

COASTLINE



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CMC's Corner



Command Master Chief Donald Alvarado

installation and meet our team, it validates the great reputation Rota has in the theater. As I learn our capabilities, limitations, and challenges, I offer that you continue to provide us feedback and see what we can do to get better to improve our Quality of Life and Service.

I want to share some recent initiatives we have started recently to get caught up with technology and for us to be more effective and efficient.

We have launched the Rota Leadership Suggestion Online with QR Code that replaced the CO's Suggestion Box located throughout the installation. You can use your personal mobile devices or government issued phone to access and submit your questions or suggestions to installation leadership in less than a minute. You also have an option to remain anonymous or you can provide your contact information and we will get back with you with an answer or solution.

Saying Hello to NAVSTA Rota and Introduction

Hello Rota Family,
I'm your new installation Command Master Chief, CMC Alvarado. Welcome to USS Oscar Austin Crew and families!
First, I would like to take this opportunity to thank every one of you for all the hard work you put in daily to support our service members and family. As I walk around the

Another technology initiative is that MWR has launched the "MWR Pizza Villa" mobile app. Our Rota MWR staff have received your feedback and they have listened. They are continuing to support and find ways to improve our Morale and Welfare. Follow them on social media.

As the holiday season approaches us, continue to be vigilant, be safe, have a plan, and enjoy your time with your loved ones!

Lastly, what is your new year's resolution? I know I have a few on my list this coming year: stay fit, eat healthy, travel with my family as much as I can when the opportunity comes, and run a marathon at least once a year.

My family and I have so much to be thankful for this year, including the opportunity to serve alongside all of you. Thank you for the warm hospitality. Happy Thanksgiving and Happy Holidays!

Continue to Lead, Train, Support, and Develop!
Hooyah Team!

Sincerely,
CMDM (SW/AW/IW) Donald R. Alvarado
Command Master Chief
Commander, Naval Activities Spain/Naval Station Rota



Rota Leadership Suggestion Box above!

On The Front Cover



Naval Station (NAVSTA) Rota, Spain hosted its annual open base event for on-base and local community members for a Halloween trick-or-treat event, Oct. 31, 2024. (Photo by Everett Lopez)

Do You Like to Write or Take Photos?

The Coastline is looking for guest writers and story ideas. Are you traveling some place fun, attending a sporting event, participating in a workshop or cooking class or leading special training in your office or community? If so, we want to hear from you! Please send story and photo submissions or story ideas to The Coastline at rotacoastline@gmail.com.

Publication is subject to approval.

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NAVSTA Rota Ombudsman Roster



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Ombudsman Coordinator Monica Gonzalez 727-3232 (Monica.gonzalez26.naf@us.navy.mil)

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USS Roosevelt holds Change of Command Ceremony

By Ensign Sarah Levine
USS Roosevelt (DDG 80)

Cmdr. Jared Carlson relieved Cmdr. Jeffrey Chewning as Commanding Officer of USS Roosevelt (DDG 80), an Arleigh Burke-class guided missile destroyer, on Nov. 1 at Naval Station (NAVSTA) Rota, Spain.

“As Roosevelt continues to operate inside the weapons engagement zone, she’s empowered by her crew to be able to



continue supporting Fleet commanders,” Chewning said. “I am so thankful and proud of what these men and women do on a daily basis. I am truly humbled to have been surrounded by such great Americans.”

Chewning, a native of Germantown, Maryland, has been in command of Roosevelt since April 21, 2023. During his command, Roosevelt completed its fifth and sixth Forward-Deployed Naval Forces-Europe (FDFE-E) patrols in support of regional and national security interests, operating in both the U.S. Sixth Fleet and U.S. Fifth Fleet Area of Operations.

On its most recent patrol, Roosevelt patrolled through the North and Baltic Seas, participating in Baltic Eagle operations and operating with NATO’s Standing NATO Maritime Group One. In the Eastern Mediterranean Sea, Roosevelt integrated with the USS Wasp Amphibious Ready Group, provided

Foreign Humanitarian Aid in Gaza, and promoted ballistic missile defense of Israel, Europe, and NATO. After transiting the Suez Canal, Roosevelt provided deterrence from Houthi aggression in the northern Red Sea in support of U.S. allies and partners.

Carlson, a native of Wahpeton, North Dakota, commissioned through the U.S. Naval Academy, and prior to taking command, served as Roosevelt’s executive officer since November 2023.

Roosevelt, named after U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt and his wife Eleanor, is one of five U.S. Navy destroyers based in Rota, Spain and assigned to Commander, Task Force 65 in support of NATO’s Integrated Air Missile Defense architecture. These FDFE-E ships have the flexibility to operate throughout the waters of Europe and Africa, from the Cape of Good Hope to the Arctic Circle, demonstrating their mastery of the maritime domain.



Cmdr. Jared Carlson (right) shakes hands with Cmdr. Jeffrey Chewning (left) after relieving him as commanding officer of the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Roosevelt (DDG 80) during a change of command ceremony, Nov. 1, 2024. (U.S. Navy photo by Culinary Specialist 2nd Class Devon Scafone)

Rota VIPs: Esaú Peña - Race Mechanic

You already know everything about Rota: history, culture, festivities, gastronomy... but do you know all the important people that were born in Rota? This year, we will be featuring one famous roteño or roteña every month. Do not forget to say hello when you see them out in town!

By Alejandra Tirapu Lucero
NAVSTA Rota Public Affairs

You are probably surprised to read that our Rota VIP is a mechanic and that is because they usually do not make it to



the lists of “famous” or “important” people. However, this roteño just achieved something that only a few people in the world achieve: He won the 2024 Moto2 World Championship.

Esaú Peña, 34, knew from a young age that two-wheeled vehicles were going to play an important part in his life. Since he was a little boy, he would ride his bike everywhere and as soon as he was able to get his license, he started driving motorcycles. When he drove for the first time, he realized that he wanted to dedicate his life to the motor world. Peña then decided to move to Barcelona and study to become a race mechanic. When he got the first glimpse of the racing world, he knew he had chosen the right path.

Peña, a world champion, states that his greatest achievement is being able to do what he loves for a living.

“There are not many job offers in this sector – it is very difficult to get in



and it is even more difficult to stay,” he says.

During the past few years, he has worked with amazing riders in different world championships. However, winning the Moto2 World Championship with Ai Ogura has made 2024 the best year in his career.

His short-term goal is to enjoy the rest of the season with Ai Ogura, the rider that made his dream come true. His long-term goal is to be promoted to MotoGP and his dream is to win another World Championship!

Peña lives in Rota, but spends most of his time traveling due to his job. When he talks about Rota to people from other

parts of the world, everybody recognizes it because of the base. “The base has done a lot for the economy and the culture of Rota” he says. “Rota is what it is thanks to the base.” His job takes him to the United States every year and every year he looks forward to that trip. He loves the culture, the gastronomy, the lifestyle and the way Americans enjoy sports. In fact, his favorite racer is from the United States: Nicky Hayden.

His travel recommendations are Australia, Japan and Indonesia. However, and you all probably know by now, roteños and roteñas are obsessed with Rota. Peña moved back to Rota in 2022 and he never wants to leave again, “even if they gave me all the gold in the world!”

When Peña was a little boy, he would take apart all of his toys and then put them together again. Now he takes apart motorcycles, puts them together, and wins world championships. He is grateful for his family and friends, who have always supported him and helped him achieve his goals.

“If you have a dream, fight for it.” He stated. “there will be good moments and bad moments, but there is nothing more beautiful than the feeling of making your dreams come true.”



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Homeschoolers visit Jardín Botánico Celestino Mutis

By Randy Lambert
School Liaison Office

A group of homeschool families visited the Jardín Botánico Celestino Mutis in Rota, Oct. 13. The garden is situated along Avenida de la Diputación and close to the beach and the pine forest. It is a relaxing space and an area that packs a lot of biodiversity in the park. Walking along the paths, you will find many different varieties of trees and plants from our local area and from other areas of the world. There are over 18 varieties of oak trees found in the garden as well as other plants like the Canary Island Dragon Tree and the Moroccan Atlas Tree that have adapted to our dry and sunny climate in Rota.

In the park, you can see different varieties of birds, insects and reptiles. If you are lucky, you might get to experience seeing chameleons crawling on rocks, trees or other plants.

The garden's head biologist led a guided tour in English where he talked about the history and founding of the botanical garden. The garden was named after José Celestino Mutis who




was born in Cádiz in 1732, but he died in 1808 in Bogotá, Columbia. He was a Spanish priest, doctor, botanist and mathematician. He is known not only as a great scientist, but also as a great promoter of knowledge.

If you wish to visit the botanical garden, entrance is free, and it is open from 10 in the morning until 9 in the evening. The park is closed on Mondays.




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In addition to its recreational sessions, Karting Jerez organises special competitions, providing an immersive experience that emulates Formula 1 racing. With these innovations, Karting Jerez has established itself as one of the main leisure options in the province, gaining more and more positive opinions from its visitors. Please see their advertisement in the paper for more information.




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Spouse Talk: The Next Stop Is...

By Ashley Leigh

Contributing Community Member

Fallon, Nevada. It's called "The Oasis of Nevada." Known for its rich history in mining, cowboys, tribal groups and the original Pony Express, this wild west destination touts being a small town with big smiles. Plus, if you have ever watched the original "Top Gun" movie, a brief - and I mean brief - part of the movie was filmed there. This is where my husband and I found ourselves stationed in 2013.

Have you ever been to a duty station that you just loathed? Maybe it didn't start that way but that's how it ended up. When we moved to Fallon, I was initially excited. I had never lived out West and was looking forward to seasonal weather and being in a smaller community. But that excitement wore off. I was bored. There was nowhere to work. My husband was back working shifts, and I was lonely. To this day, I cringe whenever my husband even suggests going back to Fallon.

Living somewhere that you absolutely cannot find love for is part of the many "downsides" to military life. Outsiders think we have it great because of all the traveling that befalls us. How lucky are we that we move from place to place, exploring other countries and on the military's dime? Little do they understand that not all destinations are magical.

Beyond the effort of just getting to the next duty station and surviving months in a hotel, managing how to live somewhere you don't want to be brings

challenges of its own. Our moods have to have time to adjust. Some never do. Our marriages can struggle when one spouse is unhappy while the other thrives. When both struggle, the real work of keeping it together begins.

Our outlook on the situations in which we find ourselves affects every aspect of our family unit. A way to manage living where the situation is just plain dreadful is to tell ourselves that it isn't forever. We all know our time frame from one place to the next. Find others who have been in the same boat and ask how they did it. Finally, try to see some light in the darkness. Maybe your spouse is doing great, or the kids are happy. A positive that came out of my time in Fallon was meeting my friend, Tara Landis, who made my life happier. See the good in the bad. It's tough, but doable.



"Spouse Talk" is written by Ashley Leigh, a military spouse of 16+ years and a homeschool parent to one "spunky" redhead. She hopes her frank conversations on military life will inspire others to embrace the challenge and find the good at each duty station.

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“What to Expect When You’re Expecting” Author Attends NAVSTA Rota Baby Shower

By Jessie Reinhart
Fleet and Family Support Center

In a heartwarming event dedicated to celebrating military and Department of Defense (DOD) families, bestselling author Heidi Murkoff, known for her iconic book “What to Expect When You’re Expecting,” came to visit Naval Station (NAVSTA) Rota, Spain. This special baby shower was created by New Parent Support Home Visitor, Jessie Reinhart (FFSC) and took place at La Plaza on Oct. 25th – thanks to the “What to Expect Project.” The baby shower showed appreciation for service members and their families as they prepare to welcome new members into their lives.

The gathering brought together many new and expectant parents from across the military community onboard NAVSTA Rota and nearby installations, providing them an event filled with support, connection, and joy. Murkoff, a passionate advocate for military families, shared her expert advice on pregnancy, childbirth, and early parenting, offering families personalized tips, encouragement, and humor. Her dedication to these families was clear as she took time to listen to their stories, answer questions, and offer reassurance in the face of the unique challenges military life brings to parenthood.

In addition to Heidi’s engaging talk, families enjoyed a catered lunch, signed books, raffle prizes, giveaways, and gift cards. The atmosphere was one of camaraderie and celebration, with parents connecting over shared experiences and building a network of support within our community. Our families stationed here were able to have an afternoon focused on them and their growing families, finding comfort in the bonds they share with others on similar journeys.

The baby shower with Murkoff was more than just an event; it was a tribute to the resilience and dedication of military families. As these service members and their spouses prepare to bring new life into the world, the event reminds us that they are not alone in parenting and that the community stands with them every step of the way.



Photos by IC2 Marlin Dominguez



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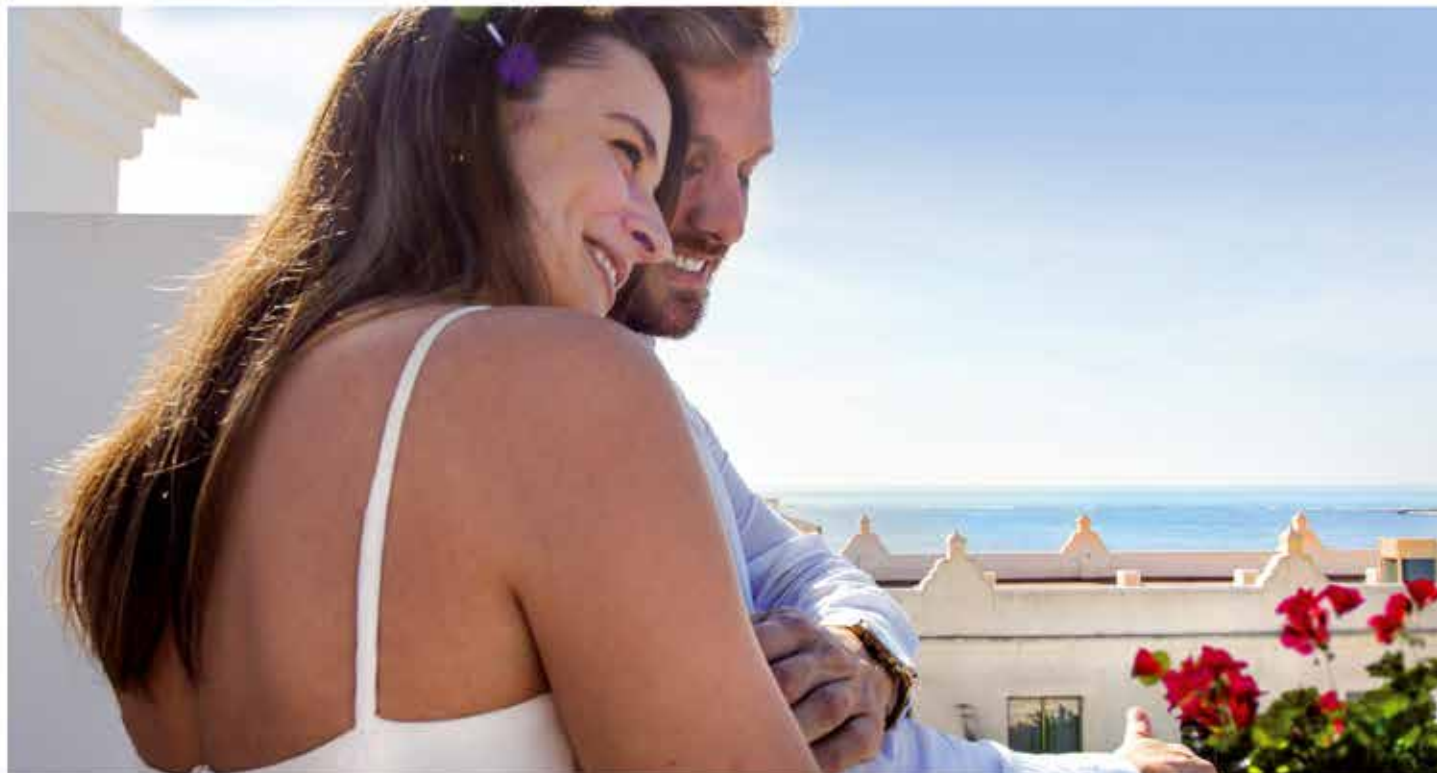


Photos by MC2 Drace Wilson



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Halloween Open Base Event

Naval Station (NAVSTA) Rota hosted its annual Trick-or-Treat event Nov. 3, opening up the base to our local Spanish friends to gather candy in their favorite costumes at base housing. Thank you to everyone who participated, both candy givers and eaters, and we hope to see even more of both next year!



Photos by Lt. Charena Dedios and Everett Lopez

MWR Madrid Halloween Event

By Rebecca Daley
MWR Madrid

Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) Madrid hosted a trunk or treat style event Oct. 18, 2024. The event had a DJ, an acrobat troop, and a host of volunteers to assist in managing Halloween-themed games and providing face paint, goodie bags and hot chocolate. The theme was “A Nightmare Before Christmas.” There were also theme category costume contests for adults, kids, and families. Finally, the top three well-decorated trunks were recognized in the trunk decorating contest.

This event was open to all Combined Air Operations Center (CAOC) personnel and their families with a contribution of a snack or treat. There were three tables full of international snacks and treats, along with sodas and water provided by MWR.

The acrobats wowed the crowd with juggling, dancing, balancing acts, fire tricks, a bubble show, aerial displays and several unicycle tricks that had the kids sitting still for a whole hour!

In the end, the event had over 150 attendees - from Belgium, France, Germany, Spain, the U.K., and the U.S., almost all of whom were in costume!



Courtesy Photos

EFMP Boo Bash



Photos by IC2 Marlin Dominguez



Veterans Day Ceremony and Resource Fair

Naval Station Rota held a Veterans Day ceremony at the base chapel, Nov. 6, 2024. The ceremony included Capt. Teague Suarez and guest speaker HMC (retired) Jeremiah Brew as they gave remarks on the sacrifices of those that came before us, with a community resource fair being held in the chapel courtyard afterward.

Thank you to everyone who joined us to celebrate and give recognition to our veterans.



Photos by MC2 Drace Wilson

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MWR Library Bookmark Design Contest

DODEA High Schools Achieve Honor Roll

By Minerva Jimenez
NAVSTA Rota MWR

The MWR library celebrated its 29th annual Halloween bookmark contest. The selected theme this year was “The Wonderful World of the Wizard of Oz.”

Between Sept. 16 and Oct. 16, the participants had to make a bookmark related to the Wizard of Oz. The last day to bring the bookmarks to the library was Oct. 16. Three winners were selected from each of the age categories. These were Lena Fraissinet (5-6 years), Noa Velez (7-8 years) and Katherine Hicks (9-10 years). We revealed the winners at the awards ceremony that was held on Oct. 29 at the library. All participants obtained their certificate accrediting their participation in the event and the winners even received some library-related gifts. Two other prizes were also awarded, one for the funniest costume (The Invisible Man) and another for the best handmade costume (the geisha sisters).

For the ceremony we had the fantastic USO volunteers who dressed up as “The Wizard of Oz” characters.



Courtesy Photos

By Jessica Tackaberry
DoDEA Europe Regional Communications Director

The Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) Europe Region is proud to announce that 19 of its high schools have earned Platinum status and two have achieved Gold status on the prestigious Advanced Placement (AP) School Honor Roll. The fact that every high school was recognized underscores the region's commitment to broadening access to college-level courses and promoting equity in education.

"Equity and access to rigorous instruction for every student are at the heat of our regional goals," said Dr. Michelle Howard-Brahaney, Europe Director for Student Excellence. "Our AP programs are a critical component of helping students develop the skills and confidence to succeed in college, career, and beyond."

The AP School Honor Roll celebrates schools that are delivering exceptional results in their AP programs while ensuring increased access for students. This annual recognition is based on key criteria, reflecting each school's dedication to fostering a college-going culture, providing opportunities for students to earn college credit, and maximizing college readiness.

To earn Platinum status, the highest award, schools must meet the following criteria for their Class of 2024:

- 80% or more of students took at least one AP course before graduating.
 - 50% or more of students earned potential college credit by achieving an AP exam score of 3 or higher.
 - 15% or more of students took a total of five AP courses during their high school years, with at least one taken in 9th or 10th grade.
- Recent studies highlight the importance of early exposure to college-level coursework in boosting college readiness and increasing the likelihood of students pursuing higher education. According to one study, students who engage in rigorous AP courses are more likely to persist in college and graduate on time.
- Tami Elder, the Europe Instructional Systems Specialists for AP, worked with secondary counselors to embrace a broader view of College Readiness. "Throughout the region, we've expanded our vision of what college and career readiness truly means," said Elder. "It's about providing equity and access to academic rigor—and cultivating resilience, adaptability, and critical thinking, ensuring that every student is prepared to excel and thrive in an ever-evolving world."
- At ten schools, every graduate in the Class of 2024 took at least one AP class during their high school career, marking an extraordinary achievement in providing

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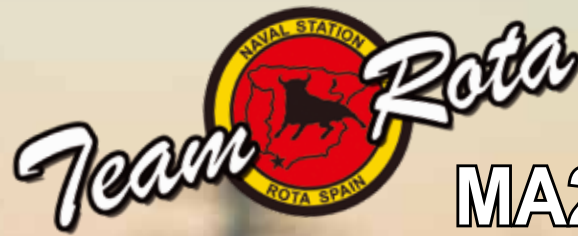
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MA2 Esther Tyrrell

Master-at-Arms 2nd Class Esther Tyrrell, from Martin, Mich., is assigned to Naval Station (NAVSTA) Rota, Spain's Security department, standing watch and working with Spanish base security to ensure the safety of the installation's personnel from any possible insider or outsider threats.

"I really enjoy having the opportunity to practice my Spanish with the Spanish police and getting to know how their customs and courtesies differ from ours," she explained.

Tyrrell has gotten the chance to serve at a variety of duty stations since enlisting in the U.S. Navy in 2019. These include Lackland Air Force Base, Naval Support Activity Bahrain, and Naval Support Facility Diego Garcia before arriving to NAVSTA Rota in May 2023. Tyrrell stated that she enjoys learning about Spanish culture and being able to

live in a prime place for European travel.

"I am a part of the Chapel's Young Adults program at the Victory Villa," said Tyrrell. "It's a place where Sailors can have a home away from home, encouraging each other and seeing Europe while making smart decisions in a safe environment."

Alongside traveling and learning about different cultures, Tyrrell spends her free time reading and currently has her head buried in the "Mistborne" book series, written by Brandon Sanderson. Other hobbies include drawing different locations from her duty stations and getting to know other people around her.

"I really enjoy answering questions so if you have a question and you see me on the street, do not hesitate to ask!" Stated Tyrrell. "I love helping people."



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Health Promotions - Fight Inflammation with Food

By Kay Lehman, MS, RD

Naval Hospital Rota, Health Promotions

Chronic inflammation is a state of persistent activation of the immune system, which may contribute to chronic diseases such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease and cognitive decline. The foods you eat can have power over the inflammatory response in the body. Certain foods can help fight inflammation, whereas others can make it worse.

Anti-inflammatory foods – foods which fight inflammation—are all part of the Mediterranean style eating philosophy. These foods consist of fruits, vegetables, legumes, whole grains, seeds, lean proteins and small amounts of dairy and olive oil. Plant-based foods provide vitamins, minerals, fiber and phytochemicals that can protect our cells against inflammation. Foods such as fish, nuts and plant oils contain monounsaturated fats which are good for blood vessels, heart and brain health.

Here are some my favorite foods that fight inflammation!

Berries: strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, blackberries contain phytochemicals called anthocyanins – this gives them their red and purple hues. Anthocyanins have an anti-inflammatory effect on cells and are associated with lower risks of heart disease, cognitive decline and diabetes.

Fatty fish: salmon, tuna, sardines, trout – are rich in omega-3 fatty acids, which have been shown to reduce cardiovascular disease risk.

Leafy Greens:

arugula, chard, kale and spinach – all good sources of vitamins A, B, C, E and K, as well as minerals (iron, magnesium and potassium). Not to mention, loaded with phytochemicals. All of which help to reduce inflammation levels over time.

Nuts and Seeds: pistachios, almonds and pumpkin seeds are rich in fiber and other nutrients that help promote healthy gut bacteria and are good for brain health. Other nuts like walnuts, flaxseed and chia are good sources of omega-3 fatty acids.

Dark Chocolate: my personal favorite – rich in protective plant polyphenols and catechins, dark chocolate is well known for it's heart healthy benefits. To reap those benefits – be sure to choose the chocolate with at least 85% cocoa content.

Foods that promote inflammation tend to the ultra-processed foods with added sugars, salts and fats. Avoid eating processed foods such as hotdogs, sausages, candy, chips, donuts, fatty meats, ect. Instead, opt for whole, natural foods with minimal processing to help reduce and prevent chronic inflammation.

Recommendations: To get enough foods that fight inflammation, eat at least two servings of fatty fish per week and at least two fruits and 3 servings of vegetables per day. Since nuts are higher in fat and calories, enjoy a small amount each day (1/4 cup or small handful). A key to promoting gut health is to load up on fiber-rich foods, this includes fruits and vegetables along with whole grains,



beans and lentils.

Make the most of your meals by adding a colorful green salad loaded with vegetables, berries and use a little olive oil for dressing. Instead of using refined, processed grains, opt for whole grains

such as quinoa or brown rice.

To meet with the dietitian for help to make your diet a little less inflammatory, call Central Appointments at 956-82-3618 to schedule an appointment.

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Spanish Holidays: A Season of Warmth, Laughter, and Tradition

The contributors are co-founders of a seasoned agency committed to assisting expatriates with navigating Spanish culture and lifestyle. With extensive experience in translation, interpretation, and cultural coaching, they equip expats with the tools and knowledge necessary for a seamless integration into Spanish society.



By Ellie McDonald and Brenda Navarro
Castelet
Contributing Community Members

The holiday season in Spain is like no other. While you won't find snow-covered streets in southern Spain, you will find an abundance of holiday warmth, unique customs, and community celebrations. Let's dive into what makes the Spanish holiday season so special—from quirky pranks to delicious sweets, a bit of red luck for New Year's Eve, and the grand finale of the Three Kings' arrival.



A Spanish Christmas Under the Sun
Imagine celebrating Christmas with a bright sky and warm sun overhead. In southern Spain, holiday lights shine against clear, blue skies, creating a unique seasonal charm. As December approaches, Spanish homes and public squares are filled with "Portales de Belén," or nativity scenes. These elaborate displays are cherished parts of the Spanish Christmas, capturing scenes of Bethlehem with artistic detail. One of the most entertaining elements is the Catalan "Caganet," a cheeky figurine often tucked away in a corner, bringing a dose of humor to the sacred scene. The joy is in the hunt to spot this quirky addition.

In Cádiz and El Puerto de Santa María, you can combine Belén visits with tapas hopping, making the experience both festive and delicious. If you're looking for a whimsical twist, El Puerto's famous Playmobil nativity scene brings a modern,



fun spin to the traditional display.
Dec. 22: The Sound of "El Gordo"
In Spain, Christmas officially kicks off with the national lottery, known as "El Gordo," or "the fat one" in English, being drawn on Dec. 22. This event is as much about tradition as it is about winning. As children from the San Ildefonso school sing out the winning numbers, families gather to listen, often holding tickets shared among friends, family, and even the local café. Win or lose, it's a unifying event, setting the festive season in full swing.

La Nochebuena and Christmas Day
Christmas Eve, or "La Nochebuena," is the highlight of the season for many Spanish families. It's a night for reunions, storytelling, and elaborate meals. Tables are filled with seafood, jamón ibérico, roasted lamb or turkey, and finished with sweets like "turrón" and "polvorones." These crumbly almond treats hail from Estepa, Andalucía, and the trick is to give them a little smash while they're still wrapped. If you can manage to eat one without making a mess, you've mastered the Spanish Christmas!

New Year's Eve: The Challenge of the 12 Grapes
As the clock approaches midnight on New Year's Eve, Spaniards prepare for "Las 12 Campanadas," or the 12 chimes, which is a time-honored tradition that's part countdown, part superstition, and all about luck. At the stroke of midnight, the bell at Madrid's Puerta del Sol rings twelve times, each chime marking a second to eat a grape. If you manage to finish all 12 grapes before the final chime, it's believed to bring good luck for each month of the coming year.

This tradition sounds simple, but as the clock strikes and everyone races to eat one grape per chime, it becomes a joyful challenge. Friends and families gather around their TVs or in public squares, trying not to laugh as they rush to keep

up with the chimes. To make things easier, some people peel and deseed their grapes in advance (a widely accepted shortcut!) or use seedless grapes. Others opt for the convenient canned grapes sold specifically for this night, making it just a bit easier to complete the tradition.
For an added touch of luck, many Spaniards wear something red, such as a scarf, bracelet, or undergarment, and some place a gold ring in their glass of cava as they toast. When the final grape is downed, the new year officially begins with hugs, laughter, and a shared sense



of accomplishment, setting the tone for a year filled with joy and connection.
Jan. 5 - 6: The Three Kings Arrive in Style
While Santa Claus might have a growing presence in Spain, it's the Three Kings—Melchior, Gaspar, and Balthazar—who remain the true stars of the Spanish Christmas season. The magic reaches its peak on the evening of Jan. 5, when cities across Spain host grand parades known as "La Cabalgata de Reyes." The Kings arrive in elaborate floats, throwing candy to thrilled children and families gathered along the streets. Each King represents a different region of the world, symbolizing unity and the diverse origins of those who came to celebrate Jesus' birth. Melchior, Gaspar, and Balthazar enchant the crowds, filling the streets with music, color, and joy.

As the parade winds down, children rush home to place their shoes out in anticipation, sometimes leaving snacks for the Kings and their camels to enjoy during their long journey. When they wake up on Jan. 6, the kids find gifts surrounding their shoes—a magical experience that brings the holiday season to a spectacular close.
To mark the day, families gather around

a "roscón de Reyes," a ring-shaped pastry adorned with candied fruits that symbolize the Kings' crowns. Inside the roscón are two surprises: a figurine of a King and a dried fava bean. The person who finds the King is crowned and wears a paper crown, enjoying a bit of "royal" luck for the day. But if you're unlucky enough to get



the bean, tradition has it that you must pay for the roscón!
A Season of Joy, Tradition, and Togetherness
Together, the 12 grapes on New Year's Eve and the joyful arrival of the Three Kings represent the heart of Spain's holiday spirit. These moments capture the laughter, anticipation, and rich sense of community that make the season unforgettable. As Spaniards navigate this festive period from the midnight countdown to the final gift exchange on Three Kings Day, these unique traditions turn the holiday season into an experience of warmth, joy, and connection that endures year after year. ¡Feliz Navidad y Próspero Año Nuevo!





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Tenant Command Spotlight: Aircraft Intermediate Maintenance Department (AIMD) Aviation Support Detachment (ASD) Rota



What is the role / mission of your command?

Aircraft Intermediate Maintenance Department (AIMD) Aviation Support Detachment (ASD) Rota provides effective and efficient intermediate level maintenance and logistics services for aviation units supporting Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa (NAVEURAFCENT) and Commander, U.S. 6th Fleet (C6F), NATO and Unified Commanders to meet readiness requirements and allow uninterrupted forward-deployed operations.

Can you tell us a brief history of your command? How many personnel are assigned to it?

AIMD ASD Rota was established in April 2020 in Rota, Spain, as a detachment from AIMD Sigonella to provide aviation and logistics support for

HSM-79's homeport shift from San Diego to Rota. Initially starting with 12 Sailors from diverse aviation backgrounds, our detachment has grown to 33 Sailors to meet the increasing demand for warfighting support and capabilities in the Sixth Fleet Area of Responsibility.

What makes your command unique? Is there anything other personnel onboard NAVSTA Rota may not know about your command or what it does?

Being the sole naval unit with both AIMD and ASD under one command, AIMD ASD Rota enjoys a unique array of opportunities and challenges. AIMD ASD Rota proudly represents the Naval Aviation Enterprise (NAE) among our numerous allies and partners across Europe, strengthening partnerships and enhancing aviation logistic support. As we continue to develop and expand, we

are implementing innovative solutions to unique challenges while maintaining our efficiency and effectiveness to support warfighters anytime, anywhere.

Looking ahead, what are your command's future goals, projects, growth?

In 2020, the detachment arrived without working spaces or temporary hangars but was able to establish operations with minimal resources, promptly providing aviation support to HSM-79 and all transiting units through Rota. This year, we have outlined specific goals for maintenance and logistic excellence, professional development, and quality of life. Our facilities continue to improve with the construction of our new relocatable buildings and the move into expanded office space. Our permanent facilities are slated for completion in late 2025, which

will enable us to establish additional highly demanding capabilities to support our frontline warfighters.

Anything else you'd like the community to know?

AIMD ASD Rota is proud to be home to an exceptional team of warfighting professionals, committed to upholding a culture of excellence. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the entire Rota base community for their unwavering support and assistance, which has been instrumental in our successful integration and establishment. Special thanks go to NAVFAC, Jesus Serrano & Ken Sorenson, and NCTAMS, Kris Robinette, whose early provision of temporary facilities and services enabled us to perform our duties with remarkable efficiency and effectiveness. Their contributions have been pivotal to our mission's success.

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NAVAL STATION ROTA COMMUNITY RESOURCES

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS MEETINGS

AA on base: "Rota 213" meets Tuesday and Thursday, 1900-2000 (7-8pm) in person in the NAVSTA Rota Chapel Library (in the back). For meeting information, please contact Cynthia at +34 661 47 95 20 or Dean at +34 674 38 77 55.

AA off base on Zoom: "Rota Drydockers." Every Saturday, 1600 (4 pm) on Zoom only. For information on how to join the Zoom session, contact Cynthia at +34 661 47 95 20 or Joe G. via WhatsApp at: +34 603 84 15 59.

AA in Rota in English: "Rota to Recovery." Every Saturday, 1900-2000 (7-8pm) in person, Calle Bachiller, 11, Rota; parking is available near the marina. For information, please contact Cynthia at +34 661 47 95 20 or Dean at +34 674 38 77 55.

AL-ANON MEETINGS

Have you been affected by another person's drinking? If so, please join us every Wednesday at 1600 (4 p.m.) at the base chapel nursery for an Al-Anon meeting. The only requirement for Al-Anon membership is that there be a problem of alcoholism in a relative or friend. For info on meetings, please contact Naydene at +34 669 09 7149.

AMERICAN RED CROSS

Mon - Fri, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Volunteers are welcome and encouraged to stop by the office and CPR courses are now being offered. Days and times of the courses will be posted on our FB page. For more information, call us during business hours at DSN 727-2333 or commercial, +34 956-82-2333, or visit our Facebook page, @RedCrossRota.

AMERICAN RED CROSS EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS SERVICE

Red Cross Emergency Messages services operate 24/7. If you have a family emergency during business hours, call us immediately at DSN (314) 727-2333 or +34 956-82-2333. After hours or on weekends, our national call center can be reached at +1 (877) 272-7337. Messages can also be initiated online, at <https://www.redcross.org/military-emergency-communication.html>

ROTA EDUCATION CENTER

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University and University of Maryland Global Campus offices are open and able to assist you in reaching your education goals. The Rota Education Center is located on the first floor of the Community Services Building (Bldg. 3293).

NAVY-MARINE CORPS RELIEF SOCIETY (NMCRS)

When you are having trouble meeting urgent financial needs, NMCRS may be able to provide an interest-free loan or grant. Through financial counseling, we will also help you plan for better financial stability. Our services are completely confidential. If you are approved for a loan or grant, you will receive funds immediately. There

is no application fee and the appointment is completely free. If you need \$1,000 or less, you may be eligible for our Quick Assist Loan.

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Monday-Friday; 8 a.m.- 4 p.m.

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After Hours Duty Cell: +34 660 984 511

After Hours Emergency Assistance: +1 (877) 272-7337

Email: rota@nmcrs.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/nmcrsrota

NMCRS Thrift Shop

Hours of Operation

Monday: 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Thursday: 3-6 p.m. (third Thursday / active duty + dependents only)

Third Saturday of month: 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

NMCRS Casework and Classes

Casework Appointment: For active duty Navy, Marines, retirees, and dependents, the NMCRS can help you with financial relief. This can be used for emergency travel, basic living expenses (BLE), pet OCONUS, auto, household set up, and more.

Budget for Baby Class: Are you a new or prospective parent? Join us in-person to learn important budgeting skills for your new addition! Parents will learn about military pay fluctuations, baby expenses, consumer pressures targeting new parents, and entitlements available through government and private sources. This class is now open to both active duty and government civilian families. All participants will receive a layette and a handmade baby blanket. Families will also receive a \$50 Amazon gift card. To register, visit <http://linktr.ee/nmcrsrota> and select the desired class and date.

Command Classes: We offer financial classes for groups and commands. Our caseworkers can come to you, or we can hold the classes in our classroom. Call or email our office to schedule one of these classes.

UPCOMING NMCRS AND HOSPITAL MATERNAL PROGRAMS AND CLASSES:

The Visiting Nurse program includes home and virtual visits, classes, and community support groups for active duty, retirees, and their families. The Visiting Nurse provides health education, resource referral, and support for prenatal and postpartum, newborn care, breastfeeding, pediatric, adult, and geriatric health concerns.

NMCRS: VOLUNTEER WITH US!

Are you interested in volunteering in the NMCRS office or Thrift Shop? We have several opportunities to grow your resume while contributing to our community! We also reimburse for childcare and mileage. Apply to volunteer online at <http://linktr.ee/nmcrsrota> and join us for a monthly volunteer orientation. NMCRS Rota is

looking for blanket makers and Thrift Shop volunteers. **PRESCHOOL SERVICES FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES**

Child Find for children three to five years of age is an ongoing outreach program that locates and identifies children who may have developmental delays or educational disabilities and need special services. If you have concerns regarding your child's development, please contact DSN 727-4185/4435 or commercial, +34 956-82-4185/4435.

RETIRED ACTIVITIES OFFICE (RAO)

Fleet and Family Support Center, Tuesday and Thursday, 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., by appointment only.

RAO serves as a link between the military retired community and other government agencies, such as Federal benefits Unit for Scoail Security and Defense Finance and Accounting Service, Veterans Administration (VA), and Office of Personal Management (OPM). RAO provides assistance to survivors regarding pensions and benefits and is a source for information about retiring and living in Spain.

USO ROTA

The mission of the USO is to strengthen the well-being of America's military service members and their families. At USO Rota, we are dedicated to this mission by offering a variety of events and services—all free for active duty service members and their families.

Our center is conveniently located inside the Air Terminal and is open Monday through Friday, from 0830 to 1630. We invite you to join us for any of our events or stop by for a visit!

Interested in giving back? The USO is a fantastic organization for volunteering. To get started, fill out your volunteer profile at VOLUNTEERS.USO.ORG.

For all USO Rota events and more, follow "USO Rota" on Facebook at www.facebook.com/USORota.

WIC OVERSEAS

Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Overseas is a nutrition education and supplemental food program that aims to improve the overall health and wellness of families for active duty service members and their dependents, DoD civilian employees and their dependents, DoD contractors and their dependents. Basic nutrition and health screenings, drafts to be redeemed for nutritious foods, access to resources & tips that help you and your family lead healthier lives, healthier birth weights for babies, reduced anemia rates for children, breastfeeding support, breast pump loan program, breastfeeding/pumping room open to everyone. Call DSN 727-2921 or commercial, +34 956-82-2921, for more information.

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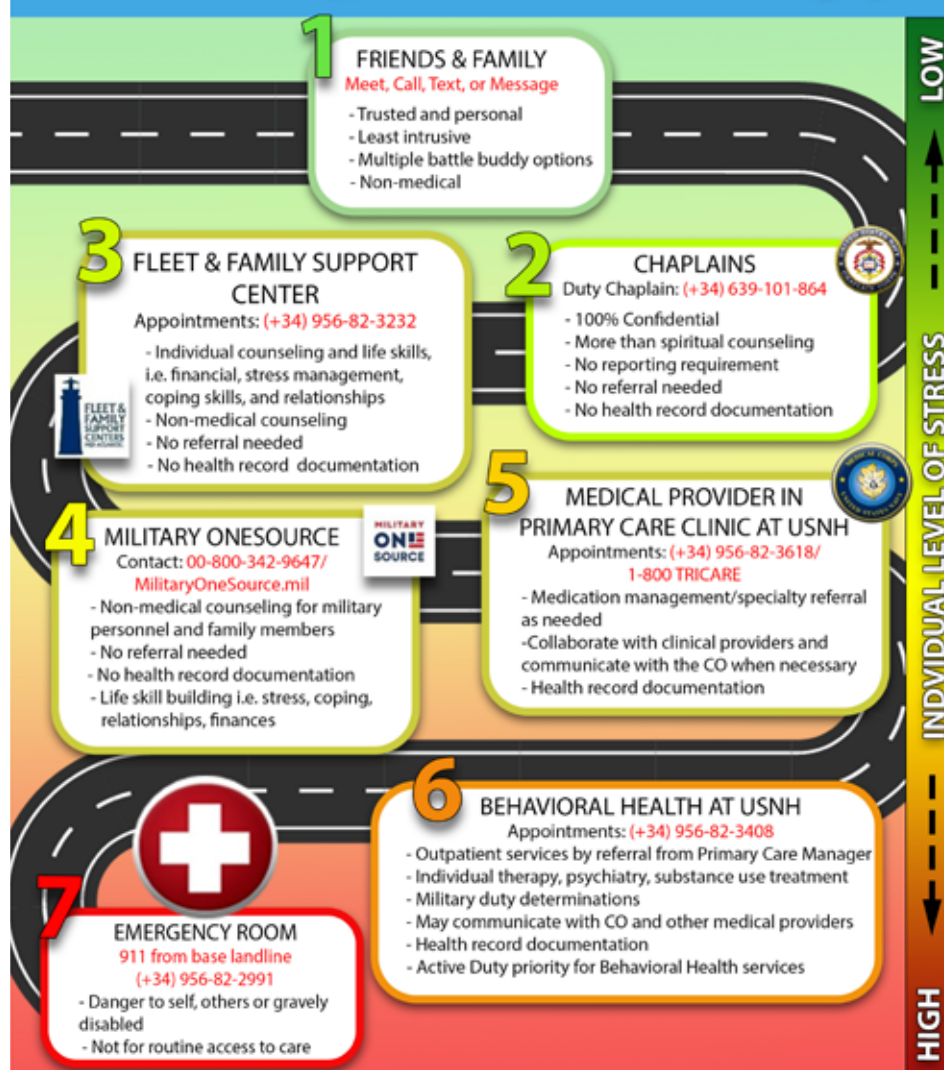
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DODEA Continued from page 15

all students with access to college-level coursework.

The college board's AP program enables students to challenge themselves with college-level studies while still in high school. AP students learn to think critically, construct sound arguments, and appreciate diverse perspectives—skills that serve them well in college and in their future careers.

Leah Zamor, principal of Baumholder Middle High, a school that received Platinum status for the first time, stated, "We are committed to fostering a college-going culture by using AP potential data, providing inclusive AP course offerings, and providing resources that empower all students to reach their full potential. This effort supports students, bolsters their confidence, and supports their self-awareness of their potential to excel in a collegiate setting – the essence of what it means to be College and Career Ready."

Dr. Heather Ramaglia, Europe East

Community Superintendent and former principal at Wiesbaden High School, reflected on the school's attainment of Platinum status after achieving the Gold level in 2023: "The success of earning AP School Honor Roll Platinum level is attributed to the strong culture and climate, as well as the dedication of the outstanding staff at WHS. I am constantly in awe of the dedication, innovation, and risk-taking of these educators in support of more meaningful and authentic learning experiences."

This achievement, having each school recognized, reflects the Europe region's ongoing dedication to equity and access for all students, ensuring that all students have the opportunity to succeed academically and prepare for life after high school.

For more information about our AP programs, please contact your school principal or school counselor.

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