

DIRECT LINKS

Miami flight confusion clarified

Speculation that the direct flight from Tenerife to Miami had been pulled off by Air Europa has been dismissed by the airline and the local authorities.

As reported here, the weekly connection is to stop as of 9

January and it was thought that Air Europa had taken the decision to suspend the service due to low passenger numbers and the reliance on official business and political delegations to fill seats. However, in a communiqué issued just

before Christmas the carrier said it was happy with the route, which had achieved a load factor of just over 70 per cent since it was inaugurated in June. The lack of flights as of January is due to "extensive maintenance" on the Airbus 330 aircraft that

covers the route.

An Air Europa spokesman said the service should be resumed towards the end of March, although there are no plans as yet for a second weekly flight.

HUNGER STRIKE ENDS

Haidar supporters celebrate

Supporters of Aminatou Haidar celebrated the return of the Saharan human rights activist to Morocco after a 34-day hunger strike in Lanzarote airport.

Haidar, who had been admitted to hospital 24 hours prior to finally returning home due to her weak condition, was flown by private plane to El Aaiun after Morocco bowed to international pressure to allow her back in to the country. Her case had

sparked international interest and certainly will have raised the level of awareness regarding the situation in Western Sahara and the unresolved dispute over the zone's independence.

At a more local level, her departure meant Lanzarote airport could get back to normal after the month of disruption caused by the protest, which attracted scores of journalists from all over the world.

Aminatou Haidar is back home



ISABEL CANINO

Case takes new twist

The investigation into the murder of Tenerife woman Isabel Canino took a new twist with the revelation that DNA traces found under her finger nails do not belong to the man currently on remand in connection with her death.

Former boyfriend Salvador

Morales has been in jail since 31 May after bus driver Isabel's body was discovered buried in his La Laguna garden several weeks after she went missing. Morales has always denied killing her although he admitted to burying her after he allegedly found her body on his premises. A 12-page forensic report drawn

up in August and disclosed to a local paper just before Christmas could seriously damage the prosecution case against Morales given the evidence found that points to the involvement of another person.

Doubts cast over accused in murder of Isabel Canino



In our thoughts

Michael Clarke - RIP

• We at Island Connections Media Group were shocked and saddened to hear of the sudden and untimely death of Michael Clark, the Shaitsu practitioner.

We have known Michael for some considerable time as both a client and friend of the newspaper. He was a larger than life fellow and anyone who had the good fortune to meet him will never forget him. We pass our sincere condolences to all his friends and family at this sad time.

EU deal

Banana deal fury

• Banana growers in the Canaries say the import tariff deal struck between the EU and Latin American countries could spell the end of the sector here.

The major associations have expressed their anger that the lower tariffs agreed to open up the EU market to bananas from countries such as Honduras and Costa Rica will squeeze fruit from the Canaries out of shops because growers cannot compete on wage costs.

They are calling on the EU to create a package of measures to compensate them for anticipated losses.

2010 ::

Official holiday calendar

Fiestas and national holidays

Local fiestas are part of the way of life in the islands and mean that we get extra days off in comparison with many of our European counterparts.

Often on these days, businesses, banks and shops are closed and equally often a number of colourful traditions are enacted before, during or after the official fiesta date. Holiday dates are divided between national and regional holidays and municipal holidays. Below is a complete list of the national, Canarian and island holidays for 2010 and in addition each borough has two feast days which are local holidays and can be found at

<http://www.gobiernodecanarias.org/boc/2009/220/002.html>

National & Canarian holidays

January 1st

New Year's Day

January 6th

Three King's Day

April 1st

Maundy Thursday (aka Holy Thursday)

April 2nd

Good Friday

May 1st

May Day

May 31st

Canarian Day

October 12th

Spanish National Day

November 1st

All Saints' Day

December 6th

Constitution Day

December 8th

Day of the Immaculate Conception

December 25th

Christmas Day

Island feast days

February 2nd - Tenerife

Virgen de Candelaria

August 5th - La Palma

Virgen de las Nieves

September 8th - Gran Canaria Nuestra

Señora del Pino

September 15th - Lanzarote

Virgen de los Dolores, Nuestra Señora de los Volcanes

September 18th - Fuerteventura

Nuestra Señora de la Peña

September 24th - El Hierro

Nuestra Señora de los Reyes

October 4th - La Gomera

Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe

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