

# LIFE

STYLE  
&

JANUARY 2006 - 40



## RENZO'S RHYTHMS

The making of a percussionist

## PROMISES PROMISES

New year resolutions and what to do with them

## SONG FOR EUROPE

Meet the committee's new chairperson

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# EDITORIAL

It's a new year! Hooray, hooray! Time to reminisce about the past year, and time to try for the umpteenth time to stick to New Year resolutions, probably made in an inebriated state again.

Now that we are all home and dry, we at Life&Style hope that 2006 keeps on bringing you cheer throughout the year with articles that are fun and interesting to read.

This month's issue takes off with an interview with Renzo Spiteri – who hasn't seen or heard the curly haired percussionist around? Karen Mifsud meets up with him and reveals all about his humble music beginnings. Stefan Cachia Zammit talks about his perception of New Year resolutions and why, try as he might, it's so tempting to succumb yet again.

David Azzopardi turns to the Song for Europe committee's new chairperson Robert Abela for an interview at the helm. And to get you right into Eurovision fever, check out NetTV's new weekly programme where you can hear the songs and more.

At Life&Style we love food and tantalise your taste buds by bringing you a selection of our favourite winter warmers. Once again, we bring you useful information about what to do with those nails and keep you posted on what's in fashion. Krista is also back with more postures to try out this year – all in the name of keeping us flexible and feeling better.

We wish our readers a happy and healthy year.



**Charlotte Stafrace, Editor**

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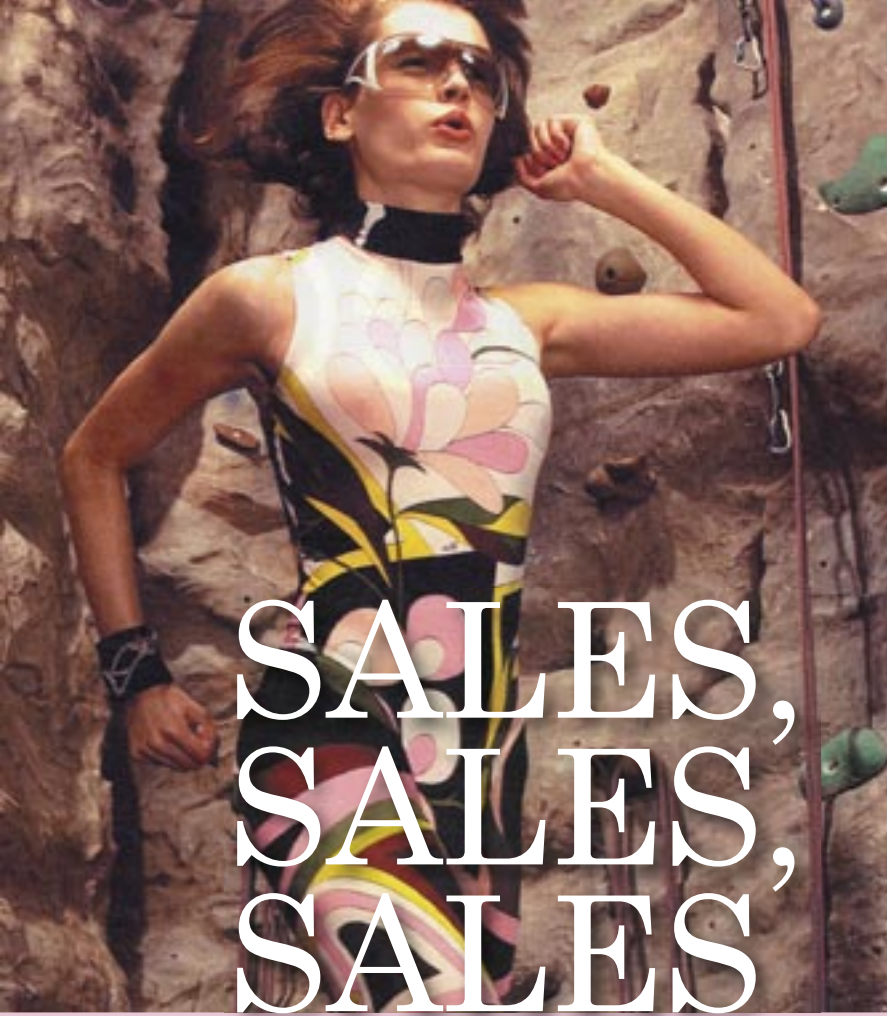
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'I don't bother with the sales' say a lot of us, however we all know its just too tempting. Becoming a master sales shopper might be the only way of affording that lovely cocktail dress you just would love to add to your wardrobe.

Getting early to the sales is a pre requisite – though prices might still be a hefty wack. But waiting a bit too long can sometimes not be worth the risk.

The only way to becoming a savvy sales shopper is by working at it: looking at endless rails in search of a different dress while avoiding elbows and queuing at changing rooms and cash tills can be daunting to say the least. Sales shopping can be a nightmare but wearing the item will transform all that!! ☺

## MASTERING THE SALES... TIPS

- Be prepared to pay a bit more than usual if it's a fine piece of tailoring that will last for years
- Don't just buy something because it's a favourite label. Make sure it fits well and you'll wear it
- Risk It – If it's an item that suits you, but is not your usual style, and is cheap, buy it!!! You can create a new look
- If it's a really good, cheap staple item e.g. t-shirt to wear under a suit jacket– buy more than one but stick to classical colours you will wear
- Rifle those rails and try lots on – you never know what you might find.
- Be Patient – its easy just to give up at the long queues outside the changing rooms

SKINCARE FOR THE SCALP

SHOULDN'T YOU BE *thinking* ABOUT YOUR HAIR BEFORE YOU START *worrying?*

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Mr Abela is a man of action rather than talk. He is dedicated to his work, yet keeps a low profile. Above all, he believes that success is achieved by working in a team.

“I believe that everything that goes on throughout the whole process is not the result of one person’s work but that of the whole committee, where everybody is involved. I like to talk of the committee in the plural, as ‘we’ and not ‘I’. After all it is the whole team as one body that is working and not me on my own.”

Trying to figure out what our readers would like to know about Robert, I ask him about his credentials in the music field. “To carry out these responsibilities, there is no need to be a professional musician. Basically, one needs top organisational skills, the know-how of delegation and the ability to co-ordinate people as a team. After all, it is not me who will be selecting the singer or the winning song to represent Malta in the European Song Contest! “

Robert agrees, however, that experience in the music field is needed when it comes to drawing up rules. “In my early teens, when I was a member of the Teens and Twenties Talent Trust, I was one of the organisers of the Malta Disco Dancing Championship. At first this was organised by PBS. When PBS was no longer in a position to keep it going we of the ‘4 Ts’ took over.

# SONG FOR EUROPE: THE MAN AT THE HELM

[ DAVID AZZOPARDI TALKS TO ROBERT ABELA,  
CHAIRPERSON OF THE SONG FOR EUROPE COMMITTEE ]



“I found myself in the centre of the music arena, bringing over to Malta international singers like Pupo, The Brotherhood of Man, Don Lurio, and Mattia Bazar. When the government wanted a mega star in 1994, we brought over Tina Turner. I was very much involved both in contacting her and in the organisation of her show. After Tina Turner we brought over Joe Cocker, Zuccherò and Marco Masini. Then for the opening of Malta International Airport we brought Richard Clayderman. For four years I was part of the Song for Europe committee.”

Is Robert happy with the idea that the public has full authority to decide who will perform Malta’s Song for Europe? “Whether I agree or not, I have to accept that this was a decision taken by my predecessors and I will respect it. Personally, I prefer to have a percentage of the votes coming from a qualified body apart from the public. Malta is a very small country and it is easy to influence public opinion by giving advantage to those who have more access to the media.

“This has to be taken into consideration and we must ensure that it does not happen. This year we are going to try and play all the songs on air as much as possible. In this way the public will have a clearer view on which song is most suitable to represent our country. We will help them to vote more with their minds rather than with their emotions.”

The participation of foreign composers and writers has been a hot issue. How is Robert going to handle it? “I believe that this is like a knife that cuts from both sides. Wherever you touch it bleeds. Composers

emphasise that this is a song festival. I say that a song festival is a package containing three essential elements: author, composer and singer. One cannot make rules to favour composers only. One also has to take the singers into consideration.

“I know that there are singers who are being left in the lurch by composers who are not ready to take risks. So what about those singers who have no composers to write for them? They never have the opportunity to participate and compete! So I do believe that we have to work out some solution by sitting down around a table and trying to find a way to accommodate everybody, giving everybody a fair chance.”

I finally ask Robert how he envisages the ideal format for the selection of a song which will compete well abroad. “My idea and wish is to first have a contest for the best singer. Once the best singer is chosen, there will be a call to all composers to write a song for that particular singer and the best song will be given to this singer. This is what I believe could produce a competitive song for a high level contest. Yet I know that because of the different perceptions of our composers this idea is not easy to sell.”

Robert’s last word to the public? “This is a European festival where the best song is going to be voted for. When the singer is abroad none of his or her parents, brothers, sisters, extended family or friends will be there or in a position to vote for him or her. The song has to be of a highly competitive standard. Let us vote with our minds and not with our hearts. This way we would be doing our utmost to get the best for Malta.” ©



PHOTOGRAPH: ROBERT CAMILLERI - FOTO CLASSIC

| I SAY THAT A SONG FESTIVAL IS A PACKAGE CONTAINING THREE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS: AUTHOR, COMPOSER AND SINGER. ONE CANNOT MAKE RULES TO FAVOUR COMPOSERS ONLY. ONE ALSO HAS TO TAKE THE SINGERS INTO CONSIDERATION. |

# PROMISES, PROMISES,

[ BY STEFAN CACHIA ZAMMIT ]

It's that wonderfully amusing time of the New Year when you set out, with firm resolve, to make some changes in your life. Allow me to titter. Do you start to simmer with indignation at my reaction?

Oh sure, on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2006 you will stand there, unshakeable as the Colossus of Rhodes, fully determined to knock off that nasty habit and curb those excesses. How long will it last I wonder? Will your New Year resolution crumble into dust by the Ides of March?

I guess the most classic vow of vows is to start that diet. Perhaps you've gained a couple of pounds during Christmas due to the extra mince pie. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of January you'll be frantically browsing the internet looking for the most effective, rapid fat-reducing diet on the web. I imagine you at the supermarket on this day; it'll be a one-stop-shop at the veg counter where you'll stock up on lettuce and cabbage big-time, right?

But what will happen when your ultra-slim daughter walks in cramming her face with a chocolate éclair on the morning of the 5<sup>th</sup> February? Later you visit Mum & Dad (just for a low-calorie espresso and a chat) and they're roasting a heavenly thyme-coated pork loin with potatoes. How can you resist the smell as the gravy bubbles?

Gastric juices ooze and play their tricks. You know you still can't fit into last year's denims and you've absolutely had it with boring soups and tasteless bran flakes. What will you do?

Ok, you decide to compromise (yeah, right). You'll

immerse your taste buds in gastronomic masterpieces and indulge yourself in culinary delights BUT you start a keep fit crusade.

You decide to locate the snazziest, best-equipped gym in town. Before hurling yourself into your first workout since sixth-form, you will only attempt this Herculean task by doing it in style. After leafing feverishly through the yellow pages you proceed to the snootiest sports shop. Naturally, this outlet sells the trendiest designer brands on the market – stuff usually worn by David Beckham when taking Victoria's three dogs for a walk in the park. This sets you back a mere LM 250 (you just had to get a pair of Edgar David's sporty specs).

The following evening, rather broke but undaunted, you head for the gym. You ask for consultation and the friendly instructor, smiling benignly, hands you a 36-page fitness manual that could only have been suitable for Stallone if he filmed Rocky 1,2,3 and 4 all at one go.

After two weeks of cramps, toil, tears, sweat and Radian B, you take an evening off, put your feet up and devour a whole packet of chocolate digestives. Oddly enough, you feel a warm glow flowing through your body. You're happy, comfortable and you rather prefer an evening in watching an episode of some local drama on the box rather than fake-tanned bimbos grunting and groaning with dumb bells. You convince yourself that this is not a bout of laziness but a well-deserved break.

By the following week this New Year resolution also starts to transform itself. You begin to substitute the more rigorous exercises for more placid types of training, such as swimming in the heated indoor swimming pool, a spot of Jacuzzi, massages and saunas.

Your appetite, however, has not diminished in the least. Sure, you're not attacking the panettone but you realise that all you've gained from this expensive caper is a ruddy complexion, back-ache and Athlete's



| I GUESS THE MOST  
CLASSIC VOW OF VOWS  
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DIET ON THE WEB. |



foot from the gym showers. I mean, you haven't even obtained the phone number of the sexy receptionist at the gym entrance.

You decide to resort to Plan C. That's no smoking and waving good-bye to Jack, Johnnie, Justerini & Brooks (J&B). Yep, no more booze. Lent starts the day after tomorrow anyway. See, you're grinning again – what a Christian, clean and healthy way to live.

Never mind it being late March, this is only Appendix No. 3 or a P.S. to your almost-gone-but-not-quite New Year Resolution. Financially, you haven't made much progress, as you have had to purchase large quantities of fizzy table water, organic fruit juice, chewing gum and nicotine patches.

You now share a romantic mug of Horlicks with your partner as a night-cap and try to forget the Merlots, Chardonnays, Chiantis and Pinots from all regions of the globe, including far-flung New Zealand.

It's Easter Sunday and your in-laws have laid out a sumptuous banquet. You've resisted the delicious aperitifs with a gargantuan effort of will, but now wine corks are popping and it's time to toast your hosts' exquisite cooking and cousin Carol's bonny new-born twins who came to light a fortnight ago.

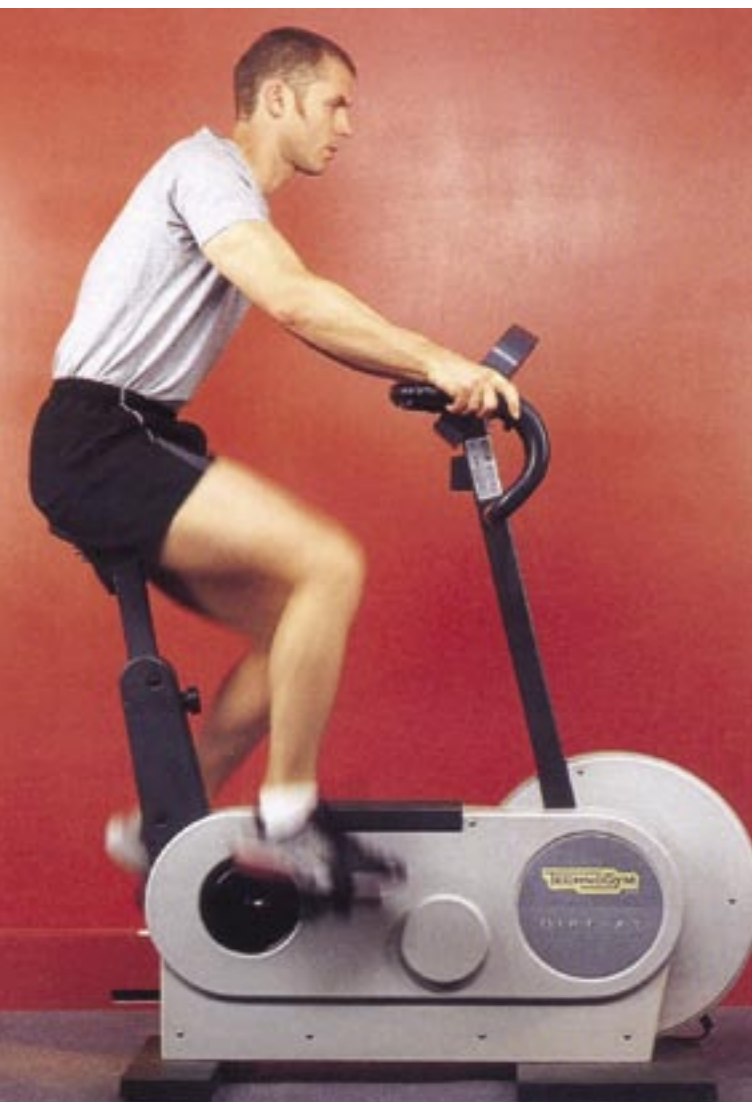
The Beaujolais beckons wickedly and compliments the roast lamb. You surrender to ONE glass, but several

moments and wine bottles later you can only shrug as you sip your second limoncello. You barely blink as a cigarette is popped into your mouth over coffee. It tastes great.

You realise it's been stressful these last three and a half months and you are exactly the same person you were on January 1<sup>st</sup>. Albeit, at 38 years of age, you realise you haven't wholly matured and perhaps you'll be wiser come January 2007. Put everything on hold then and pass a piece of that Easter egg. Sigh. ☹



| YOU DECIDE TO RESORT TO PLAN C. THAT'S NO SMOKING AND WAVING GOOD-BYE TO JACK, JOHNNIE, JUSTERINI & BROOKS (J&B). YEP, NO MORE BOOZE. |



# €805M FROM EU BUDGET TO IMPROVE MALTA'S STANDARD OF LIVING

[ BY CARMEL ATTARD - FORUM MALTA IN EUROPE ]



The grant of €805 million from the EU budget of €862.4 billion to be injected into the Maltese economy during the period 2007-2013 is set to considerably improve Malta's standard of living. A total of €72 million will be allocated to agriculture, fisheries and the environment while €728 million will be used in projects as part of the cohesion policy.

The Cohesion Policy is made up of three main Funds: the Cohesion Funds, the Structural Funds and the Territorial Funds.

The Cohesion Funds financed projects aim to improve the road network infrastructure that forms part of the Trans-European Network. Such funds will also be invested in improving energy efficiency and setting up renewable energy sources. These Funds will also contribute towards the protection of the environment through the construction of recycling or waste-treatment plants.

The Structural Funds encompass a much wider spectrum of areas through which Malta can benefit from EU-funded projects. These funds will be financing projects in the fields of transport, enterprise, environment, tourism, education and training, innovation and research, electronic communications, health and social infrastructure.

Projects that fall under transport should lead to better

roads in addition to those that were reconstructed with the Italian Protocol financing and those that are being funded by the EU funds allocated to Malta during the first three years of accession.

The 2007-2013 funds should also increase the number of restored historic sites and refurbishing of tourist areas, improving Malta's tourist product.

Part of the €728 million will also go towards further improvement of skills of Maltese workers in all sectors of the economy, not least in the tourist industry. The funds will also help keep the Maltese workforce from falling back in a very competitive market by ensuring that workers are trained throughout their career.

The environment, which is one of the main priorities of the current administration, will receive a substantial part of the €728 million. These funds should lead to a further improve of Malta's waste management, air quality and nature protection.

Farmers and fishermen will continue receiving support from EU funds to the tune of €72 million over a period of seven years in addition to the Lm77 million subsidies that the Maltese Government had committed itself to provide as part of the EU membership package. Part of the €72 million will be allotted to rural development resulting in better conservation of rubble walls and agricultural land.

The next challenge for Malta is to prepare and present projects on time, in order to have these funds released as from January 2007. Government will soon embark on a consultation process in order to ensure the widest possible involvement of the public and others interested in such projects.

More information on the EU budget 2007-2013 may be obtained from the Forum Malta in Europe on 2590 9192 or by email: euinfo.mic@gov.mt or from the website: [www.mic.org.mt](http://www.mic.org.mt) ©

**Table No 1: Malta's allocation from the EU Budget 2007-2013**

Theme	2007-2013	Per capita per annum
Total allocation	€805m Lm345.6m	€287.50 Lm123.43
Agriculture	€72m Lm30.9m	
Cohesion policy	€728m Lm312.5m	
Others	€5m Lm2.2m	
Contribution to EU Budget and British rebate	€350m Lm150.3m	€125 Lm53.68
Net balance	€455m Lm195.3m	€162.50 Lm69.75

Notes: Exchange rate: €1 = Lm0.4293  
Population of Malta: 400,000.



# WE ARE FAMILY . . .

## HISTORY OF THE ORANGE FAMILY

The orange has been cultivated for thousands of years. It is supposed to have originated from South and Indo-China. The clergyman Pierre Clement crossed a mandarin with an orange and created a seedless mandarin with a looser skin which was thus easier to peel - the clementine (beginning of the 20th century).

*What's so good about oranges?* Citrus fruits are high in vitamin C and potassium, and also contain limonene, a compound shown to have anti-cancer properties in laboratory animals. Recent research at the University of Arizona found that people who use citrus peel in cooking, baking or in their tea have less risk of skin squamous cell carcinoma (skin cancer). Other research published in the Journal of the American Medical Association found that people who eat more grapefruit and oranges, and other fruits and vegetables high in potassium, have reduced risk of stroke. And the membranes between citrus segments provide pectin, a soluble dietary fibre that helps control blood cholesterol levels. All citrus fruits are high in flavonoids (the most common antioxidant found in fruits and vegetables, thought to reduce the formation of substances that cause cancer and heart disease.)



**CLEMENTINE:** a seedless mandarin.

**KUMQUAT:** similar to a citrus fruit with an edible skin. It is the most well-known of the fortunella family which is closely related to the citrus family.

**MANDARIN:** a type of small orange with loose skin. The mandarin got its name from high-ranking government officials in China (mandarins).

**ORANGE:** There are different types of oranges: navel oranges, Valencia oranges and blood oranges are the most cultivated varieties.

**SATSUMA:** a very special seedling from Japan. Its skin is a bit tighter than the clementine and it is also seedless.

**TANGERINE:** also known as a mandarin orange, it has a thin, loose skin and is less acidic and smaller than oranges. Tangerines are easy to peel and are traditionally part of both Christmas and Chinese New Year celebrations. Ounce for ounce, they contain half as much vitamin C as oranges. Tangerines are richer in beta-carotene than other citrus fruits. Like other citrus fruits, they are also high in pectin.

## STAYING WARM

Some people with a slow metabolism feel the cold much more easily than others, and have trouble keeping warm. If after checking any possible underlying conditions with a GP you are given the 'all clear', it might just be the way you're made.

Blood remains at the same temperature in everyone but you might have a very sensitive internal thermostat in a part of your brain called the hypothalamus. Although you may not want to pile on layers, it really is the best way to stay warm in cold weather. Be sure to protect your extremities when you go out – especially your head, since you lose up to 70 per cent of your body heat through your head.

**"If we could give every individual the right amount of nourishment and exercise, not too little and not too much, we would have found the safest way to HEALTH." Hippocrates (ca. 460-377 BC)**



## DID YOU KNOW?

Men's brains are bigger on average than women's – around 4,000 more cells say Danish scientists. However, this doesn't make men more intelligent. (As we all know, it's not size that counts but what you do with it!)

# LIFE BITS

## HOW TO... GET NOTICED AT WORK

1. Maintain eye contact when talking to colleagues – you'll look more confident and sincere.
2. Use positive phrases like 'I've found a solution' rather than 'there's a problem'.
3. To ensure you're listened to, don't approach your boss with an idea five minutes before an important meeting.
4. Don't be a yes person. Most bosses like their staff to have an opinion, but make sure you think through your argument. Be assertive, not cocky.
5. Ask intelligent questions and keep up to date on the latest developments in your field by reading trade journals.
6. When the boss asks for help, go out and volunteer.
7. When you've achieved something, let other people see your success. Thank your boss when he or she congratulates you.



## ARGUING MAKES YOU ILL



Couples who argue are more likely to get ill than those in happier relationships, say scientists at Ohio State University in Columbus – stress induced by arguments is thought to lower the immune system. Watch out though – even couples who have been happily married for years can suffer during bad times, making them more susceptible to coughs and colds.



**FAR LEFT:** JULY 1953 - FRANK ZAMPA - SCORING THE WINNING GOAL FOR VALLETTA UTD. WPC THE 3-2 WIN AGAINST BALLUTA WPC  
**LEFT:** MALTA FOOTBALL REFEREES ASSOCIATION MENTOR JOE CASSAR NAUDI, AHEAD OF AN INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENT TOGETHER WITH ARTHUR LENTINI AND PAUL BONNETT

# BC<sup>3</sup> = TT + UW

3 borg cardonas = table tennis + underwater.

[ CHARLES CAMENZULI STUDIES THE MAGIC FORMULA OF THE BORG CARDONA FAMILY. ]

The Malta Table Tennis Association was officially founded in January 1953 under the presidency of Joe Cassar Naudi, synonymous with the Malta Football Referees Association since 1945 and brother of Carmen, wife of the late Joseph Borg Cardona.

Joseph was the brother of Sunny Borg Cardona, one of Malta's leading football players and stalwart of Sliema Wanderers FC. Ever-present with Sliema, from 1946-47 to 1950-51 Sunny played 45 competitive matches, winning the 1<sup>st</sup> Division Championship in 1948-49.

Joseph and Carmen Borg Cardona had five children - Joe, Peter, Chris, Bernard and Anna. In 1984 Joe Borg Cardona was elected 6<sup>th</sup> President of the MTTA, thus inheriting his uncle Joe Cassar Naudi's legacy. Joe Borg Cardona renounced the presidency in 1991.

I had the opportunity to work closely with Joe Borg Cardona on many occasions, and he remains the mentor of many initiatives and sport development programmes adopted by the Malta Table Tennis Association in the recent past.

Joe Borg Cardona's career in table tennis started by coincidence. Originally the sport he had opted for was basketball. Four times Malta national champion between 1974 and 1981, his 'forte' was the men's doubles with Alex Anastasi with whom he won all major national honours between 1973 and 1990. In three decades, Joe played for Olympians, Melita, Banks San Michel and Banks ROL with whom he is still active.

Between 1973 and 1999 he represented Malta in both European and World Championships. However as he remarks, "I think that the highlight of my sports career was in 1990 and in 1996 when I emerged winner at the Sportivi Nazzjonali awards, winning the 'Official of the Year' category". Joe is now also a

member of various commissions within the European Table Tennis Association with special emphasis on youths and development.

Joe's father-in-law is Frank Zampa, one of Malta's post-war leading water polo players. A prolific Valletta United WPC defender with whom he won all major honours in the 1950s.

Likewise, Peter Borg Cardona has been on the table tennis scene for more than three decades. Following his baptism of fire in 1970-71 winning the National Championships Boys Doubles, three years later he managed to win the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division League and in 1975-76 he won the title 'Best Improved Senior Player'.

Peter's international debut took place in February 1977 at the Sports Festival in Tripoli, Libya. Since then innumerable appearances in European and World Championships have followed, as well as in the Mediterranean Games in Split in 1979 and GSSE Editions in 1995 in Luxembourg, 1999 in Liechtenstein and 2003 in Malta, either as player or official.

To his credit, Peter registered 8 National Championships Men's Doubles from 1978-79 to 1989-90, besides winning Division 1 on nine occasions from 1978-79 to 1994-95. For the past decade Peter has been General Secretary of the Malta Table Tennis Association and still ranked 7<sup>th</sup> as active player, while his brother Joe ranked 9<sup>th</sup>.

The Borg Cardona dynasty in table tennis is continuing. Joe's son, 17-year-old Umberto is the current leader in the Under 18 MTTA ranking list. He has already participated in various international tournaments, namely the Jeux des Iles in France (2001), FISEC Games held in Malta in 2003 followed by the Sicilia International held in Catania in 2004.



**ABOVE:** JOE BORG CARDONA - MTTA PRESIDENT AND STILL ACTIVE PLAYER WITH HIS SON UMBERTO, RANKED NO. 1 IN THE UNDER 18 CATEGORY

**RIGHT:** JOE BORG CARDONA - IN ONE OF HIS INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS TOGETHER WITH ADHAM SAHRARA - PRESIDENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL TABLE TENNIS FEDERATION AND PIERRE ALBERTINI, PRESIDENT OF THE FRENCH TABLE TENNIS ASSOCIATION



Umberto is facing a stiff challenge from his cousin Daniel Bajada, son of Anna Borg Cardona, the younger sister of Joe and Peter. Daniel is already figuring well in the Under 15 Championships.

Bernard Borg Cardona is one of Malta's leading pigeon racing enthusiasts and so far has figured rather well in the sport he has at heart. And if for Bernard pigeons fly high, for Chris Borg Cardona underwater fishing is both sport and profession. He has been Malta Champion in underwater fishing for six editions between 1987 and 1997 besides being runner up in 1993 .

Since his debut in 1978, Chris's local and international career has been enriched with constant success, including four nominations for the 1987, 1990, 1993 and 1999 editions of the Sportsman of the Year Awards. He also placed 9<sup>th</sup> in the 1998 Free Diving World Championships held at S.Teresa Gallura in Sardegna with a static apnea of 4.33 minutes. Between 1991 and 1998 Chris also obtained a good number of successes in underwater photography - a fascinating experience and the envy of any sport enthusiast.

Chris's underwater challenge might come from his son Daryl who besides between 2000 and 2005 managed to complete the 48 hours marathon has been ever since 2001 both singles and doubles National champion within the National Federation of Sea Anglers as well as Singles Champion of the European Federation of Sea Anglers. ☺



**ABOVE:** CHRIS BORG CARDONA - TO DATE ONE OF MALTA'S LEADING UNDERWATER COMPETITORS  
**LEFT:** DARYL BORG CARDONA FOLLOWING HIS FATHER'S UNDERWATER FOOTSTEPS. CURRENT EUROPEAN FEDERATION SEA ANGLERS SINGLES CHAMPION.  
**BELOW:** BERNARD BORG CARDONA - YOUNGEST OF BROTHERS, A KEEN PIGEON RACING COMPETITOR.

**BELOW:** JANUARY 1997. JOE BORG CARDONA PRESENTED WITH THE OFFICIAL OF THE YEAR 1996 TROPHY FROM FORMER MOC PRESIDENT MR. JUSTICE GINO CAMILLERI  
**BELOW RIGHT:** SUNNY BORG CARDONA - A LEADING FIGURE IN THE POST-WAR SLEIMA WANDERERS F.C. STANDARD FORMATION



**ABOVE LEFT:** UNDOUBTEDLY MALTA'S LEADING QUARTET IN TABLE TENNIS. JOE BORG CARDONA, ALEX ANASTASI, MARIO GENOVESE AND PETER BORG CARDONA. **MIDDLE:** 1980. AT THE PHOENICIA HOTEL BALLROOM. JOE BORG CARDONA TOGETHER WITH FORMER WORLD CHAMPION KIM SING OF KOREA, PRIOR TO THE MALTA - KOREA INTERNATIONAL. **RIGHT:** DANIEL BAJADA - SON OF ANNA BORG CARDONA ONE OF THE LEADING UNDER 15 PLAYERS (IN PHOTO THE ONE IN BLUE T-SHIRT) IN FRONT OF HIS COUSIN UMBERTO BORG CARDONA ENCOUNTER.

# ART TALK

Just for one moment... imagine a world without art – what a dull place our world would be!

[ NADIA THEUMA – ARTISSA ART GALLERY@240 ]

The dictionary definition of art is “the field of visual works such as painting, drawing and the like”. Thus, generally speaking, art is a constant presence around us – it is the pictures, images and a multitude of designed objects that we see around us.

It is in our nature as human beings, to capture important moments of our lives and keep them for posterity. Art is something that makes us more human, it allows us to interpret the environment around us and to represent it for others to see and enjoy. Had our forefathers not taken to represent the world around them we would have been much poorer as a race. Look at the temples, our churches, the open spaces around us – they are all adorned with images and representations of one form or another.

In this age of fingertip-technology, we have other methods to capture important moments of our life. Yet art still plays a significant role in our

lives. Painted images, scenes whether realistic or abstract are used to decorate spaces and also allow us to make certain statements. Art gives character to rooms. Art is sensuous, something that evokes reactions. It makes us laugh or smile, it makes us think; art, in all its forms makes us react in one way or another.

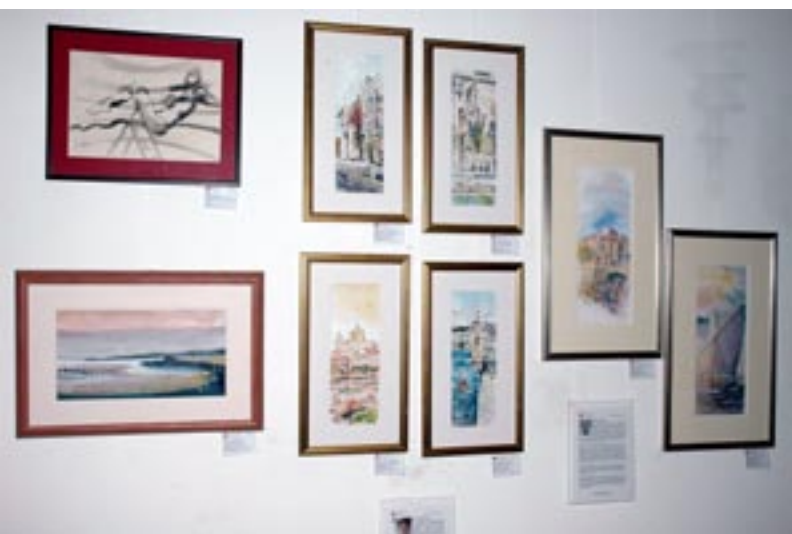
Until some time ago, art was considered an item for the elite and the wealthy – today we are seeing that more and more people are venturing into buying original pieces of art work to adorn their living space – be it their homes or even their offices – indeed why not, why shouldn't our working space be also the place where we appreciate art?

Owning a piece of art – a piece that gives you pleasure each time your gaze falls upon it – is indeed a delight.

In Malta we are lucky as we have a good stock of talented artists – some



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of whom have established themselves also abroad and a number of others who are slowly establishing themselves. Our gallery, Artissa Art Gallery@240, in Fgura, currently has a collection of over thirty artists, local and foreign, exhibiting their work with us. Artissa is keen on assisting artists to promote their art, making a unique, personal statement and expressing their emotions – whereby demonstrating a talent which many but the most keen art enthusiasts and close family and friends were previously unaware of and would have found it more difficult to emerge in the community.

The main aim of Artissa Art Gallery is to make art accessible to the public by offering friendly, objective guidance through its partnership and through a network of art critics and design collaborators. The gallery offers innovative concepts such as the availability of demonstrative spaces in which there is an opportunity for anyone

interested to interact with the working artist. The gallery has a varied display of work aimed to satisfy any preference in budget, medium, and form. The gallery also offers the possibility for those on a tight budget to buy limited prints from our catalogue.

We give great importance to building strong, long-term relationships both with artists and our clients. We are always available to discuss special requirements such as commissioned work or special themes.

Our stance as intermediaries is also ideal for businesses and organizations requiring variety and quantity without sacrificing on quality. We are in a position to provide a tailor-made solution using one or more artists, offering customised research depending on each individual space's interior design, and matching the budget allocated – a task which would require great time, effort and cost which can rarely be afforded, especially when they can be avoided! ☺



# ARTISSA

## ART GALLERY

Home Design Office Decoration Collections Gifts ...

*Art is a pleasure to enjoy. Our commitment is to make the experience as pleasurable as possible....*

- *We source artwork from upcoming and established artists.*
- *We provide personalised research according to every space's interior design, requirements and budget.*
- *Contact us for a private appointment and viewing.*

**Appointments:**

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+356 7943 2468

**Email:** [info@artissagallery.com](mailto:info@artissagallery.com)  
**Website:** [www.artissagallery.com](http://www.artissagallery.com)

**Artissa Art Gallery ...@240,  
Zabbar Road, Fgura.**

*Create • Network • Promote • Evolve*

# RENZO'S RHYTHMS

[ HIS INSTRUMENTS TAKE ON A LIFE OF THEIR OWN WHEN HE IS DRUMMING. RENZO SPITERI CAN BE SAFELY DESCRIBED AS MALTA'S LEADING PERCUSSIONIST. KAREN MIFSUD DELVES INTO HIS WORLD OF MUSIC. ]

PHOTO BY ROBERT CAMILLERI - FOTO CLASSIC

The passion that Renzo shows for his music while he is on stage, surfaces again when he is talking about music. Renzo warns me that he can talk about it for hours unless forcibly stopped. I had never met him in person before. Even when he thinks, he strums his palms and fingers on his thighs, looking for the right inspiration - perhaps through a drum beat.

Renzo's musical CV includes a degree in music at the University of Malta as well as a two-year spell studying with the first percussion player Prof. Bianchi at the *Teatro della Scala* in Milan.

His interest started when he was still a little kid, using 'instruments' he found at home. He fondly remembers using his favourite toy, which had a metal back that produced a good sound.

"I used pencils and all sorts of things lying about to produce my earliest music" he says with a wide smile, "and when I was seven or eight years old I memorised band marches and spent hours humming and playing them with my home-made instruments."

He could listen to a piece of music and play it without being able to read music, and experimented with books of different sizes to produce different sounds - and used them to give his first-ever concerts at school to his class mates.

"A couple of teachers were intrigued. Friends would record these sounds on a small cassette recorder and play them out during lunch breaks!"

He bought his first drum-kit at the age of 14, by doing odd jobs and scraping



[ WHACKING THOSE DRUMS! LISBON (SEPTEMBER 2005) ]  
PHOTO BY GABY GIACCHINO



| RENZO IS NOW  
A FULL-TIME  
MUSICIAN, FOCUSING  
ON DISCOVERING  
NEW SOUNDS, NEW  
TECHNIQUES AND  
NEW INSTRUMENTS.  
HE HAS TRAVELLED  
EXTENSIVELY AND  
THE TRIBAL MUSIC  
HE ENCOUNTERS IN  
REMOTE CORNERS OF  
THE GLOBE AMAZES  
AND INSPIRES HIM. |



together every penny. He then started a jazz trio, playing gigs at Tigné and the YMCA festivals.

“I was very restless during my sixth form years. I could not settle into any subject or decide what I wanted to do with my future,” Renzo explains, “The only thing I wanted to do was play music but my parents could not understand this.” Their concern, like that of every parent, was that music would interfere with his schooling.

“There isn’t anyone musical in my family. They finally took me seriously when I applied for a degree in music at University.”

Renzo is now a full-time musician, focusing on discovering new sounds, new techniques and new instruments. He has travelled extensively and the tribal music he encounters in remote corners of the globe amazes and inspires him.

“Earning a living out of music on an island as small as ours is tough. It has taken many years to get here. I do remember times when the fridge was empty, especially when I was studying abroad.”

He has performed in many different countries – in 18 months he has played in 16 different European and North African countries, from Ireland to Cyprus, to the middle of the Sahara desert. He leans back in his seat, ready to talk about his two passions – travelling and music.

“Wherever I go, I am subconsciously on the alert, looking for new sounds. Travelling exposes you to a lot of different elements. Doors are opened and one lifetime is surely not enough. The more countries I visit the more incredible musicians I discover, such as tribes in some obscure village or nomads in a desert. Music is part of their daily lives and makes their dreary and tough manual jobs more bearable. They have music for different occasions, times of day and situations.”

This approach to music has influenced him. “I cannot perform a piece of music that leaves me cold - I do not work, I *play*.”

In December Renzo performed at Teatru Unplugged with a Latin Jazz quintet. “Latin Jazz is a fusion of Latin

music and modern jazz, that was brought to light by the great Tito Riente, a Latin American percussionist that I greatly admire.” Renzo also performed there with another group he formed, Tango for 5. “We re-interpreted a modern style of tango from Argentina,” he briefly explains.

Renzo enjoys switching from one style of music to another. “Percussion is an abstract world. It is a never-ending musical situation with endless possibilities and the toughest bit is switching to different styles where the technique, energy and interpretation differ. That is my challenge, to experiment with different styles and instruments.”

And on this note, Renzo concludes. I look forward to his concert ‘Chants’ in January, where he will be teaming up with African musician N’Faly Kouyate. ☺

**Renzo Spiteri and N’Faly Kouyate’s ‘Chants’ will be held at the MITP, Valletta on 27 & 28 January at 8 pm. Tickets available at St. James Cavalier Centre for Creativity.**

[ IN CONCERT WITH BBC  
WORLD MUSIC AWARDS  
NOMINEE MERCAN DEDE,  
ISTANBUL (JUNE 2004) ]  
PHOTO BY GABY GIACCHINO



[ PERFORMING WITH CONTACT  
DANCE COMPANY, FESTIVAL  
MALTA 2005, VALLETTA  
WATERFRONT (JULY 2005) ]  
PHOTO BY GABY GIACCHINO



# DHANURASANA (BOW POSE)

KRISTA HENDERSON BEAUTY, MASSAGE AND YOGA THERAPIST. I.N.F.A ITEC (MALTA) AYUR (SRI LANKA)

This pose looks like an archer's bow, with the torso and legs representing the body of the bow, and the arms representing the string.

## STEP BY STEP:

1. Lie on your belly with your hands alongside your torso, palms up. (You can lie on a folded blanket to pad the front of your torso and legs.) Exhale and bend your knees, bringing your heels as close as you can to your buttocks. Reach back with your hands and take hold of your ankles (but not the tops of the feet). Make sure your knees aren't wider than the width of your hips, and keep your knees hip width for the duration of the pose.
2. Inhale and strongly lift your heels away from your buttocks and, at the same time, lift your thighs away from the floor. This will have the effect of pulling your upper torso and head off the floor. Burrow the tailbone down toward the floor, and keep your back muscles soft. As you continue lifting the heels and thighs higher, press your shoulder blades firmly against your back to open your heart. Draw the tops of the shoulders away from your ears. Gaze forward.
3. With the belly pressed against the floor, breathing will be difficult. Breathe more into the back of your torso, and be sure not to stop breathing.
4. Stay in this pose for between 20 to 30 seconds. Release as you exhale, and lie quietly for a few breaths. You can repeat the pose once or twice more. ☺

## Therapeutic benefits:

- Constipation
- Respiratory ailments
- Mild backache
- Fatigue
- Anxiety
- Menstrual discomfort

## Modifications & props to help you build stamina and achieve the pose:

If it isn't possible for you to hold onto your ankles directly, wrap a strap around the fronts of your ankles and hold the free ends of the strap, keeping your arms fully extended. Start by lifting your head and lowering it whilst inhaling and exhaling gently. After you have done this a few times, try lifting your knees whilst keeping your chin on the ground and your eyes looking straight ahead.

## Do not perform this pose if you suffer from:

- High or low blood pressure
- Migraine
- Insomnia
- Serous back or neck injuries

*For more information about Yoga, write to :*

Life & Style - YOGA -  
Media.Link Communications,  
Dar Centrali,  
Triq Herbert Ganado,  
Pieta HMR08  
or  
email:life&style@media.link.com.mt



Photo Mario Bugeja

# SPOTLIGHT ON HERBS

## Rosemary



### USES:

- general tonic
- stimulant
- astringent
- anti-inflammatory
- diuretic
- stimulates the flow of bile
- antidepressant
- circulation
- digestive remedy
- nervous system balancer
- regulates blood pressure
- boosts energy levels
- boosts feeling of vitality and well-being

## ROSEMARY

(*ROSMARINUS OFFICINALIS*)

A common herb found in most gardens locally. It grows very densely and is easy to propagate from a cutting or seeds. The leaves are the part of the plant that is used. They are narrow and hard and have an unmistakable aroma. This herb flowers towards early summer.

To make an infusion, pour a cup of boiling water over the rosemary, let it stand for 5 minutes, strain and drink it.



### SPECIAL CARE

Only use if you are 100% sure that it is really the herb in question. If you are ill, please consult a medical doctor. When you use herbal remedies, be aware that they can be extremely powerful, and should you have any side effects when taking these infusions, immediately consult a medical professional.

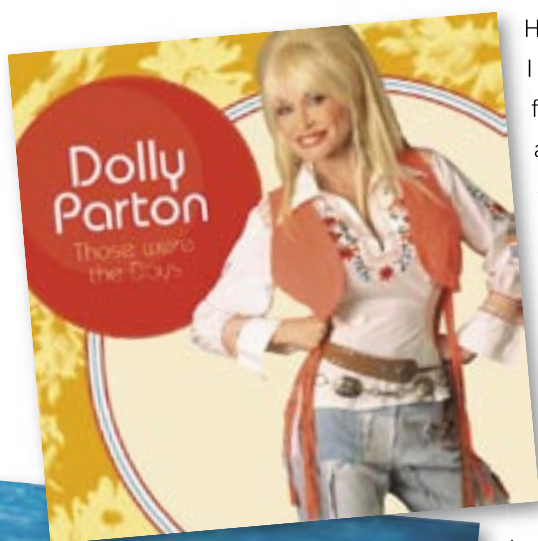
**Perfect treatment for dry winter skin....**  
 Keep your feet warm and beautiful during the cold winter months using Gehwol Red and Gehwol Warming Bath. By stimulating circulation, they create a pleasant warm feeling plus revitalize your feet by preventing further moisture loss and by keeping skin supple.  
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# COUNTRY MUSIC USA... AND BEYOND

Eleven years ago, Richard Muscat, who was head of Radio 101 at the time, and Kevin Drake, head of programmes, asked me to start hosting a new country music programme. I was initially taken aback, having been more into rock music throughout my journalistic and production career.



However I took on this request as a challenge. I was then also getting more and more into folk roots, having become an avid listener of a now defunct programme on the BBC World Service called 'Folk Roots'.

I also had to consider how the general public would be responding to a (then) relatively young presenter hosting a country music programme, which would appeal to a largely conservative audience. Things got rolling in October 1994. At first, the programme focused on new albums by the likes of Dolly Parton, Alan Jackson, George Jones, George Strait and other established artists.

The internet later made a big difference. The availability of the world wide web brought whole new avenues to my programmes and eventually as the programme series gained more weight, I started getting – and plugging - new sounds from small companies all over the length and breadth of the USA.

The programme also drew the attention of various fledgling and interesting companies from Europe. Quite a few established artists from the USA were finding the going hard and had to opt for less lucrative contracts with smaller companies. Some were even left without any contract at all. Thus this new scenario also provided new contacts, as artists like The Bellamy Brothers searched for pastures new, both in their country and around Europe.

The late Dottie West did the same with Arnie, an established Norwegian singer, and practically presaged many other artists in this regard. Soon the programme was becoming a pot-pourri of many new as well as established talents, from New Zealand to the Faroe

Islands, Canada and the USA.

One important factor in the popularity of country music in Malta is our British heritage. The fact that we can easily understand the English language helps a lot of locals to love country music. BFBS, the British Forces station, also used to broadcast country music during the afternoon and the small hours.

Soon, my programme ended up getting a top prime slot on Saturday afternoons and ratings literally shot up. Now it has been shifted to Sunday afternoons (13.00 -15.30 hrs) and the response so far has been positive. What I find interesting is that this genre is now also attracting quite a few 20 and 30-somethings. Perhaps this is linked to the emergence of alternative country music in recent years.

One shouldn't forget the efforts of artists like Brooks and Dunn and Dolly Parton, whose new album 'Those Were The Days' features cover versions of great pop classics delivered in a very astute bluegrass and roots idiom. Dolly is one of a kind as was, of course, the late Johnny Cash. His American label albums fused roots, rock and country. The more traditional followers of country disliked this direction, yet many newcomers to the genre avidly followed the album.

Some listeners may also have realised that country music has had enough of cheap, sentimental songs over the years. That scenario is changing and will probably continue to change. The only problem that the genre faces is the fact that half a dozen companies dominate the scene and thus the country music charts can be a stale affair.

On my part, I hope to achieve a sense of balance that will reflect the true scene of country music and in the process provide more contacts with our local talents. They are in their majority quite aware that the scene has to change sooner rather than later. ©

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# LEJN IL-EUROVISION BACK ON NET!

With the start of the New Year, Eurovision fever has already hit many of us. With only a few days to go till the 4<sup>th</sup> February when we will vote for the song to represent our country in Athens in May, Net TV will, for the third year running, present a weekly television series on the Eurovision Song Contest.

*Lejn il-Eurovision* kicks off on Sunday 15 January 2006 at 20.30hrs. Presented by Claudette Pace, the series is produced by Frederick Zammit, who will also be researching the information on the 51<sup>st</sup> edition of the festival.

The programme is broadcast live from the Net TV studios and each week hosts various guests who are in some way familiar with the popular music contest.

The programme features various interesting items. The regular *Lejn il-Eurovision Gossip* keeps viewers informed about what is happening or is rumoured in the world of Eurovision.

*Il-kalendarju tal-Eurovision* is a must for all Eurovision fans. Each week it keeps fans posted on upcoming events, and song selections in the participating countries for the semi-final and final night to be held on the 18<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> May.

The first programme also features some of the Malta Song for Europe finalists as the Maltasong board was announcing the finalists. Net TV was present at the Golden Tulip Vivaldi to interview all those singers that were present.

In the following two programmes leading up to the Malta Song final, Net TV will host all singers, while a special programme will also include the winner of the festival on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> February.

Viewers will can have their say during phone-ins or by sending an SMS on **50617092**.

**The eighteen songs for the Malta Song for Europe finals are (by order of ballot)**

- You Too** – J Anvil
- Amazing** – Annabelle
- Only Till The Morning** – Ali & Lis
- Opportunity 2 Participant to be confirmed*
- Echoes of Gaia** – Charlene & Natasha
- I Promise You** – Emmanuel Xuereb
- I Do** – Fabrizio Faniello
- Tell Me** – Eleanor Cassar
- This Heart of Mine** – Trilogy
- So Good** – Adreana
- Time** – Paul Giordmaina & Morena
- Reachin' Out** – Pamela
- Stronger** – Christian Arding
- Waves** – Nadine Axisa
- Opportunity 2 Participant to be confirmed*
- You're My Dream** – Kevin Borg
- High Alert!** – Claudia Faniello
- Spare a Moment** – Olivia Lewis



# WHAT ARE YOU WEARING THIS WINTER

## coats, belts and necklines

[ BY AMOR WOMEN'S FASHION OUTLET. ]

Now that the cold season has settled in, it's fashionable – and a good idea! - to cuddle up in a comfortable, stylish coat.



**JACKETS AND COATS** - Look out for the 1960s influence! Coats in the '60s had wide square collars, Jackie Kennedy style, sometimes in bold checks and often embellished with metal belt straps and grommets. The new Mod fashion trend brings easy to wear double-breasted jackets and coats.

**COLLAR LINES** - Classic Mandarin and Chanel collars are popular on military style and Victorian style coats. All sizes of collars are fashionable, especially small narrow ones and high standing necks. Some coats and jackets have fur collars, while many sport massive shawl collars.

**DEFINING YOUR SHAPE** - Coat collars wide at shoulder level give the illusion of a slimmer figure especially if emphasises is on the waist line with a belt or a nipped in tailoring at the waist.

**BELTS** - This winter, corset belts are a good alternative. Belts also continue to be worn low on the hips, and often with short bolero spencer cardigan wraps that tie just under the bust. So the waist and torso get a new focus as the bust and hips are emphasised.

**NECKLINES** - Softer looks include lace trimmed or filled around necklines of Edwardian or Victorian style blouses. Square necklines look modern and new and some styles have square smock panels with folklore style embellishments. ☺



COMPETITION

The question for the competition is:

What fashion era is in fashion?

1) 1960s    2) 1970s    3) 1980s

Send your reply to :

Amor Women's Fashion Outlet, Parish Priest Mifsud Street , Hamrun HMR 10

5% discount for all correct answers.

Lm10.00 voucher for the first two correct answers.

### DECEMBER WINNERS

1. Maria Chircop - 'Maria Grazia' Triq il-Habbiez, Qormi

2. Anne Marie Mifsud - 31, Tulip House Ant. Schembri Street, Attard

First two correct answers Lm10.00 voucher

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

ID No: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

# WINTER WARMERS

Its winter, and it's grey and cold outside. Yet it is in winter that food comes into our lives with a sharp focus, because it's then that we all need to be warm, cosy and comforted.

Here are some recipes we would like to share with our readers. These are tried and tested recipes, which will fill your kitchens with wonderful aromas. And they're dead easy to make too. Some of them can easily be made, even after a day at the office if you've got all the ingredients together .

So enjoy cooking – and hopefully when you try these recipes you will also share our enthusiasm and joy in what winter cooking has to offer. ☺



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## PUMPKIN RICE COCONUT SOUP

SERVES 6

*Don't be put off by the long list of ingredients, this is really easy to make in no time at all!*

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>600-800 g pumpkin</b>                            | <b>1 teaspoon of five spice powder</b>          |
| <b>a small handful of lime leaves</b>               | <b>1 tsp ground cumin</b>                       |
| <b>2-3 chillies, finely chopped, seeds removed</b>  | <b>olive oil</b>                                |
| <b>2 cloves garlic, peeled and sliced</b>           | <b>1 white onion, peeled and finely sliced</b>  |
| <b>2 small pieces of fresh ginger, peeled</b>       | <b>half litre of chicken or vegetable stock</b> |
| <b>3 sticks of lemongrass, outer leaves removed</b> | <b>200 g basmati rice</b>                       |
| <b>a handful of fresh coriander</b>                 | <b>2 x 400 ml tins coconut milk</b>             |
|   | <b>salt and pepper</b>                          |
|   | <b>juice of 1 or 2 limes</b>                    |

Chop the pumpkin flesh into small pieces. Chop your herbs (lime leaves, chillies, garlic, ginger, lemongrass, coriander, five spice and cumin) in a pestle & mortar or a food processor. You should end up with a pulpy mix. Take out the stringy lemongrass ends. Put this mixture into a pan with a little oil and your sliced onion and cook gently for about 10 minutes.

Add the pumpkin and the stock to the pan. Stir, scraping the bottom of the pan as you go along. Bring to the boil, then reduce the heat and simmer with the lid on for about 15 minutes until the pumpkin is soft. Add the rice and give it a good stir. Some of the pumpkin will have broken up into a mush. Continue to simmer rice with lid on until cooked. Add the coconut milk, stir, taste and season with salt and pepper. Add the lime juice. Serve in warm bowls

### NOBILI PALAZZOLI SOAVE

#### CLASSICO:

A prestigious white wine made from the grapes grown on the hills around the city called Soave, in the Nord East Italy. Straw yellow colour, delicate fragrance with a dry and harmonious flavour.



## MUSHROOM RISOTTO

SERVES 4

*Feel free to adapt quantities. A lot has been said about risotto texture – this should be pleasingly moist with the grains of rice soft but with some bite to them, held in a creamy stock.*

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>2 small onions, finely chopped</b>  | <b>butter – about 60 g</b>  |
| <b>rice – preferably arborio – about 2 to 3 cups</b>   | <b>chicken stock – about 2 litres</b>                                 |
| <b>mushrooms – large handful plus about 50 g of porcini mushrooms soaked in some hot water</b> | <b>to finish:<br/>finely chopped parsley<br/>shavings of parmesan</b> |

Peel the onion and chop finely. Melt the butter in a heavy pan, stir in onion until soft and translucent. Add mushrooms and porcini and give it a stir. Tip in the rice and stir it gently, pour in a ladleful of stock (chicken and porcini) and let it come to a boil. Adjust the heat so that the liquid bubbles around the rice. It's important to keep stirring constantly with a wooden spoon.

Pour in more stock to cover the rice and keep on stirring gently. Stop adding stock when the rice is tender but still a bit 'chalky' (around 20 minutes is usually fine).

Risotto must be moist but not resembling soup! Stir in some chopped parsley, butter and parmesan shavings or grated if you prefer. Just lovely!

### STEFANO FARINA

#### BARBARESCO:

Known as the younger brother of the Barolo, however it is slightly lower in alcohol, more gentle and velvety. This wine is aged in oak cast from Slovenia and has a garnet red colour with orange reflections. Its bouquet is very pleasant, with an intense aroma of violets and a very generous and pleasing flavour.





## QUICK LAMB CUTLETS

SERVES 4

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>lamb cutlets – about 2-3 per person, french trimmed</b> | <b>2 onions, finely sliced</b>               |
| <b>couscous – about 400 g</b>                              | <b>couple of sprigs of fresh thyme</b>       |
| <b>sea salt &amp; ground pepper</b>                        | <b>1 chilli, deseeded and finely chopped</b> |
| <b>4 tsp ground cumin</b>                                  | <b>6-8 tomatoes, chopped</b>                 |
| <b>extra virgin olive oil</b>                              | <b>large handful of parsley</b>              |
|  | <b>juice of 4 lemons</b>                     |

Heat your frying pan. Place the couscous in a bowl and cover with boiling water to cook the grains. Flatten out the cutlets. Dust on both sides with salt, pepper and cumin and add some olive oil to your pan. When the cutlets brown on one side, turn them, adding the onion, thyme and chilli and keep moving the ingredients so they cook well in a couple of minutes.

Finely chop the tomatoes and most of the parsley and mix into the 'cooked' couscous with some olive oil and a squeeze of lemon. Add salt and pepper. To serve, put the couscous on the bottom of your plate with the lamb and onions on top. Sprinkle some extra parsley on top.

### SICHEL ST. EMILION:

Derived from the most famous terroirs of the Saint Emilion appellation, following traditional methods, the 2002 vintage has a brilliant crimson colour with beautiful intensity and an expressive, dominated by red fruits (crystallized raspberry and morello cherry) with a floral and spicy touch. The suave, subtle yet powerful and racy tannins are retained on the palate until the finish with a lot of freshness and remarkable balance. A highly vintage, characteristic of its noble origin



## WARM CRISPY APPLE TART

- puff pastry – about 400-500 g**
- 4 apples (green ones are fine)**
- butter – a thick slice, melted**
- castor sugar**

Set oven at 230 degrees. Roll the pastry out thinly. This will make it crisp and flaky.

Using a large saucer or small side plate as a template, cut out six discs of pastry. Using something smaller, for example a cup, score a slightly smaller circle within each one so that you have a small rim. This will rise and hold in the apples. Slide the pieces of pastry on to a baking sheet, then prick the centre circles of pastry all over with a fork. This stops them puffing up too much in the oven.

Peel the apples, cut them in quarters and take out the cores, then slice them thinly. Arrange the apple slices on the pastry discs. If you can get the slices to overlap it will look pretty. Brush the apples and pastry with melted butter, then dust with a fine layer of sugar. Bake in the oven until pastry turns golden (about 15 minutes). Serve warm – delicious with ice cream or a jug of cream!

### ROMANDIOLA ALABANA DI ROMAGNA DOLCE:

This Albana is the sweet version of the only D.O.C.G. wine from this region and was also the first white wine to get this status. Straw yellow in colour, with golden reflections, it has a well-knit bouquet, with characteristics of fresh fruit notes on the palate, it is soft yet fresh, intensely flavored, fruity and appealingly sweet. Goes well with all types of desserts, and particularly with dry pastries or creamy dishes.



All the wines are imported and distributed by Mirachem Marketing Limited. For more information, please call 21214434 or visit [www.mirachemltd.com](http://www.mirachemltd.com)

# HEALTHY NAIL TIPS

[ BY ANGÈLE STAFRACE ]



You may not realise it, but your fingernails reveal a lot about your general health. Take a look. Are your nails strong and healthy looking? Or do you see ridges or areas of unusual colour or shape? Many less-than-desirable nail conditions can be avoided through proper care, but some actually indicate an illness that requires attention.

Whether you treat your nails as decorative or functional, here's what you need to know to keep them in tiptop shape and promote strong and healthy nail growth, as well as strengthening and maintaining the health of the entire body.



♣ Alfalfa, black cohosh, burdock root, dandelion, gotu kola, and yellow dock, are all rich in minerals, including silica and zinc, and also contain B vitamins, all of which strengthen the nails. Horsetail and oat straw also are good sources of silica, which is essential for healthy nails.

♣ Combine the following for a herbal tea (3 to 4 cups per day) rich in minerals to help strengthen nails: horsetail (equisetum arvense), oat straw (avena sativa), alfalfa (medicago sativa), gotu kola (centella asiatica), and bladderwrack (fucus vesiculosus).

♣ Borage seed, flaxseed, lemongrass, parsley, primrose, pumpkin seeds, and sage are all good sources of essential fatty acids, which nourish the nails. Do not use sage if you have a seizure disorder of any kind. Royal Jelly is a good source of essential fatty acid.

♣ Butcher's broom, chamomile, ginkgo biloba, rosemary, saffron, and turmeric are also very good for circulation to keep nails well fed and nourished.

♣ Quality protein is essential for maintaining healthy nails. Grains, legumes, oatmeal, nuts and seeds are great natural sources of protein. Eggs are also good if you do not have high blood cholesterol levels.

♣ Eating a diet composed of at least 50% fresh fruits and raw vegetables supplies the nails with the necessary vitamins, minerals and enzymes to keep them healthy. Eat foods that are rich in sulphur and silicon, such as broccoli, fish, onions, and sea vegetables, as well as brewer's yeast, soy flour and whole grains which are high in biotin.

♣ Drink plenty of quality water and other liquids. Cuts and cracks in nails may be a sign that the body requires more liquids. Also drink fresh carrot juice daily. Carrots are high in calcium and phosphorus both of which strengthen the nails.

♣ Excessive intake of citrus fruits, salt or vinegar can result in a protein/calcium imbalance that may adversely affect the health of the nails.

♣ If you are prone to hangnails or splitting nails, take two tablespoons of brewer's yeast or wheatgerm oil daily. Do not pull

at hangnails. Cut them with sharp clippers or scissors. Keep your hands well moisturised to avoid hangnails.

♣ To help restore colour and texture to brittle, yellowed nails, make a mixture of equal parts of honey, avocado oil, and egg yolk, and add a pinch of salt. Rub into your nails and cuticles. Leave on for a half an hour, and rinse. Repeat this treatment once daily.

You should begin to see good results in about two weeks.

♣ To strengthen nails, soak them in warm olive oil or cider vinegar for ten to twenty minutes on a daily basis.

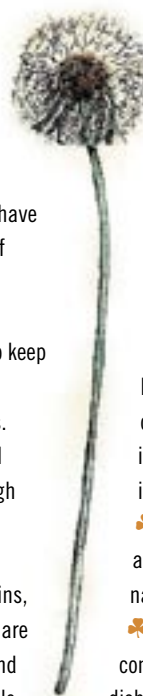
♣ Treat your nails with care. Do not use them as tools to pry, pick or scrape. This can cause damage to the nails. Keeping the nails relatively short (no longer than one quarter of an inch beyond the fingertip) keeps breakage and damage to a minimum.

♣ Do not cut your cuticles. Uncovering the nails this way can be harsh and irritating, and can cause infection. Instead, use baby oil or olive oil to gently push back the cuticles. If you are a diabetic and your cuticles become inflamed, consult your physician immediately, as the infection can spread.

♣ Nails split and peel more easily when they are dry. Apply a gentle hand cream each morning and night to keep your nails from drying out.

♣ Do not repeatedly immerse your hands in water that contains harsh detergents or chemicals, such as bleach or dish soap, as this results in split nails. Wear cotton-lined gloves when doing dishes, laundry or using furniture polishes. This protects your hands and nails against the damaging effects of harsh chemicals. Wearing gloves if you have a job that exposes your hands to chemicals is vitally important. Not only do harsh chemicals damage the nails, they can also cause the skin surrounding the nail bed to dry out and crack, which can lead to bleeding and pain.

♣ Try to avoid using nail polish removers on a regular basis. They contain solvents that remove lipids from the nails and make them brittle.



*Weak fingernails can be a challenge to toughen up. If you have weak fingernails, the following tips can help you protect them, making your nails less likely to split or break.*

1. Keep your nails short, square-shaped and slightly rounded on top. Trim brittle nails after a bath or a 15-minute hand-soak in bath oil. Then apply a moisturiser.

2. Apply a moisturiser each time you wash your hands. If your nails are brittle, moisturise your nails and cuticles at bedtime and cover them with cotton gloves.

3. Apply a nail hardener, but avoid products containing toluene sulphonamide or formaldehyde. These chemicals can cause redness or irritate the skin.



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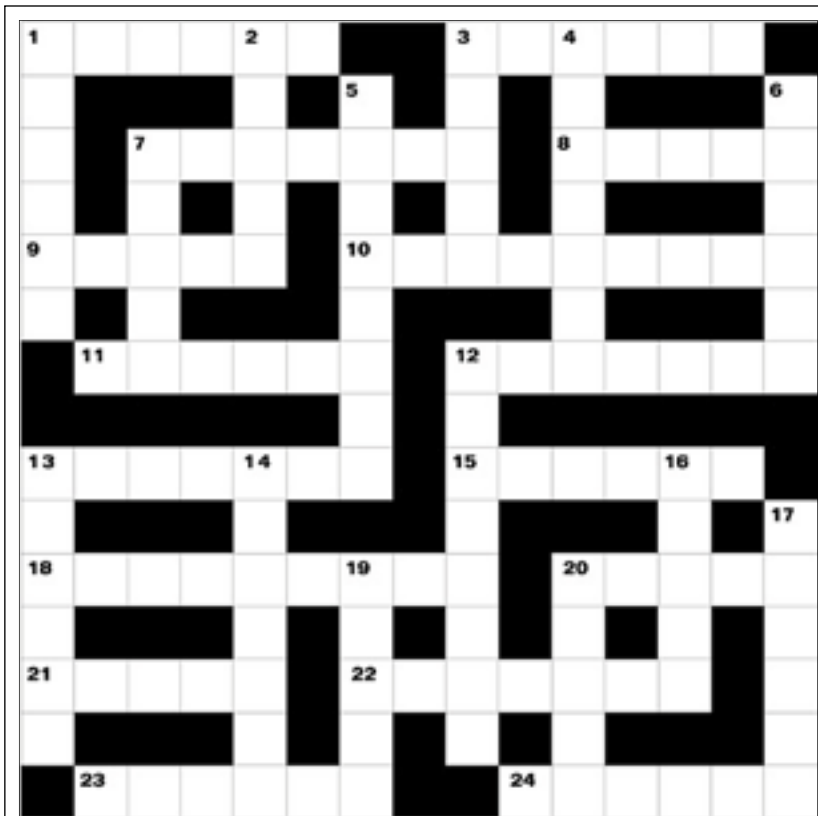
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# CROSSWORD



**ACROSS**

- 1. Prohibit two articles of fruit (6)
- 3 & 10. Two tools are used to make a political symbol (6,3,6)
- 7. Custer's last stand was made in this American State (7)
- 8. Weight of article in the cart (5)
- 9. Fertile spot in a desert (5)
- 10. See 3 across.
- 11. Is camp the place to find a dish of Norway lobsters? (6)
- 12. Pre-arranged modes of bidding at auction sales (7)
- 13. Husbandry up to one's later years (7)
- 15. It might be a decree to go back (6)
- 18 & 21. The two aren't the same person, though (9,5)
- 20. Exceptionally, he's one in the crowd scenes (5)
- 21. See 18 across.
- 22. Prospects that theatrical hangings give you (7)

- 23. To you, good health! (6)
- 24. 42nd one was a celebrated musical (6)

**DOWN**

- 1 & 5. Dazzling flier – i.e. rapid RAF bods will sort it out (4,2,8)
- 2. There are ten of them in ninety (5)
- 3. Store secretly (5)
- 4. This bird's a-mimicking (7)
- 5. See 1 down.
- 6. Emphasize the strain (6)
- 7. Entertainment in bars (5)
- 12. Walker with a transatlantic pushchair? (8)
- 13. Try hit this number! (6)
- 14. One skilled in some art is tempted also to sing or dance (7)
- 16. Absurd being covered in small dots (5)
- 17. Small flat pill (6)
- 19. Throws a net to catch the actors assigned to play particular characters? (5)
- 20. Something of importance when first lady comes to Northern Territory (5)

**PRIZES**



**THIS MONTH'S PRIZES**

- 1st prize: Weekend Break for 2 Alexandra Palace Hotel
- 2nd prize: JB Stores Lm10 voucher
- 3rd prize: Pizza for 4 from Buon Caffè, St Julian's
- 4th prize: Lm10 voucher from Salon Services
- 5th prize: Lm10 worth of products for Scala Detergnets

**LAST MONTH'S WINNERS**

- 1st prize: Louise Vassallo, Valletta
- 2nd prize: Anthony Borg, Tarxien
- 3rd prize: Bernardette Attard, Mosta
- 4th prize: Paul S. Sultana, Zabbar
- 5th prize: Mary Rose Borg, Bugibba

**LAST MONTH'S SOLUTION**

**ACROSS** — 2. Choir; 4. Stoc-kings; 6. Deep; 7. Inn; 8. F-0-ur; 12. Bach; 13. Snowmen; 14. Open; 18. White; 19. Orient-at-e; 20. Angel; 22. Red-nosed; 23. E-men-d; 24. Yule-tide; 15. Holly; 27. Mas-on.

**DOWN** — 1. Good King Wenceslas; 2. Cool; 3. Ring; 4. S-led; 5. Snow; 6. Dickens; 9. Raphael; 10. U-NW-I-SE; 11. Herald; 12. Bairn; 15. Night; 16. Gold; 17. Aery; 18. W-ye; 21. Le-d; 25. Him; 16. Y-e-n.

**SEND IN THE CORRECT ANSWER TO:**

Life&Style Crossword Competition, media.link Communications, Triq Herbert Ganado, Pietà, HMR08.

Send in your correct entries by 25 January 2006.