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INDUSTRIAL WOODWORKING

2024 ISSUE N° 8

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INDUSTRIAL WOODWORKING IS NOW THE ONLY SPECIALIST MAGAZINE IN ITS CLASS

THE magazine Woodworking News has ceased publication after 37 years, with staff being made redundant. Many readers were left wondering why no issue had appeared in October and why there was no official announcement of the closure of the title on the magazine's website.

Our former rival publication, Woodworking News was originally published by Neil Herbert-Smith, who remained at the helm until 2018 when the publication was acquired by MyTime Media Ltd.

Industrial Woodworking (first published in 1991) continues and, in 2025 will boast 34 years of continuous publication. As we move forward into 2025, we look forward to taking up our position as the ONLY magazine aimed at industrial sized woodworking operations, as well as providing plenty of interest for smaller scale joinery manufacturers and anyone who makes their living from the woodworking trade.

Perhaps the reason that Industrial Woodworking has prevailed is because it offers its readers a more unique editorial content, rather than simply "regurgitating" press releases, which have appeared in several other woodworking titles.

In 2024 alone Industrial Woodworking has been clocking up the miles visiting and reporting on specialist woodworking suppliers throughout the UK and European countries including France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the Republic of Ireland.

Throughout 2024 we have aimed at producing a large pagination every month, publishing no fewer than 288 pages of up-to-the minute news compared to the much slimmer pagination of Woodworking News.

Industrial Woodworking is aimed at the woodworking trade supply sector incorporating those specialising in panel production.

***"Industrial Woodworking now the
ONLY magazine aimed at larger sized
woodworking operations".***

Industrial Woodworking acts as a mouthpiece for both the joinery manufacturing trade and panel processors. Industrial Woodworking is published regularly throughout the year and has an excellent reputation for providing the very best advertising opportunities. Every reader is sourced by using the latest data base information to ensure that those who receive each title have a specialist interest in the particular sector.

Industrial Woodworking brings you up-to-date news covering the whole of Europe as well as the UK. Constantly reflecting the latest industry trends, Industrial Woodworking contains a wealth of information. We bring you all the latest news on a regular basis.

Advertisers can be assured that their products and services will be showcased to the right people – those whose task it is to source the correct machinery and equipment for the job!

Industrial Woodworking is quite simply the best there is in the market for those involved in the woodworking trade sector! It makes sense to advertise with us – because Industrial Woodworking will work for you!

CATASTROPHIC FLOODING: CAN PLANTING MORE TREES PROVIDE THE ANSWER?

IN THIS issue of Industrial Woodworking, John Emslie heads to Spain in the wake of the historical flooding in October which claimed so many lives and asks a question posed so often by the likes of the Woodland Trust: "Can trees help to reduce flooding?"

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FROM LITTLE ACORNS GREAT OAKS GROW ALL WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM VOLLMER

ESTABLISHED for over 30 years, ECC Timber Products is a €100m+ turnover business with over 150 staff employed based in County Galway in the Republic of Ireland.

With exponential growth over recent years, one thing has always been a constant: its unwavering belief in its saw blade sharpening technology from Vollmer UK.

As the business has grown, its portfolio has evolved to encompass products for construction, fencing and landscaping, pallet and packaging, motorway fencing, acoustic panel products and much more.

The environmentally conscious manufacturer processes more than 600,000 tons of timber every year, utilising its by-products from the wood milling facility to supply products such as bark, wood chip, sawdust and dry shavings to the horticulture, panel manufacturing, biomass and animal bedding sectors.

Soon after its inception, the company invested heavily in its saw-sharpening facility. During those early days, ECC purchased a CAS bandsaw sharpening machine, an EMS twin-head side grinder, a first-generation bandsaw, Stellite tipping machine and a VWM bandsaw and rolling bench, all from Vollmer.

The circular section of the saw shop was also augmented with the purchase of a Vollmer CHC22H TCT grinder and an FS2A side grinder.

This investment was copper fastened over the following years with additions and updates, including CA200 profile grinders, an Alligator Stellite tipping machine and, more recently, an RC100 automatic levelling and tensioning machine – all from Vollmer.

Many of these Vollmer machines are still in active service today – demonstrating the longevity and quality of the brand.

As part of a strategic plan, ECC is planning the next phase of its sawmill upgrade and, as an initial part of this, the saw shop that services and

maintains circular saws and band saw blades needed to be moved from its previous location.

‘We needed to move the saw shop on-site and we saw this as an opportunity to invest in a brand-new purpose-built facility encompassing the latest technology to future-proof our business. We also saw this as an opportunity to improve quality and create efficiencies,’ says ECC Timber Products maintenance manager, Pat Mullarkey.

‘Many of our previous Vollmer machines were 25 years old and had more than served their time. Despite their age, the Vollmer machines still ran well and we refurbished and re-purposed some of them.

‘The all-new purpose-built facility allowed us to explore opportunities and invest in the next generation of technology.

‘After the proven performance and longevity of the Vollmer brand here at ECC, we had no intention of looking anywhere else,’ says Mr Mullarkey.

Following a consultation with the new managing director of Vollmer UK, Martyn Cross, ECC took delivery of a Vollmer CHF840 side grinding machine.

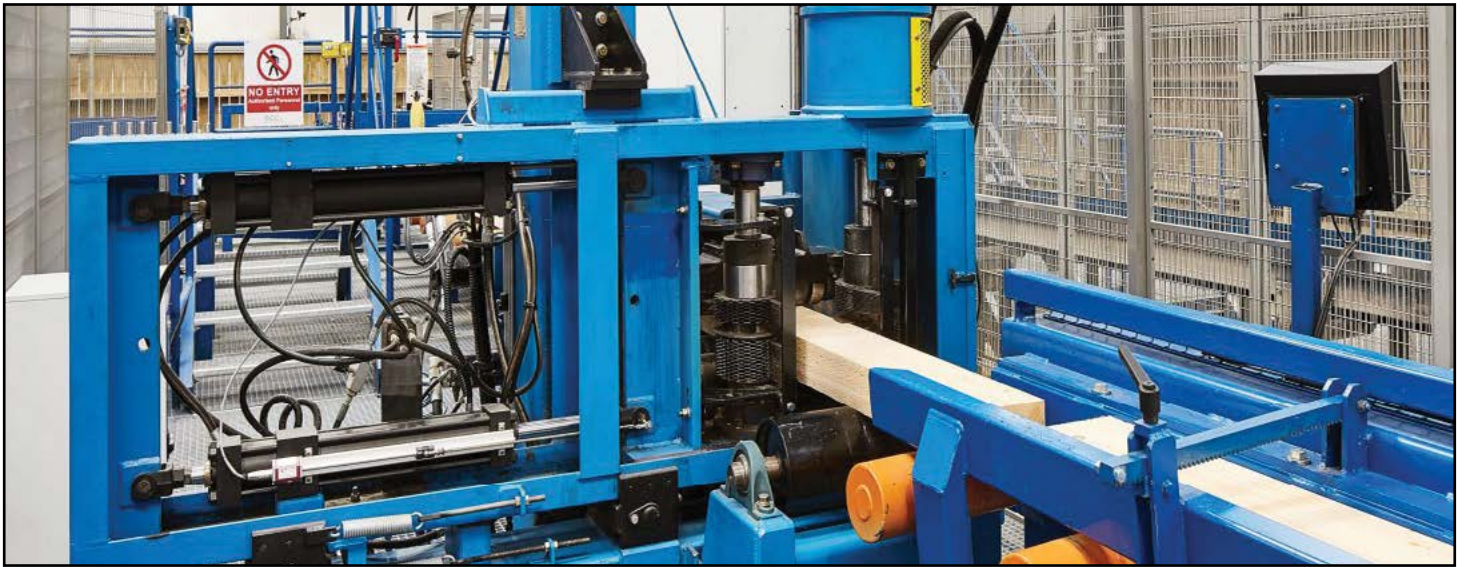
This was accompanied by a fully automated CS860 for universal tooth face and top grinding of TCT saw blades with an ND320 robot loading automation system.

ECC placed the order in November 2023. Landing in March 2024, the new arrivals have significantly benefitted ECC.

‘We picked these two machines, as they perfectly matched our processes and desired results. Having seen these machines operating in similar environments before purchasing, it gave us 100 per cent confidence in what we were buying,’ says Pat Mullarkey.

‘We only service saws for our own site and the previous machines perfectly served our limited requirements in the past.





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By Order of the Liquidator of Hyperion Wall Furniture Limited
(In Members Voluntary Liquidation), we offer for sale by

ONLINE AUCTION

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Woodworking & Kitchen Manufacturer



including: a 2016 **SCM** Olympic K560 type T-ER2 edge bander, a 2000 **SCM** MiniMax T/40N spindle moulder, a 2016 **SCM** Sandya CS110 wide belt sander, a 2018 **SCM** MiniMax Unilev-150 edge sander, a 1999 **Biesse** Rover 20 CNC router/machining centre, a 1999 **Giben** Prismatic 2 SP H.100 beam saw, a 2007 **Rojek** PK300A Euro Serie 5 tilting sliding table saw, a 2007 **Blum** Minipress P vertical drilling/insertion machine, a **Magic** MT3 spindle moulder, three **Fercell** ST25/C vacuum tables, a large quantity of hand power tools including **DeWalt**, **Festool**, **Makita**, **Bosch**, **Mac Allister**, **Draper**, etc, various dust extraction systems and compressors

A large quantity of stock including **Blum** fixings, wood profiles, sheet material and edge banding material

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At: Hyperion Wall Furniture Limited (In Members Voluntary Liquidation), Business Park 7, Brook Way, Leatherhead, Surrey, KT22 7NA

Bidding Closes: Wednesday 4 December from 3pm

Further information, registrations and online bidding available at

www.marriottco.co.uk/auctions

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eccc

TIMBER PRODUCTS

'However, we have evolved over the years and, along with many other changes, we currently have a USNR Versagang that takes a box of 25 guided 28in saws per shift.

'In addition, we have four multi-head cross-cut lines, two board edgers, an 18-saw trimmer and a Ledinek high-speed planer with a splitting module.

'These machines all run two shifts daily and many workstations require daily saw blade changes. This means that we go through a large number of saw blades.

'This placed significant demands on our saw shop, the old Vollmer machines and our ability to service the fast-paced production department with the quality required. The new machines have changed all that,' says Mr Mullarkey.

After purchasing new circular saw blades, the self-sufficient saw shop undertakes servicing, maintenance and re-tipping of its blades in-house, performing the duties while achieving the throughput and quality any saw shop would be proud of.

With up to 14,000m³ of timber processed weekly, saw blade performance and efficiency are critical. Here, the new Vollmer CHF840 and CS860 have demonstrated their value.

Not only did the arrival of automated saw processing generate staff efficiencies, but it drastically improved productivity.

By removing the time required for manual loading/unloading, the CS860 maximises processing uptime.

Additionally, the latest CNC control and drive technology, optimised kinematics, in-process measurement and calibration further reduce saw blade cycle times by more than 30 per cent.

Another key benefit of the new Vollmer arrivals is the precision and quality of the blades sharpened on the CS860 and CHF840.

'The in-process monitoring and calibration is improving the precision of our blades far beyond anything achievable on our previous machines,' says Pat.

'Furthermore, the new Vollmer machines have introduced an oil cooling system instead of a water-soluble coolant.

'Our tip surface and edge finishes are much better than those on our previous machines.

'Improved precision and surface finishes positively affect our saw blades' productivity and cut quality.

'The result in the sawmill is greater productivity and longevity from our saw blades with far superior edge finishes and precision levels on our sawn products.

'The automated CS860 and the CHF840 have made a massive impact on everything from labour, manufacturing efficiency and productivity in the saw shop to precision, quality and improved saw service life in the sawmill.

'We have had the machines for a few months and we still haven't fully challenged or utilised the benefits of Vollmer's latest CNC technology. We have more to learn, but regardless of this, the benefits of the new machines have been immeasurable,' concludes Pat Mullarkey

**For further information tel Vollmer on 0115 949 1040.
Visit www.vollmer-group.com**

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ARTFUL TIMBER STRUCTURE CREATES VERSATILE ADDITION TO EAST END LONDON LIBRARY

A STRIKING refurbishment and extension of Lea Bridge Library in East London has seen the addition of an adaptable wood-lined community space and café, creating an inspiring and dynamic space in which to work, learn and socialise.

The 250m² single-storey wing features a mass timber primary structure to improve access and connection to the public gardens, bringing a new lease of life to this Grade-II Listed Edwardian library.

In order to accommodate the constraints of the historic setting and the protected mature trees, structural engineer, Andrew Trotman, has developed a lightweight “pavilion” in both form and construction methodology.

The elongated foot-print of the building extends from the original library building and runs along the perimeter wall of the green, planted area called “Friendship Gardens”.

Tapered LVL beams support a length of floor-to-ceiling overhead glazing along the entire east elevation. By anchoring the structure and bulk of the building to one side, this continuous, open connection to the gardens is generated.

The refurbished main entrance and foyer leads to a new café, before opening into the main community centre, where the dividable open plan layout contains interspersed “reading room” spaces.

With re-use at the heart of the project, salvaged wood from trees felled across London has been used for all the internal joinery and furniture. A ribbon of skylights fills the interior with light, picking up the varying tones of the patchworked wood.

Architect, Studio Weave, worked closely with furniture designer and maker, Sebastian Cox to develop a continuous wall of fluted timber joinery that connects shelving with built-in banquette seating.

Sebastian Cox also designed and made custom desks,

collapsible tables, coffee tables, stackable chairs and upholstered sofas for the pavilion.

Fallen and Felled, a London-based company set up with the intention of reducing wastage of timber in the capital, helped Cox to source, mill and plane the timber for the project.

Highly visible from the street, the completed scheme transforms what used to be a blank wall and deteriorating garden into a delightfully animated and welcoming public resource.

The project was shortlisted for The Wood Awards, the UK’s premier competition for excellence in architecture and product design in wood.

For further information visit www.timberdevelopment.uk



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PUSHING HIMACS TO THE LIMIT

Students push HIMACS to new creative limits in Rycotewood's furniture making competition sponsored by leading independent timber supplier, James Latham.

JAMES Latham and Rycotewood School's annual furniture-making competition sees students continuing to push the boundaries of what cutting-edge solid surfaces can do.

Once again, leading independent timber, panels and decors distributor, James Latham has supported Rycotewood College (Rycotewood) part of Activate Learning, Oxford, with its annual student competition.

A long-time champion of skills and material innovation in the UK furniture-making industry, it returned as a sponsor for a third consecutive year, providing premium materials for participants to showcase their craft and flex their creative muscles.

A total of 12 second-year degree students took part and were challenged to produce a piece of furniture, with an overarching theme of storage.

Following a 10-week entry period, the judging took place ahead of the College's end-of-year show where the winning and commended entries were announced.

Since James Latham first partnered with Rycotewood in 2022, HIMACS, a revolutionary, premium solid surface, has proven to be one of the most popular products of those provided.

It was the overwhelming favourite amongst this year's entrants and was used across almost every piece entered. However, whilst the choice of hero material was uniform, the variety of uses was impressive.

The 2024 edition also saw the product truly pushed to its limit, with show-stopping results, including one of the most original treatments and inventive applications, of HIMACS seen to date.

The competition's overall winner was Baxter Mansley-Leach, who designed and built a unique hallway storage unit to stretch the limits of

the imagination. He used a wide variety of materials, including rough sawn European oak, woven willow and steel rebar to create the frame and basket, whilst the literal crowning glory was a Native American head-dress-inspired feature in white HIMACS.

Visually striking, Baxter cleverly manipulated the solid surface to give it a frayed and distressed appearance akin to weather-beaten leather, or bone.

This eye-catching effect was discovered totally by chance as he was testing the performance and behaviour of the material, subjecting it to all sorts of different treatments from acid bathing to blow-torching.

Ultimately, he heated the sheet to 450 degrees in a kiln designed for



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pottery, ripping it by hand and scraping the blistered surface away.

It was this latter technique, used on the surface and exposed edges of the HIMACS sheet which achieved the most interesting results, creating a torn, distressed effect.

Combined with HIMACS' ease of fabrication and thermoformability, he was able to achieve something never-before-seen.

The judges were unanimous in their praise, singling out Baxter's ambition, inventiveness and ability to create both a functional storage space and a striking artwork in one piece of furniture.

There were a number of other ingenious and finessed uses of HIMACS also worthy of mention, showcasing its versatility.

One student, Charlie Martin, effectively demonstrated its ability to be carved in the same way as natural timber, routing a tessellated inlay in HIMACS Diamond White within a contemporary side cabinet.

Not to be outdone, Alex Holden used HIMACS San Remo dovetail

joined to European Oak to achieve visual contrast for the drawer interiors of his sophisticated, multi-tiered jewellery box.

Exploring HIMACS' ability to be twisted, turned and even knotted, Lucas Davidson, used thin lengths of HIMACS Black to create a wrought iron effect on the doors of his wall-mounted kitchen cabinet.

Likewise, Matthew Suckling took thin straps of HIMACS Black to create a series of artistically curved bars as a flourish to his own piece.

'It's been a privilege to watch how our students have taken to a non-traditional material like HIMACS and the more familiar they're becoming with it, the more ambitious they've become in their scope,' says furniture lead at Rycotewood, Josh Hudson.

'Baxter's piece is truly inspiring and shows an incredible depth of imagination, playfulness and even rebelliousness in the final piece.

'He really pushed the envelope and should definitely give something for HIMACS head office to talk about!

'James Latham continues to be one of our most trusted and valued partners and we're always grateful for its ongoing support, empowering students to realise their creative potential and ambitions,' concludes Mr Hudson.

For further information visit www.lathamtimber.co.uk



VALUE ENGINEER YOUR PROJECTS WITH TIPS FROM EGGER UK'S PRODUCT EXPERT

HERE Egger UK's design and product manager, Aimee Fletcher shares how making simple swaps from real materials to Egger's market-leading reproductions can reduce cost, save time and increase environmental credentials.

'Whether it is budget control, time constraints, or compliance with environmental frameworks, there are simple, accessible solutions in the market to help value engineer even the most complex of projects.

'In an economic climate of rising prices and lower consumer spending, cost becomes a vital consideration when it comes to design and significant savings can be made by looking at alternatives to authentic material, such as stone, metal, or wood veneer.

'These not only carry a significantly higher price tag, but often require specialist fabrication, or recurring maintenance, adding to cost pressures.

'By making simple swaps to alternative materials, such as laminate worktops, or decorative faced chipboards, you can not only control the budget at source, but also over time.

'Let's take natural stone for example, which is trending in high-end design. With factors such as weight, handling and waste to consider, fabrication and fitting can notably impact a budget.

'Additional costs can occur over time with recurring treatment such as sealing. When you are looking to avoid mounting costs, the benefits of wood-based reproductions should not be overlooked.

'With features, such as scratch and stain resistance, lightfastness and stability, these products are also simple and efficient to install and require no ongoing maintenance.

'Cost differences can be significant, with natural stone countertops often amounting to 1,100 per cent more expensive than a laminate reproduction.

'Time is also a key factor in any project schedule and choosing materials that demand additional processing, or ongoing labour can significantly delay completion.



Egger UK's design and product manager, Aimee Fletcher.



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‘Stay on track by choosing alternative products in versatile formats, that offer fast and efficient processing, reduce waste and are readily available in pack sizes optimised to streamline fabrication.

‘Take painting wood or veneer, for example, which may require multiple processes and substantial labour hours. By considering reproduction materials that offer the same look in a ready made finish, your projects can be streamlined and remain on course for a prompt delivery.

‘In case of damage during fabrication, replacements can also be sourced at pace and without disruption to the schedule. Remember to consider this additional labour on the scale of your project.

‘In a multi-unit development, even a small amount of extra labour per installation could make the difference between a prompt, or delayed delivery.

‘Making savings on costs and time are not the only way to add value to a project. Minimising environmental impact and increasing sustainability credentials, adds another level of worth to a project that is of growing importance in the furniture and interiors sector.

‘Look for products that make use of recycled content and are recyclable at end of life, promoting material circularity. Manufacturers’ raw material procurement and production techniques should also be considered and attention paid to supporting documentation available via websites and published resources.

‘Remember, natural does not necessarily mean sustainable. Many naturally derived materials, such as stone, marble, or metal, require energy-intensive processes and carry substantially higher carbon foot-prints as a result of fabrication and transportation. Non-recyclability is often another factor.

‘Overall, product performance and design integrity are always top priorities, but there is no need to over specify. By selecting the right material technology for specific application areas and choosing carefully developed finishes with high quality prints and textures, you can ensure a product’s specification is fit for purpose, with added value and without compromise on design.

‘Whether you are looking to make simple swaps from natural stone worktops, ceramic floor tiles, metallic facades, or wood veneered doors, there are alternative products readily available that cost less, save time and keep environmental impact at a minimum - an all important consideration for anyone involved in the woodworking industry sector, whose aim is to be as environmentally conscious as possible.

‘By choosing reproductions, your projects will become more affordable, delivered more efficiently, and very likely to achieve your environmental targets,’ concludes Aimee Fletcher.

For further information Visit www.egger.com



OSTERMANN PROVIDING ALL THE RIGHT SOLUTIONS

OSTERMANN supplies carpenters and cabinet makers with Hettich hinges for every application. Solutions for difficult mounting situations, glass doors and aluminium frames are also supplied reliably and quickly.

With Hettich Sensys, Ostermann stocks high-quality and versatile cup hinges with different cup designs, as well as with and without Silent System.

Ostermann also offers the economical Intermat hinge and the Veosys stainless steel hinge.

The classic among Sensys hinges is the Sensys 8645i model with integrated Silent System soft-close mechanism.

Colour has also become important with these products, so the company supplies many models in either nickel, or black to match the furniture.

Carpenters and cabinet makers who want to save time when preparing their work can order their hinges together with the other materials needed for furniture making

True to its motto “Service. Diversity. Tempo.”, Ostermann offers the right hinges for every application.

All orders for stock items placed by 4pm are shipped on the same day.

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SEVILLE'S HISTORIC WEALTH OF WOODEN CARVING

STEEPED in its proud history, with its Moorish-style buildings, the Spanish city of Seville is the true home of flamenco.

After conquering the city in 712 AD, the Moors from Northern Africa built their beautiful palaces with their decorative ceramic tiles (azulejos) on top of the Roman remains.

Seville boasts numerous Roman Catholic cathedrals - most of them constructed in the fifteenth and sixteenth century. Seville Cathedral (consecrated in 1507) is the third largest cathedral in the world.

Another much revered cathedral is the Capilla Mayor (or Great Chapel), which is dominated by a vast Gothic altarpiece made up of 45 elaborately carved polychrome wooden scenes depicting the life of Christ.

Polychrome is created by layering multiple materials - paint, gesso, varnish and metallic gilding to create an attractive laminated effect.

The unique patterns and colours to be found in polychrome are created through the process of iron oxide staining.

The most distinctive feature of polychrome jasper is its vibrant range of colours, which can include shades of red, brown, blue, pink, green and yellow.

The origins and methods of polychrome as an artistic technique dates back to ancient times with its roots traced to civilisations, such as the Romans, Greeks and Egyptians.

The Great Chapel in Seville was the life-time's work of a single craftsman - a Belgian sculptor and master carpenter by the name of Pierre Dancart, who was commissioned to create the main altarpiece in 1480, commencing the work two years later, although it was not completed until some 80 years later. After Pierre's death, the work was continued by various carvers and finally being completed in 1564.

The main altarpiece consists of seven sections, with the central one being the widest. The compartments are vertically separated by pilasters decorated with ornate carvings of historical figures from the Bible.

In total, it measures almost 28m high by 18m in width and consists of 44 reliefs depicting the life of Jesus and the Virgin Mary.

It is made entirely carved from and features hundreds of elaborately carved wooden figures including a beautifully carved sculpture of the Virgin Mary cradling the baby Jesus in her arms. Having originally been sculpted in the thirteenth century, it is known as "La Virgen de la Seed". It is entirely coated in silver.

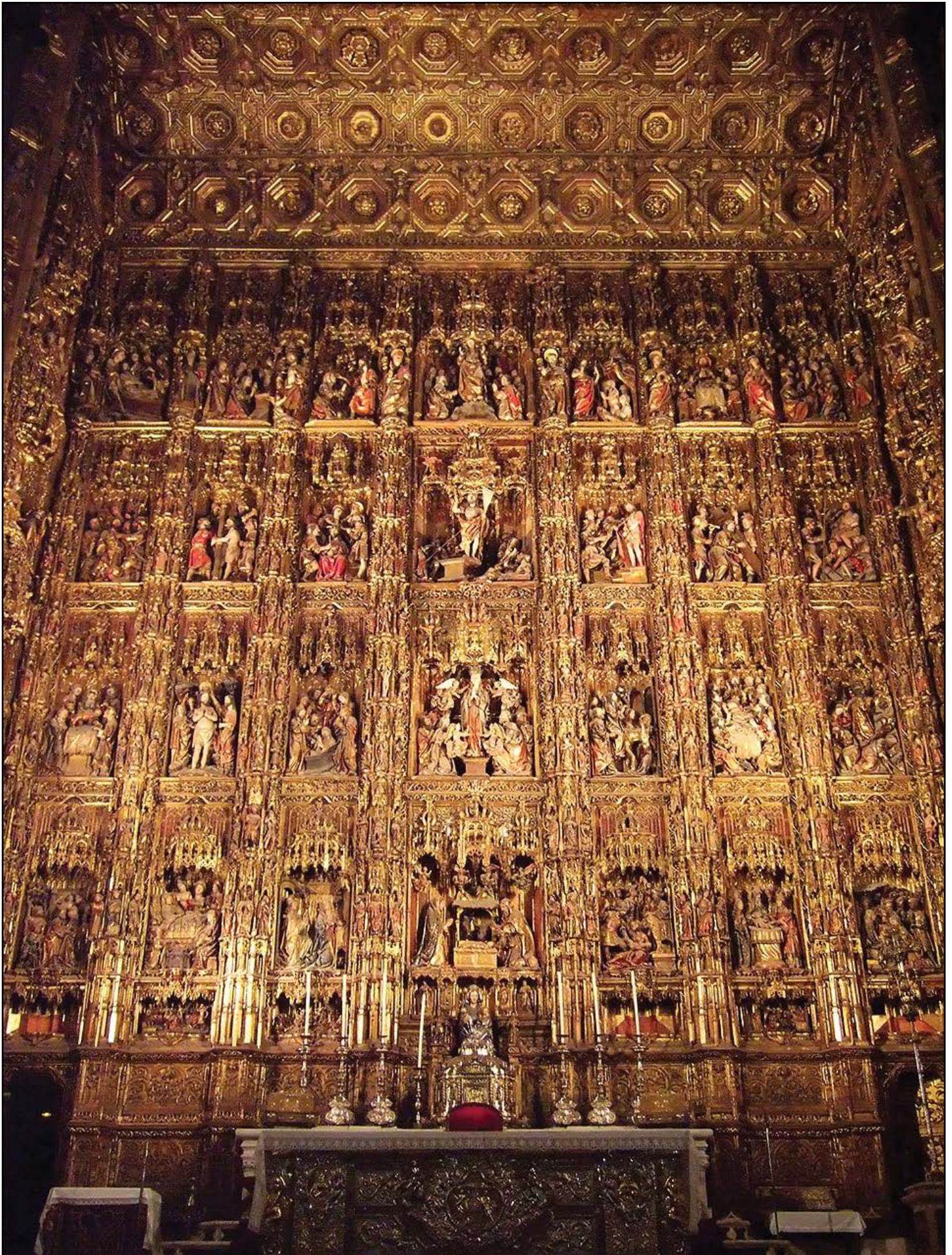
Seville also boasts innumerable famous tapas bars - some of which date back to the late seventeenth century. Nestling in a narrow street, El Rinconcillo (translating simply as "The Corner") is claimed to be the oldest in the city and a true relic from a bygone age.

Serving customers since 1670, tourists come from all over the world to admire the elaborately carved wooden ceiling with its huge and richly fragrant Iberian hams, suspended from the high ceilings below which waiters and bar staff busy themselves chalking up customers bills on the wooden bar counters.

Located on the Calle Gerona, El Rinconcillo has been serving up traditional Spanish cuisine in Seville for over 350 years. This historic restaurant boasts a rustic-chic dining room with understated whitewashed brick walls, wooden beamed ceilings, chandeliers and fresh flower arrangements.

El Rinconcillo is a magical place





The vast Gothic altarpiece at Seville's Capilla Mayor is made up of 45 elaborately carved polychrome wooden scenes depicting the life of Christ.

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Wooden beamed ceilings are a feature at El Rinconcillo - a seventeenth century tavern which has been serving up traditional Spanish cuisine in Seville for over 350 years.



Richly fragrant Iberian hams are suspended from the wooden beams which are a feature of the high ceilings at El Rinconcillo.

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The current shape of El Rinconcillo arises from the fact that, since 1858, the original tavern has been linked with a second property around the corner in Calle de la Alhondiga.

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Waiters and bar staff at El Rinconcillo are in the habit of chalking up customers bills on the wooden bar counters.



Ancient decorated blue and white tiles (ajulejos) proclaim part of the history of this famous Spanish tapas bar in Seville.

FOCUS ON SPANISH WOODWORKING... FOCUS ON SPANISH WOODWORKING...

which attracts everybody from local celebrities to families who come to enjoy traditional tapas and drink at the mosaic-tiled bar with wine barrel tables.

The menu is an eclectic collection of tapas dishes, stews, seafood, meat and sweet flans for dessert and it would be almost impossible to find a more quintessentially Spanish eatery anywhere in Seville.

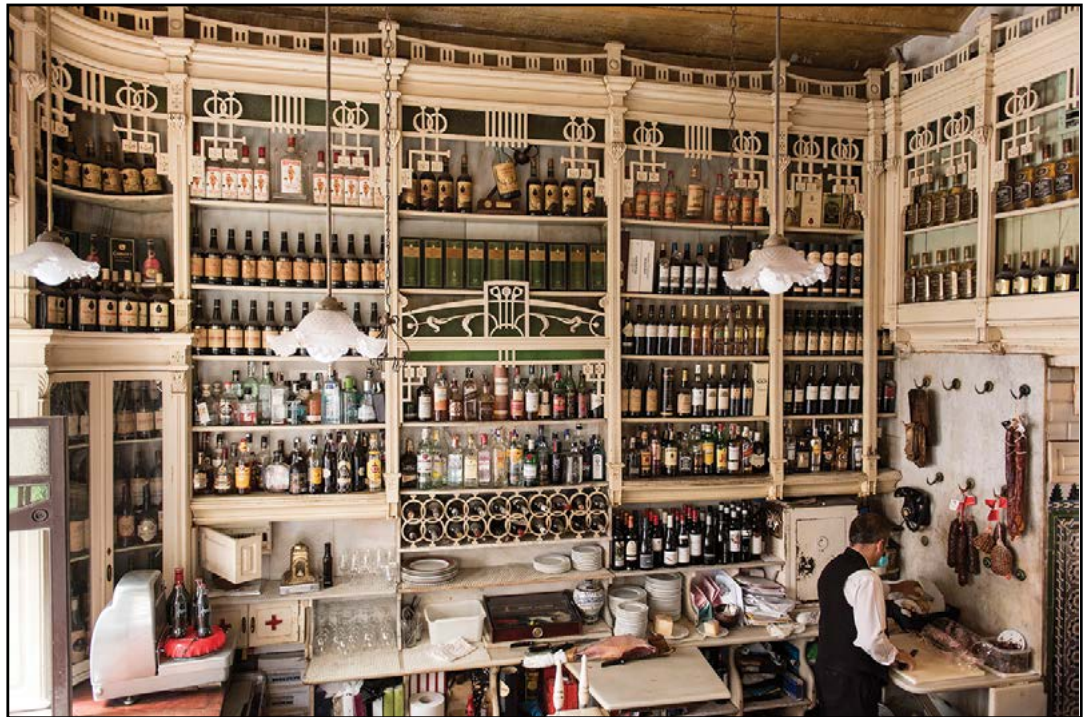
El Rinconcillo has remained in the same family ownership since 1858 - shortly after which the then new owners purchased the adjoining property in Calle Alhondiga.

The current shape of El Rinconcillo arises from the fact that the two properties are linked - with the original property serving as a tavern and the second one fulfilling the function of a local corner shop.

This arrangement remained unchanged until the early 1960s when corner shops began to disappear and both properties were amalgamated into the tavern that is known today.

Without changing its original appearance, the de Rueda family who own these two adjoining properties have preserved the original essence

of El Rinconcillo over the generations, ensuring that this authentic tavern remains one of the most popular corners of Seville - enjoying the patronage of Spaniards and visitors from all over the world.



Bottles are stacked to the height of the high ceilings at El Rinconcillo.



The famous Spanish tapas bar, thought to be the oldest such establishment in Seville, occupies a corner position.

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TEAK & MERANTI TOP THE LIST OF ASIAN TIMBER IMPORTS IN SPAIN

WHITE Knight Consulting Ltd is a premier manufacturer and supplier of high-quality softwood, hardwood, timber, construction wood, plywood and a provider of timber consulting services in Spain. The company's wooden products are delivered to popular locations and cities across the country.

Anyone aiming for the best wholesale prices on wood and timber in Spain need look no further than White Knight Consulting Ltd - a leading timber supplier with production facilities and distributors located throughout the country, including major cities, such as Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia and Seville.

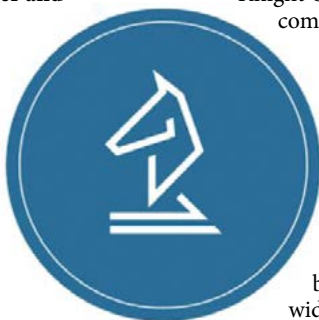
As one of the top merchants and exporters of timber, White

Knight Consulting Ltd offers the highest quality products at competitive prices.

The company's regional suppliers provide wood to numerous retailers and woodworkers nationwide. Whether you're a retailer, or a woodworker, White Knight Consulting Ltd is your one-stop shop for the purchase of premium quality timber in Spain.

Burmese Teak

Teak (otherwise known as afromosia) is a southern Asia native hardwood that is known for its attractive golden brown hue and excellent decay resistance. It is used for a wide variety of different applications including boat-building, furniture and numerous other projects.



NEXT MONTH: RUSSIAN SPECIES ON OFFER FROM WHITE KNIGHT CONSULTING LTD

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This southern Asia native hardwood is also grown on plantations across tropical regions of many countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

The trees are about 100-130ft (30-40m in height and have a 3- 5ft (90cm-1.5m) trunk diameter. The average dried weight is 40.9lb/ft³ (655kg/m³) and the wood has a janka rating on 1,070 lbf (4,740N).

Description

The heartwood usually has a golden/medium brown colour, which becomes darker with ageing. Although it can sometimes be wavy, or interlaced, the grain is generally straight, with a moderate to relatively low shine and a rough, uneven texture.

Natural oils give raw, fresh wooden surfaces an oily, or greasy texture. Many people view afromosia wood as excellent for decay resistance, as the heartwood is regarded as being extremely durable.

Teak has a moderate level of resistance to beetles and marine borers and it is also resistant to termites. With the exception of the fact that teak has a high silica content (up to 1.4 per cent), which has a noticeable blunting impact on cutting blades, it is usually quite easy to work with.

Uses of teak

Teak is incredibly pricey, despite being grown on plantations all over

the world. At least for massive, unfigured wood, it is possibly among the costliest lumbers available.

Teak can be used for furniture, veneer, exterior construction, ship and boat-building, carving, turning and in the production of small wooden products.

Meranti

Meranti hardwood is commonly found in South East Asia. There are five different species, namely dark red meranti, light red meranti, white meranti, yellow meranti and balau.

Meranti, (sometimes called Philippine mahogany), is also known by other trade names, such as Lauan and Red Lauan. It is sourced from a tree that is about 65-130ft (20-40m) tall and has a 3-6ft (90cm-1.8m) trunk diameter. The average dried weight of meranti hardwood is 42lb/ft³ (675kg/m³) and it has a moderate Janka hardness rating of 800lb (3,570 N).

Description

Dark reddish, or brown is the usual colour of Meranti and white resin streaks are frequently seen. The grain has a rough texture and little natural shine and it can be straight, or interlocked.

In terms of resistance to decay, the wood is characterised as being either moderately durable, or non-durable and is considered to be vulnerable to insect assault.

Although interlocked grain can cause issues during planing and some species are reportedly poor at steam bending, the wood is generally simple to work with.

Due to trace amounts of silica in the wood, some species may have a modest blunting effect on tools. It stains, binds and finishes very well.

Uses of merit

Meranti is widely available at a moderate price, even for imported wood. It is commonly used as plywood, in the construction industry, making interior furniture, veneering, flooring and boat-building.

White Knight Consulting offers sustainably-sourced Meranti and teak for sale. As an FSC-certified company, the company guarantees high-quality genuine timber and logs at the best prices online.





CAN TREES HELP TO REDUCE THE INCIDENCE OF FLOODING?

As Spain suffers the worst natural disaster this century with lives being lost in the recent monstrous flash flooding, The Woodland Trust poses the question: “Can planting more trees reduce flooding in the UK and elsewhere?”

ACCORDING to the Woodland Trust, the answer to the question contained in our heading is a very definite “Yes”.

Forested land, woods and the trees they contain play a vital role in reducing flooding by slowing down the flow of rainwater, absorbing it and reducing erosion.

Flooding is a devastating reality in many communities and nowhere was this more apparent than in Spain last October where over 200 people died in devastating flash flooding, which swept across many parts of southern and eastern Spain.

On Tuesday October 29 torrential rain caused flooding across a large area of the country, including the cities of Valencia and Malaga.

... And all this was happening against the backdrop of what has been described as the worst cold snap of the century by the Aemet (Spain's state meteorological agency).

Rising rivers and relentless flooding have left many localities, especially in Valencia, Castilla-La Mancha and Andalusia, in ruins.

Industrial Woodworker's John Emslie visited the area in the aftermath of the storm to view the devastation for himself.

Police and rescue services used helicopters to lift people stranded in their homes and cars. More than 1,700 army personnel were deployed in some of the worst-hit areas to help search for those who were unaccounted for.

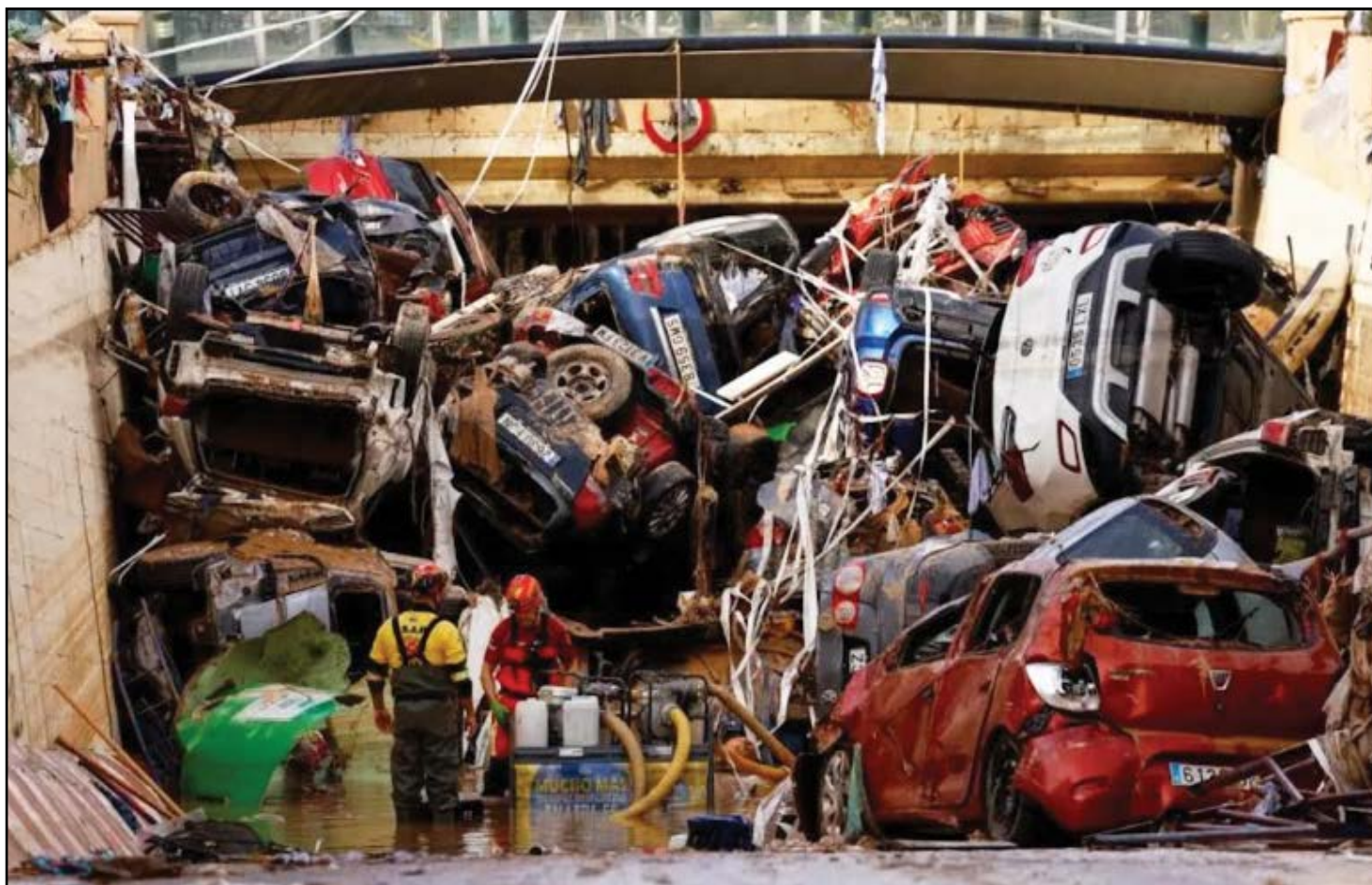
As mud-coloured water quickly filled streets in cities, towns and villages in several Spanish provinces (including many tourist hot spots) police and rescue services were deployed using helicopters to lift people to safety as the flood waters swept through their homes, bringing down power lines and overturning literally hundreds of cars and other vehicles, piling them up together, as many streets began to resemble a breaker's yard.

Spain's central government immediately set up a crisis committee to help co-ordinate rescue efforts and it was eventually confirmed that over 200 people had died as a direct result of being caught up in the storm.

This has now been recorded as the worst flood-related disaster to hit Spain since 1996, when 87 people died near in a town in the Pyrenean mountains.

In a televised address to the nation, Spanish Prime Minister, Pedro Sanchez re-iterated that dozens of towns had been flooded.

‘For those who are searching for their loved ones, all of Spain feels your pain,’ said Spain's Prime Minister, speaking of the tragedy that had affected



Hundreds of cars were crushed and piled high in the entrances to underpasses in the city of Valencia.

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so many overnight, whilst Spain's King Felipe and Queen Letizia publicly praised the "titanic work" of rescuers.

Apocalyptic scenes have witnessed entire towns plunged underwater, with cars were swept away and dumped on top of each other in huge, mangled piles by the powerful waters.

Torrential rain rapidly turned streets into rivers and left many trapped in their homes as the water levels began to rise.

On the outskirts of the city of Valencia, the appropriately named town of Torrent was among the worst hit, with the storm claiming at least five lives.

Spain is likely to turn to the European Union for support on what will ultimately be a huge recovery project and one which will require substantial funding, so that homes and lives can be rebuilt as quickly as possible.

Germany has already offered its help.

'We are in direct contact with the Spanish government as to whether there should be support from Germany to provide aid to offset this terrible disaster,' said a German Government spokesperson in Berlin.

'Our thoughts go out to those whose homes and possessions have been devastated. To those who are still looking for lost ones, Spain weeps with all of you - our absolute priority is to help you,' announced the Spanish prime minister, Pedro Sanchez.

'We are united and we will rebuild your streets,' he proclaimed.

With many bridges destroyed and roads cut off, train services were cancelled, with schools and "other essential services" being suspended, as rescue teams continued to search for those who were missing.

Meanwhile, it was left local authority workers and civilians to begin the mammoth task of clearing up the damage left by the flooding - including deposits of mud measuring up to 1ft (30cm) deep.

As roads rapidly became muddy rivers, the flood waters tumbled vehicles down streets at frightening speeds along with communal rubbish bins, household articles and all manner of other debris.

The cost of insurance claims is likely to run into millions of euros, with the result that the cost of both household and car insurance in Spain will likely rocket.

Rescuers could be observed pulling people from their homes on the Tuesday night and again on the following Wednesday morning.

November is traditionally the wettest month of the year in Spain, but the stormy weather seems to be creeping forward into the month of October

with similar autumn storms being experienced in recent years.

Scientists say that increased episodes of extreme weather are likely linked to climate change.

The events 'are yet another wake-up call that our climate is changing rapidly', according to professor of climate change impacts at Britain's Newcastle University, Hayley Fowler.

'Our infrastructure is not designed to deal with these levels of flooding,' she adds, stating that "record-shatteringly hot" warmer sea temperatures fuel storms that dump extreme levels of rain in one place.

Scientists warn that extreme weather events are becoming more intense, last longer and occur more frequently as a result of human-induced climate change.

Among the worst-hit areas in Spain was the town of Utiel, around 60 miles inland from Valencia, where several people remained missing days after the storm.

'We were trapped like rats. Cars and trash containers were flowing down the streets as the water rose to a level of 3 metres,' said Mayor Ricardo Gabaldon.

The "historic" weather event affected large areas of eastern and southern Spain.

A high-speed train with nearly 300 passengers on board was derailed near Malaga, whilst footage posted on social media appeared to show a police car being swept away by flood waters in Valencia.

Other footage captured in the Valencian town of Alzira showed firefighters rescuing trapped drivers and flooded streets as heavy rain pummelled the area.

Spanish authorities in the worst-hit areas urged citizens to remain in their homes and to avoid all non-essential travel.

Scary, fast-flowing flash flood waters barrelled through streets of Albacete in central Spain.

In the UK half-term holidaymakers were being warned by the Met Office to expect heavy rain in many of Spain's popular tourist destinations including Alicante and Malaga.

The national meteorological service pronounced that a risk of "significant flash flooding "frequent lightning" and "large hail stones" would continue for several days following heavy showers and thunderstorms.

In the city of Almeria hail stones the size of golf balls rained from the



Rescue teams propelled many stranded residents to safety.



In the streets of Valencia (and elsewhere) dozens of cars were wrecked as they were carried along by the force of the flood waters.





Along the motorways countless vehicles were tossed aside by the raging flood waters.



Vehicles were thrown upon into the air as they were swept down flooded streets in Valencia.



Many cars were swept into swirling pools of muddy water, or left high and dry in mud splattered streets.





Swirling flood waters swept away many cars and, tragically, often with their occupants suffering the same fate, whilst others were simply stacked high one on top of another.





The beaches at the popular Spanish resort of Vera Playa suffered greatly in the storm. For years local businesses have continued to implore the local mayor to implement better flood defences along the coastal strip which is home to a number of large hotels, bars and restaurants - many of which are frequently damaged by flooding and suffer both in terms of the immediate effect and the subsequent loss of business whilst repairs are undertaken.



This tangled mess of a wooden structure was almost dragged out to sea. It had served as a beach front bar for many years, but was no match for the storm.

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Forked lightning provided a pre-warning of the storm which was about to wreak havoc on a huge swath of Spain, effecting both coastal resorts and inland areas alike.

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skies, smashing through car windscreens and denting bodywork.

Would-be holiday-makers were warned of torrential rain and thunderstorms, which could bring flash flooding, landslides and significant travel disruption.

“These are no longer rare incidents. This is just one of several Spanish communities, spread over an extremely large area, which are seeing streets turned into raging rivers and this is highly likely to happen again in the future,” proclaimed one weather forecaster.

Spain has experienced similar autumn storms in recent years. Scientists say that increased episodes of extreme weather are probably linked to climate change.

Spain is by no means alone in experiencing the devastation that such severe weather conditions can cause. Storms are no longer isolated events, but harbingers of a changing climate.

Here in the UK each year, increasing amounts of relentless rain devastate numerous lives, drawing attention to the crucial role trees have in safeguarding both people and property.

A startling one in six of UK homes face flood threats. In 2023 the heaviest March rainfall in England and Wales in over four decades was recorded.

In the UK February 2020 stands as the wettest month since records began in 1862. Two storms - Ciara and Dennis alone inundated 3,300 properties, shattering countless homes and livelihoods.

With climate change, such extreme weather events will only intensify. However, according to the Woodland Trust, there is hope. By harnessing the power of trees and woods, we can bolster our flood defences and mitigate the crippling effects of such deluges.

Why are we experiencing more flooding?

Climate change has increased the likelihood of the extreme rainfall events which are now considered a significant risk factor for the UK.

Changes to our rural and urban landscapes also mean that rain is hitting the ground at higher speeds and taking much longer to drain away, leading to an increased risk of flooding.

Heavy rainfall on to already saturated, compacted ground, or hard surfaces

runs across the surface and collects in lower areas.

When a river can no longer cope with the amount of water, it simply overflows its banks. Following heavy rain, drains become blocked and unable to disperse surface water.

When weather and tidal conditions combine to increase sea levels, the result is often the inundation of coastal areas. This type of flooding can surge inland - often affecting nearby neighbourhoods.

Plant more trees!

In the UK the Woodlands Trust is on a mission to grow millions of healthy, native trees in order to help protect us from the effects of climate change.

Flooding poses a serious risk to many people living right across the UK.

According to the Woodland Trust, we can repel much of the threat posed by flooding by planting more trees. They help to reduce flooding in a number of ways:

Rain hits the ground at higher speeds where there is a lack of tree cover. An intercepting canopy of leaves, branches and trunks slows down the rain before it hits the ground simply by getting in the way.

The interception of rainfall by trees can spread the effect of a rain storm over a longer period of time. This allows some of the water (studies suggest up to 30 per cent) to evaporate back into the atmosphere directly from the canopy without ever reaching the ground.

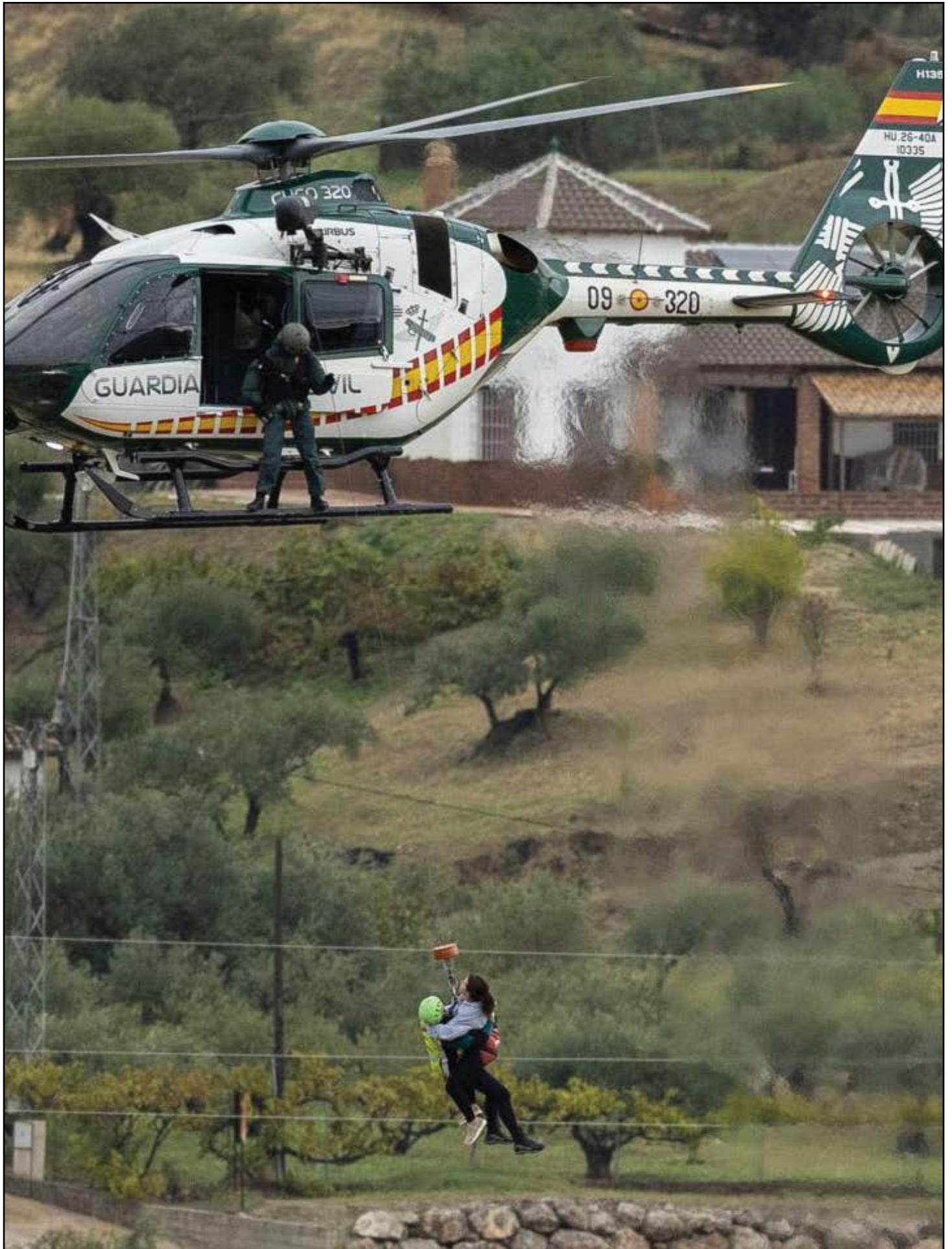
All trees act in this way, but our native broadleaf trees do it best in summer when they are in full leaf. However, even in winter, leafless trees (and, of course, evergreens) can intercept and re-evaporate rainfall.

Root systems also help water penetrate deeper into the soil at a faster rate under and around trees. This means less surface run-off and more water storage in the soil.

In rural areas, the removal of trees and hedges has increased run-off from fields. Planting trees and hedges can be effective in terms of increasing water infiltration and reducing and slowing run-off on farmland. Water infiltration rates can be 60 times higher within tree shelter belts than on adjoining farmland.



In Spain many train services were cancelled due to damage to the rail tracks caused by the storm and subsequent flooding.



The Spanish Guardia were deployed using helicopters to lift people to safety as the flood waters swept through their homes.

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Road bridges in many parts of the country suffered severe damage, rendering vital communication routes unpassable.



PLANT MORE TREES.

In towns and cities the rise in impermeable surfaces, such as roads, pavements and driveways has led to increased surface water run-off.

Following UK-wide flooding in the summer of 2007, one report identified that the paving over of front and rear gardens was a major factor in surface water movement in towns and cities. Around two thirds of all flooding is as a result of surface water run-off.

Compared to asphalt, an area planted with trees can reduce the surface water run-off by as much as 80 per cent!

Any increase in the amount of green space in our cities and towns could drastically reduce run-off in built-up areas.

There are other, smaller ways to make a difference too. For example, the small patches of bare ground around street trees, known as tree pits, are

sometimes covered by asphalt. Removing the asphalt is an easy way to improve water infiltration in urban areas.

Trees, shrubs and deadwood along riverbanks and on floodplains act as a drag on flood waters, holding back water and slowing the flow at times of flooding.

According to the Woodland Trust, the message is loud and clear - the UK (and indeed the rest of the world) needs more trees!

There is irrefutable evidence to suggest that trees and green spaces play a central role in protecting us against flooding, as well as offering cost-effective benefits. We must expand tree cover and protect and restore woodland on an unprecedented scale.

That's why the work of the Woodland Trust is so important as it seeks to expand, restore and protect native trees and woodlands throughout the UK.

In 2018 the Woodland Trust was responsible for the planting, distribution and selling of over three and a quarter million trees, creating some 1,714 hectares of new woodland across the UK in both rural and urban areas.

The Trust's work in lobbying Government ensures that natural flood risk management solutions are considered as part of local and regional flood management schemes.

The Woodland Trust supports the work of the Environment Agency, providing technical guidance and tools for flood and coastal risk management authorities.

In order to improve targeted tree planting, the Trust continues to call for mapping, thus building up a knowledge of where trees and woods are most likely to reduce flood risk in England.

Improving the resilience of our landscapes is crucial. The Trust encourages Government to do more to incentivise woodland creation and tree planting in our countryside, towns and cities.

The work of the Trust will ensure that the UK can tackle its climate and biodiversity crises at the same time and, hopefully, ensure that a tragedy on the scale of what happened in Spain last October will not be repeated on our shores.

*All figures correct at time of writing.



WOODLAND
TRUST

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A MOTORWAY HOTEL UNLIKE ANY TRAVEL LODGE

SITTING by the edge of the main motorway route from Madrid following northwards towards the ferry ports of Bilbao and Santander on the north coast of Spain is a hotel which is totally unlike any Travel Lodge you may have stayed in whilst travelling up and down Britain's motorways.

The Hotel Spa Tudanca Aranda is located in Fuentespina in the wine-growing Ribera del Duero region in Spain. In addition to providing a night's sleep for weary travellers, it also offers a wide range of wine-related activities, including grape harvesting and wine tasting for those guests who have made a special trip to visit this unique hotel.

Here many of the guest bedrooms enjoy spectacular views of the surrounding vineyards owned by the hotel.

However, what makes the interior of the building very special is an impressive dining hall which is decorated with wine paraphernalia, including an ancient wine press and oak barrels set into the walls which support the high elaborately carved wooden ceiling.

The Tudanca's main restaurant specialises in traditional Castilian, food such as roast suckling lamb cooked in a wood-fire oven.

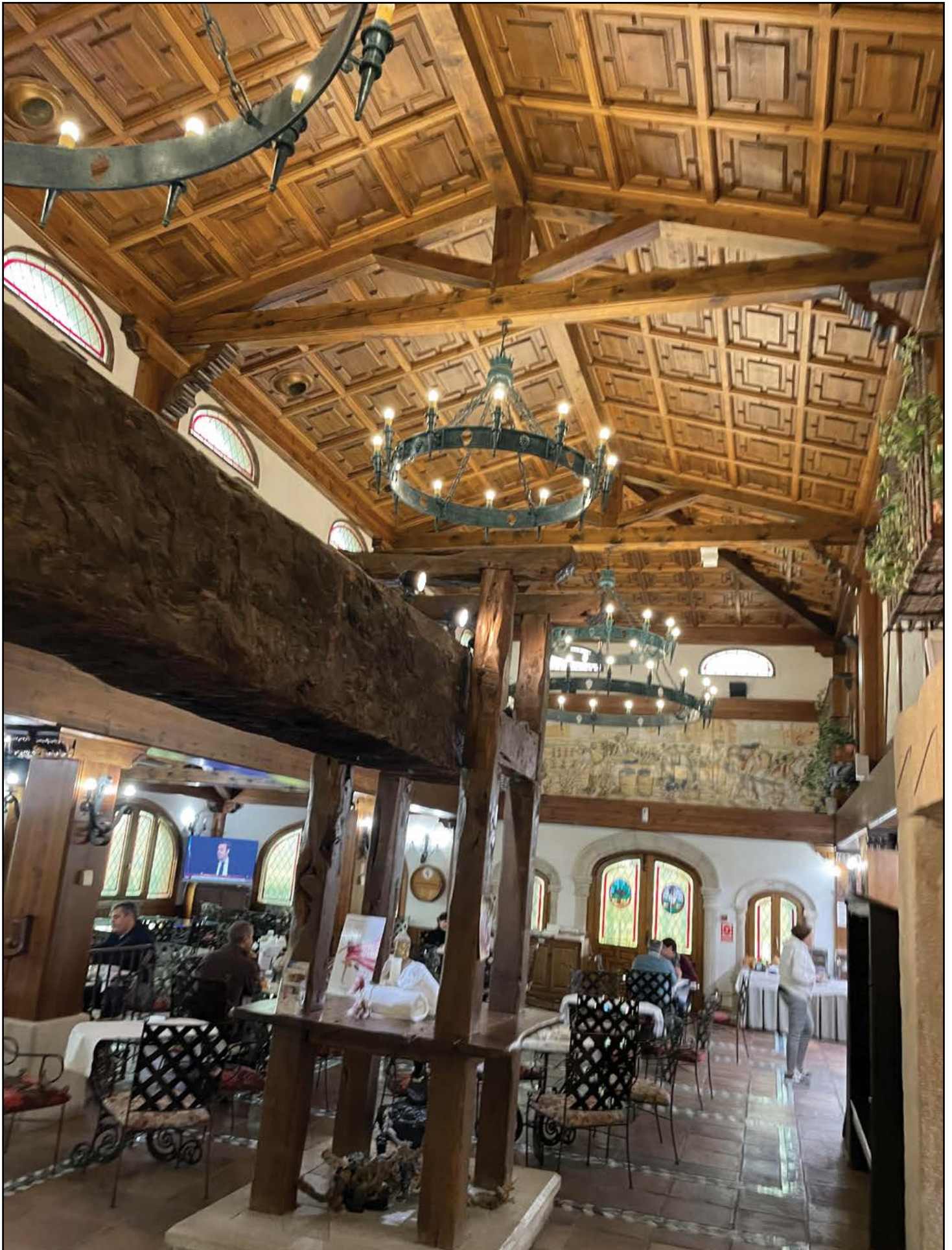
Nearby the old fortress of Peñafiel Castle is situated in the village of the same name. In years gone by, it served as an important line of defence, protecting the essential waters of the River Duero, which were so important to the early Christians and Moors, who inhabited this region in the 9th and 10th centuries.



An ancient stone wine press for sits in the reception area to the Tudanca Hotel.



Oak barrels are set into the walls which support the high, elaborately carved wooden ceiling.



Guests can enjoy their breakfast whilst marvelling at the exquisitely carved oak panelled ceilings on the main dining hall.

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A massive oak beam measuring over 50ft (15m) in length dominates the main dining hall attached to which is an old stone wine press.

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Peñafiel Castle is an impressive sight. It is perched on a cliff that rises sharply to dominate the vast plain of the River Duero. The long crest of the hill on which it is built determined the castle's layout; it has the form of a very narrow walled precinct, almost 600ft (180m) in length, with a massive keep situated at the mid-way point of this ancient monument.

In many ways the castle's architectural style is reminiscent of a ship. The 15th century keep is crowned by eight turrets - one at each extremity of the wall - one pointed and the other wider giving it the appearance of the bow of a ship.

A museum dedicated to the history of the local wines is contained within the castle, but you need not go that far to enjoy being steeped in all things wooden the wine related.

A massive oak beam attached to an ancient stone wine press dominates the main dining hall, with its hefty double entrance doors decorated with illuminated stained glass panels and illustrating the ancient art of wine making. Sit on barrel and enjoy a glass (or two) of the region's richly fragrant red wines.

However, anyone who has an eye for all things wooden and wonderful, simply cast your eyes up to the exquisitely carved oak panelled ceilings and lose yourself in the crafts of yesteryear.

You will certainly never find anything like this staying at a Travel Lodge.

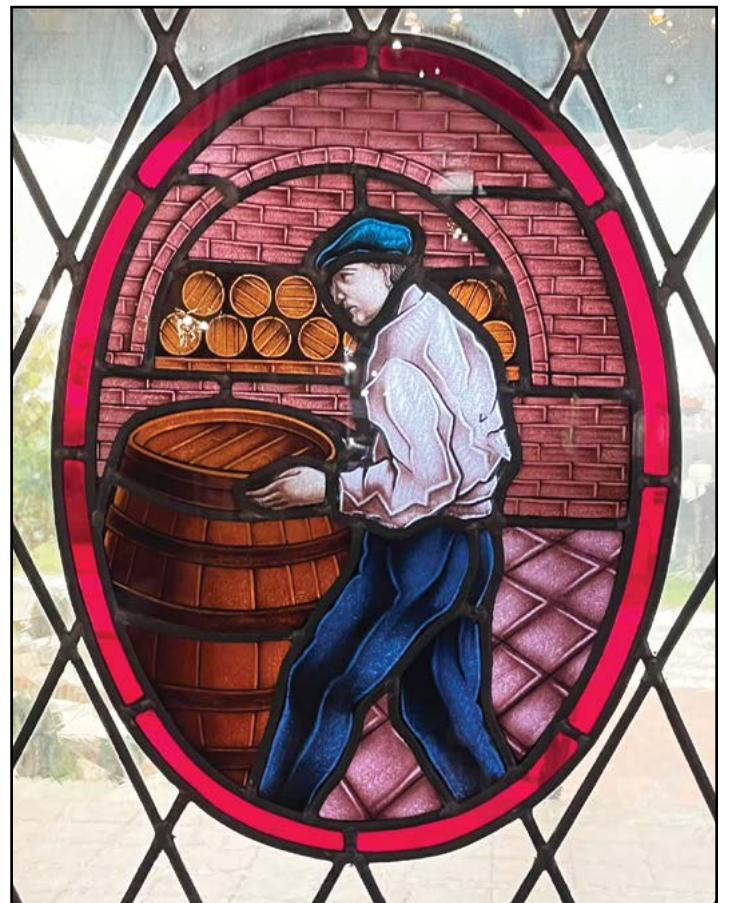
*For further information tel the Hotel Tudanca on 00 34 947 50 60 11.
Visit www.tudanca-aranda.com*



The nearby Peñafiel Castle is perched on a cliff that rises sharply to dominate the vast plain of the River Duero.



Heavy oak panelled doors with stained glass inserts depicting various aspects of wine production greet visitors to the Tudanca Hotel.



A detailed close up of one of the stained glass panels which feature throughout the hotel.

MADE SMARTER POWERS SME MANUFACTURERS TO INVEST £25M IN A HOST OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES

A total of 1,700 new jobs are to be created and 3,300 existing roles upskilled with the backing of the North West adoption programme

MADE Smarter, the movement accelerating the digital transformation of SME manufacturers, has reached a major milestone - backing North West companies to invest £25m in new technologies.

A total of 330 businesses have now secured £7.1m matched funding from the Government-funded, industry-backed initiative over the past six years, adopting technologies as diverse as sensors, robotics, 3D printing and artificial intelligence (AI).

These companies have put £18m of private sector investment towards 379 technology projects, which are forecast to create over 1,700 new jobs - an average of five each and upskill 3,200 existing roles.

Whatismore, the investments in technology and people are set to add £267m to the economy over the next three years.

Made Smarter's funding panel, which comprises leading figures from across the worlds of business, Government and academia, offers grants of up to £20,000 towards new technology and digital tools.

Among the latest wave of 23 companies securing grants are:



Director of the Made Smarter Adoption Programme in the North West, Donna Edwards,

- **Edinburgh Weavers**, the world-renowned textile manufacturer, based in Bolton.
- **Duo UK**, a manufacturer of packaging products, based in Manchester.
- **Trekk Vans**, a campervan conversion specialist, based in Carlisle.
- **J. J. Smith & Co. (Woodworking Machinery) Limited**, an original equipment manufacturer, based in Liverpool.
- **C-TEC**, a manufacturer of life-safety electronic systems, based in Wigan.
- **BrickByBrick23**, a manufacturer of personalised photo blocks using LEGO® Bricks, based in Glossop in Derbyshire.
- **Gardner Engineering**, a manufacturer of CCTV brackets, based in Preston.
- **System Hydraulics**, a manufacturer of hydraulic components, based in Carlisle.
- **Esspee Fabrications**, a manufacturer of electrical and high temperature insulation materials, based in St Helens.



JJ Smith & Co (Woodworking Machinery) Ltd has adopted robotics and software to accelerate its development of automation solutions aimed at simplifying manufacturing processes to the woodworking sector.

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C-TEC is a manufacturer of life-safety electronic systems, based in Wigan which, with support from Made Smarter has become significantly more efficient, productive and environmentally friendly, as well as creating new jobs, upskilling its workforce and helping to position the company for future business growth.



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- **Cupcakes By Sophia**, a manufacturer of cupcakes, based in Blackburn.
- **James Labels & Supplies**, a manufacturer of self-adhesive labels and swing tickets, based in Bacup.
- **Arc Elevators**, a manufacturer of lifts, based in Nelson.

JJ Smith & Co (Woodworking Machinery) Ltd has adopted robotics and software to accelerate its development of automation solutions aimed at simplifying manufacturing processes to the woodworking sector.

'We have a clear strategy for digital transformation and business growth. This technology can revolutionise our approach to programming and testing,' says sales director, Ian Stanley.

'This rapid turnaround time enables us to provide our customers with proof of concept swiftly and efficiently, enhancing our responsiveness and improving our chances of securing sales and maintaining a competitive edge in the market,' he adds.

'Made Smarter's backing is important and we are grateful for the expertise and enthusiasm the team has shown in support of our ambitions,' concludes Mr Stanley.

C-TEC has digitised its warehouse operations as part of a £1m investment programme to upgrade its state-of-the-art manufacturing facility.

'Working with Made Smarter has fast-tracked our investment in fully integrating and digitising our warehousing operations,' says manufacturing operations director at C-TEC, Peter Butterworth.

'With approaching 9,000-line items of fast-moving raw materials, sub-assemblies and finished goods, a fully digitised system was essential and the system implemented through support from Made Smarter has made us significantly more efficient, productive, environmentally friendly, created new jobs, upskilled our workforce and well positioned C-TEC for business growth,' he adds.

Additive manufacturing specialists have also started their Made Smarter journey including: FDM Digital Solutions, based in Burnley; Additive

Manufacturing Solutions (AMS), based in Burscough and Fusion Implants, based in Liverpool and other grants have been awarded to engineering companies.

One-O-Five Precision, a precision CNC manufacturer, is investing in new inspection technology.

'Working with MadeSmarter has been transformative. This investment has significantly enhanced our inspection procedures, allowing us to achieve greater accuracy and efficiency in quality control,' says managing director, Richard Pratt.

'This improvement is crucial, as we continue to grow our reputation in the nuclear, defence and aerospace sectors, where precision and quality are paramount,' adds Mr Pratt.

'These technology projects will have a tremendous impact on individuals, businesses, the sector and society. They will boost efficiency, productivity and growth, creating new jobs and upskilling existing roles, all while shifting the dial on creating a more sustainable approach to manufacturing,' says director of the Made Smarter Adoption Programme in the North West, Donna Edwards, commenting on the latest milestone and grant awards.

'I welcome these 23 companies into the Made Smarter family. Alongside the hundreds who have already reaped the rewards of the adoption programme, we have now invested over £25m into the digital transformation of the sector,' adds Donna.

'Celebrating milestones is important. It permits my fantastic team to take stock of the achievement and then commit to improving the services we offer to continue the Made Smarter mission,' she concludes.

As well as grants, Made Smarter offers SME manufacturers access to funded support including digital transformation workshops to create a digital roadmap, impartial and expert technology advice, and leadership and skills training.

For further information Visit www.madesmarter.uk



Esspee Fabrications is a manufacturer of high temperature insulation materials, based in St Helens, which is among the latest wave of 23 companies securing grants from Made Smarter.

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THOUSANDS MORE SME MANUFACTURERS TO BENEFIT FROM MADE AFTER BUDGET COMMITMENT

Government to spend £16m to roll out pioneering adoption programme

MADE Smarter Adoption, the UK Government's programme helping SME manufacturers adopt technology and digital skills, will continue next year and expand into all regions of England.

In its autumn budget the Government has announced that it will spend £16m expanding the Adoption programme to all nine English regions in 2025-26.

The decision means that hundreds of thousands more SME manufacturers will gain access to technology advice, leadership and skills training, as well as grant funding for digital internships and technology projects.

These interventions will boost productivity, growth, create new high value jobs and decarbonise SME manufacturers across the country.

The Budget also set out plans for a modern Industrial Strategy, to extend the Made Smarter Innovation programme with up to £37m funding in 2025-26 and committed long-term funding for growth-driving sectors, including £975m for aerospace, over £2 billion for the automotive sector and up to £520 million for a new Life Sciences Innovative Manufacturing Fund.

Launched in the North West in 2019, Made Smarter has engaged with 2,500 manufacturers and funded 379 technology projects, which are forecast to create over 1,700 new jobs and upskill 3,200 existing roles. What is more, the investments in technology and people are set to grow the economy by £267m over the next three years.

Since 2022 a central government funded Adoption programme has been running in the North East, Yorkshire and the Humber, the West Midlands and East Midlands, along with a locally funded programme in the West of England.

'The budget announcements on the Made Smarter Adoption and Innovation programmes are a tremendously positive acknowledgement of the impact that Made Smarter is having on UK manufacturing,' says the co-chair of the Made Smarter Commission and managing director of Siemens Digital Industries, Brian Holliday.

'I am particularly pleased that the programme has been supported by successive governments, helping to stimulate longer-term thinking and long-term growth - now backed up by an emerging Industrial Strategy.

'Manufacturing leaders need Made Smarter, which has become the best-known start-point and signposting service for the sector in support of productivity, competitiveness and sustainability improvement at scale,' concludes Mr Holliday.

'Over the last five years Made Smarter has transformed countless SME manufacturers, introducing them to new technologies and new digital skills,' says the director of Made Smarter's North West adoption programme, Donna Edwards.

'The programme has proven that by offering businesses specialist advice to help them select the right approach, level of investment and tools for their business, they can grow and build resilience.

'I am delighted that the Government recognised the impact that Made Smarter is having on the digital transformation of such a vital sector of the economy.

'While we await further details on the funding package, the commitment to a national roll-out is a major positive to emerge from a Budget, which promises to rebuild Britain and puts UK Industry at the heart of that change,' she adds.



Co-chair of the Made Smarter Commission and managing director of Siemens Digital Industries, Brian Holliday.



Director of Made Smarter's North West adoption programme, Donna Edwards.

For further information Visit www.madesmarter.uk

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FRENCH COMPANY ROLLING OUT THE BARRELS AND A WHOLE HOST OF OAK-BASED PRODUCTS

IN 1928 Eugène Charlois established a wood splitting mill at Murlin in Central France – the Maison Charlois.

Situated deep in one of the largest oak forests in France, the company has contributed to the preservation of this aboreal gem, which contains the finest oaks in France. With its self proclaimed edict of best forestry practices, the company aims to select the best quality oak for processing into wine barrels and a whole host of other uses.

Fast forward to the present day and the family owned business now in the hands of Sylvain Charlois (and since 2005 known as the Charlois Group) retains its historic family values and skills, whilst resolutely striving to keep in step with the modern era.

Since its creation the Group has diversified into a range of complementary activities all with oak and the forest as their focus. These fall into two broad categories :

OAK COLLECTION - bringing together houses linked to forest, inheritance, art and culture.

OAK NATION - bringing together all the professions both upstream and downstream in terms of barrel production, such as forestry, sawmilling, stave production, parquetry, cooperage, large cask making and the recycling of used oak barrels, the production of oak products for wine-making, transportation and logistics and engineering.

After the staves have been seasoned, they are once again checked and sorted before being sent to the cooper. At this stage, each of the group's cooperages chooses the particular type of oak according to where it came

from, or its individual grain pattern and in accordance with the intended manufacturing methods.

Barrel ageing is one of the most important stages in maturing top quality French wines. At the end of the ageing process, these great wines are renowned both for their taste and their aromatic properties, which reflect a complexity and originality that strengthens their individual characteristics.

Repairing oak barrels is another essential operation at the Charlois group. This repair trade requires extensive experience in cooperage know-how.

Indeed, after having identified the damage caused by time, the coopers at OAK NATION know how to analyse and then provide the necessary care for a qualitative extension of the life of the barrels.

The repair activity consists of restoring used barrels in order to extend their life and thus extend the cycle of sustainable management. Indeed, an individual oak barrel can be more than 100 years old.

Repairing oak barrels is part of a process dear to the Charlois group: recovery and optimisation of the oak raw material is considered to be an environmentally sound practice

This repair trade requires extensive experience in cooperage know-how.

After having identified the damage caused by the passage of time, the coopers at OAK NATION's repair workshops - all of whom are experienced in traditional techniques, are led to use the tools of yesteryear. They know how to make a detailed study of the necessary restoration work and then provide the necessary care for a qualitative extension of the life of the barrels.

Similarly to cooperage, the manufacture of top quality oak products for wine-making depends on three main criteria: the selection of raw materials, the natural seasoning of the wood and the "toasting" process.

Thanks to its leadership in the French oak sector and its coopering experience, OAK NATION offers technically accomplished products and has positioned itself at the top end of this specialist sector.

The transport and delivery of wine barrels likewise requires special care and attention. Since 2006, OAK NATION has been operating custom-made logistics adapted to each of its customers.

In 2017 Charlois Premium Logistique (CPL) was formed and In 2022, the company was acquired the company STMD, located in Vayres in the heart of the Bordeaux region.

With 20,000 m² of covered and temperature-controlled buildings, STMD offers highly secure storage, transport and logistics dedicated to wines and spirits.

Since 2005, in doubling its average turnover every five years, the Charlois Group has pursued its development in the wine and cognac cooperage markets, both in France and around the world.

Another important product in the company's portfolios is the sawmill's manufacture of railway sleepers.

As a renewable and indigenous raw material from sustainably managed forests, railway sleepers represent genuine added value. This activity means that OAK NATION can add value to more than 80 per cent of the



The family owned business is now in the hands of Sylvain Charlois.



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Email us at: bill.willowe@gmail.com

oak it purchases from forests throughout France.

OAK NATION sources its oaks from several suppliers: the French National Forestry Office (ONF), Oak Forest Club, logging companies and co-operatives.

Throughout the year, Charlois Group buyers roam the French forests in search of the finest oak trees that will be used for making the barrels for the ageing of fine wines and spirits.

Painstakingly, one by one, they will evaluate the oaks that have been selected according to a strict management plan, designed to ensure sustainability, forest regeneration and respect for biodiversity.

After the trees have been selected, the most important work is splitting the wood in the correct manner. Using techniques passed down from generation to generation, this traditional expertise requires the unerring eye of the stave-maker.

He must correctly read the grain of the wood, split the logs into quarters, remove the heart, sapwood and bark to extract the noble wood of the straight-grained staves. The stave is then seasoned outside for a minimum of 24 months – an essential step in the ageing process.

Another part of the company's portfolio is parquetry - an ancestral art that combines traditional know-how and modern techniques to create exceptional wooden floor coverings.

At Charlois, the craft begins with the careful selection of the best oak trees in the forest, where each tree is chosen for its specific qualities.

Then follows a meticulous transformation process. The oak wood is cut, dried and handled with care to reveal all its natural beauty and to guarantee its durability. Every step of manufacturing, from sawing to sanding, is carried out with artisanal precision. This craft represents a perfect fusion of tradition and innovation, perpetuating a heritage, whilst meeting contemporary demands for design and sustainability.

Charlois' goal is to produce parquet flooring which is not only attractive for home interiors, but also eco-friendly thanks to sustainable practices and responsible management of forest resources.

The group has also diversified by investing in the creation of La Chêne - a brand of cosmetics made using a patented oak extract.

With its ongoing research into the multiple benefits of oak, the Charlois group scientists have, for the first time, perfected a patented oak extract with powerful anti-ageing properties.

Known as Quercus Petraea Concentrate this extract, derived from different parts of the tree has given rise to the creation of a range of age defying skincare with what are claimed to be exceptional regenerative powers.

In 2018, Sylvain Charlois created the Charlois Foundation for Art and the Forest - with the aim of developing and promoting art and culture and artistic endeavour and upholding the heritage in relation to the forest, its trades, traditions and values.

Since 2021, the Charlois Group has expanded through strategic partnerships and joint ventures, notably with French brandy producers, Hennessy and Martell. The group has also initiated a process of diversification into the cooperage market for whisky and that of bourbon.

The group is already the No 1 buyer of oak in France and Romania. With the acquisition earlier this year of Kentucky based Graf Brothers - one of the world's largest manufacturers of rift and quartered timber and flooring - Charlois continues its development as a leading timber based products company.

The company's deep attachment to the French region in which it is headquartered has led the Charlois Group to support numerous projects in the nearby village of Murlin.

Under the Murlanum umbrella, created in 2003, the group manages property and restaurant facilities and promotes the development of this small village in the Nivernais woods.

The numerous building and renovation projects include premises constructed in 2016 for the Exact Laboratory and the restoration of an 18th century building destined to accommodate the La Grange cooperage. This building will also incorporate spaces dedicated to exhibitions and concerts and two houses have been restored to provide space for artists in residence and skilled craftsmen.

For further information tel Charlois on 00 33 86 38 17 55.
Visit www.groupecharlois.com



KUNDIG AUTUMN OPEN HOUSE SHOWCASES EXPERTISE

THE surface finish is the first impression set by anyone looking at fine pieces of furniture or, in fact, any wood-based product. This often denotes the level of expertise, care and quality of the product during the manufacturing process.

When creating either a high gloss, or semi-gloss finish, the surface needs to be truly flat to allow a mirrored reflection, free from distortion.

In addition, as veneer slicing technology has advanced, veneer thickness has become less and less, emphasising the importance of both controlled and accurate sanding to protect vulnerable corners and edges. These are areas in which Kundig excels.

The company's autumn open house allowed Kundig to showcase the advantages of its products, from methods of construction to ensure long-term accuracy and longevity, through to choice and application of different sanding aggregates.

Several discussions took place covering various topics, including the advantages of individual sanding heads compared to combi units, calibration rollers with steel vs hard rubber coated, fixed sanding beds compared to moving beds and, of course, the advantages of the patented Kundig Oblique sanding versus traditional and "super finishing" heads, which use an inner chevron belt.

Another area which is often both overlooked and misunderstood when it comes to sanding is the correct choice of abrasive for the application.

Many machinery manufacturers talk about the capability of a machine with large diameter rollers and big motor HP, etc.

However, all sanding machines are limited to the capability of the abrasive.

If a sanding belt is overloaded, then it will become consumed very quickly, resulting in high running costs.

Kundig manufactures its own abrasives to support its own machinery and is able to offer informed advice on all aspects of sanding.

The all-new Kundig Master was demonstrated sanding both solid wood and veneered panels. This latest version now includes a 200mm working height and an "Enormatic" automatic setting device, which makes the sanding of even the largest panels an easy process, as there is no need for the operator to return to the control panel once this function is activated.

The Kundig Perfect was also shown sanding solid wood, veneer and denibbing sprayed surfaces. The machine on display was also fitted with a structure brush complete with the new "Twinex" brush to give a textured surface by leaving the hard grain raised.

Also displayed was the complete line-up of Kundig edge sanding machines, from the Uniq with motorised tilting of the abrasive and programmable oscillation to the Uniq-S, complete with an integrated feed system.

The Kundig Flash was also shown, which is designed for the denibbing of edges using the same technology employed in the wide-belt machines.

*For further information tel Kundig on 0845 833 0565.
Visit www.kundig.co.uk*



TOP KITCHEN HARDWARE TRENDS FOR 2025

Managing director at Croft, Paul Clifford – a leading name in architectural hardware – provides insight into the top hardware trends for 2025 ...

MINIMALIST and contemporary, black hardware offers a sleek appearance that contrasts with traditional polished metals, making it perfect for spaces aiming for a streamlined design.

Matt black hardware has recently gained popularity as it is a versatile, neutral colour that can also create striking visual interest.

The Matt Black Bronze finish from Croft is perfect for adding an intense rustic appearance that complements a wide range of interior styles whilst evoking a sense of craft and heritage.

Textured hardware, which adds character and definition, is expected to appear more frequently on cupboards and doors throughout homes.

The days of simple hardware are over and home-owners and designers are now seeking choices that not only enhance the aesthetics of their interiors but also provide functionality.

Croft's Textured Collection will instantly add depth, contrast and personality to a space, creating a long-lasting and timeless design feature.

Neutral and brass palettes

Warm, friendly, and inviting, neutral and brass colour palettes are expected to continue growing in popularity next year. These tones work well together to create a contemporary, warm space where carefully chosen brass hardware, cabinets and doors will be kept looking sleek and stylish.

Croft offers a variety of brass finishes and designs, including aged, smoked and polished, suited to both modern and traditional décor and an array of furnishings.

Dark kitchens with metallic accents

Achieve sophisticated aesthetics by contrasting metallic accents with the warmth of darker surfaces and cabinets, adding a luxurious appeal to areas without being overpowering or harsh.

This trend will continue growing over the next year, with metallic elements incorporated into hardware in dark kitchens, adding a distinct depth of detail to the design.

Croft's Brooklands Collection in Light Antique Brass works particularly well with dark green cabinetry for an overall polished look.



For further information Visit www.croft.co.uk



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Email us at: bill.willowe@gmail.com