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Revealed: the UK's 10 most wanted in new Costa del Crime

Detectives release descriptions of men suspected of murder, rape and kidnap

By Terri Judd



Adam Hart, 29, who is suspected of conspiracy to supply cocaine and who escaped arrest in August 2007 as police officers searched his workplace

Fugitive British criminals living in Spain found an uncomfortable spotlight turned on them yesterday as a list of the 10 most wanted was released.

Crimestoppers and the Serious Organised Crime Agency (Soca) issued descriptions of a list of individuals they want to track down for a variety of offences including murder, rape, drug trafficking and kidnap.

All of the fugitives are believed to be hiding in the Costa Blanca area around Alicante and Crimestoppers appealed to expats living in the country to look out for the nine men and one woman.

The new hunt has been codenamed Operation Captura 2 after an original operation to track down 30 criminals on the Costa del Sol in October 2006 led to 13 arrests. Each one of the 10 has been pictured and named online on the Most Wanted section of the Crimestoppers website www.crimestoppers-uk.org although legal constraints mean that only the scantest details of their alleged crimes have been included.

Among the fugitives featured in Operation Captura 2 are a convicted rapist, Andrew Alderman, and a kidnapper, Dean Rice, as well as an alleged heroin smuggler, Shashi Dhar Sahnar.

Alongside them is Adam Hart, 29, who is suspected of conspiracy to supply cocaine and who escaped arrest in August 2007 as police officers searched his workplace. Also on the list is Alan Gordon, 46, who is wanted by police in Scotland for supplying drugs.

Police are also trying to find Andrew Snelgrove, 45, who also uses the name Edward and is accused of attempted murder, wounding with intent and possession of a firearm with intent to endanger life.

Scottish police also want to track down Anthony Kearney, 43, and Donna McCafferty, 41, both suspected of fraud – they use a variety of aliases.

Also on the list accused of fraud is Hungarian-born Dennis Hunter, 57, who is accused of masterminding a major attack on the VAT system which is estimated to have cost the Treasury £250m. Meanwhile, Thomas Cochran, 50, who also used the alias Thomas Caldwell and has a dagger tattoo on his right arm, is accused of drug dealing.

For many years, Spain has proved to be an appealing hideaway for British criminals fleeing imprisonment. But that changed in 2004 when European arrest warrants came into effect, making it easier to bring offenders back to the UK to be tried.

Crimestoppers' founder and chairman Lord Ashcroft said: "We are extremely proud of the success of Operation Captura and Most Wanted, which highlights how well the working partnership has gone with ourselves, Soca, the British embassy and the Spanish authorities. With 13 arrests from 30 appeals so far, it is great to know that both UK and Spanish residents are helping law enforcement to capture these dangerous individuals by passing on information, which ultimately helps make their communities safer.

"We are now appealing to the public in the UK and particularly expats in Spain to look carefully at the 10 new appeals and to pass on information they may have about them to Crimestoppers in total anonymity."

Bill Hughes, director general of Soca, said: "This is an innovative partnership which is proving to be very successful, and is delivering a simple message to criminals; you won't escape to the sun, we will find you and bring you back."

Since Crimestoppers began in 1988, the appeals have resulted in more than 87,000 arrests and charges.

On the run Accused

* Andrew Alderman was sentenced to 10 years in his absence for the rape and indecent assault of a young girl. The 49-year-old from Canterbury, Kent, was on bail awaiting sentence when he disappeared on 31 August 2006. Police immediately realised he had gone abroad after he was caught on CCTV at the Channel Tunnel terminal in Folkestone, Kent, in the early hours of that morning. Known to speak several languages, including Spanish, he is described as 5ft 10in, with a dark

complexion and a lot of body hair, short, stocky, with greying dark hair and brown eyes. Earlier this year his 14-year-old victim's mother appealed to holidaymakers to help find him: "It's a living nightmare for my daughter who has not seen justice served. He still has his liberty while she lives with the scars everyday of what he did." Detective Inspector David Berry, from Kent Police, said it was a "rare occurrence" for a rape suspect to be granted bail.

* Dean Rice skipped bail and was jailed for life in his absence for his part in a horrific kidnap of an ex-employee. Alan Clarke was grabbed off a Camden street as he walked his dog. The kidnapers included the construction businessman Trevor Crouch and Rice's wife, Nichole. They kidnapped Clarke because they thought he had stolen their money. At Crouch's trial in Maidstone, Andrew Espley, prosecuting, said Mr Clarke had suspected Rice was involved in smuggling drugs. He had been taken to a farm near Ashford, Kent, where he was assaulted and tied up, had a gun held to his head and repeatedly asked where the money was. He jumped from a window to escape. Crouch, 39, described as the hired muscle, was jailed on charges of conspiracy to kidnap and conspiracy to falsely imprison. Nichole Rice, 41, and Michael Kelly, 63, were jailed for five years. Rice, 47, is 5ft 3in, of medium build with brown eyes, straight black greying hair and possibly a beard or moustache as well as a tattoo on his right arm. He has used the aliases Dean Borton and Steven Greenfield.

* Shashi Dhar Sahnian stands accused of smuggling £1.5m of high-grade heroin into Britain. The drugs were hidden in packaging surrounding air-conditioning units but the operation was foiled when Customs officers at Birmingham International Airport seized the drugs during a joint operation with Leicestershire Police in July last year. The seizure led to the arrest of 15 men and three women who have all been released on bail pending further inquiries. Mr Sahnian, 51, is described as 5ft 8in, of proportionate build with short straight, greying hair and brown eyes. He wears a hearing aid in his right ear.