

Don Juan conman tricks 10 women

A moustachioed 'Don Juan' has conned ten women in Spain by promising them love and then taking their savings.

By Alex Starritt

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The women, who have formed a 'Gang of Ten' called las Diez, were all victims of an Israeli conman using the names Moises Chocron, Carlos Echeverria and Joel Klein.

In an attempt to track him down, the women have gone to the courts and newspapers in Israel, but the mysterious conman seems to have disappeared.

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The fraudster's technique was to find women in internet dating sites, pursue them with romantic emails and win their confidence by generously paying for trips to see him.

"A perfect gentleman from another century," is how Kathleen Martens described to Spanish newspaper El Mundo the man she agreed to marry.

Only after the 62-year-old had transferred funds, apparently to cover wedding expenses, did her fiance mysteriously fall ill and die in Singapore.

When she received an email purporting to be from his daughter, saying that he had been cremated, she realised it was a scam.

The group was formed after two women in Malaga discovered by chance that they were engaged to the same man. "Malaga is a small city and news circulates quickly," said Conchi Madueno.

She wrote to him, saying, "Did you know there is another woman here who is marrying an Israeli? He looks surprisingly like you!" By then, she had already sent him euro 12,000 (£9,600) to cover wedding costs.

Similar wedding expenses scams are widespread on the internet and US website romancescams.org, which helps victims of romance fraud, has more than 30,000 members. By April this year, 883 members had reported their financial losses, totalling over \$8 million.