

P-O Life

Life in the Pyrénées Orientales

Walk the Region
PIC DU CANIGOU

Let's get physical
**SPORTY SUNSHINE
ACTIVITIES**

Festivals & Traditions
**WHAT'S ON AROUND
THE REGION**

SUMMER 2010
FREE / GRATUIT N° 28

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Salut tout le monde!

I have a really clever little wheeze for pleasantly plump people who want to take full advantage of the amazing variety of summer food, drink and festivities in the P-O, but know it's naughty. Buy jeans or a skirt that are at least one size too big for you and pull nonchalantly at the waistband as you order another cool beer or pick at the tapas that accompany the evening apero.

In this edition, we have put together some fabulous sporting activity ideas to burn off the calories... and an interesting selection of restaurants to put them back on again!

Our summer days out take you up into the mountains in search of the perfect saucisson, and along the coast to Saint Cyprien and Banyuls, where calamari fans can learn a little about the smart seiche! Leigh and Merry Foster slog up to the peak of Canigou, Ellen Hall takes you round the free photographic expo on the Argelès sea front, Michael Brady goes Stone Age, and John Fairclough once again takes on the arduous task of restaurant reviewing!

Go steady on the sun and heavy on the sun cream and have a great summer!

Kate & Jane



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Vide Greniers

Visit our site at www.anglophone-direct.com for an up-to-date list of the vide greniers in your area.

OOPS..... In the last edition we told you that after the age of 75, drivers need a medical examination every two years to prove they are fit to drive. In fact, this is not yet law, just being discussed for the future. *Sorrrrrrrry!*

Palais des Congrès, Perpignan

organises events, exhibitions, salons, concerts and conferences throughout the year. Check out their website on www.congres-perpignan.com




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Walk the region...

with Leigh and Merry Foster



PIC DU CANIGOU

This walk is not for the faint-hearted, but has to be on many people's 'bucket list' of things to do while they can. The sense of achievement and the spectacular views from the top on a good day are more than worth the effort. Bear in mind the altitude, and the fact that the weather in the mountains can change quickly, so packing some extra layers is a good idea just in case. Good footwear is essential and walking poles very advisable.

Getting there

We started at 9am in the parking des Pompiers in Prades, which can be found by following the signs to Codalet from the centre. There we met up with our transport for the first leg of the trip - M. Colas (04 68 05 27 08) and his very old and bumpy 4x4, with room for seven people into which we somehow squeezed eight. This took us the 30 km (1 hour's drive) up rutted forest tracks and logging roads to Chalet des Cortalets at 2150m altitude, co-ordinates

456067E 4709241N. This is where the walk starts. If you have a suitable vehicle (or an unsuitable one and a brave driver!) you can drive the track yourself.

The walk


Set in a pretty forest clearing, the Chalet provides basic accommodation and a refreshment stop in dramatically wild surroundings. After making sure we were well supplied with water we set off. The trail, which at first joins the famous GR10 coast to coast walk, heads


southwest past a small lake and climbs the hillside towards Pic Joffre. The clearly marked path up Canigou splits from the GR10 at 455260E 4709170N. Those like us that don't live in the mountains will find the altitude makes the modest gradient surprisingly hard work.




After reaching the ridge (1.8km from the start), turn south and start the long ascent to the summit. The path is well marked and well trodden, but still not easy in places where

hand-over-hand climbing is required. As you go there are magnificent views to the west over the Forêt Domaniale du Canigou and south towards Spain. While taking a breather we spotted some enormous soaring birds of prey that, thanks to Google, we later identified as Spanish Imperial Eagles. There is quite a steep drop to the west so do take care.

 The trail continues south, up and further up, until you come to the foot of the final ascent (3.2km from the start). Here it zigzags precariously up the loose rubble slope to the top. You are tantalizingly close, but at 2680m altitude it's still about 100 metres straight up, or 400 metres if you don't have a helicopter!

 You finally reach the surprisingly small summit at 2784m, 2-3 hrs after starting from the Chalet, to find people perched on little outcrops of rock, taking photos and eating sandwiches. The famous 'Croix' is there, and the Table d'Oriocation with its Catalan poetry by Jacint Verdaguer. You can see the top of the 'Cheminee', which is the alternative route to the top reserved for mountain goats and hard-core climbers. There was snow in the avalanche-sculpted gully in mid September, as there probably is for most of the year.

 After your picnic and rest, you start back the 4km back to the Chalet. Going down is less challenging than coming up, but still not easy as you have



to watch every step. The walking poles come in handy here. It was with great relief we got back down 2 hours later, to find everyone else waiting to squeeze into the 4x4 back to Prades!



Did you know...?

CLEVER FRENCHMEN

The famous Houdini, born Erik Weisz, took his name from Frenchman, Jean Eugene Robert Houdin, gifted magician, watchmaker and inventor who is actually credited for inventing the electric light bulb 15 years before Edison.



And whilst we're on the subject of famous Frenchmen, have you heard about La Petomomane? He didn't take his name from a gifted magician. Oh no! Joseph Pujol was a gentleman who became a very famous vaudeville act due to his amazing ability to control his bottom muscles!! His stage name of Le Petomane (loosely translated as "the farter") rather gives it away! One of the highlights of his act was pumping out the Marseillaise through his bottom!

Money, money, money

If you just love money, head for the Joseph Puig Museum of Coins and Medals in Perpignan. Apparently the only museum of its kind in France and the largest in Europe, it displays coins and medals from all time periods and locations, with some very rare coins from Catalonia and the Roussillon.

42 av. de la Grande-Bretagne
Perpignan Tel: 04 68 66 24 86



Bottoms up for petanque

According to the rules of petanque, when a player loses the game without scoring a single point, (13 to 0), "il a fait fanny" (he has made fanny), and has to kiss the bottom of a girl called Fanny - the ultimate humiliation for boules players. Of course, it is quite rare to find an obliging Fanny on the boules pitch, so there is usually a substitute pair of buttocks available in the form of a painting, sculpture, pottery bum.... If your name IS Fanny, and you're looking for a bit of fun this weekend, why not take a stroll around the petanque pitches!

'Partir' - Described on Expatica as a sort of « bourgeois Lady Chatterley's Lover », French film 'Partir' was partly filmed in the Languedoc-Roussillon and stars Kristin Scott Thomas, a married lady who falls for her builder. Whilst the main filming took place in Nîmes, several scenes were filmed in Cerdère.

'Only 24 hours from Tulsa..... sorry.....

Préfecture! - A prefecture is not necessarily the largest town within a 'département'. Whether or not a French town was classed as a 'préfecture' was decided according to the time taken to travel from the border of the department on horseback. Horsey had to be able to reach any town in the department within 24 hours.

C'est la vie! - According to a survey by International Living magazine, France has come out on top for the fifth year in a row as the best country in the world to live in whilst poor old Britain trails well behind at number 25 out of 194 countries surveyed. *Results were based on criteria such as cost of living, average house prices, tax and inflation rates, leisure and culture, economy, environment.....*

Weightwatchers The roundabout by the casino in Le Boulou, on the Le Perthus road is a fave hangout for naughty gendarmes on the pull. If you decide to go to Le Perthus or Spain to stock up on cheap booze, bear in mind that if your car is overloaded, they will pull you up. On the spot fines of around 100€ can be levied or in extreme circumstances the car could even be seized.



A little ass or a load of BULL?

Impossible around here to miss the donkey sticker on the back of some cars and the bull stickers on others! The donkey is the symbol of Catalonia, North and South, whilst the bull is the unofficial national symbol of Spain.

The whole thing actually goes back to the Osborne sherry company who put up large black silhouetted images of a bull in semi-profile to advertise their sherry on sites near to major roads throughout Spain. When a law was passed in the 1990s prohibiting such advertising, the bull was already

nationally famous, so it was agreed that the bulls would remain, but the name Osborne would be removed. There are now nearly one hundred examples of the Osborne bull advertisements, often sited on a low hilltop so as to be clearly silhouetted against the sky. Car stickers and T shirts of the Osborne bull were by now all over Spain – a symbol of Spanish pride – so the Catalans ‘hit back’ by producing their own unofficial national symbol – el burro – a symbol of Catalan pride!



Bra
La
La!



Just in case you have been choosing your French bras by trial and error ladies, here is a useful conversion table so you don't have a droopy summer!!

32 = 85	46 = 120
34 = 90	48 = 125
36 = 95	50 = 130
38 = 100	52 = 135
40 = 105	54 = 140
42 = 110	56 = 145
44 = 115	

Cup sizes the same apart from

DD = E
E = F
F = G
FF = H

Coasting

The Côte Vermeille (vermillion coast) stretches from Argelès-sur-Mer to Cerbère via Collioure, Port Vendres and Banyuls-sur-Mer. This part of the coastline covers a mere 15 kilometres but the winding road from Port-Vendres to Cerbère makes it feel much longer, despite the superb views! Take a sick bag for the folk in the back seat!

The Cote Radieuse takes less than half an hour to drive from Barcarès to Argelès, passing through Torreilles, Ste Marie la Mer, Canet en Roussillon, and St Cyprien.

Events festival traditions....

22 June - throughout the region

La Trobada du Canigou & the Focs de la Sant Joan

Els Focs de la Sant Joan, the Fires of St John, an important symbol of the unity of the Catalan culture, takes place on the region's sacred mountain, Canigou (2,784 metres), and in towns and villages right across Catalonia.

The first midsummer fire on Canigou was lit on 23 June 1955 by one Francois Poujade and fellow USAP rugby fanatics - to celebrate his birthday and also the Perpignan team's victory over FC Lourdes in the Yves du Manoir Challenge cup.

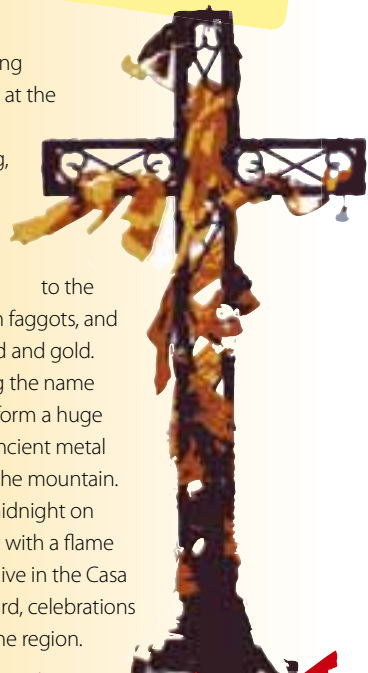
La Trobada (gathering or reunion) is the meeting of walkers and representatives of villages and towns throughout Catalonia. They make their way along the track known as La Piste du Llech (a five hour walk), on foot, by horse, mountain bike or 4x4s, to Les Cortalets (altitude 2,150 metres), below Canigou, about a week before the solstice bonfire. With them they bring faggots of vine cuttings - symbols, like the fire itself, of "love and peace" to be deposited

The curative powers of local herbs such as rosemary, thyme and verbenas are supposed to be 100 times stronger on the eve of Saint Jean. Verbena in particular, and carlina (a type of thistle shaped like the sun) apparently act as an aphrodisiac, and if nailed to the door, protect from evil spirits and prevent 'mauvaises fées' (bad fairies) entering the house.

the following morning round the iron cross at the summit of Canigou.

The next morning, after much feasting and very little sleep, they make the four-hour climb to the top of Canigou, with faggots, and ribbons of blood-red and gold. The faggots, bearing the name of each commune, form a huge bonfire round the ancient metal cross on the top of the mountain.

A week later, at midnight on 22 June, the fire is lit with a flame permanently kept alive in the Casa Pairal, and on the 23rd, celebrations begin throughout the region.



Correfocs originate from a form of medieval street theatre called 'Ball de Diables', representing the fight of good against evil.

To ensure that any festival goes with a bang, their meaning of "fire runs" says it all! Dressed in red and black, wearing horns and masks, 'colles de diables' (groups of 'devils') dance amongst the

crowds accompanied by loud music, waving sparklers, firecrackers, and roman candles, spitting fire into the crowd. Great atmosphere, great fun but can be very frightening for small children, animals and the less adventurous adult! Amongst other useful advice during a correfoc, the Generalitat de Catalunya suggests "If by any chance your



A selection ofsummer fun, festivals and fireworks. For more details, dates and origins, visit our site on www.anglophone-direct.com or check out the local tourist office.

Saturday 5th June - Céret

Festival d'Havaneres del Vallespir

Lively sailor 'sing-songs' accompanied by guitar, accordion and a tot or two of rum!

Saturday 5th - Sunday

6th June - Céret

Festival du chien - Crafts comes to Céret!

Saturday 19th June - Canet

Canet summer season opens with Irish dance show and fireworks

Saturday 19th June - Vernet

Giant 'cargolade' (10 000 snails), + fire show

Monday 21st June - (national)

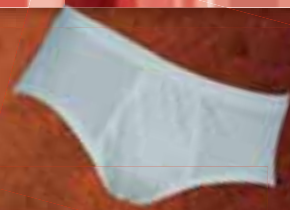
La Fête de la Musique - Open to anyone, no matter how good or bad your music is. Sounds of salsa, string quartets and steel bands, rock, pop, jazz and soul ring out from every street corner

Saturday 26th June - Argelès-plage

Corso nocturne d'été - parades, floats and music in the streets

Saturday 24th July
Prats-de-Mollo
FÊTE DU SLIP
Yes it's the
underpants festival!!

According to legend, (some what unsubstantiated and heartily embroidered but who cares?) Caporal Calçotets (caleçon = boxers) of Fort Lagarde punished the soldiers by ordering them to carry out an assault course in their underwear! They broke every record for speed and endurance! To 'immortalise' this event, a great feast was organised which became a yearly celebration known as the « Fête du Slip ». Games, barbecue and loads of foam as everybody slips and slides around and men in underpants parade, ending in the burning of the underpants king!!



Every Thursday eve in July
and August - Perpignan

Les Jeudis de Perpignan - music, street theatre, jugglers, acrobats, flamenco, salsa, jazz..... and late night shopping!

Every Wednesday eve in July
and August - Argelès

Entertainment on the port

Wednesday 30th June - Thursday 1st July Céret

Les Querencias

Catalan festival of flamenco music and dancing

clothing catches fire, throw yourself on the ground and roll over to put out the flames. Above all, do not run, as this will spread the flames and make them burn more fiercely."

Castells (Catalan for castles) originated at the end of the 18th century in Valls, Tarragona, when rival "colles" (groups) began to compete in constructing human towers.



These castellers (castle-

makers), wear traditional Catalan costume and climb on to each others' shoulders to create a human pyramid, sometimes up to eight or nine storeys high and often topped off with a brave child, a bit like a cherry on a cake!

Géants (giants) are enormous painted papier-maché figures, sometimes 14 or 15 ft tall, with traditional

Events festival traditions....

3rd – 13th July - Perpignan

Les Estivales

Eclectic mix of music, opera, ballet & theatre www.estivales.com

Sunday 4th July - Torreilles

Romeria – Spanish festival of music, dancing, bodegas.....

Wednesday 7th July -

Argelès-sur-Mer - Fête

de la Mer + fireworks

Tuesday 13 July – Canet

Musical fireworks

and grand bal

Friday 9th July - Rivesaltes

Apricot festival - All things apricot

Friday 9th – Monday 12th

July – Chateau Valmy, Argelès

Les Déferlantes Deep Purple, Suzanne Vega, Patti Smith, Iggy Pop, Gossip
www.lesdeferlantesdargelessurmer.com

July 14th - National

La Fête de la Bastille marks the storming of the Bastille prison in 1789 and the beginning of the French Revolution of 1789. Watch out for fireworks, dancing and music almost everywhere

Friday 16th – Saturday

17th July – Le Boulou

LA FIESTA - Bands, bodegas, drinking and dancing including

“la course des plumards” (speedy bed race through the streets)

Friday 23rd - Sunday

25th July - Céret

Festival de la Sardane

Sardanes competitions with ‘colles’ (sardane dance troupes) from all over Catalonia.

Saturday 31st July - Sorède

FESTIVAL DE BLUES in the Jardins de la mairie

Wednesday 4th August

- Argelès-sur-Mer

Fête du Port + fireworks

Sunday 1st August - Vernet

The Canigou race - not for the faint hearted!

Friday 6th - Sunday 8th August

- Mourets beach, Leucate

Les Méditerranéennes de Leucate

Mediterranean music festival on the beach with new and established artists
www.lesmediterraneennes.fr

Ceret (10th – 11th August)

Collioure (14th – 18th August)

Millas (5th – 8th August)

Bullfighting festival, with bull run through the streets, market, bands, street entertainment and party atmosphere.
Not to everyone's taste!

26th July – 13th August

One of the most respected chamber music festivals in

Europe, this festival takes place in the beautiful abbey of Saint-Michel de Cuxà and other churches in the Prades area. As you might expect from a festival named after a world famous cellist, many of the concerts focus on the cello.
www.prades-festival-casals.com



Wednesday 12th

August - Rivesaltes

The Babau of Rivesaltes

Street parades with stilt walkers, fire eaters, jugglers, brass bands - fireworks at nightfall

15th August - SAINT CYPRIEN

has one of the most talked about firework displays in the region

Friday 20th - Sunday 22nd

August - Arles-sur-Tech

Saturday 28th - Sunday

29th August – Canet

Medieval markets and re-enactments

Fire eaters, sword fighting, re-enactments of medieval scenes, jugglers..... Canet village and Arles-sur-Tech go back in time

clothing and a person inside. They usually appear in couples during the patron saint holidays (Festa Major), carnivals and parades, often as king and queen, or some important person in the history of the town. They dance in the streets with little “big-heads” or “cap-grossos”. The **Sardane**, or sardana, is a traditional

Catalonian circle dance, believed to be of Greek origin, designed to bring whole villages out onto the village green and get them in party mood - a little like a more complicated version of the ‘hokey cokey’ in fact! Music for the sardane is played by a cobla, a wind band with typical Catalan instruments.

July/August - Perpignan

International Carillon

Festival (Cathedral bells

played via keyboard)

Recommended listening

place, Old St. John church

square between Restaurant

St. Jean and Cathedral. Listen

to the bells ringing out a

variety of music. More details:

[Perpignan Tourist Office.](#)

Tuesday 3rd -

Sunday 8th August

- Amélie-les-Bains

Festival Folklorique

The oldest dance festival

in the Pyrénées Orientales,

dance troupes from

around the world will

light up Amélie with a

kaleidoscope of colour

and rhythm.

68^e Festival Folklorique International



Night markets (August only)

(Usually take place from
around 19h - midnight)

Canet - Every evening (sea

front) and every Saturday (port)

Céret - Every Tuesday

Argelès - Every Tuesday

and Friday (Port)

Every night - craft

(Parking des Platanes)

Prades - Every Friday

Torreilles - Tuesdays

and Thursdays (Espace

des Capellans)

Le Barcarès - Every

evening (craft)

Ste-Marie-La-Mer -

Wednesday, Friday and

Saturday (sea front)



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DON'T BE SELFISH WITH YOUR SHELLFISH

Something fishy going on in Port Vendres

It serves no proper meals, just dégustation, samples of its retail selection of seafood. It has no tables, so you cannot book one. It doesn't advertise and has no website. It closes at 7 pm, just as traditional dinnertime starts. The Port Vendres wholesale fish market (Criée aux poissons) is a popular seafood eatery and shopping point. With

good reason: the best of raw materials are close at hand, as the market is among the largest in the western Mediterranean.

The focal point for sampling shoppers as well as snack seekers is a pub-height counter toward the back of the retail shop. Here, you rub shoulders with the real stuff: the waiters are seafood workers, wearing

rubber boots and waterproof aprons. They speed back and forth, opening oysters, cleaning mussels and serving customers at the counter. The menu of reasonably-priced small dishes is a single A4 sheet, printed both sides, encased in plastic, oysters, shellfish and crustaceans on one side, tapas and wines on the other. Everything on the menu is available on the shelves and counters in the shop; few customers leave without buying something to take home.



Les huîtres - oysters

Traditionally eaten raw with lemon juice or red wine vinegar but delicious grilled with shallots and butter.



Les moules - mussels

Steamed or boiled, mussels need very little cooking, if you don't want to end up with rubbery flesh. Discard any that fail to open fully.



Les crevettes - prawns

Boil in salted water for a couple of minutes if bought raw. Also delicious grilled, deep-fried, stir-fried or barbecued on a kebab stick.



Les tourteaux - crabs

Steam, boil or poach, but if you're squeamish like me, better to buy already cooked, as crab should be cooked alive.



les langoustines - langoustines

Boil in salted water for up to ten minutes. Grill with oil and garlic, or deep-fry in batter.



les homards - lobsters

Cooked lobster can be served hot or cold and is delicious with melted butter, lemon juice or mayonnaise

Most shellfish in our shops have already been prepared, but do make sure that you discard any with broken or closed shells or bodies.



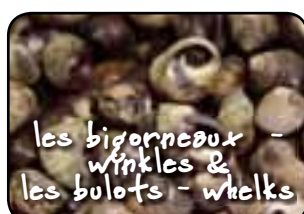
Les violets de roche

A little like soft oysters with a pungent orange flesh which isn't to everyone's taste.



Les coques - cockles

Grill, sautéed or steam in their shells - lovely with garlic, lemon & coriander



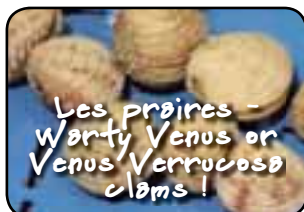
les bigorneaux - winkles & les bulots - whelks

Steam, stir-fry or coat in breadcrumbs and fry.



Les amandes - dog cockles

Like a small clam, with a sweet, almost almond flavour. Rather tough after cooking



Les paires - Warty Venus or Venus verrucosa clams!

The English name is probably enough to put you off buying these

La Criée aux poissons

Anse Gerbal, 66660

Port Vendres,

open 08:30-12:30 & 15:30-

19:00 Tuesdays to Saturdays;

09:00-12:30 Sundays and

holidays; closed Mondays.



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Food with a View



The Catalan tradition for an “-ada” (a collective meal for many, based around a single ingredient,) often creates some highly unusual, charming festivals where the whole community meet up in the ‘place’. Some examples are **bullinada** (fish stew), **cargolada** (grilled snails), **ollada**, (a winter stew), **escalivada** (grilled veggies), **calçotada** (char grilled onions)..

France may have a reputation for serving great coffee, but if you don't know what to ask for, you are likely to remain desperate for your caffeine fix once you've knocked back that traditional tiny cup of coffee. If you ask for 'un café' it will automatically arrive black, and go down in one gulp. Here is some useful vocab to make sure that you always satisfy your coffee cravings!



coffee > café

Un (grand) café...

.....**au lait** : milky coffee

....**glacé**: iced coffee

....**liègeois**: iced coffee served with ice cream (optional) and whipped cream

....**serré** : extra-strong espresso, made with half the normal amount of water

Un allongé : espresso with extra water

Un (grand) crème : espresso with warmed or steamed milk.

Une noisette : espresso with tiny amount of milk in small cup

Un déca or **décaféiné** : decaffeinated coffee

Escalivada

It's barbeque season! Escalivada comes from the Catalan word **escalivar**, meaning “to char”, as the vegetables were traditionally cooked over embers to give the smoky flavour that is the essence of the dish.

This versatile salad can be served as an entrée with crusty or toasted bread, or as an accompaniment to roast meat or fish. Serve warm or at room temperature, but never straight from the fridge.

Ingredients

2 aubergines
2 green peppers
2 red peppers
4 red onions
8 tomatoes
30 cl olive oil

salt and pepper
1 large clove of garlic, chopped
1 tbl spoon sherry vinegar
2 tbl spoon coarsely chopped flat-leaf parsley
2 teaspoons small capers in vinegar, drained

Hors D'oeuvre

Literally meaning ‘outside the works’ hors d'oeuvres was originally an architectural term for an outbuilding which was not part of the architect's main design. The phrase was ‘borrowed’ by French chefs to describe appetisers served outside the main design of the meal.

Beer measures

Absolutely formidable

12,5 cl = **un bock**
25 cl = **un demi**
50 cl = **un distingué**
1 lt = **un parfait**
2 lt = **un sérieux**
3 lt = **un formidable!!**



Un cuisinier dit au serveur:

«Supprime le “cassoulet maison” sur les menus. Je viens de casser l'ouvre-boîte»

Supprime = delete

Ouvre-boîte = can opener

Preparation :

Char-grill or barbecue peppers and aubergines until soft and tender, then transfer to a bowl, cover with clingfilm, and stand for 15 minutes. Peel both, removing seeds from peppers and tear into large pieces. Remove stem end of aubergine and tear lengthways into 6 pieces. Chop onions and lightly brush with olive oil, then char-grill or barbecue for 3-4 minutes on each side or until just tender and golden. Place char-grilled vegetables on a large platter or in separate bowls.

Place garlic and 1 teaspoon sea salt into a mortar and, using a pestle, pound into a smooth paste, add ¼ cup olive oil, vinegar, parsley and capers. Season to taste with freshly ground black pepper, combine well, drizzle mixture over grilled vegetables and serve with crusty bread.



JUST IN CASE YOU NEED AN EXCUSE....

It seems that calories from wine cause women to put on less weight than the calories from foods.

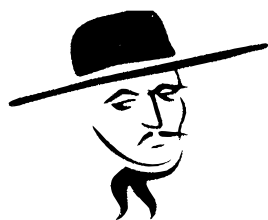
According to www.timesonline.co.uk, new research shows that "moderate female drinkers have a lower risk of obesity than teetotalers"

It is possible that the liver breaks down alcohol in a different way, turning it mainly into heat, as opposed to fat.

Beer and spirits do not come into this category, just in case you were about to pour yourself a cold glass of San Miguel!!



*Chevauchez vers les
Saveurs du Sud*



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La Littorine Banyuls sur Mer



Restaurant Review

With John Fairclough

Over the years I've seen restaurants by the sea, lake, river, canal and even docks, but rarely have I come across one closer to the water's edge than the Littorine at the Plage des Elmes just outside Banyuls sur Mer.

This is no rough and ready beachside shack though. The comfortable dining area's windows and shady veranda open directly out onto the sandy

little cove where your meal is pleasantly accompanied by the gentle lapping of the waves.

Our visit was just after the reopening in March, so we did not benefit from the full "pieds dans l'eau" experience, but the cosy ambience, impeccable

service and superb food more than compensated.

There are a range of menus from 26 to 45 €, plus carte, of course. The lowest price offering gives excellent value, as it features plenty of fresh fish, and high quality meat, all cooked in a varied and unusual way.

As starters we had sauteed foie gras and prawn tails with a white banyuls reduction, and also pan fried lamb sweetbreads with ginger and small turnips. Both were very unusual for the area and delicious.

We both plumped for fish as a main; blanquette of cod accompanied by copious fresh small vegetables, and mixed local fish platter with lemon butter sauce.

Meat based alternatives

included supreme of pigeon, veal chop and tournedos with a red banyuls reduction. Fancier pickings for the real gourmet are available on the carte or dearer menus.

Desserts are all home made and vary daily depending on availability, and, very rarely for this area, a full "chariot de fromages", with some interesting cheeses is a feature.

Needless to say, local Collioure wines feature heavily on the wine list. Whilst the wines are not especially cheap, there are a number, not just from Roussillon, that are around the 16€ a bottle mark.

To secure a table, particularly one with a sea view, booking is recommended on 04 68 88 03 12. English appears to be quite widely spoken by all the staff. Being right on the main coast road, the Littorine is easily found, and parking appears plentiful.



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Un homme vole une poule dans une ferme et la ramène chez lui. Il commence à la déplumer quand les gendarmes arrivent. Pris de panique, le voleur jette la poule déplumée dans sa piscine.

Le gendarme lui dit:

- Je sais que c'est vous qui avez volé la poule !!
- Mais non, dit le voleur, elle voulait se baigner et elle m'a demandé de garder ses affaires.

Vole - steals

Une poule - chicken (live)

Ramene - takes back

Deplumer - to pluck

Se baigner - to swim

garder - to look after

ses affaires - her belongings

ll

Le pied dans le plat

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English spoken

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SISTERS ARE DOING IT FOR THEMSELVES

When you meet pretty Perpignan pair Claude and Florence, you are left in no doubt that, in the words of Annie Lennox, 'sisters are doing it for themselves!'

Not only have this dynamic duo come back from their travels and taken over the Asia Centre in Cabestany, but they also have plans to take over the world..... world food that is!

All things Oriental, Asian and Exotic will still adorn their shelves to ensure that your curries, stir fries and sushi achieve perfection, but alongside home made 'boeuf piquant' from Vietnam and 'crevettes sautées basilique' from Thailand, a whole range of other continents will be making an appearance in the future.

With a much needed injection of 'fresh', these new brooms will be sweeping away the faded fans and paltry palms and replacing them with chic 'around the world' sections, including a wide



range of British products, which they will be happy to add to regularly, according to your requests.

There will also be themed tastings. Yummy!

So next time you find yourself trying to squeeze that jar of 'Chicken Tonight' into your 10kg luggage allowance, or whistling as that bottle of Ribena shows up clearly on the X ray machine at airport security, just remember how much easier it would be to visit Claude and Florence at the Asia Centre.



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A TOUCH OF CLASS COMES TO BELESTA

Something exciting is going on in Belesta!

The former wine cooperative has been given a total makeover, and magically transformed into a superb 4* hotel and gourmet restaurant.

In a perfect marriage of ancient and modern, the 18 bedrooms and suites created in and around the old wine vats use contemporary Mediterranean style, yet retain the atmosphere of this most ancient of wineries.

And what else could they call the new restaurant, located where once stood the old wine press, but "*La Coopérative*", reflecting generations of villagers who toiled

to bring in the grape harvest?

Due to open in July, this eco friendly renovation, with solar panels and natural pool, set amongst rolling vineyards and spectacular scenery, is a perfectly balanced reflection of its 'terroir', the soils and the climate where the grapes grow.

And with its 11th century

Chateau with museum dedicated to the ancient history of the region, nearby cave where 6000 year old Neolithic remains were discovered in 1983, and fantastic walks on the doorstep, there is so much more to discover in this lovely part of the PO.

Find out about the people behind it, and the trials and tribulations of this massive renovation project in the autumn edition of PO Life.



opening july 2010



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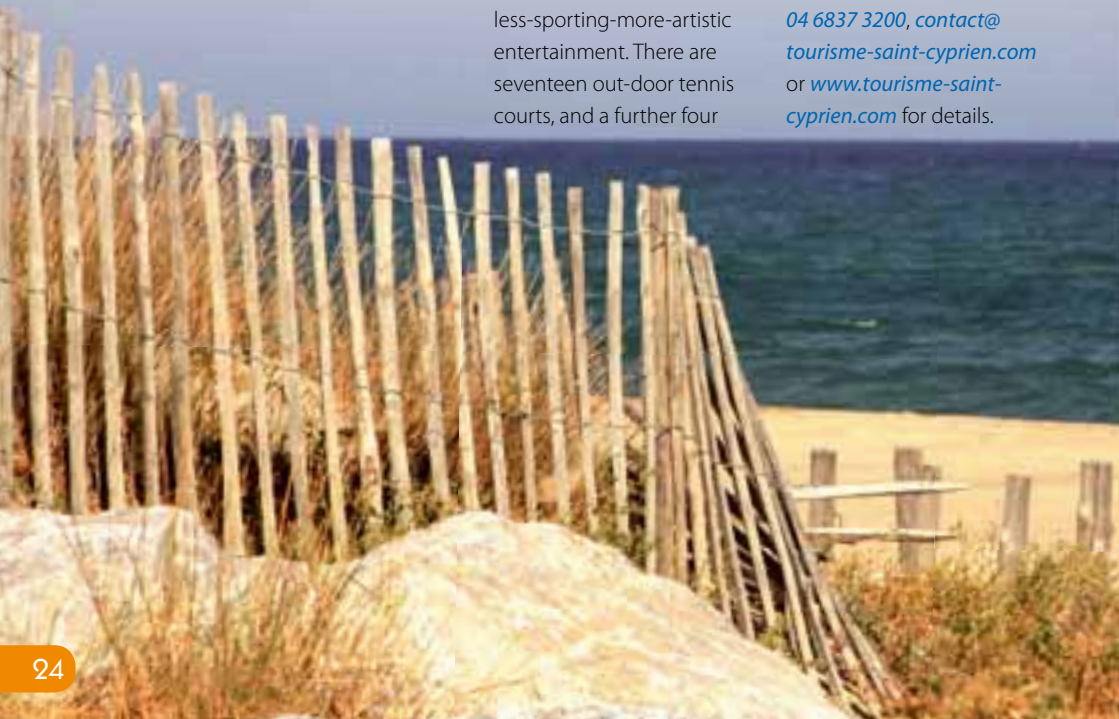
ST CYPRIEN

Miles of golden sands, a port so full of yachts the masts almost obscure the palm trees, a golf club of some renown, restaurants, bars, a casino, a discothèque, quayside fishing boats, sporting opportunities galore, an old village centre with excellent art galleries, the watery play park of Aqualand and a botanical garden in which are peacocks. Enough for several days out if not an entire holiday, and all to be found in St Cyprien.

Le Jardin des Plantes des Capellans next to the sports complex on Rue Verdi has a collection of palms and a bambouserie, the star of which is the giant from Japan that, in May, grows up to a metre a day, over a centimetre an hour. There is also a collection of over four hundred roses as well as many local Mediterranean plants through which peacocks strut.

It is to the Grand Stade des Capellans that the whole family can go for a summer of sporting and less-sporting-more-artistic entertainment. There are seventeen out-door tennis courts, and a further four

indoors. There is squash, swimming, body building and fitness gym. There is an 'ESPACE ZEN' where sauna and jacuzzi await as well as face, feet and body massage. You can join for an hour, a day, a week, a year and the prices are very reasonable. And whilst you're relaxing in the spa, children can have a whale of a time at the kids club for a half or full day of fun including rugby, football, circus, archery, painting or dance. Join as a family and all will profit from the wide variety of skills and activities available. Most of the staff are young, enthusiastic and bi-lingual. [04 6837 3200](tel:0468373200), contact@tourisme-saint-cyprien.com or www.tourisme-saint-cyprien.com for details.





A Roller Coaster of Summer Fun!

Reach for the skies

French Aerobatics Display, August 22
Helicopter initiation, June 12 and July 13

Drift away

Story time every Thursday at the botanical gardens

Firework Extravaganza

The port August 15

Share traditions

“Sardinade” followed by fireworks on August 15

The Museum

Desnoyer throughout the year ...

Welcome Drink

Every Monday in the heart of the old village

Excel

Sports courses for children and adults
International dance workshops from July 18 to 23

Play

Treasure hunt, every Tuesday afternoon in the Parc des Capellans
Children's area, every Sunday afternoon

Discover

Original art exhibits 3, 4 and 5 September at the Capellans

In March 1939, ninety thousand refugees were lodged in outstandingly inadequate shelters on the beaches of Saint Cyp. It took the floods of October 1940 to finally force the closure of this appalling camp. How very, very lucky we are to be visiting St Cyprien in 2010...

And of course, laugh, dance and sing throughout the summer at the 'bals', discos, evening events ...

Visit www.tourisme-saint-cyprien.com for more great summer highlights and entertainment or contact the tourist office:

04 68 21 01 33



Saint-Cyprien

Out for the day...



all photos on these pages © www.tourisme-saint-cyprien.com

St Cyprien is a family resort. The cafes and restaurants are user friendly, the port a hive of boating activity. There is a market on Fridays on the port and Thursdays in the village. In the village are two excellent art galleries. Of particular interest

this summer is the fact that the current Mayor is recovering all the valuable works of art that went walkabout under the old regime with a view to displaying them at both the Collections Desnoyer and the Gallery of Contemporary Art. The purpose

is to enable International Art dealers to see and buy some of the treasures of St Cyprien. The considerable side benefit being that they can also be admired and enjoyed by the public. From impressionist to ethnic, from classic to

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contemporary, beginning in June there will be new themed exhibitions every month.

The surrounding countryside is rich in riding stables. Get a list from the Tourist Office. In fact horse drawn carriages are being planned by the Tourist Office as an ecologically green and fun form of tourist transport in St Cyprien this summer. And the Tourist Office has more activities planned than there is room to mention here. You will just have to go along and find them out for yourself.



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Out for the day...



From Saillagousse & Llo to Err

OR "SAILLAGOUSSE, SAILLAGOUSSE CAN YOU DO THE FANDANGO"

Saillagousse, on the N116 between Mont Louis and Bourg Madame, is the home of Bonzom and some of the best charcuterie in the Pyrénées-Orientales. Ring [04 68 04 14 27](tel:0468041427) for the visiting hours of their ham drying workshop on the edge of the village where 700 hams hang for between six months to two years and watch the film describing the traditional methods of the house. A large sow named Cotelette surveys the car park secure in the knowledge that she is far too old and fat to end up on the inside.

Bernard Bonzom began the business about thirty years ago and is justifiably proud of all they produce. His pigs live in the open air, rooting through pine forest and meadows in Serdinya before being transformed into saucissons of pure pork and dried hams second to none. Once you have done the tour you will never again settle for commercially produced saucissons containing who knows what additives. If you have any doubts you can sample a platter of charcuterie or cheese accompanied by local

wine for a modest 6.50 euros in the converted cowsheds under their superb shop. The Bonzom Emporium itself is stuffed with Bonzom family produced veal, beef and pork, as delicious looking as all the other fresh and predominantly local produce temptingly displayed.

It is also where you turn off to **Llo**. Another village clinging to the mountain side, this time dominated by the tower of an ancient ruined chateau fort and the equally ruined monastery of Sant Felieu. Very much alive





From Olette via Sansa to Les Angles

For an alternative route to the high cantons of the Cerdagne and Capcir via a twisting, turning, drive through spectacular mountain scenery it is hard to beat the road from Olette to Les Angles via Sansa.

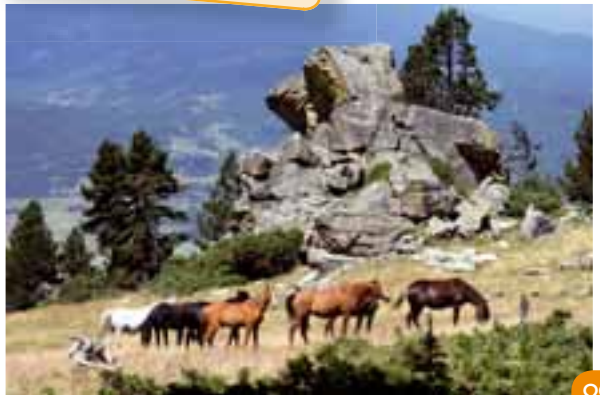
Take the road towards Evol out of Olette and turn left onto the D4. The twisting and turning begins immediately... The tiny chapel of Cabrils can be seen on a rocky out-crop above a stream of the same name. You will pass isolated farms and spectacular scenery on your way to the remote village of Sansa in the wild valley of Garrotxes (rocks,

would you believe). Either the D4 or the D5 or the C4 will bring you out in the high Capcir either via the Col de la Llose or the Col de Creu. Not a drive for the faint hearted, but, for lovers of wild and remote country, it is a joy!

are the Baths of Llo. Hot (04 68 04 74 55), sulphurous, well organised, they are open most of the year. They offer both open air and indoor swimming in water at 37 degrees. There is a Jacuzzi, hammam, bar and sauna and they are surrounded by beautiful scenery and much snow in winter. The nearby Gorges du Segre has a "via ferrata" for scalars of cliffs and lovers of rock climbing. Hire your harness and helmet and click onto the route of hand and foot holds which enable you to reach the Chapel of St Felieu. The footpath through the gorge to the refuge of Culasse at 1800 metres is gentler for those who prefer to keep their feet on the ground.

An easy drive through rich farming country brings you to **Err**. Note the church separated from its chapel by an ancient cemetery. In summer enjoy three municipal swimming pools with water toboggan slides and large picnic area. In winter the ski station of Puigmal Err caters for skiers of all levels and has some of the steepest black runs in the Pyrenees Orientales. All year round the high mountains afford splendid views over the celebrated Spanish "Cirque de Nuria"

Little and large
- According to the French statistics agency, INSEE, (Institut National de la Statistique et des Études), the most populated town or village in North Catalonia is Perpignan with **122 000** residents and the least populated is Sança, in the Conflent, 30km from Prades, with a tiddly **17** residents!



Out for the day...



Luc Viatour- www.lucnix.be

BANYULS: UNDERWATER TRAILS & CUTTLEFISH!

Head off south from Banyuls sur Mer, along the coast road to the Sentier Sous-marin (Underwater Trail) at Peyrefite. The 650 hectares of sea between Banyuls and Cerbère make up the 'Réserve Marine Naturelle'. Opened in 1974, it provides a protected space for threatened species of sea-life. No boats may enter and no fishing is

done. Masks and snorkels can be hired and the trail of 250 metres has buoys at intervals, each with an underwater notice listing the different species that may be seen.

Cliffs shelter the bay of Peyrefite from the Tramontane wind and the slope is gentle, making the start of the route well within one's depth. On one side of the

beach vineyards run to the cliff edge, on the other, cork trees provide shady picnic spots.

The Banyuls Aquarium in the Laboratoire Arago at the end of Banyuls marina also offers a glimpse of local underwater life: bright corals, octopus, eels, fish of all shapes, sizes and hues, plus showcases of seabirds.



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James Foster provides us with a fascinating insight into one of the inmates of the Banyuls Aquarium....

The smart 'seiche'

Superheroes of the sea, the seiche (European cuttle fish) is blessed with the powers of invisibility, x-ray vision and communicating in an invisible secret code.

Resembling a flattened squid with a rather smug expression, the seiche (*Sepia officinalis*) has been the focus of studies aimed at uncovering the secrets of adaptive camouflage (like in the film 'Predator'), seeing through the camouflage of other animals, and cryptic communication.

Their skin is the key to their impressive arsenal of colours and shapes which both hide them from their enemies and allow them to talk to each other. Shiny 'iridophores' reflect light from the surrounding area, mirroring the colour and brightness of the animal's surroundings, while dark 'chromatophores' expand and contract at will to create camouflaging patterns or pulsing stripes. For years it was thought that cuttlefish would use these amazing tools

simply to resemble a photo of their background, but cuttlefish are smarter than that. Looking like the background is fine, but in nature it is often not enough: the trick is to look like a truly unremarkable part of the background. Could you find a photo of your coffee table on your coffee table? I think so; it has clear edges, it looks out of place, it probably doesn't quite fit in with any patterns present on the surface unless arranged just right (which would be very hard in practice, try it if you don't believe me). Cuttlefish avoid this problem by having a bias towards lumpy patterns that overlap with their edges, disguising them amongst the shadows and making them look, if anything, a bit like a very boring rock.

Cuttlefish have enemies of

course, and there's only so many times the jet-of-ink-to-the-face trick works on predators after a mouthful of calamari. Hiding is the best strategy, and works fine when cuttlefish are using their super-camouflage to blend with the background, but what do they do when they want to talk to each other about things like "Get off my land!" and "Fancy a quickie?" without being detected? With a horny beak for a mouth whispering is pretty much out, but cuttlefish have evolved a more elegant solution. They use their shiny 'iridophores' (the reflective, mirror-like bits of their skin) to polarize light reflected from their skin, sending cryptic messages to each other without alerting predators of their presence.

Something to think about next time you're tucking into some fruits de mer, or at an aquarium staring at the pretty colours?

Out for the day...



A TALE OF TWO TRAINS

In the P-O we have two very special trains. How lucky is that? One runs up the Agly valley, the other, the valley of the Têt. Both lines are just over a hundred years old. A journey on either train is sheer pleasure and a brilliant way to have a day out in the P-O.

TPCF: Train du Pays Cathare et du Fenouilledes.

Running from Rivesaltes, just off the N9 north of Perpignan, to Axat, high up in the Fenouillèdes, a line was built at the very beginning of the 20th century and was in regular passenger use until 1939. In 1993 the Association of the Train du Pays Cathare et du Fenouillede was formed by three men, all train enthusiasts and determined to breathe new life into the old line. The SNCF was selling off its 1960's "Picasso" autorails at a reasonable price and it was in 2002 that they began circulating between Cases de Pène and Lapradelle. Now the bright red and white carriages await you at Rivesaltes, small and gentle beside the speeding TGVs and international freight trains. They pass through a land of vines and Cathar Castles, a slow climbing journey of 60 km. After Cases de Pène, on the left hand side you can see the tiny hermitage church of Notre Dame de Pène, on the right the vineyards of Chateau de Jau.



Tasting lunches and dinners held by the lake in the shade of a 300 year-old mulberry tree are a must-do for all wine enthusiasts. [04 68 38 91 38](tel:0468389138).

Next stop: Estagel, birthplace of Francois Arago. Look out for Mas Amiel and Chateau de Queribus standing on the skyline across the vines as you draw into Maury, owned by Cave of the Vignerons of Maury: [tel 04 68 59 00 95](tel:0468590095). Get off here for tasting and castle visits.

At St Paul de Fenouillet, on some trips, a bus is laid on to explore the Gorges de Galamus.

At St Paul de Fenouillet visit Le Chapitre, a IX century Abbey cum XIV century College with a dramatic dome housing a museum of Art and Tradition plus exhibitions of painting and sculpture, minerals and archaeological treasures. The countryside becomes more and more dramatic

and, at Lapradelle, the train stops on the 1904 viaduct to allow you to admire the Chateau of Puilaurens. A series of tunnels and a sharp climb end on a viaduct over the Aude, more fantastic



views before finally stopping in the pretty little town of Axat. In the reception hut is a perfect model of Axat Station in the 60's made by one of the founder members of the TPCF.

The timetable and differing circuits vary from month to month. All are exciting and fun and the train can also be booked for private parties. Tickets and info: [04 68 59 96 18](tel:0468599618). www.tpcf.fr

Le petit train Jaune

Everyone has heard of the Little Yellow Train. Running the 63 km from Villefranche de Conflent to Latour de Carol it connects with lines from Paris to Port Bou, from Toulouse to Barcelona. Conceived in 1883, the work started in 1903, and, when it was



completed in 1911, brought the high cantons of the Cerdagne and Capcir into the 20th century. The train was used for goods as well as passengers until at least 1945 when the road became more popular. In 1970 the line was on the point of closure. It was decided to revamp it as a tourist attraction. A good idea. It now carries at least 200,000 tourists a year.

The engineering problems it overcame as it climbed to Bolquere Eyne, (at 1593 metres the highest station in France), powered by electricity created along its route, were remarkable and not without mishap. On 24th September 1909, during an important visit to the Pont Gisclard by the Minister of Public Works, a terrible accident caused the death of six men including Albert Gisclard himself. His elegant metal suspension bridge, 241 metres long by 80 metres high, was considered quite revolutionary at the time. The dramatic and beautiful Pont Sejourné, 217 by 65 metres, is the other superstar of the line.

All along the route are views of the Têt valley. Mountains, forests, small tenacious villages clinging to unlikely slopes, high pastures surrounded by ski resorts and towering Pyrenean peaks, all help to make the ride one of the great train journeys of the world.

Test your French

1 - G POUR GIRAFE!

Match up these words, all beginning with G, with their definitions.

personne d'une taille extraordinaire	1	a	gratuit
entre la cuisse et la jambe	2	b	gant
petite quantité de liquide	3	c	grippe
virus contagieux	4	d	géant
amphibien qui 'coasse'	5	e	gencive
on ne paie pas	6	f	gendarme
militaire qui fait respecter la loi.	7	g	genou
chair rose qui recouvre les dents.	8	h	glace
l'eau qui a gelé	9	I	goutte
un vêtement qui recouvre la main	10	J	grenouille

Blague bête

A l'arrêt de bus, maman escargot dit à son fils

« Ne t'éloigne pas trop, le bus passe dans cinq heures! »

(escargot = snail)



Oooops! Just to test if you were paying attention, we made a deliberate 🟡 mistake in the last edition. Here is the correct version!

Useful vocab

Clock wise

dans le sens des aiguilles d'une montre

Anti clockwise

dans le sens inverse des aiguilles d'une montre

Repeat three times

(Fruits cuits,
fruits crus)

Cooked fruits, raw fruits.

2 - FAUX AMIS!

In P-O Life 27 we took a look at some of the irritating 'faux amis', false language friends, specially invented to confuse you. Can you remember which is which.....with a few extras added for good measure?

1. Bondir

- a) To jump
- b) To stick together

2. Coin

- a) Corner
- b) Small change

3. Dalle

- a) Valley
- b) Paving stone

4. Devis

- a) quote
- b) tool

5. Sensible

- a) Sensible
- b) Sensitive

6. Slip

- a) Slide
- b) Underpants

7. Marmite

- a) Cooking pot
- b) Sandwich spread

8. Piles

- a) batteries
- b) haemorrhoids

9. Sale

- a) special offer
- b) dirty

10. Rester

- a) to take a nap
- b) to stay

3 - MATCH UP THESE USEFUL WORDS AND EXPRESSIONS

Dis donc !	1	A	It's essential
bon débarras!	2	B	It's driving me mad!
j'ai un petit creux	3	C	Get lost!
Ça me prend la tête!	4	D	I'm fed up!
J'en ai marre.	5	E	That's right, for sure
Casse-toi (cassez-vous)	6	F	Shall we have a bite to eat?
On casse la croûte ?	7	G	good riddance!
C'est clair	8	H	By the way
C'est indispensable	9	I	I suddenly feel exhausted
j'ai un coup de barre	10	J	I'm peckish

Language tip

"Savoir" or "Connaître"?

Savoir" and "Connaître both mean 'to know'?

Use '**Savoir**' + verb to express the idea of knowing
HOW TO DO SOMETHING

Eg je sais parler Français Tu sais danser la sardane?

Use '**Connaître**' + noun to express the idea of knowing **SOMEONE OR SOMETHING**:

Eg Il connaît mon frère

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Test your French

4 - USE THE WORDS BELOW TO FILL IN THE SPACES IN THIS REMINDER OF WHAT MONEY CAN'T BUY!

L'ARGENT

Il peut acheter une maison

Mais pas un foyer

Il peut acheter un lit

Mais pas le sommeil

Il peut acheter une horloge

Mais pas le 1 _____

Il peut acheter un livre

Mais pas la 2 _____

Il peut acheter une position

Mais pas le 3 _____

Il peut payer le médecin

Mais pas la 4 _____

Il peut acheter du sang

Mais pas la 5 _____

Il peut acheter du sexe

Mais pas de l'6 _____

a) Santé b) amour c) connaissance d) respect e) temps f) vie

5 - Fill in the blanks with the help of the vocabulary below:

Une jeune 1 _____ américaine visite un vieux château 2 _____, que l'on dit hanté.

À la 3 _____ de la visite le guide lui 4 _____ si elle a aimé.

La 5 _____ dame reconnaît qu'elle a eu 6 _____ de voir 7 _____ des fantômes.

Le guide lui répond:

"Ne vous affolez pas, il n'y a aucun risque: je n'ai jamais 8 _____

un fantôme 9 _____ que je suis ici!"

"Ah, et cela fait combien de 10 _____?"

"oh, je ne sais plus exactement, je pense environ trois siècles..."

a) jeune b) vu c) temps d) touriste e) arriver f) depuis g) demande h) écosais i) fin j) peur

Savez-vous comment
on appelle un collectionneur de nounours
(teddy bears)? - Un "arctophile"!
(Venant du mot grec "arktos" qui signifie ours
et d'où vient aussi le mot "arctique" !)



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Saying thank you

Merci bien (mehr-see bee-ann)

Thanks a lot

Merci mille fois (mehr-see meal fwa)

Thanks a million

C'est (vraiment) gentil de ta/votre part.

(seh vray-mon chontee duh tah/vot par)

It's (very) kind of you.

Je ne sais pas comment vous remercier

(chuh nuh say pah common voo re-mehr-see-ay)

I don't know how to thank you.

Remerciez-le/la de ma part

(re-mehr-see-ay luh/lah duh ma par)

Thank him/her for me.

Transmettez mes remerciements à

(Trans-mettay may re-mehr-see-uh-mon ah....)

Pass on my thanks to

Je vous remercie de l'avoirtrouvé/cherché/ouvert

(Chuh voo re-mehr-see duh lav-wah true-vay/cher-shay/oo-vair)

Thank you for finding/looking for/opening it.

Merci mille fois de nous avoir aidés

(mehr-see bee-ann)

Thanks a million for helping us.

C'est gentil de votre part d'être venu

(say chon-tee duh vot par det venoo)

It's kind of you to come.



Une maman moustique prévient ses petits :

– Ne vous approchez jamais des humains, ils essaieront de vous tuer.

– C'est faux, maman. Hier, il y en a un qui a passé la soirée à m'applaudir !

moustique - mosquito

previent - warns

ne vous approchez jamais

never go near

tuer - to kill

passer la soirée

to spend the evening



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Orthographe

'IE' ou 'EI'?

Règle grammaticale... 'I' before 'E' except after 'C'

'I' before 'E'

believe croire
chief chef
field champ
pier jetée
thief voleur

except after 'C'

ceiling plafond
deceive tromper
receive recevoir
receipt récépissé

mais n'oubliez pas toutes les exceptions bien sur !

vein veine
weigh peser
ancient antique
efficient efficace
either l'un ou l'autre
their leur

foreign étranger
height hauteur
leisure loisirs
weird bizarre

et encore et encore.....

Take a break

to break = casser
MAIS ...

to break down
tomber en panne
(voiture, machine)

s'effondrer (personne)

enfoncer (porte)

to break in
entrer par infraction

to break off
casser (pièce, morceau)

rompre (accord, rapport)

interrompre (conversation)

to break out

se déclarer
(incendie, épidémie)

s'échapper (prisonnier)



1 - Pouvez vous trouver les équivalents en français de ces phrases utiles en anglais, qui utilisent toutes une couleur

blackmail	1	a	la police
to be caught red-handed	2	b	être à découvert
to be in the red	3	c	être ravi, très content
to be in the pink	4	d	un petit mensonge
once in a blue moon	5	e	être en bonne santé
a white lie	6	f	être très en colère
to be blue in the face	7	g	être pris la main dans le sac
a red herring	8	h	rarement
to be tickled pink	9	I	le chantage
the boys in blue	10	j	une fausse piste

Very bad joke

Q: What do you call a pig with three eyes?

A: A piig.



Phrase utile

Weather permitting

Sous réserve de beau temps

Good advice

Never take a sleeping pill and a laxative on the same night.



'Chalk and Cheese'

Things, or people described as, 'like chalk and cheese' are very different and have nothing in common.

Demandez à quelqu'un qui lit couramment l'anglais de vous lire ce poème pour vous rappeler que, comme dit Lord Cromer à la fin, «Sounds and letters disagree»

Our Queer Language Lord Cromer (1841-1917)

When the English tongue we speak,
Why is "break" not rhymed with "freak"?
Will you tell me why it's true
We say "sew" but also "few"
And the maker of a verse
Cannot cap his "horse" with "worse"?
"Beard" sounds not the same as "heard";
"Cord" is different from "word";
Cow is "cow," but low is "low";
"Shoe" is never rhymed with "foe."
Think of "hose" and "dose" and "lose";
"Doll" and "roll" and "home" and "some."
And since "pay" is rhymed with "say,"
Why not "paid" with "said," I pray?
We have "blood" and "food" and "good";
"Mould" is not pronounced as "could."
And why "done" but "gone" and "lone"?
Is there any reason known?
And, in short, it seems to me,
Sounds and letters disagree.

2 -

H - is for happy

Trouvez les définitions de ces mots suivants, qui commencent tous avec H

home for bees	1	a	hail
small rodent similar to a mouse.	2	b	hornet
bird of prey.	3	c	heart
balls of ice from the sky	4	d	hedgehog
female chicken.	5	e	heel
back part of the foot	6	f	hive
pumps blood through your body	7	g	helmet
a flying, stinging insect	8	h	hen
to protect your head	9	I	hamster
small mammal with prickly coat	10	j	hawk

Letsgetphysical...

Let's Get Physical!

Hands up if the nearest you have got recently to partaking in sporty sunshine activity is raising that glass of Roussillon red or refreshing San Miguel to your lips. OK. Put your hands down!



Did you know that there are around 100 calories in that small glass of wine and even more in that cold beer? So let's get physical!

There are so many possibilities in this land of sun, sea and sexy mountains. And you don't have to be super fit for all of them. We have put together a few fun activity suggestions, supervised by competent and friendly professionals, which are guaranteed to bring a smile to your face and a tingle to your body.

And what could be more exciting on a summer's day than hurtling down a rushing river on a raft? How about starting off with 'hot-dogging', two people in an inflatable canoe, or why not try 'hydrospeed', swimming turbulent waters clinging to a rather special float? Are you tempted?

Maybe you would prefer to try 'canyoning', jumping into natural pools, abseiling down spectacular waterfalls, shimmying and sliding over rocks in a watery cascade, surrounded





by mind blowing scenery?

Or perhaps you would prefer something slightly gentler, like 'tubbing' down the river on a specially designed inflatable tyre. Great fun.

With two fabulous locations in Axat and Marquixanes, Extérieur Nature is well set up to guarantee unforgettable adventure. For white water frolics such as rafting, tubbing, hotdogging..... all roads leading

to their Axat location are a delight to drive. Whether the D117 from Estagel towards Quillan or from Prades to Mosset and over the Col de Jau to Axat, the countryside through which you pass is dramatic and grand. Arriving at the roundabout of the bears, at the junction of the D117 and D118, continue towards Quillan . Almost immediately on your left is a restaurant. Take

the next left. You will be kitted out in wet suits, life jackets and helmets, driven to a launch pad..... and you're off, swirling through Axat, round the bear's roundabout, through Martin de Lys, in an exhilarating, whirling

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watery ride down the Aude.

All the guides have state diplomas, they speak English, they are experienced, professional, and fun. Their enthusiasm is infectious.

Set in a wooded adventure playground by the river, Extérieur Nature in Marquixanes just off the N116 between Ille sur Tet and Prades will introduce you to parts of the P-O lesser mortals never see. Jumps, short natural slides, abseiling, leaping and sliding through waterfalls.....

Or try the increasingly difficult runs high up in the trees, a series

of nets, ropes, zip wires and other obstacles, which will all challenge your skill and courage. Non participants can sit in the on-site café and watch their loved ones swinging through the branches or bobbing down the stream.

And after a hard day messing about on the river, the restaurant El Tip Tap awaits you with delicious and reasonably priced Catalan dishes and live music most weekend evenings throughout the summer.

And did you know that you don't need to go up into the mountains to canyon, abseil,

slip, slide and shimmy down waterfalls, wade through underground rivers...? The canyoning park at Argelès Adventure is a unique water park just outside Argelès, based around a man-made canyon. The rock may be artificial but the excitement certainly is not! A variety of ropes, nets, and zip lines hang precariously over rock pools. The circuits are all supervised by qualified instructors, who are able to give you safety instruction in English, and help you to adapt the course to your level. There is also a high-wire forest adventure park with tree top tomfoolery to make Tarzan beat his chest in delight.

And don't forget Aqualand in Saint Cyprien, a very pleasant alternative to the beach if you're tired of sand in every orifice – a great day out for both little and big people.

Maybe you're looking for a slower return to fitness. Join qualified fitness instructor Martine of Energym, Céret, beside the lake at Saint Jean Pla de Corts on Thursday 10th or Thursday 17th June from 9h15 – 10h15 for gentle exercise with 'chi balls' for the young at heart and the not-so-young! Just turn up.

Or why not spend a memorable day in the high mountain pastures, on an organised walk by the farmer/producers of La Rosée des Pyrénées, to meet the cattle in





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Letsgetphysical...

their summer grazing grounds and to talk to the men and women who raise them? The farmers themselves lead a series of day long 'balades' from June to September. The walk includes an excellent 'grillade', local fruit juice and good Roussillon wine. Ring **04 68 05 25 80** or **06 24 41 01 18** to book

For a completely different summer sport in the mountains, have you considered downhill mountain biking in Les Angles? Hire a specially adapted bike, take it up to the top of the ski slopes in the telecabine, and hurtle back down! The descent by either the long and gentle green run or the slightly steeper blue run is exhilarating to say



the least and the top of the telecabine is the perfect place for a picnic tho best not to eat too much if you don't want to lose your lunch on the way down!

If you long for the thrill of a Harley, but don't quite trust yourself on two wheels, why not hire a quad bike, a kind of motorcycle with four large

wheels? Those with driving licences can head for the hills and those without a licence to thrill can head for AccroQuads near Ille Sur Têt, where their circuits are on 3 hectares of private land, so you can really open up that throttle without getting dizzy.

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you can 'get physical' all year round– it's not just a summer thing. Rafting, hydrospeed, tubing, canyoning, acrobanch, quadbiking, mountain biking, horseriding, water sports, climbing are just a few of the many activities available to you here in the Pyrenées-Orientales. Many of them are open all year round.

In the next issue, we will take you winter canyoning.... or maybe you'd like to have a go at ice diving? Loads of possibilities. See you in the next edition!



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Earth: the Melodrama

by Ellen Hall



A beautiful and fabulously rich heroine in flowing green robes is ravished by a hungry crowd lead by men in business suits. Does she languish and die or is she saved?

The answer, dear friends, is in your hands!

Such is the message of the free outdoor photographic exhibit at Argeles-sur-Mer, "La Terre Vu du Ciel". From 9 April to 26 September, a collection of aerial photographs of the Earth will be displayed along the promenade of Argeles Plage. Each image is accompanied by texts in French and English about the state of the planet, inviting us to think about how our world is changing and asking whether we want to be part of the problem or take up the challenge to become part of the solution.

This year's stunning images are the work of Yann Arthus Bertrand, photographer, passionate ecologist and founder of GoodPlanet.

Looking down at earth from the air allows us to see, quite literally, the big picture. Each image is placed in its geographical context, as a red dot on a green world map. The texts offer information on the twisted relationship

between history, politics, economics and biodiversity.

The worst case scenario is represented by a photograph taken in the Mbeubeuss Dumpsite near Dakar, Senegal. Heaps of smoking rubbish confront us with the grim

face of "waste". Is this our future environment?

The good news is that individuals can make a difference. A panel discussing the world's shrinking resources of drinking water, cites the story of 6-year-old Ryan Hreljac who in 1998 began collecting money in his school in Canada to bring water to African children. Today Ryan's Well Foundation



has contributed to more than 120 projects in 9 countries.

The mountain icecap, described in Hemingway's "Snows of Kilimanjaro" written in 1938, today appears as a faint dusting of sugar atop a burnt bun. Amidst the gloom and doom of disappearing forests, marshlands and rivers, a striking green spot of hope is the patchwork of small-scale market gardens in Timbuktu, Mali. Another experiment in sustainable agriculture is the "algaculture" – drying algae- in South Korea.

Go and take your children and your grandchildren! The images will not leave you unmoved. You will fall in love



with the heroine and boo the villains, but that is not enough. Go onto the website and see how you and your family

can rescue mother Earth.

Full programme and more information:
www.enfants-de-la-mer.fr



Over the border...

Top tips from our Forum

EXCAVATIONS AT EMPURIES (SPAIN)

Flying from Girona airport with a few hours to kill? Empúries, (coming from the Greek "Emporion" meaning market place or shopping centre) lies midway between the Costa Brava town of L'Escala and the tiny village of Sant Martí. Let visitors to our forum on www.anglophone-direct.com tell you a little more about it, based on their personal experience.

“ We visited the site at Empurries on the way back from Girona airport and would recommend it to anyone. The setting is dramatic with its entire sweep of the bay of Roses through to L'Escala. There are two distinct settlements; the Greek town closer to the coast and the Roman town above it (look out for the keystone with the carved phallus, always good for a cheap laugh). A fascinating insight into the history of the area and its richness and desirability to foreigners even then. ”

“ There is a museum included in the entry price (about six euros I think), not large or impressive, as the site speaks for itself. There is ample parking, a little cafe and good loos... ”

“ We particularly liked the fact that the site is still being excavated and we saw archaeologists in action. Fascinating. ”

“ St Marti d'Empurries is five minutes away and worth a stop, particularly later in the day when the crowds dissipate. ”

“ Interestingly, part of the Greek harbour wall has survived for 2000+ years and is still visible in the sea. ”

“ Well worth a stop. Like a sort of mini Pompeii. We've been a couple of times on the way to L'Escala (another place that's good to visit). The beach between Empurries and the town is excellent too. ”

“ Shhhhhh! Don't tell everybody! ”





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Who to call in an emergency

MEDICAL



Dial 15 (or 112) for the SAMU (Service d'Aide Médicale Urgente) for EMERGENCY MEDICAL TREATMENT

The SAMU is the French hospital based emergency medical service, providing around the clock phone support, and swift and appropriate emergency call out. Dial 15 at any time if an emergency medical situation arises.

They will:

- give medical advice over the phone
- send ambulances where appropriate
- send a GP to your home
- send mobile resuscitation unit in absolute emergency
- manage large scale crisis

For less urgent medical problems, **dial 08 20 20 41 42 (Perpignan) or 36 24 (national) for SOS Médecins**, a private doctor callout and ambulance company. Twenty four hour service. Visits are reimbursed by the Social Security as long as you are eligible

MEDICAL AND GENERAL



Dial 112 from any telephone (landline, mobile, call box....) for ANY EMERGENCY REQUIRING AN AMBULANCE, THE

FIRE BRIGADE, OR THE POLICE.

Most mobile phones can dial 112 calls even when the phone keyboard is locked or the phone is without a SIM card. Calls are free.

This is a European helpline and can be called from any country in the EU. Do not rely on operators to speak English.

Some EU countries have introduced 112 as their

unique main emergency number. In most countries however, including France and Britain, 112 operates alongside national emergency numbers.

When you call 112, the operator will either deal with the request directly or transfer it to the appropriate emergency service (ambulance, fire brigade, police, etc.).



FIRE

Dial 18 (or 112) for FIRES & ROAD ACCIDENTS

Sapeurs-pompiers (firefighters and first rescue)

Eighty percent of the sapeurs-pompiers (firefighters) in France are volunteers. They work closely with the SAMU and are trained and equipped to respond to fires, car accidents and emergency medical situations. They are made up of professionals (SPP), military (SPM) and volunteers (SVP).

You will probably have heard the emergency sirens blasting out. This national network of 4,500 sirens is called the 'réseau national d'alerte' (RNA), and would sound in three sequences of 1 minute each, separated by a silence of five seconds, if there were to be an imminent and major catastrophe. Do not be confused on the first Wednesday of the month at midday, when the sirens are tried out for just one minute, or by the short sequences used in some communes to alert volunteer firemen to man their posts for fire or accident.



USEFUL VOCAB

It is worthwhile ensuring that all members of your family have the basic French vocabulary needed to make an emergency call.

English	French
Emergency!	Urgence !
Help!	Au secours !
Fire! -	Au feu !
Thief! -	Au voleur !
crash -	une collision
flood	une inondation

I have asthma	.....je suis asthmatique
I need an inhaler	.....j'ai besoin d'un inhalateur
I am diabetic	.....je suis diabétique
a heart attack	.....une crise cardiaque
a stroke	.....une attaque cérébrale
She is in labour	.....elle est en train d'accoucher
He is drowning	.....il se noye
He is unconscious	.....il a perdu connaissance
I need a doctor/ambulance	.....Il me faut un medecin ...../ambulance –
The house/car is on fire	.....la maison/voiture a pris feu
I have been burgled	.....je me suis fait cambrioler



History of the SAMU

In 1792, Dominique LARREY, Napoleon Bonaparte's surgeon-in-chief used to treat casualties directly, on the battle field in the hope of preventing complications such as gangrene. Immobilisation, excision and, if necessary, amputation were the principal methods. Subsequent wars have confirmed the importance of early treatment.

The SAMU was created in the 1960s when a group of doctors wished to redress the balance between the treatment a casualty received in hospital compared to the available treatment at a road accident or in a patient's home, recognising that to increase the patient's chances of survival, quicker and better 'on the spot'

measures were imperative.

Despite initial scepticism, the French Ministry of Transport contributed to the development of the first pilot Hospital Mobile Intensive Care Units (H-MICU) and since then the SAMU with their SMUR (Service Mobile d'Urgence et Reanimation) has gone from strength to strength

www.samu-de-france.fr

CAVE LANGUAGE

with Michael Brady

Genevieve von Petzinger explains why symbols in caves across France may be the earliest foundation of writing.

What started your study of the symbols marked on the walls of Stone Age caves in France?

I studied Stone-Age caves in France because it has more of them than any other country. Stone Age people decorated their caves with paintings and engravings and usually marked the walls around the paintings with symbols. The images of animals and people are easily understood, but the symbols have remained mysterious. Viewing a painting and its surrounding symbols is somewhat like leafing through an illustrated magazine picked up while waiting for a delayed flight in a foreign airport, where you know neither the language nor the alphabet it uses. You can easily guess the theme of a story from its pictures, though you can make no sense of the surrounding alphabetic characters. That was the challenge. I wanted to find what the symbols meant.

How did you go about studying the symbols and what did you find?

At the outset I found that though records had been made of cave symbols at 146 sites in France, there was no anthology of them all that could be used for study. So I decided to compile one. I entered all the site records into a database that I then manipulated to search for similarities. The results were astonishing: 26 symbols were common among the sites. This implied that they comprise the earliest attempt to represent abstract ideas. If so, the assumed date of the origin of writing must be pushed back, from 5,000 years ago to 30,000 years ago.

Are there any sites with symbols in the Pyrénées-Orientales?

Yes, two near Prades, both unique. The Grotte Cova-Bastera near Villefranche-de-conflent is a stand-alone, with no nearby cave to compare it with. The Fornols Haut rock block near Compôme has the only known examples of Palaeolithic rock in the open air in France. There also are four



• Twelve recurring symbols engraved in rock.

sites in neighbouring Ariège, most notably Grotte des Trois-Frères near Montesequieu-Avantès.

Can the symbols be deciphered?

We don't know. But history suggests that someday they may be. Egyptian hieroglyphs were long considered impossible to read, but were deciphered in the 19th century by French linguist Jean François Champollion. So perhaps the curiosity of some French schoolchild of today will lead to future deciphering.



- Genevieve von Petzinger is in the Department of Anthropology, University of Victoria, BC, Canada.
- Pictured In cave in Dordogne (Department 24), one of the oldest sites in France

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What the tippees say.....

The English word 'tip' was originally an acronym for "To Insure Promptness." Innkeepers would write this on a box by the door, later simplified to "T.I.P.", to enable customers to show their appreciation of good service. The French word 'pourboire' means 'in order to drink', as the original intention was of course for the 'tippee' to have a drink on the 'tipper'

In France, bars and restaurant are required by law to include and display the service/cover charge. Tipping is strictly optional as 'service compris' (SC), 'service et taxe compris' (STC) or 'prix nets/toutes taxes comprises' (TTC) all mean that the service charges (usually 15%, even 20% of the price of the meal) are included. In fact, when you leave a tip, you are really paying twice for your service.

Of course it is customary to reward good service, but when questioned, most French people in this region were shocked at the idea of leaving more than a couple of euros, feeling that a tip was an occasional reward for really good service, and insisted that two or three euros was enough, no matter how large the bill. The British '10%' was considered way over the top!

Céline, owner of Restaurant Coté Sud at Pollestres

"C'est vrai que ça fait plaisir mais ce n'est pas du tout obligatoire. On ne doit pas se sentir obligé de donner un pourboire - on donne ou on ne donne pas. »

Christine, owner of Curcuma Hair Salon, Pollestres

« Bien sûr les pourboires ne sont pas obligatoires mais si un client ne donne rien, peut être qu'il n'est pas content. Nous, on met une boîte à côté de la porte. Un – deux euros suffit. Les pourboires vont toujours aux employés, pas au propriétaire ».

Hélène, owner of LenyMontoya taxis in Maureillas

Les anglais trouvent que c'est cher de prendre un taxi en France mais c'est l'état qui décide la tarification, pas nous. Recevoir un pourboire est toujours agréable. Combien ? Ah, ce n'est pas important – c'est le geste que compte !



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c'est le geste – it's the gesture

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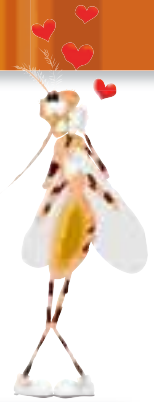
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