



P-O Life

Life in the Pyrénées Orientales

Food and Drink
WINE IN IT'S PRIME

Out for the Day
.....IN PERPIGNAN

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

Autumn **2010**
FREE / GRATUIT N° 29

AMÉLIOREZ VOTRE ANGLAIS
AND TEST YOUR FRENCH

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Holà

I love autumn in the P-O. Warm sunny days, cooler nights and mornings, kaleidoscopes of wild yellows and cornflower blues twisting and turning against a backcloth of faded summer green, as stylish red and russets peep out timidly to assess the seasonal situation. Golden days that you wish you could bottle and drink with friends over the winter months to come.

The vigneronns are busy in the vineyards preparing the vines for the new harvest. What a job! I can't help thinking that it is our duty to help them out by drinking their wine in quantity! 😊

A guided tour of Perpignan, a perfect autumn picnic high above the Tech valley, 'dégustation' tips for the 2010 'vins primeurs', language exercises, daft jokes and a bucketful of useful (and useless) information about the Pyrénées-Orientales await you in the pages to come. Dive in and enjoy!

**Wherever you are,
and whatever you are
doing, we do hope your
autumn is golden this
year in the PO.**

Kate & Jane



Register for our
free weekly newsletter,
and stay up to date with
life in the Pyrénées-Orientales.
www.anglophone-direct.com



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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.

Palais des Congrès, Perpignan

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



welcome to the Pyrénées-Orientales!

www.cdt-66.com

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Walk the region...

with Mike Rhodes



PORTEILLE DE LA GRAVE

Porteille de la Grave 2426m from Lac de Bouillouses.

UTM Grid WGS84 – 31N 418168E 4712375N - 18k, 6 hours and 455m of ascent

Starting from the barrage at Lac de Bouillouses, 2005m, built 100 years ago to create the lake and supply power to run the Train Jaune, this walk follows the route of the Tet river as it flows down the glaciated valley of the Coma de la Grava. Today the artificial Lac de Bouillouses is an important water reserve (16 million m3) but also one of the most beautiful lakes in the area.

Access

Take the D118 Les Angles road from Mont Louis, for 1.5k until you see a sign for Barrage de Bouillouses. In the summer school holidays the road is closed to cars after 1.6k, just after the camp site. You will see a large parking area on the right where the navettes depart. The cost is 5 euros per person for the uphill trip. Coming back is free!!

The navette drops you by the Auberge du Carlit (great place for a beer at the end of your walk) where you can cross the barrage.

The walk

From the far end of the barrage turn right, North, and follow the well marked path, through the forest, by the side of the lake. The path is marked with white and red dashes, identifying the route as a "Grande Randonnee" and it is in fact part of the Cross Pyrenees GR10 route. Although the path generally follows the lakeside, it is far from flat, climbing and descending small knolls and crossing several stream valleys. After 3k (1 hour) exit the forest into pasture land and the path

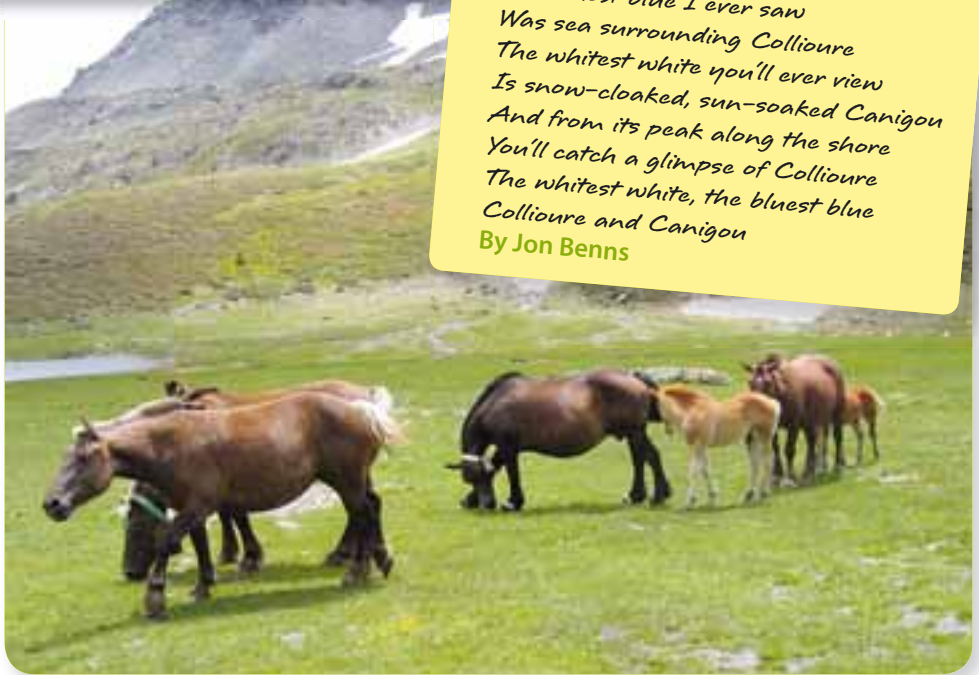
splits. The RH route follows the Tour du Capcir, but we continue on the LH track and climb into the Coma de la Grava.

👉 We have only reached 2030m at this point but it feels a lot more. Our chosen route continues to meander gently up the valley for a further 4k to a height of 2150m. Stay on the LH side of the stream before turning westwards and climbing into a higher valley at Estanyol where wild horses can often be found grazing. This valley is a favourite training ground for helicopter pilots and it is not

Collioure and Canigou

*The bluest blue I ever saw
Was sea surrounding Collioure
The whitest white you'll ever view
Is snow-cloaked, sun-soaked Canigou
And from its peak along the shore
You'll catch a glimpse of Collioure
The whitest white, the bluest blue
Collioure and Canigou*

By Jon Benns



unusual to see the bright orange rescue copters from Osseja doing their low flying exercises.

👉 At Estanyol, the stream that feeds the source of the river Tet comes down the slope from the left but ahead the Porteille de la Grave looms up at the head of the Coma.

👉 Cross the stream to the RH side of the valley and start to climb the final 700m distance and 130m of height gain to the col, following an ever steepening, rocky path. Early in summer, banks of snow tend to accumulate in this

east facing valley so take care. The snow slopes can be avoided by taking the rocky slope to the right.

👉 As you approach the col the slope eases and a stunning view explodes before you. Way below is the Etang de Lanoux, subject of a dispute between France and Spain when, with the building of the barrage, water was diverted north to Toulouse, instead of flowing into the Segre and into Spain. Behind the Lanoux rise the towering twin peaks of Puig de Coma d'Or 2826m and Puig

Pedros 2842m, both involving a scramble to the summit. The western side of the col provides a superb picnic site where you can also watch the fully loaded GR10 walkers, labour up the steep slope from the W.

👉 For the fitter walkers, it is a simple but steep option to climb the Puig de la Grava, 2671m.

👉 We return by the same route but the views are totally different and the prospect of a cold beer at the Auberge becomes more and more appealing.

Mike Rhodes is an International Mountain Leader / Accompanateur de Montagne, lives all year in Les Angles and specialises in guided walks in the high mountains and Snowshoe trips in winter. He can be contacted on +33 (0)4 68 04 37 28 email: mike.rhodes@free.fr web site: www.pyrenean-trails.com

Did you know...?

I forgot to tell you.....

Filmed entirely in the Pyrenees Orientales, in a variety of locations, Laurent Vinas-Raymond's "J'ai oublié de te dire" (I Forgot To Tell You) stars Egyptian-born actor Omar Sharif along side the lovely Emilie Dequenne.

The film follows Jaume played by Omar Sharif as an aging artist descending into dementia, from flowers in the fridge to vinegar in the cake mix. Amidst the stunning

scenery of the P-O, his apprentice, Marie, played by Emilie Dequenne, is searching for new beginnings after a turbulent adolescence, and the chance to pursue her interest in painting. A strange kind of friendship develops between the two as Marie takes on the task of unravelling, repairing and protecting the gruff artist as his mental health deteriorates. Tender, heartbreaking..... an Sharif who has never been better, despite his rapidly approaching 80 years!



The Lydia

Did you know that Le Barcarès means "a dry spot to which boats can be dragged" in Catalan? Rather suitable as the Lydia, (casino, restaurants, bars, disco, laser shows, pool with waterslide.....) is a 100 metre steamship which was deliberately beached in the sands of Le Barcares in 1967 and has been a permanent feature ever since..



Going off the rails

A difference in width between Spanish and French railway tracks has been put down in the past to a deliberate move on the part of the Spanish to prevent French armies invading Spain by train. The technical reason was in fact to allow more powerful engines to function in mountainous country. Of course, this difference in track width meant that goods had to be unloaded and reloaded onto different wagons when they crossed the border. As oranges used to be one of the most important imports, women called "transbordeuses" used to carry out this unloading and reloading, carrying baskets weighing 15 – 20 kilos. In February 1906, poor pay prompted a strike which continued on and off until December. A group of

militant women who had been refused employment in favour of more 'pliant' workers, lay on the track. The train carrying "scab" workers stopped just in time, the women received an extra 50 centimes per wagon load, and the militants were offered equal employment rights! This was the first successful industrial strike by women in France.

Today, as trains pass through Cerbère, some goods trains still have to be adjusted each time they pass from country to country. However the Talgo passenger trains from Montpellier to Barca and southern Spain have to go through a shed at Port Bou where the axel width is widened. Vice versa coming back.

All will be different with the new TGVs which will all use standard European gauge.

Hair-raising history

King Charles the Bald, (Charles II le Chauve) son of Emperor Louis the Pious and grandson of Charlemagne, was not really bald. In fact, it is believed that he was actually quite a hairy chap!

On the other hand, Wilfred the Hairy, (Guifred le Velu or El Pelut) who was made Count of Barcelona, Besalú and Girona by King Charles the Bald, was not known to be particularly hairy.

Charles the Bald also ordered the assassination of Wilfred the Hairy's father, Sunifred 1st, and legend has it that the hairy one avenged his Dad's death by challenging his assassin, Salomon, Count of Roussillon, to a duel and killing him. Dipping, his hand in his own blood, he traced 4 bloody stripes on the surface of his golden shield et voilà – the Catalan coat of arms was born!



Big Stone Explained

Many a wall of a traditional stone house of the PO has one stone far larger than all the others in the wall. Apparently, in the old days, everybody pitched in to help build a house. Each time the scaffolding went up a stage, a competition was held to see who could mount the biggest stone. The bigger the stone, the bigger the glass of wine (or pastis) afterwards!

If you receive an email from the Department of Health telling you not to eat tinned pork because of swine flu – ignore it.

It's just spam.

Just over the border.....

The 'Castell de Sant Ferran', built in Figueras, in the mid 18th century, is apparently the largest castle in Europe. The walk around the perimeter of the castle is a flat 3km walk with superb views over the Empordà Plane out to the sea.

And have you noticed the pink, orange and yellow building going up on the right hand side of the motorway, direction Figueres Girona? Càrcel Puig de les Basses is a new prison, due to open in 2011, built to conform to the high standards required by the modern criminal of today. A pleasing visual interior, sports facilities, pool, and tree lined walkway along side the cells, which will be in independent units, with lounge and patio, sport facilities (gym etc) hairdresser, canteen, library..... The philosophy

behind this is to rehabilitate prisoners according to personalised programmes, tailor made for drug addicts, sexual predators....



French Spanish border contravenes Schengen

According to the Schengen agreement of 1995, internal borders were to be abolished and EU members were to have 'free movement'. Despite heavy summer traffic bottlenecks at both motorway and Le Pethus borders, the Catalan frontier continued to be the most heavily manned border in the EU! Threats by the EU to impose fines of over 10 million euros if customs booths were not dismantled, have finally hit home, border police controls have been abolished, and customs will move to Le Boulou on the A9.

Events festival traditions....

SEPTEMBER

DIADA DE CATALUNYA- 11TH SEPTEMBER -

The Diada de Catalunya, is a national holiday throughout Catalonia and the Balearic Islands, the anniversary of the day in 1714 when the Franco-Spanish army captured Barcelona, bringing an end to the region's independence. It is an annual commemoration of a bloody and controversial episode of Catalonia's history. People wave 'senyeres' or 'estelades' (Catalan flags) and hang them on their balconies, and red and gold are the colours of the day, which is punctuated in unique Catalan style by concerts, fireworks, parades through the streets, sardanes, gégants and castellers amongst other events.



7th September

LATINO EVENING 21h30

Place Méditerranée, Canet

Free concert with « Los Payos » www.ot-canet.fr

10-12th September

CAP LIBERTE SENIORS FAIR

Palais des Expositions,

Perpignan - Products, services and information targeting the over-50s sector, with "Espace Anglophone" offering Anglo-French suppliers, organizations and useful advice.

18th September

INTERNATIONAL ART FESTIVAL

Chateau Valmy, Argelès-sur-Mer

Until 3rd October Art salon with grape-pickers meal, auction, evening viewings, concerts... <http://assosarg.fr>

18th September

FESTA MAJOR DE SANT FERREOL

Céret - ermitage St Ferréol -

This 13th century chapel had the hermitage added in the 18th century along with other buildings to accommodate the many pilgrims who came to pray at the chapel of St Ferréol. Saint Ferréol himself actually lived in the third century but his sacred remains were moved to Céret for security during the crusades against 'heretics' of the 13th century and a chapel built to honour them. The chapel bells, named Maria, Margarita et Salvaterra, date back to 1608. www.ot-ceret.fr

18-19th September

LES JOURNEES EUROPEENNES DU PATRIMOINE

Around the region

Museums, exhibitions and cultural centres invite visitors

to share the Catalan culture.

Free entry to many of the museums, monuments, exhibitions and attractions. Beware! They are not all free and it is worth checking in advance. www.journeesdupatrimoine.culture.fr

24-26th September

FETE DE LA ST COME ET ST DAMIEN

Argelès-sur-Mer

Several days of festivities, crashing to a grand finale on Sunday 26th with the parade through the streets of the Argelès giants. www.argeles-sur-mer.com

25th September

CHARITY SHOE PYRAMID

Prats de Mollo-La Preste - 9H

- 12H - Each shoe symbolises the lives and limbs lost to cluster bombs and other explosives. Bring along your old shoes and place them on the pyramid. Afterwards, they will be distributed to charitable organisations.

pratsdemollolapreste.com

25-26th September

TROBADES MEDIEVALES

Perpignan centre and

Fort of Serrat d'en Vaquer

(next to Auchan)

Great fun for all the family, this medieval weekend takes us back in time to the days of the kings of Majorque, lively and colourful, with a careful reconstitution of the affluent and long ago times.

25-26th September

INTERNATIONAL RECORD AND COMIC STRIP FESTIVAL

Eglise des Dominicains & Chapelle du Tiers-Ordre,

Perpignan - Vinyl, cassettes, CDs and comic strips.

Concerts, films including the avant-premiere of « Nowhere boy », biography of the young John Lennon.

26th September

Festival Jazzèbre

Around the region

Until 17th October. A series of jazz and world music concerts with special homage to Great Black Music. Regional concerts in towns around the P-O and the Aude and 'musical picnics' at natural and cultural sites, as well as exhibitions, debates, musical apéros, films...

www.jazzebre.com

OCTOBER

3rd October

RENCONTRE GEGANTERA

Argelès village - Meeting of the Catalan 'giants' from around the region

16th - 17th October

INTERNATIONAL DOG SHOW

Parc des Expositions, Perpignan

Exhibitions and puppy sales, demonstrations of defence, obedience, agility, sheep dog roundups, doggie fashion parade on the catwalk (or should that be dogwalk?)

www.congres-perpignan.com

22nd - 24th October

FESTA DE LAS BRUIXAS

(Pron: brooshas)

Tressere - Fairies foul and foulies fair... witches and wizards arrive on their broomsticks when the village and its visitors dress up for a weekend of myth, legend and Catalane culture.

End October

FOIRE SAINT MARTIN

Palais des Expositions, Perpignan

Until the end of November. One of the longest standing travelling fairs in France comes to the Parc des Expositions in Perpignan, bringing you all the fun of the fair - big wheel, ghost train, candy floss, dodgems..... a family day out or a wild evening in the tunnel of lurv!

Don't forget to turn your clocks back - Sunday October 31st 2010

French Wintertime - clocks go back one hour (during the night of Saturday/Sunday morning)
This means that mornings will be lighter but it will grow dark earlier.

(Clocks go forward last Sunday in March 2011)

Events festival traditions....

November

LA CASTANYADA – 1ST NOVEMBER

Historically, La Castanyada, celebrated on All Saints Day, was to honour saints and dead ancestors. Whole villages would stay awake in vigil, and the church bells would ring throughout the night. They would eat 'castanyes' (roast chestnuts) along with 'moniatos' (roast sweet potatoes) and 'panellets' (small almond balls covered in pine nuts) and share Muscat in 'porrons', glass wine pitchers with stem to pour wine into your mouth without touching lips, and avoid passing on bugs! The traditional, high energy foods were served up to prevent them from passing out from lack of sleep and the effort of ringing the heavy bells. Cemeteries are busy this weekend of remembrance and chrysanthemums are on sale on every street. Don't offer them to your hostess when invited out for dinner! They are for the dead

11th November

FOIRE AUX ETALAGISTES -

Perpignan, Stalls along the banks of the river perpignantourisme.com

11th November

Castagnade Corsavy. - Castagnade' accompanied by vin nouveau, music, dancing and a cosy autumn atmosphere

17th November

CELTIC LEGENDS - *Parc des Expos,*

Perpignan - An Irish show based in France, this Riverdancesque show has live musicians on pipes, accordion, fiddles, whistles and guitars, along with both traditional and

TOURISME DE TERROIR

Coming from the French word 'terre' for "soil," the word 'terroir' originally described the special characteristics of a region, or piece of land, which gave different varieties of wine, coffee and tea their individuality. (Soil, climate, position, regional traditions....)

Over the centuries, French winemakers developed and took for their own the concept of terroir but the word is still often used to describe rural activities, harvest festivals etc.

In autumn, the P-O celebrates every imaginable 'produit de terroir', be it animal, vegetable or mineral.

Here are just a few...

SEPTEMBER

8th – 19th - Canet

La Ferme à Canet-en-Roussillon
A festive occasion to meet the region's farm animals..... and their produce.

12th September - Rabouillet

Hazelnut fair

19th - Baillestavy

Catalan Donkey Festival

26th - St-Michel-de-Llotes

Honey and bee festival

26th - Prats de Mollo

Mushroom festival

OCTOBER

3rd - Canet

Olive oil festival (and parade of the giants)

9th – 10th - Banyuls-sur-Mer

La fête des vendanges,
Wine harvest fair

10th - Castelnou

Farm produce market

10th - Casteil

Chestnut Festival

10th - Mont-Louis

Hunting, fishing and mushroom fair

15th - Perpignan

Nuit des vins primeurs,
New wines night

16th – 17th - Ur

International Horse Fair
Matemale
Potato fair

18th - Perpignan

Fête des vins primeurs,
New wines festival
11h-18h, Rue Mailly
and Rue de l'Ange

21st – 24th - Le Boulou

Tastings and entertainment based around produits du terroir

25th - Sahorre

Apple fair

31st October – 1st November Olette

Autumn fair - market
and entertainment

contemporary dance and music. Try and stop yourself tapping and stamping your feet, clapping your hands and whooping along to the music and vocals!

www.boitaclos.com

27th November

FETE DE LA SAINT

SATURNIN Vernet-les-Bains

A weekend of festivity, dancing, music and entertainment, held in honour of St Saturnin, patron saint of Vernet-les-Bains.



Fédération Départementale

**Pyrénées
Orientales**

NOVEMBER

6th - 7th - Caudiès-de-Fenouillèdes

Chardonnay festival

21st - Prades

Foire au Gras

27th - Throughout the region

Celebration of the Christmas Muscat

Bank holidays (Jours Fériés)

Bank holidays always take place on the day on which they fall, unlike in England where they are sometimes moved to a Friday or a Monday to extend the weekend. Many larger shops now open on 'jours fériés'.

1st November - La Toussaint (All Saints Day)

11th November - Armistice of WW1 (1918). Flowers are placed on the tomb of the 'soldat inconnu' (unknown soldier) beneath the Arc de Triomphe in Paris and other war memorials around the country.

NOWHERE TO RUN?

MARATHONS AROUND THE REGION

Sunday 5th September

PRATS-DE-MOLLO

"TRAIL DU COL D'ARES" 25km

More info: 06.29.64.48.78

Sunday 5th September

VILLENEUVE DE LA RAHO

"LA RONDE DU LAC" 10 km

More info: 06 15 20 78 37

Sunday 19th September

CERET - La Ronde Cérétane 20km

More info: 04.68.83.37.23

Sat 2nd Sun 3rd October

COLLIOURE - "LE TRAIL DES

VENDANGES" 8 & 32 kms

More info: 06 27 89 25 43

Sunday 3rd October

LAROQUE - "LE CROSS DES 3

CHAPELLES" 13,2 kms

More info: 04 68 89 21 13

Sunday 3rd October

CABESTANY

"LE SEMI MARATHON DU

TRAVAILLEUR CATALAN"

7,5 & 21,1 kms

More info: 04 68 67 00 88

Sunday 10th October

THUIR - "L'ESCAPADE THUIRINOISE"

15km

More info: 04 68 53 41 47

Saturday 16th October

CABESTANY

"LE VENDEMIARE DES CES DAMES"

Ladies only, 5,2 km against the clock.

More info: 04 68 67 06 96

Sunday 18th October

MAUREILLAS

"LA PISTE DES TRABUCAYRES" 13km

More info: 04 68 83 24 70

Sunday 24th October

LE BOULOU

"LE MARATHON TRANSPYRENEEN

CATALAN" 42km

More info 04 68 37 06 77

Sunday 7th November

SOREDE

"Le CROSS DE LA ST MARTIN"

13km

More info: 04 68 89 00 34

School holidays for our region

Beginning of Summer term - Tuesday 2nd September 2010

Toussaint (half term) - Saturday 24th October - Thursday 5th November 2010

Christmas - Saturday 19th December - Monday 3rd January 2011



NUIT ET FÊTE DES VINS PRIMEURS IN Perpignan

On **Thursday 21st October** from 18h and on **Saturday 23rd October** from 11h00 the cobbles of the rue Mailly and rue de l'Ange in Perpignan, run red, white and rosé with 'cavistes' touting their new wines (les vins primeurs), fresh from the vines into your glass and for just 5€ (including the glass) it's 'try as much as you like' time!

To celebrate the PO equivalent to the Beaujolais Nouveau (AND out three weeks earlier, due to our sunnier climes!) cavistes, bars

and restaurants of Perpignan toast the arrival of the Vin Primeur with wine tasting and entertainment. Brass bands in regional dress thump out



WINE IN ITS PRIME By Jonathan Healey

Jonathan Healey is the author of *The Wines of Roussillon* and *Discovering Wine Country: South of France*. He hosts wine tours and wine tasting events in Roussillon. For more information: j.healey.pro@gmail.com.

“What contemptible scoundrel stole the cork from my lunch?” [W. C. Fields]

Catalan tunes and the whole evening has a carnival atmosphere.

Whilst there is no real pressure to buy, most bottles tend to be between 3 and 5 €, so it's rather easy to get carried away! Some might feel that it would be rude not to!

Many local caves also offer an evening of jollity and 'dégustation' often accompanied by a traditional Catalan Castanyade (roast chestnuts!!!)

Our recommendation? Take at least one sturdy bag and a designated driver. **Continued on page 16 >>**

Vins primeurs arrive in shops with all the ballyhoo of the unveiling of a new car at a motor show. Except winemakers aren't launching new cars – they're launching prototypes. Prototypes are fun

The winemakers play with traditions and find innovative ways to renew them, like trendy labels and lurid cork and cap seal combinations. We don't care that vins primeurs have not even been road-tested, or that they don't need to pass the appellation's Contrôle Technique. They rev out of the pits, some still fermenting in their tanks. They may handle unpredictably. Too much acidity and they over steer, giving your tongue whiplash. Too little acidity and they under steer, sloshing across the palate. Well-balanced examples handle just right, gripping the curves around your tongue for a couple of fruity laps in slick racing tyres. But vins primeurs will never be 'vintage' like a 1958 Ferrari Testa Rosa. They don't have tread for

the long haul. They are one-offs that aren't built to last or to go into mass production. Wine heritage will not be diminished as you pile up empty bottles. Vins primeurs are peppy prototypes meant to be fun and frivolous. They are not meant to have leather upholstery and cigar box aromas. They are boy racers for day trippers. They cheerfully get you where you want to go.

Tasting Tips

It's difficult to judge a vin primeur by looking at the wine through its bottle, so look at the label and cap-seal instead. Look for the words vigneron indépendant (independent winemaker). Independent winemakers make vins primeurs to attract



Terres Romanes
pays d'art et de vin

... discover our selection of stunning wines - Reds, Whites & Roses

Vin de Pays, AOC & Vdn

Taste our latest Vin Primeur at the Fête des Vins Primeurs in Perpignan or visit our caves :-

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VINÇA

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04 68 05 85 86

www.vigneronssterresromanes.com

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L'abus de l'alcool est dangereux pour la santé, à consommer avec modération



your attention, build customer loyalty, and get some quick cash flowing from the vintage. Of course, cooperatives do the same, but not always with the same passion. You'll be paying € 4-something, not € 3-something, for a Primeur from an independent, but go the extra Euro. Look for a mention of grape variety, too. If you like Merlot, buy a Merlot Primeur. In your glass the colour should be clear and sustained all the way to the rim, not watery. It should have a simple, fruity appeal on the nose. When it's in your mouth, feel for flavour, body, balance, and length. But remember, these are easy-drinking, uncomplicated wines, they shouldn't have you reaching for your thesaurus, or doing a Jilly Gooden!

<< Continued from page 15

Vins primeurs are the first of the harvest, released on the third Thursday in October. They are usually bright red or violet, fruity, with a taste of cherry, strawberry, raspberry, freshly squeezed grapes, depending on grape variety, the production method, and the area in which the grapes are grown. Normally, a very light, easy to drink wine, it traditionally needs drinking before Christmas.

And only a month later, the whole shebang starts again for the

Fete du Muscat de Noel

The third Thursday of November (18th November 2010), we see the launch of this year's Muscat de Noël, with events in local caves and a launch in Perpignan.

Again, the Muscat de Noël is the wine from the same year. A good MdN should be very pale in colour and will have an intense aroma of white peaches, flowers and even hints of lychee and mint.

No Christmas table or fete is complete without a bottle of this delicious nectar from the Gods.

Check out the MdN website for up to date information at www.muscatsdenoel.com





FÊTE DES VENDANGES BANYULS-SUR-MER

The annual Fête des Vendanges takes place this year on the **9th and 10th October**, with tastings and merriment which have to be seen and experienced to be believed.

On Sunday the beach becomes positively medieval, the smoke from endless grillades rising up into the autumn air, musicians, stilt walkers and jugglers mingling with the crowd, food is consumed

in great quantities, much wine is drunk and, towards the end of the afternoon, Catalan Barques zig zag a ballet in the bay before bringing the "harvest" in to the shore.

Book your own table on the beach (info from town hall) and invite your friends to make a day of it with you. Take your own food and drink, BBQ, or buy food and wine from the many beach bars and restaurants.

Boudoir
Literally "a place to sulk in"
from the French "boudier"
meaning to sulk.

Restaurant

Ascoli, St Cyprien



Restaurant Review

John Frazer-Robinson, returns to this Italian restaurant on the marina-side at Les Capellans, Saint Cyprien.

When I took on this arduous task, Kate explained that she didn't want to publish bad reviews as she sees the task of this column simply to track down good restaurants for the benefit of P-O Life readers.

Ok. Here's one that fits that bill perfectly. First though, I must come clean and admit that Moss, the owner/chef, has now become a friend, based on the fact that we have been back so often.

The menu offers all the typical range of pizza and pasta dishes, with some interesting veal and other meat options, and a 'menu bambino' at €6.50. Some of the dishes just have to be singled out...

Girasolis aux Crabes – round ravioli stuffed with crab and served with a yummy sauce including 'Queenie' size scallops Mari Monti – scallops and king prawns in a superbly creamy, lightly tomato'ed sauce

From the seven veal Choices, I love the bread-crumbed Escalope Milanaise. Or perhaps you'd prefer a choice of entrecôte steak with any one of six sauces. Moss is a dab hand at sauces which is just as well really since his range of pastas comes with nine to pick from!

Alongside the veal, steak and pasta choices, there are five fish and seafood dishes and fifteen pizzas, including the Calzone, delicious folded over pizza with an egg inside.

For afters perhaps an Italian cheese selection or the mouthwatering (I am informed!) and mandatory Tiramisu.

The house pichet wine is very drinkable but at €11.50 it should be –however his list of local and Italian wines also includes a personal favourite - Chateau Les Pins – both red and white. It's over €20 a bottle but if you like it, I think it's worth it. Glorious.

In true Italian tradition you will be offered a digestif of grappa or limoncello on the house. As for ambience and location you are right on the marina in St. Cyprien..

Restaurant Ascoli

Centre Commercial des Capellans
66750 St Cyprien
Téléphone: 04 68 22 71 34

Food	☆☆☆☆☆
Wine	☆☆☆☆☆
Price	☆☆☆☆☆
Service	☆☆☆☆☆
Ambience/Location	☆☆☆☆☆



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Simple fig chutney

Rich in minerals, a good source of potassium, manganese and iron, figs also contain vitamins A, B and C and a decent amount of fibre. Pick them ripe from the tree, as they don't ripen well once picked. A very firm fig is not ripe and will not properly ripen further. They also have a very short shelf life, so you should eat or freeze them within seven to 10 days of harvesting.... or make them into this delicious and simple fig chutney which will keep for months..

Ingredients

- 13 - 15 fresh figs
- 150ml balsamic vinegar
- 100ml red wine vinegar
- 300g soft brown sugar
- zest and juice of 1 lemon
- 2 red onions (sliced thinly)
- 2 teaspoons mixed spice
- 10g fresh grated root ginger, or 1 teaspoon of dried ground ginger
- 1 tablespoon of olive oil

Method

Remove the stalk from the figs and cut into quarters..

Heat the oil in a large pan over a medium heat and fry the onion for 5 minutes until soft and slightly caramelised.

Add all the other ingredients to the pan except

for the figs, season with salt & pepper, bring to the boil, and simmer for 30 minutes.

Once the liquid has reduced to syrup, add the figs and cook for a further 15 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Pour into sterilised jars, and allow cooling.



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LIFE IN THE SLOW LANE

Why not combine lunch or dinner at the Auberge des Alb eres in Saint G enis des Fontaines, with a visit to the ancient cloister, built from different coloured marble, white from C eret, pink from Villefranche-de-Conflent and black from the Corbi eres?

Children will love the short but delightful drive from there to the 'Vall e Heureuse' to visit Tortoise

Valley, (La Vall e des Tortues - [04.68.95.50.50](tel:04.68.95.50.50)) one of the last European tortoise sanctuaries - a little piece of paradise for both domestic and wild tortoises.

Or just a little further towards the coast, in Saint Andr e, the Ferme de D couverte ([04.68.89.16.39](tel:04.68.89.16.39)) awaits you, with 300 farm animals just waiting to be caressed, cuddled, fed.....





Visit this famous ancient Lintel in the nearby church in Saint Genis des Fontaines

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Out for the day...

...IN PERPIGNAN



It's VISA time again! VISA pour L'IMAGE: Perpignan opens the doors of its most illustrious venues to show the world the very best photographs of the world's very best photojournalists. For the first couple of weeks in September international visitors will flood in, filling the cafes and restaurants, resting between feasting their eyes on unforgettable images shown in unforgettable buildings. It is a brilliant way to explore and enjoy Perpignan. And if you miss VISA itself, the Tourist Office in the old Palmarium on Place Arago (tel 04 68 66 30 30) offers a selection of interesting tours of the historic centre and is well worth visiting.

Rue François Rabelais, near the top of Quartier St Jacques, is the largest VISA venue lies. In the 15th century the Couvent des Minimes, photographic excellence is on show on the walls of every corridor, dormitory, refectory, church and chapel that make up the large and rambling collection of buildings. The church, huge with a first floor gallery, is 11

metres wide, 25 metres long, its vaulted ceiling 16 metres high. Room for quite a few photographs. In the vast cloisters photographers and visitors can relax and take a break before moving on to the nearby Chapelle Sainte Domimique. During the Middle Ages Perpignan was blessed with any number of monasteries. Almost all religious orders



were well represented. Many are now used for exhibitions and concerts.

St Jacques was originally the Jewish Quarter, created in 1243, by James the Conqueror. He wished to develop Perpignan's economy. Perpignan was becoming known internationally for its cloth business and the drapers needed more money to improve their trade. Jews were well known as moneylenders. By offering them special privileges he persuaded them to live right next door to the cloth merchants and drapers. The ploy was immensely successful and all prospered. (Until 13th September 1493, that is. On that fateful day Ferdinand of Aragon and his queen, Isabelle of Castille, came to Perpignan and on the 21st of the same month, all Jews were given thirty days to leave, taking nothing with them.)

In 1245 the same James the Conqueror gave the Dominicans land on which a leprosy hospital stood. It took them almost a century to complete the soaring and beautiful building we see today. This time the photographs are hung on long wires, almost dwarfed by the height and beauty of their surroundings. A small courtyard joins the Chapelle Ste Dominique to the Chapelle du Tiers-ordre. The true splendour of the doorway was discovered during the preparations for a VISA festival, traces of colour indicating that the alternatively round and almond shaped arches were originally brightly painted. The Tiers-ordre chapel, full of dramatic 19th century art, is where the "Trabucayres," (bands of highwaymen) who terrorised the roads of the Albères in the mid 19th century were tried and



condemned to death or hard labour.

Outside is the Place de la Revolution Française where, in the dappled shade of tall plane trees, the lizard fountain spouts water at several tempting restaurants.

For the most spectacular plane trees you must go to the Square Bir Hakeim. It was named in memory of the desert battle where, in May 1942, the French held the superior strength of the German/Italian offensive at bay allowing the troops of Montgomery to defeat those of Rommel at El Alamein. The trees planted in 1809 are still there, the fountain still sparkles and, with the Promenade des Platanes, it is one of the main lungs of Perpignan.



Out for the day...



Further green space lies on either side of La Basse, the river that runs through Perpignan. Here you may admire the municipal plantings from the decking of the Quai Vauban but you may not stroll on the well-tended grassy banks. Vauban's walls have all but gone, as have the older city walls that preceded them. You can see a model of the city as it was in 1686, showing the proposed Vauban Fortifications as you pass under the archway of the Porte de Notre Dame by the Castillet. Once incorporated into them, the XIV century Castillet, symbol of the city, remains. Originally built as a fortress it now houses a museum of Roussillon Folk Art and is another VISA venue. From the

roof terrace there are wonderful views over the rooftops, up to the Palais Royal and, in the opposite direction, to Canigou.

The Palais des Rois de Majorque, is not a VISA venue but is a must-see if only for the equally good views from the impressive red brick ramparts. It is made up of a succession of citadels starting in 1276 as a residence for Jaume II of Majorca, on to Louis XI in 1475, Charles Quint in 1535, Philippe II in 1564 and finally fortified by Vauban for Louis XIV in 1679. It contains a beautiful chapel, some rather austere royal apartments and a grand courtyard. The wild lions that used to roam the moat have long gone. Free concerts can often be enjoyed within its walls.

From the Castillet it is only a few steps to the Place de la Loge, marble paved and full of cafes and restaurants. Maillol's voluptuous statue of Venus faces the 1397 Loge de Mer, once the Stock exchange and the HQ of the Consulat de

Where to Eat?

With so many restaurants, good bad and indifferent, in Perpignan, it's tempting to stick to regular haunts isn't it? Why not try something different this time? For classic French Bistro dining in traditional art deco surroundings and great ambiance, try the Vauban Restaurant on the Rive Gauche, or to escape the madding crowd, take a wander down Passage Doisneau and relax in the cool surroundings of Nature & Gourmande for fine cuisine with a difference.

Bon appetit!



Mer. Next door is the XVI century Town Hall, a classic example of Catalan architecture, and, relaxing in the courtyard, La Mediterranee, another Maillol bronze. Next door again, the Palais de la Deputation used to be the seat of the Roussillon Parliament and a sombre setting for a variety of gruesome executions.

The Cathedral St Jean, (St Jean being the patron saint of Perpignan), is nearby on the beautiful Place Gambetta. It was raised to cathedral status in 1602 when Perpignan displaced Elne as the seat of the Bishop. The vast, rather sombre interior has been recently restored and houses some spectacular religious art, an impressive 19th century organ and a large pre-roman white marble baptismal font.

The original old Romanesque St Jean le Vieux is joined to the cathedral by huge buttresses but is unvisitable. In 1892, Bartissol, a self made extremely rich and important man, not only tore down some of the original city walls to build a series of luxury apartments right next to the cathedral Cité Bartissol but also, realising the city needed more light, acquired St Jean le Vieux to house much needed electricity generators...

On the other side of the cathedral lies the Campo Santo, one of only two cloister cemeteries



in France. A grand square, whose graceful arcades contained the tombs owned by wealthy burghers in the Middle Ages, it is now used for open-air concerts, lectures and, during VISA, on a huge screen, showings of the best of the best press photos.

More are shown on an equally huge screen in the magnificent Place de la Republique. As night falls the Place fills, all tables are taken in the many bars cafés and restaurants and photojournalism par excellence is the order of the night.

Actually, at any time, it is a delightful place in which to sit, eat, drink, shop and relax. An old 1795 watercolour shows that this, indeed, was how it was planned. Then known as Place de la Liberté, the theatre was built in 1813 and there were plane trees under which each morning there was a market and each evening the good folk of Perpignan would stroll.

Not so very different from today.



A DRIVE FROM AGLY TO TET, FROM LAPRADELLE-PUILAURENS TO PRADES

There are many good drives from valley to valley, this one takes you through a variety of different and dramatic landscapes, past fascinating rocks, distant farms, ruined castles and many monuments.

It starts at Lapradelle just off the D115 on the D22 where Chateau de Puylaurens towers in all its splendour above the valley of the Boulzane. A noble and fairytale castle from the battlements of which marvellous views are to be had, over the village, the 1904 railway viaduct and the Forest of Fanges.

Continuing along the D22 and following the river Boulzane through the forest past Salvezines, you arrive at Gincla, an interesting village to visit for its history of iron forging from 1308 onwards. The river runs

attractively through its centre and the small chapel of St Jean-Baptiste is worth visiting.

After Montfort sur Bouzane the road practically doubles back on itself rising up through forest and farmland before crossing over the 1020 metre Col d'Aussières out of the Aude, into the P.-O. and becoming the D2.

From Rabouillet you can see the ruined Chateau d'Arsa, built upon huge granite boulders. A piste leads you to it and on to Sournia passing a couple of small chapels, notably that of St Laurent west of Arsa and St

Michel, on the left of the D2 just before Sournia. You could stop in Sournia for refreshment and decide whether to continue on the D2 to Trevillach, Montalba le Chateau and Ille sur Têt or take the D67 to Campousssey. Both routes are a bit wild



and wonderful but I favour Campoussey, a picturesque village in a landscape of sparse garrigue scattered with dolmen and strange rocks.

The church is unusual in that it has two Roman doors and, in front of it, two huge elm trees.

Leaving Campoussey on the D619 you pass close to a fine dolmen and the strangely shaped Roc Cornut before winding your way ever downwards. The views over the valley of the Têt sweeping up to Canigou are stupendous. Just above the pretty little village of Catllar you join the D14 and from there it's an easy drive into Prades.



TO THE TOURS OF CABRENÇ FOR A PERFECT AUTUMN PICNIC

When there's a light sprinkling of snow on Canigou and the vineyards are just turning gold it's a good idea to pack up a picnic and head up the Vallespir.

After Arles sur Tech take the D44, follow the signs for Serralongue and soon you are high up above the Tech valley surrounded by grand mountains and farming country. From Serralongue village the three towers of Cabrenç are easily visible, perched on a nearby mountaintop. The first is the remains of the 10th century castle, the second the keep of the castle added in the 12th century and the third the signal tower built in the 14th century. Serralongue village had been built in the 10th century to provide lodgings for the serfs of the Castle of Cabrenç.

To reach the towers, take the road to Lamanère, but turn off up a track marked "To The Towers" before you get there. A steep path leads through the straight trunks of sweet chestnut woods, sunlight glittering on the remaining leaves, golden light allowing glimpses of craggy peaks and occasional farms. A beautiful but long commute for the 10th century peasants getting to work in the castle from Serralongue on a daily basis. "Cabrenç" meaning goat

in ancient Catalan, seems an apt title, goats could well have designed the path. Gradually the chestnuts give way to beech woods, huge granite boulders appear and, as you approach the towers, the only sounds are of distant cowbells and the rustle of fallen leaves around your boots.

The view from the top is wonderful. Mountains for miles and the Castle Keep makes the perfect spot for a picnic. The past may have been full of frantic fighting and demented defending of high mountain passes, but all you see today is peace and beauty, the animals small as toys, making their way from meadow to meadow far below.

It is quite a climb up to the top the third tower but when you do get to the top a beautiful enamelled Table of Orientation shows you are 112 km from Barcelona, the Bay of Roses is way over the border in that direction, it is only 40 km from Collioure and Canigou of course is just there ...

The descent by the same path is easy.



TIME TRAVELLING IN BÉLESTA DE LA FRONTIÈRE...

Slip back in time six thousand years and, in a cave in the limestone rocks behind the village of Bélesta, Neolithic man's life is a busy one. Land has to be cleared, wheat, barley, peas and lentils grown. Sheep, goats, pigs and cattle are raised, both for food and for wool. He supplements his diet by hunting boar, deer, rabbits and birds. Domesticated wolves are his hunting dogs. Life expectancy may be around 35 years, infant mortality rate high, but, for those who survive infancy, life is healthy. Wool is spun and woven, and clothes made from the cloth. The creation of jewellery, fine pottery and useful tools are among his skills ...

All this and more we know thanks to some potholers who, in 1983, discovered a passage, starting in the cavern behind the village played in by generations of local children... Archaeologists, led by Mme Françoise Claustre, began to dig. Under the debris of six thousand years they uncovered the oldest communal sepulchre to be

found in the Midi. In it were the bones of thirty or more human beings as well as twenty eight beautiful pottery vases dating from 4715 / 4365 BC. These are now on display in the museum, as is a perfect reproduction of the original cave. The cave itself, on its arid limestone hillside, is barred and locked although, on Thursday afternoons in July and

August it is possible to visit.

It is easy to see how it got its reputation as a witches lair, how exciting it must have been to play and made camps in it before the treasure it contained was discovered. There are modest beginnings of stalactites, the light filters in through vegetation blocking holes in the boulders. The well, ten or more metres deep, is unaccessible. The tiny entrance through which the potholers crawled also. The soft floor is how it has been for centuries, hiding and protecting millennium of history. The sculptor who took the moulds of the sepulchre for the museum had to crawl fifteen metres to reach it. He suffered from claustrophobia. The fumes of the

materials he had to use made it necessary for him to return to the surface frequently. Painstakingly he performed his task. In the museum his replica takes pride of place so we have no need to crawl back in time to the Neolithic funeral parlour. We can marvel at it all in room five in the Chateau.

In 1258, Louis IX (Saint Louis) of France and James I of Aragon signed the Treaty of Corbeil, redefining the French border with Aragon and placing Bélesta firmly on the new frontier. The Chateau, with its useful lookout tower and deep cistern was fortified. Over the centuries it passed from family to family until, during the Revolution, the remaining occupants, five sisters of the Niort family, were thrown out and the Chateau fell into ruin. In the 80's it was rescued and in 1992 began a new life as the Chateau Museum of Bélesta. In the IX century signal tower is a frieze of fashion from Neolithic to modern man. The jewels and clothes discovered in the cave, as well as the tools used by those distant inhabitants are on display. History, from Neolithic through Bronze to the local agriculture of the twentieth century is explained and set out in the series of rooms that formed the original castle. There is a Neolithic menu created from the plentiful local produce of 6000 years ago. From the

terrace are splendid views over the vineyards to Canigou, of the bell tower of the 12th century church and of the former wine co-operative recently converted into a designer hotel, restaurant and winery.

Due to open in early autumn 2010, organic, ecologically sound and four star luxurious, the RIBERACH Cave Hotel and "LA CO-OPERATIVE" Restaurant will bring to Bélesta more than just a touch of class. Luc Richard, architect with a passion for wine, is bringing his life long dream to fruition. Born and bred in Bélesta, grandson of a vigneron, he and his team are taking the 1925 Cave Co-operative and creating something unique and exciting. Their motto? None other than the emblem of the original cave "Un pour tous, tous pour un!"

He and his wife, Karin Pühringer, have dreamt and lived the project since 2006. The

restaurant, open to all, will use local produce. The four menus will change frequently, subject to available fresh ingredients., not unlike the Neolithic menu in the museum, although the presentation is likely to be more sophisticated. They will range from 29 – 69 euros. There will also be an extensive a la carte



Out for the day...

and an irresistible dessert trolley. The views from the huge plate glass windows over the valley add an extra dimension to the experience. A large terrace overlooks the "Basin Baignarde", a large, naturally filtered pool, set in the vineyards below.

The Cave will house a Wine Boutique where a wide range of local and less local wines will be on sale and where tastings will be held.

And the Hotel. Each of its 18 rooms have been created in or above the old wine cuves, all with views over the valley, all with private terraces and each one with a different décor and ambience.

The 9 doubles, ranging in price from 115 euros to 135 + according to season, 7 suites (160 – 185 +) and 2 family rooms (185 – 215 +) are furnished with

the same attention to detail that characterises the entire project.

Bélesta is fortunate indeed to be placed so firmly on the wine tourism map of France.

A fortune in which all who live in or visit the P-O. can share...

From the Co-operative you may chose to walk the 3 – 4 hour "BALADES A TRAVERS LES AGES".

Before reaching the entrance to the cave, on the left, is a field planted with scrubby oak trees in neat rows. They are truffle oaks, Harvested regularly, they are another of Bélesta's many treasures. No doubt they will appear on the menu of the Riberach Restaurant. Leaving the cave locked and barred on your right, the piste continues to the ruins of a 17th century "Ice Well". Before the days of fridges the ice business was an important industry. In fact, so-

called "natural ice" was used on market stalls of the region until 1920 – 1930. Ice wells were built near a source of water, ideally on a slope shaded from the sun but open to the breeze. The wells were dug and impressive circular walls raised, watertight and insulated. They were roofed by two layers of dry stone tiles



opening july 2010



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Et si la vigne n'était contée...

separated by a layer of sand. In winter, water collected in small artificial lakes would be frozen, then cut into pieces and carried in heavy containers on porters' backs to the wells. Straw was used for extra insulation and so thorough was the construction that the ice could be kept and used all summer. It was carried, by night, to the village in wooden panniers under layers of straw, leaves or wool. Near the well is a vestige of an old pottery kiln where tiles for the chateau were reputedly fired.

The walk continues along an ancient irrigation canal. Moorish engineers constructed the local network of canals in the 6th to 8th centuries, some of which are still used for irrigation to this day. The canal, often dry and covered in vegetation, ends at the mill

known as the "Moulin d'En Gateu". Until the terrible flood of 1940, kitchen gardens ran its length and wheat from which the flour was ground was grown on all the terraces. The medieval mill itself is perfectly placed where the river Crabayrisse runs between great granite blocks that form a natural barrage. The canal supplied water that collected in two basins before falling onto the blades of a vertical water wheel that drove the grindstones. Then, in 1836, the town council built a windmill, to the north of Bélesta, and the Moulin d'en Gateu slowly crumbled into the dangerous ruin we see today.

Returning to the piste and crossing the Crabayrisse, it is a brief walk to two of the frontier stones marking the 1258

border between France and Aragon, the frontier between the Occitan Fenouillèdes and Catalan Roussillon. Simple and somewhat phallic, they stand, thrusting out of the encroaching garrigue as they have done for the last seven hundred odd years... Engraved on the southern side of the nearest is the simple cross of Aragon.

Returning to the present, take the Caladroi road for the view of the Riberach Hotel's windows repeating those of the Chateau Museum above it, proof that the architect's art has stood the test of time and that we are fortunate indeed to be able to appreciate the skills of the men who live and have lived and worked in Bélesta for the last 6000 years.



Test your French

1 - H POUR HÔPITAL!

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

<i>rangée d'arbres</i>	1	<i>a haut parleur</i>
<i>air qui sort par la bouche</i>	2	<i>b homard</i>
<i>légume vert, blanc, rouge....</i>	3	<i>c hirondelle</i>
<i>augmente le volume des sons</i>	4	<i>d haleine</i>
<i>qui sort chaque semaine</i>	5	<i>e hibou</i>
<i>crustacé avec grosses pinces.</i>	6	<i>f huître</i>
<i>petites secousses</i>	7	<i>g hebdomadaire</i>
<i>désagréables qui soulèvent la poitrine.</i>		<i>h hoquets</i>
<i>coquillage qui contient des perles !</i>	8	<i>I haie</i>
<i>oiseau de proie, actif la nuit</i>	9	<i>J haricot</i>
<i>petit oiseau migrateur</i>	10	

2 - CHOOSE THE RIGHT DEFINITION

une mite

- a) femme très forte
- b) possibilité
- c) petit papillon blanc

un répondeur

- a) ce qu'on dit en réponse à une question
- b) machine qui enregistre des messages téléphoniques
- c) Quel qu'un qui donne des conseils

un conjoint

- a) mari ou femme
- b) accord pour l'achat d'une maison
- c) cigarette illégale

un potager

- a) un jardin pour cultiver les légumes
- b) une soupe
- c) un point d'arrivée

un crapaud

- a) toilettes sur l'autoroute
- b) des bêtises
- c) ressemble à une grosse grenouille



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3 - MATCH UP THESE IDIOMATIC SAYINGS

A la bonne franquette
 J'ai la queue de bois
 C'était un coup de foudre
 Ça ne vaut pas la peine
 Ça me donne des frissons.
 Arrête ton cinéma
 Ne le prends pas sur ce ton
 C'est une drôle d'idée
 J'en ai ras le bol
 J'ai le trac

- 1 a Stop making such a fuss
- 2 b It was love at first sight
- 3 c I'm fed up.
- 4 d I've got butterflies in my stomach
- 5 e That sends shivers down my spine
- 6 f Don't take it like that
- 7 g Simply, without ceremony (usually meal)
- 8 h It's a strange idea
- 9 I I have a hangover
- 10 J It's not worth it

Language tip

English: I bought my shorts at
 Décathlon (plural)

French: J'ai acheté **MON** short à
 Décathlon (singular)

English: My hair IS blonde (singular)
 French : Mes cheveux **SONT** blonds
 (plural)

If you take French Lessons in your own home and pay with CESU (Chèque Emploi Service Universel), you will probably be eligible for up to 50% tax rebate on your payments.

Check out <http://www.anglophone-direct.com/The-cheque-emploi-paying-for> for further details.

Repeat three times

Six chaussettes
 sèchent dans seize
 sachets

Blague bête

Une mite dit à son amie: "Je suis au régime. Je mange seulement des bikinis"

(mite – moth
 régime – diet
 maigrir – to lose weight)



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Test your French

4 - MATCH UP THE USEFUL EXPRESSIONS!

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 <i>Quoi de neuf docteur ?</i> | A <i>Bless you!</i> |
| 2 <i>Allons-y !</i> | B <i>I get sea sick</i> |
| 3 <i>J'ai le mal de mer!</i> | C <i>Willingly, with pleasure</i> |
| 4 <i>Tant pis</i> | D <i>What's he on about?</i> |
| 5 <i>Qui t'a sonné</i> | E <i>I had a narrow escape</i> |
| 6 <i>À tes (vos) souhaits !</i> | F <i>Never mind!</i> |
| 7 <i>Volontiers</i> | G <i>That's it, it's done</i> |
| 8 <i>Je l'ai échappé belle</i> | H <i>Who asked you?</i> |
| 9 <i>Qu'est-ce qu'il raconte ?</i> | I <i>What's up doc?</i> |
| 10 <i>Ça y est</i> | J <i>Let's go!</i> |

5 - MATCH UP THESE SLANG WORDS WITH THEIR ENGLISH MEANINGS

- | | | | |
|----------------------------|----|---|-----------------------------|
| <i>urke) ado</i> | 1 | a | <i>cheap wine, plonk</i> |
| <i>dingue</i> | 2 | b | <i>a man's suit</i> |
| <i>Quel bordel</i> | 3 | c | <i>ridiculous</i> |
| <i>marrant</i> | 4 | d | <i>ugly</i> |
| <i>le cinoche</i> | 5 | e | <i>a teenager</i> |
| <i>un costard</i> | 6 | f | <i>minimum-wage earner</i> |
| <i>un smicard</i> | 7 | g | <i>disgusting</i> |
| <i>C'est la galère !</i> | 8 | h | <i>crazy</i> |
| <i>débile</i> | 9 | I | <i>It's a real struggle</i> |
| <i>déqueulasse (dégeu)</i> | 10 | j | <i>funny</i> |
| <i>le pinard</i> | 11 | k | <i>cinema</i> |
| <i>moche</i> | 12 | l | <i>what a mess</i> |



Test your french - answers

1. 1! 2d 3f 4a 5g 6b 7h 8f 9e 10c
 2. 1c 2b 3c 4a 5c
 3. 1g 2! 3b 4f 5e 6a 7f 8h 9c 10d
 4. 1! 2! 3b 4f 5h 6a 7c 8e 9d 10g
 5. 1e 2h 3! 4f 5k 6b 7f 8i 9c 10g 11a 12d

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Making a complaint

Ce ne marche pas (sanuh marsh pah)

It doesn't work

Ca ne va pas (sanuh vah pah)

It's no good

Je voudrais me plaindre

(chuh voodray muh pland)

I want to make a complaint

Je ne suis pas du tout satisfait

(chuh nuh swee pah dew too satisfy)

I'm not at all satisfied

C'est un abus de confiance

(sate an abbu duh confee-onse)

It's a breach of trust

C'est là que vous avez tort

(say lah kuh voose avay tor)

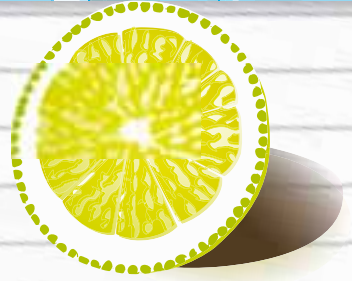
That's where you're wrong

Ca fait une heure que j'attends

(sa fay oon euhr kuh chaton)

I've been waiting for an hour

**When somebody says 'merci', answer
pas de quoi.....don't mention it
de rien.....it's nothing
je vous en prie.....it was my pleasure**



Une autre blague bete !

Maman citron dit à ses enfants :

« Pour vivre longtemps, il ne faut jamais être pressé! » !

(pressé – in a rush)

Language tip

Il y a - there is/there are...

Il y avait - there was...

Il y aura – there will be...

Il va y avoir – there is going to be

Voici = here (it) is

Voilà = there (it) is



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Améliorez votre Anglais

1 - Il est clair que les anglais aiment les français, il y a tellement de mots et expressions avec 'French' dedans. Trouvez la bonne définition pour les mots ci-dessous qui contiennent tous le mot 'french'

French bread	1	a	le baiser avec la langue
French door	2	b	filer à l'anglais
French letter	3	c	cor d'harmonie
French fries	4	d	baguette
French kiss	5	e	vinaigrette
French horn	6	f	frites
to take French leave	7	g	porte-fenêtre
French dressing	8	h	capote anglaise

'No' tout seul peut faire un peu méchant non?

Voici quelques phrases pour vous aider à dire 'non' gentiment.

I'm afraid I can't...

I'd (really) rather not...

Thank you for asking but, I have to...

That's very kind of you but

I'd love to but...

Ouch, that English humour!

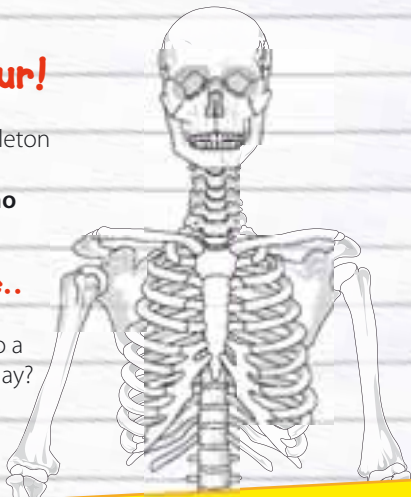
Q: Why didn't the skeleton go to the ball?

A: Because he had no body to go with!.

and another one..

Q: What do you say to a skeleton going on holiday?

A: Bone voyage!.
(bone = os)



Trouvez la définition de ces mots d'argot anglais

bloke	1	a	mollasson
brew	2	b	mourir
chummy	3	c	bruit
couch potato	4	d	UNETTES
cushy	5	e	fou
kick the bucket	6	f	homme
bonkers	7	g	kitsch
rip off	8	h	facile
specs	9	i	arnager
racket	10	j	tasse de thé



Very bad joke

Q: Why don't cannibals eat comedians?

A: Because they taste funny.
(funny = amusant OU bizarre)

Virelangue

Répétez trois fois

Creamed clams
crammed in clean
cans can clash

Remember...

Behind every
successful man is a
surprised woman...

3 - Still, yet, already

Still (encore, toujours) indique que quelque chose est toujours en cours et n'est pas encore terminé,
It's still raining!

Yet (jusqu'à présent, déjà) indique que quelque chose ne s'est pas encore arrivé, mais qu'on s'y attend.
Hasn't it stopped raining yet?

Already (déjà) indique presque la surprise que quelque chose s'est terminé si tôt.
Has it already stopped raining? (Quoi? Mais ça vient juste de commencer!)

Choisissez la bonne réponse

1. After all these years, I **already/still/yet** get lost in Perpignan.
2. Don't go **already/still/yet**. You've only just arrived!
3. Haven't we **already/still/yet** seen that film?
4. I'm getting worried. She hasn't come home **already/still/yet**.
5. Lazy thing! Are you **already/still/yet** in bed?

4 - H - is for Hat

<i>hail</i>	1	<i>a</i>	<i>we hang clothes on these.</i>
<i>half</i>	2	<i>b</i>	<i>pumps blood through your body</i>
<i>hammer</i>	3	<i>c</i>	<i>worn to protect your head</i>
<i>hanger</i>	4	<i>d</i>	<i>Balls of ice that fall from the sky</i>
<i>hare</i>	5	<i>e</i>	<i>small mammal with coat that prickles</i>
<i>heart</i>	6	<i>f</i>	<i>a female chicken</i>
<i>hedgehog</i>	7	<i>g</i>	<i>for hitting nails into wood</i>
<i>heel</i>	8	<i>h</i>	<i>the back part of the foot</i>
<i>helmet</i>	9	<i>I</i>	<i>similar to a rabbit</i>
<i>hen</i>	10	<i>j</i>	<i>divided into two parts</i>

Because We're Worth It!

USEFUL VOCAB

HAIR

haircut - une coupe

shampoo - le shampoing (shom-pwan)

conditioner - l'après-shampoing

highlights - les mèches

perm - une permanente

layered - dégradé

sideboards - les pattes

fringe - une frange

parting - une raie

blow dry - un brushing

hair ends - les pointes

Would this suit me? - Ca m'irait ?

I'd like the colour/roots touching up. -

Je voudrais refaire ma couleur/racines.

BEAUTY

treatments - les soins

make-up - le maquillage

hair removal (legs/eyebrows/bikini/underarm) - l'épilation (jambes/sourcils/maillot/aisselles)

moisturising cream - une crème hydratante.

eye cream - un soin contour des yeux.

facial - un soin de visage

(dry/oily/combination) skin - la peau (seche/ grasse/ mixte / peau sèche / peau sensible ou irritabile)

anti wrinkle treatment - un soin anti rides

beauty sleep - sommeil réparateur

And if all else fails.....

plastic surgeon - un chirurgien esthétique

NOTE TO HUSBAND

Dear Olivier

Just in case you are wondering what to get a gal for xmas who has everything, a day of pampering at the Pavillon de Soie would go down a treat!

Love Kate XXX

Remember, a pampered wife is a happy (quieter) wife...



We've found an English speaking hairdresser!

If the language barrier leaves you looking more like Olive Oyl than Oliva Newton John when you visit the hairdressers, pop eye, I mean pop in to see Samantha, English speaking hairdresser in Cabestany.



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Lets get physical...



Up, up and away...

Bored with the beach? Want to see the top of Canigou, but not got the time to walk up? Then why not try a trip in a microlight? You will certainly see the P-O from a new angle. And don't worry, if the word "microlight" conjures up a vision of a lawnmower with wings; be assured that they come in all shapes and sizes.

From the ULM base at Toreilles (ULM = ultra-léger motorisé), you can experience the delight of being aloft in a "multi-axe" (almost a plane) or a pendulaire (more of a flying wing). Introductory flights - or baptêmes - can last as little as 12 minutes, long enough to discover whether it is a sport "for you" and not so long that you need to panic. With a "baptême", you get the chance to handle the machine yourself and, if that

sounds a bit daunting, why not indulge instead in a pleasure trip? A two hour flight climbing you up to an altitude of 3200 metres would give you that view of Canigou without the blistered feet. Or you could have a ride above the Corbières looking down on the Cathar Castles or, for the less adventurous, a little jaunt along the coast.

At Toreilles you are not limited to pleasure flights, it is the only

ULM Base in the P-O where you can obtain your licence with qualified instructors. Why choose to fly a microlight instead of a light airplane? It is cheaper, the training is more flexible and, for those of us over 50, there are less stringent medical requirements.

The thrill of flying a microlight in the P-O is hard to beat.

Imagine the adrenalin rush on take-off, then flying out over the Med with the boats far below and turning to see the majestic beauty of Canigou rising from the Roussillon Plain.

www.ulm66.fr

...back down to earth

The school summer holidays may be over but the P-O will still be sizzling a while longer yet. In fact, we were going to do a special feature on warm water canyoning but they tell us that it is simply not cold enough in autumn in the P-O... and to come back in December. So that's what we'll do! (Brrrrrrrrrrrr)

Autumn really is the perfect season for a bucketful of physical

activities. Not too hot, not too cold, it's the best season for golf, quad and mountain biking, horse riding, many of the water sports, climbing.....

And on the subject of climbing, have you ever considered indoor climbing? It's a safe and fun introduction to the outdoor sport, a physical and a mental challenge. As well as being an excellent workout for your

whole body, using muscles that you didn't even know you had, climbers must plan out a sequence of moves to complete the route, requiring mental agility as well as the physical effort. Deversud in the Espace Polygone, offer a variety of courses to learn climbing techniques in a controlled, supervised environment, whatever the weather. Once you are feeling confident, they will introduce you into the great outdoors with



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climbing expeditions into the Pyrenees. It's also a great place to take the kids for birthday parties.

Of course, not everybody wants to climb a wall! Some of us would rather keep our feet or wheels firmly anchored on the ground so a group or family visit or birthday party to AccroQuads near Ille Sur Têt is another different but thrilling way to spend an autumn afternoon. Hiring a quad bike means that those with driving licences can head for the hills and those without a licence can drive around the 3 hectares of private land, without getting dizzy

Join us for another round of 'Let's Get Physical' in our winter issue where we will be experiencing all the thrills and spills of para-skiing and kite -skiing (assuming our nerves hold out that is!) and re-donning our wet suits to try out Warm Water canyoning in cold, cold conditions! (brrrrrrrr, brrrrrrrrrr and double brrrrrrrrrr)

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STATE AUCTIONS - ADJUGÉ , VENDU!



Have you thought about buying your next car or home by auction?

State auctions (les ventes domaniales) take place throughout France and are organised by the DNID (Direction Nationale d'Interventions Domaniales), a national, governmental administration agency, responsible for selling off a variety of state owned property, assets and estates as well as unclaimed items resulting from theft or loss, unclaimed inheritances, lack

of a will, confiscation by the authorities. ...

The DNID holds over 200 auctions per year of furniture, electrical and household goods, vehicles, and property. Dates and places of sales are published online at :-

www.ventes-domaniales.fr

Go to 'Ventes Mobilières' to search for auctions by region or by category of goods, or head straight down to the bottom of the page to 'Accès rapide'.

Go to 'Ventes Immobilières' to search for property.

Viewings can be arranged before the auction and the sale price will include VAT, expenses and registration. (frais de vente) Payment can be made at the auction or in instalments, depending on the article for sale.



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CANCELLING OR CHANGING YOUR INSURANCE POLICY

Most of us who are insured in France have learnt, sometimes through bitter experience, that many insurance policies (though not all) are automatically renewed unless two months notice to cancel is given in advance.

In fact, whilst this is true, what we are NOT always told is that insurers MUST give proper notice/reminder to renew at least 15 days before the final date allowed for cancellation, and if this is not done, you may cancel your policy at any time.

When cancelling a policy, always send your letter of termination by registered post and bear in mind that the stamp date on the envelope is the date that counts, not the date at the top of your letter.



*Qu'est ce qui est vert et qui se déplace sous l'eau?
Un choux marin.*

COMPULSORY REGISTRATION FOR RENTAL PROPERTIES IN FRANCE

From July 2010, second home and gite owners must register their properties with their local town hall or risk a fine of up to €450. Anyone renting out furnished holiday accommodation should fill in the simple two page form (Cerfa 14004-01) available at and returnable to, the Mairie, or downloadable at <http://vosdroits.service-public.fr>, and should receive an acknowledgement within a few days, (depending of course on the efficiency of the commune!) signed and stamped. And that should be it!



The 'taxe de séjour' local tax set by some communes and which should be paid per visitor per night for rental properties should continue to be paid as normal. However, many gite owners have not been paying this, and were in fact unaware of

its existence, as it was a difficult tax to control and checks were rare. This is all likely to change with the new compulsory registration but the tax is small, varying from 0,20 € à 1,50 € per person per night depending on the commune.

Martin N. Johansen: More than meets the eye

by Ellen Hall



Martin Johansen has the rugged Nordic looks you might expect of a landscape and wildlife photographer. His love for mountain hiking and biking has drawn him far from the beaten track to observe nature in its most secret and intimate moments. A man of action who knows when to sit still and observe, Martin's photographs reflect his attention to the wonder of what he sees.

Martin's publishing career started at the age of 16 with black and white photographs for a Danish fishing magazine. His articles and images have since

appeared in Geo, Terre Sauvage and other publications. His most recent book "Atlantique Nord" surveys Greenland, Iceland and the Faroe Islands with text in French and English.

For the past 10 years Martin and his young family have lived in Collioure. His next book project is about the wildlife and landscape of the Pyrenees from Vallespir and Canigou down to the coast.

Some of these images will be part of an exhibition at the site of Paulilles from September 1 to 26. The work of two other photographers, Aouad Said and Henri Colonna d'Istria, will also be on display

"By showing the beauty of landscape I hope to prevent too much development and destruction." In Greenland Martin recently witnessed how climate change has affected the landscape and the dramatic consequences for the way of life



© Martin N. Johansen



And now for something COMPLETELY DIFFERENT.

"SPLIT" is the title of the exhibition to be held from 8th – 31st October at the CASTANGALERIE, 3 Place Gambetta, Perpignan or at 7 Avenue du General Leclerc. (Venue to be confirmed. Ring 04 68 340367 for details)

The photographer/ artist/sculptor is Phil Monk. All his artistic skills are discernable in the awesome black and white images on show. The resulting photographs are both

powerful and disturbing, fascinating and unsettling.

Unique, totally original and highly unusual, in them Phil Monk uses his remarkable creative energy to expose the struggle towards inner peace. It is a great opportunity to see them in Perpignan before they move on to the Contemporary Art Fair in Strasbourg from 24th – 29th November.



© Martin N. Johansen

of its population. Referring to the recent floods in the Var, where water rose up to two meters in an hour and a half, Martin says we should prepare for more storms and floods in France.

While conceding that progress is necessary, Martin's message

is "Respect for our natural environment". Luckily for us, the Pyrénées Orientales has more natural reserves than any other department in France. To share his passion for singular landscape and elusive wildlife, Martin offers photography workshops - a day

trip in the Alberes or overnight on the Canigou, to take advantage of the evening and early morning light. His website, www.explorerimages.com, is an inspiration to pick up your camera and head for the hills.

See for yourself.



Over the border...

Top tips from our Forum - www.anglophone-direct.com

CITÉ DE L'ESPACE, TOULOUSE

By thumbelina

We visited the Cité de l'Espace in Toulouse in January. What a day out!!!

We took the additional option of a guided tour and paid 66 euros for three adults.

We started in the main pavilion. Had a go at walking on the moon and spent hours looking - and playing - with the interactive attractions as well as watching some interesting little films and images.

Lunch in the main restaurant was excellent and very good value.

Our guided tour was outstanding! The guide was passionate about space travel and personally knows several astro/cosmonauts. He made the tour so interesting and really brought the idea of space travel to life. The tour around a real Mir space capsule was just great.

After the guided tour, we visited the Imax theatre to watch a fascinating film about the moon landings.

The Cité closed at 18h15 so we had to leave but went back again the next day.

Brilliant Meteo France presentation, explaining climate change, meteorology, climatology, oceanology etc. Could have spent hours in just this area. You can also film yourself presenting the weather - absolutely hilarious! And SO difficult to read an autocue and point to the right place on a map at the same time

Headsets are available in several languages at a price of 4€90 for adults and 3€90 for children.

www.cite-espace.com

An absolutely fabulous day out which I cannot recommend highly enough!

Other Forum Comments

**We visited the Space Centre in summer and confirm that it is really a two day visit to see everything - absolutely fascinating - great day out. Well worth booking in advance online so you don't have to stand in the horrendous queue to get in like we did. "*

**ITS BRILLIANT!*

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Apparently the best time to call is first thing in the morning, and they may take a while to answer but are very helpful when they do!

Always ask for a name as it is a small office and you should be able to communicate with the same person each time to save repeating your situation over and over and over.....

You can also contact them on simpleenergywithedf@edf.fr

Spam.....

From 2011, mobile phone users in France will be able to protect themselves from spam phone call such as unwanted voicemail messages or cold callers by adding their number to an official black-list.

Spam voicemail messages and missed calls from 08 numbers, tempting the phone owner to call back at premium-rates can already be reported by calling 33700 from your mobile. These messages can now be reported



..... and scam

Thinking of setting up as an autoentrepreneur?

If an official looking letter and form arrive from 'Infogreffe', demanding payment for entry into an online business register, ignore it! There are NO compulsory directory registrations and this is simply a way of scamming money out of new businesses!

Stamp price rises

Stamp prices for letters delivered within France rose at the beginning of July to €0.58 for a 'tarif prioritaire' (first class) and €0.53 for a 'tarif économique' (second class).

Feeling lucky?

French composer Edmond Audran was an unknown until he produced hit production, La Mascotte, in 1880, The opera, named after a provincial French word for a witch, followed a central character who had such good luck that theatregoers were sure it had to come from supernatural sources. As the show expanded throughout Europe, the title of the opera came to describe any object or person bringing good fortune

A Load of sCrap

The scrap bonus scheme (prime à la casse) introduced by the French government nearly two years ago to encourage the buying of new cars is being phased out. The original offer of €1,000 towards a new car when the old one was scrapped was reduced to €700 at the beginning of this year, dropped again in July to €500, and will be completely 'scrapped' by 2011.

Doctors and medicines

Fees for GPs go up in January 2011, €22 to €23.

Reimbursement for prescription medicines will also be reduced. Medicines are reimbursed at different rates, which are shown by the colour of the label.

15% Orange

35% Blue

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Your 'mutuel' or top up health insure will reimburse a further amount depending on your policy.

On your bike...

It may well become a legal requirement in France in the future to wear a cycle helmet and fluorescent jacket. As yet, this is not law but has been proposed in parliament.

BURNING ISSUES

Fed up with trudging to the bottom of the garden in a stiff Tramontane to chop and heave beastie-ridden logs from the woodpile to your fireplace?

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By Ellen Hall

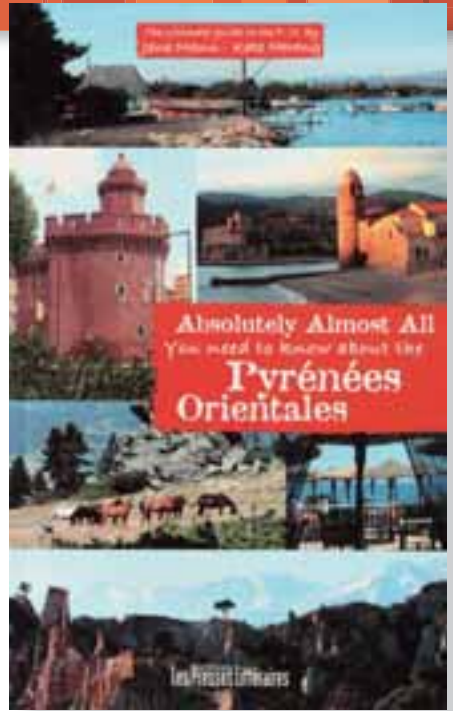
Whether you just hopped off the plane in Perpignan or have roamed the region for the last 20 years, Jane Mann's latest book - *Absolutely Almost All You need to know about the Pyrénées Orientales - is a delightful travelling companion full of up-to-the-minute and surprising information about the marvels of the region.**

The department divides naturally into three valleys and *AAAAYNTKATPO follows the same principle. Along the Tet you can zip through the trees on a wire and discover your inner monkey, spanning the Tech you can find a bridge built by the devil, and near the Agly you can lunch and sip wine under a 300-year-old mulberry tree.

Here you will find essential information for your own exploration. Place names are in BOLD print with Tourist Office telephone numbers on the same page for easy reference. At the end of each section you can test your French to see if you have been paying attention! There is even an excursion across the border into Spain.

With her light hand when it comes to history: "Visigoths, Franks and Moors came and went", Jane puts you in the picture without weighing you down (further reading is suggested in the bibliography.)

Jane has lived, written and taken pictures in the region for over a decade and has visited every one of the places mentioned. No detail escapes her photographer's eye, be it the view from La Rotja



mountain cave, Dali's Polar Bear or the railway yard at Cerbere. You are in the care of a playful and sensitive travel companion.

Did you know that the PO is home to the biggest oak barrel, the smallest ski station, and the narrowest gorge in the world? Intrigued by a mountain pasture of granite sheep? Curious about the process of curing ham? Ever wonder how the word "bistro" entered the language? In addition Kate Hareng's little-known facts, curious details and French exercises, ensure that this guide is brimming with insights and asides about language and culture and how to navigate day-to-day encounters in the region.

Absolutely (not Almost) the best imaginable introduction to the PO. Buy it from your local bookshop or from the FNAC online and enjoy making your own discoveries.

It is available from most major Maisons de la Presse and also from the FNAC on line. Delivery is free in France.

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Faire la


A tongue in cheek look at kissing in France


The French 'bise' can be slightly awkward for those who haven't grown up with it. Hold out your hand, pucker up your lips..... and cross your fingers that the person you are being introduced to has some idea if the occasion merits a kiss or a shake! Oh, and keep your tongue firmly behind your teeth and your mouth closed so that if you do get it wrong, you don't accidentally end up with your tongue rammed down their throat practicing another type of French kiss!

So are there any rules for 'ze French keez'?

Kind of... but not really, although some kind of physical greeting is usually expected.

-  Women kiss women (only ones they already have a friendly relationship with of course. Don't go kissing the lady on reception at the dentist)
-  Men kiss women but shake hands with men (unless they are family or very close friends in which case men kiss men)
-  Children kiss everybody.
-  The number of kisses varies from region to region, town to town, and even person to person, so don't worry about etiquette.
-  Most people kiss from right to left (ie your right cheek to their right cheek) Many people just touch cheek to cheek and 'air kiss', others will kiss properly on the cheek

 Avoid any of this if you can get away with it during the flu season!

 If the 'kissee' is rather cute, *make up your own rules!*

And if you do get it wrong, it can be quite a good ice breaker to start off with a good giggle!

We asked a few French friends to dish the dirt on their kissing habits!

Roland, Calce « J'aime faire les bises, surtout aux femmes ! Ca m'arrive d'embrasser les hommes que j'aime bien et de ma famille bien sur.

Combien? *J'en fais 4 à ceux que j'aime et 2 aux autres*



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bise

Nelly, Porté Puymorens

(Catalane de souche)

Ca fait plaisir en famille, mais quand il y a beaucoup de monde, ça me saoule un peu ! Les

hommes ont de la chance parce qu'ils peuvent serrer la main aux hommes.

Combien ? *J'en fais 2*



Suzannah, Roses

On fait la bise toujours en famille et avec les amis. C'est une habitude, une marque d'affection. En Espagne on commence par la joue gauche.

Combien ? *En Espagne on en fait toujours 2.*



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(Catalan) born and bred

Faire la bise
kiss on cheek.

Surtout
especially

Ca m'arrive
I do sometimes....

J'en fais 4
I give 4 (of them)

Ceux que j'aime
those who I like

Ca me soûle (slang)
it does my head in

Ca fait plaisir
It's nice..

Serrer la main
shake hands

Une habitude
habit

La joue -
cheek



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