P-O Life

Life in the Pyrénées-Orientales

OUT for THE DAY Le Racou

WALK The REGION Banyuls-Sur-Mer

FESTIVALS and TRADITIONS Sardanes and Correfocs

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EDITO:

egular readers of P-O Life might say that it was out of character for me not to be leaping about with excitement at the new

look P-O Life - and they would be right. I am giddy as a kipper, and soooooo delighted to extend a warm 'Holà' to Maite, fun new designer from Barcelona who has brought a little bit of 'quirky' back into P-O Life. Do hope you like it.

As usual, PO Life brings you walks, restaurant reviews, recipes, airport news, French and English language exercises, silly jokes, days out..... and a host of talented quest writers who have volunteered to be your personal guides around the region. My grateful thanks to them all - they are what make P-O Life special! Join us in Arles sur Tech and Chateau Valmy, pack your picnic and head for the Gorges de la Guillera, or take a ride, possibly your last, on Le Petit Train Jaune, destined to close in January 2016 unless substantial funding is found.

Keep an eye out too for our new look website, due to go online in late summer, packed with loads of stuff that we can't fit into the magazine!

> Please support our advertisers, and tell them how much we appreciate them when you meet them. P-0 Life is funded entirely by their adverts. Without them, we

> > Go steady on the sun and heavy on the sun cream....

and have a great summer!

would quite simply not exist.

Kate

Magazine gratuit



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3. Côte Vermeille Stories



Welcome to the Pyténées-Orientales!



51

With Ted and Kate Hiscock Banyuls-Sur-Mer

Puig del Mas, Chemin de Walter Benjamin, Col del Bast, Torre d'en Pages 8km (5m) – 2.5 hours

his is a comfortable jaunt around a valley to the south of Banyuls-sur-Mer. It involves a gentle climb to Puig del Mas, followed by a short but steep climb along the beginning of the Chemin de Walter Benjamin, before re-joining a road that stays on the level at Col del Bast and then descends back to Puig del Mas. Good footwear is advised.

Head for Banyuls-sur-Mer, (why not take the 1 euro bus?), and turn right at the roundabout on the sea front, along the Avenue du Géneral de Gaulle to the monumental 18th century railway bridge crossing the river Baillaury. Park, and take the footbridge over the dried up Baillaury alongside the road to Puig del Mas. This is a simple and short climb along the Avenue Pierre de Marca to one of the oldest hamlets in the region, whose narrow streets are worth exploring.

As the hill turns to the left, take the Avenue de la Fontaine, which is a narrow circular road through the village, until it emerges at a T junction with Cami de la Cigala. Turn right and right again in a few metres. descending the narrow Chemin de Mas Guillaume out of the hamlet, around a right hairpin bend followed by a right angle to the left after which, a sudden steep concrete track rises on the left crudely labelled 'Walter Benjamin'. This ancient 'Chemin de la Liberté' was a route taken by many escapees during the Second World War and climbs up to the frontier at 595m.

Follow this good track as it climbs and winds through shrubs, garrigue and vineyards and emerges back on the Chemin de la Guillaume. Turn left and follow the winding road for about 500m

to the Coll del Bast at 139m. Here, a board promotes

the Chemin de Walter Benjamin up to the frontier, but

of these precipitous vineyards and in particular, the need to remove surface water effectively and quickly during the heavy autumn rains. Without the terraces, murettes and pied de cog drainage channels, soil and vines would rapidly end up in the bottom of the valleys. In places, some contemporary farmers in search of enhanced planting and yield, have removed the drainage ducts and walls only to find nature's ravages have done just that. The commune of Banyuls has some of the steepest sloping vineyards in the region.

† This winding lane passes within 2km of the frontier beneath the savage vertical rock of Puig Joan and some more marvellous vineyards close to the spiny mountaintops at about 400m. Eventually, with a gradual descent, the cylindrical Torre d'en Pages is passed on the right and the road enters back into the

Walter Benjamin, (1892 - 1940) was a German
philosopher and fierce critic
of Nazism, who took his own
life in Port Bon while fleeing from the Gestapo

outskirts of Puig del Mas. Take care to take the left fork along Rue de la Colline aux Oliviers and wind back down into the hamlet by the T junction, turning right along Chemin de Mas Guillaume, then right again on to Avenue Pierre de Marca, back to the railway bridge.



Cap d'Ona: Brewery Beauty in the Eye of the Beer Holder

v ou can't live or holiday in the P-O without visiting the vinevards for a wine 'dégustation'. but how about a bit of beer tasting for a change? This purpose built brewery in the ZA near Intermarché in Argelès is state of the art, but the methods used are strictly traditional, with only quality ingredients used; malt, wheat, rye, yeast, and pure well water.

Voted 'Meilleure bière artisanale' in France in 2009, and with numerous medals under their belts. they've obviously got it right, with an impressive range of beers from Blanche De Garrigues (4.5%), flavoured with Rosemary, to Spéciale au Banyuls

(6%), a light beer fortified with Banyuls wine. Seasonal brews feature cherries from Céret and apricots from the Roussillon and 7 cereals.

Organic, low sugar lemonade, Alter cola, and tonic Catalan tick the teetotaller and driver boxes. With tapas bar, shop and kids' play area, and disabled access, a tour of the Cap d'Ona brewery,

followed by beer tasting and tapas on their shady terrace sounds like an ideal afternoon or evening out.

Guided tours every Friday (+ Saturday in season) and musical evenings every Tues, Thurs, Fri & Sat. Open all year.

04 68 95 79 09



Find us on fb: Cap d'Ona l'officiel

DID YOU KNOW

The King's Head No, not a tale of a British pub but an

introduction to Canet born Joseph Cassanyes (1758-1843), after whom the Place de Cassanyes in Perpignan is named. Mainly remembered for his part in the French Revolution, as a member of the National Convention, (the new administration during that troubled period) he voted to lop off the head of Louis XVI in 1793.

Fortunately, his fame in the region was not just based on his fondness of or the quillotine; he was also a prominent figure in the organising of the defence of the Roussillon against Spain in the battle of the Pyrenees.

DID YOU KNOW

Alizard's tale

Did you know that the tail of the gecko, most common lizard in our region, is crucial to its movement? This "fifth leg" prevents it from slipping and allows it to rotate in a fall so that it lands on its feet. It can also stick upside down or even cling to smooth vertical surfaces such as windows thanks to the sticky



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DID YOU KNOW

A time for quiet reflexion



If you have a quiet hour or so in your busy summer, why not visit Camp Joffre in Rivesaltes? Under the shadow of a wind-farm. behind an industrial estate, desolate ruined huts and latrines bear witness to man's inhumanity to man. In June 2015, on the original site of this former concentration camp, a museum will open. The interior will have exhibitions, learning annexes, and bare

minimalist spaces for reflexion but the exterior will remain as it is – a crumbling and sombre witness to the past

MARJ & RICHARD'S

There's not much to see outside, but if you close your eyes and listen, you might hear voices on the breeze.

Blague Bête homme dit à un aut

Hey...t'as une banane dans l'oreille! Ouoi?

T'as une banane dans l'oreille!

T'as une banane dans l'oreille! Parle plus fort, j'ai une banane dans l'oreille!





...remboursable - refundable ...échangeable - exchangeable ...aller simple - single ...aller-retour - return Un panneau d'information - information display Le départ - departure L'arrivée - arrivals La gare - station Le guichet - ticket window La salle d'attente - waiting room Une place (assise) - a seat Un carré - 4 seats facing each other Voyager dans le sens du train sit the way the train is moving Un train direct - direct train Une correspondance - connection Le quai - the platform Un passage souterrain - underpass Le rail/ la voie - track

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If you are interested in joining our property sales team contact: sarah@leggett.fr or call 05 53 56 62 54

WHAT DID YOU LEARN IN SCHOOL TODAY

For MONEY, you learnt ARGENT...
But you can also say...



les sous le fric les ronds le blé l'oseille

le pognon la mitraille les briques les thunes la ferraille la caillasse la monnaie les pépettes le flouse les biftons

des cacahuètes les balles les bifs



sinking by simon Newman

Traditional Catalan fishing boats



It was the perfect storm of 1913. A local fisherman, Josep Llanas, was caught off the port of Collioure with his sails torn to shreds as huge waves broke over the boat's bows, flooding the hull. Frantic efforts to bail out were to no avail, and as a final act he prayed to Notre Dame de Consolation (Our Lady of Comfort) for safe deliverance to his maker.

ercifully, and despite the appalling weather ercifully, and despite the appaining weather conditions that day, signal reception heldup and the patron saint of Catalan fishermen responded to the prayer with a message to remove the sinking boat's rudder. Our stalwart mariner, by now up to his plums in freezing briny, just managed to complete this task before his stricken vessel disappeared beneath the surface. Miraculously, the howling wind turned around and clinging to the wooden rudder for buoyancy Josep was blown back towards the harbour where eager hands dragged him safely ashore. A poor fisherman with no insurance, Josep could ill-afford the cost of building a new boat with which to continue his livelihood. On the bright side however, at least he didn't have to buy a new rudder.

Local fishermen chipped in and very soon Josep was back at sea plying his trade in a new craft that carried the name of the saint who, he was convinced, had saved his life. As it turned out, it was to be one of the last traditional Catalan fishing boats to be built, for by the end of WW1 the internal combustion engine had replaced sail on most new commercial vessels. Josep's boat can still be seen today moored at the main quay at Port Argeles from where she is regularly taken out on regattas. Local folklore has it that the boat is divinely blessed and will always steer it's skipper and crew back to port safely. Doubters could always take along a GPS as backup.

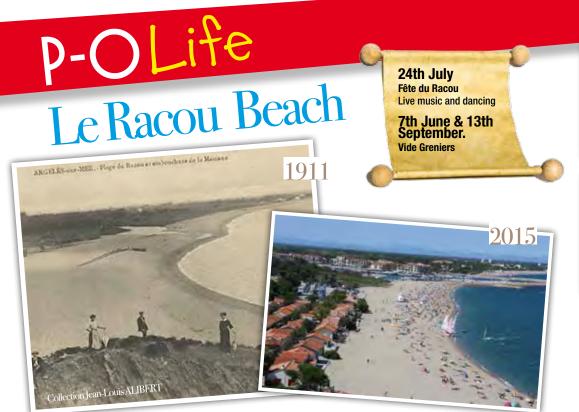


Catalan sailing boat are the subject of keen debate among aficionados. Arab dhows from North Africa certainly lent their influence and there are clear styling echoes from some early Greek sailing craft. Other clues can be seen in the Maltese gozzos as

well as the Balearic llauts, both traditional styles of sail boat typical of their respective regions. In their heyday these distinctively shaped boats were used not only for fishing but for the transport of harvest produce, passengers, building materials and barrels of wine. And amazingly, given a typical boat length of little more than six metres, livestock were said to be sometimes carried on board. Gerbils presumably. These boats were exceedingly tough, using Iroko and other heavy-duty hardwoods in their construction. But their considerable weight rendered them heartstoppingly slow to rise from the troughs of deep waves especially when carrying cargo. A certain Collioure fisherman might well have said that this was, in many respects, somewhat of a design flaw.

However plenty of these old boats still remain seaworthy and can be seen in use throughout the region today. Every September in L'Escala at the Festa de la Sal (Salt Festival) several Catalan boats sail into the harbour carrying supplies of salt used in the preparation of anchovies. And at Banyuls-sur-Mer in October, during the Fete de Vendanges (Festival of the Vine Harvest) a colourful fleet carrying grapes arrives in the town's main bay, replicating the times when the produce would be transported the length of the Costa Brava and beyond.

So there we have it. Traditional Catalan fishing boats - ponderous and apt to sink under load, but awfully pretty.



It's 1946. War is over, and the sandy tracks of the Racou beach are buzzing. Amidst fishermen's huts and makeshift shelters thrown together in darker days by Spanish refugees, people, laugh, drink, share a pastis, absinthe or 'cop de vi blanc' before sitting down to a communal cargolade or fresh fish BBQ.

The beach houses facing the sea have been demolished by the occupation, but the labyrinth of narrow alleys is noisy with children playing. Bicycles and mobylettes lie carelessly in the sand alongside canoes and kayaks waiting to be launched Electricity will arrive in 1956, and running water in 1957. For now, water is pulled from a nearby fountain - but nobody's complaining.

From 1947, the Racou village started to spring up. A road was built for the occasional cars and vans, and the train stopped briefly on the Argelès - Collioure road where the hôtel du Golfe now stands.

In the late 50s a handful of shops and a café opened. Demonte Frères of Elne delivered ice twice a week so drinks could still be served literally 'on the rocks'. There was open-air cinema, dances under the stars, petanque...



So what's changed? Well, not a lot really. Somehow, Le Racou beach has managed to retain that family beach feel, with shops selling saucy postcards, buckets and spades, shabby chic bars and cafés, a tiny boulangerie full of local treats. >>>





DID YOU KNOW

that you can walk from the Racou along the cliffs to Collioure and get either a bus or boat back?

FROM THE END OF JUNE....

....visit the exhibition 'Argelès fête le 150e anniversaire de ses plages' at the Casa de l'Albera in Argelès Village to find out more about the local beaches.



The original Spanish exiles' huts have been done up, gentrified even, several with crude extensions bolted on giving them an almost shanty-town look. Many of them are in a comfortably reassuring state of genteel dilapidation - wind, salt and sun are doing their darnedest, but they're still hanging in there.



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14

-OLife

Some Catalan Festivals and Traditions Corretoc f you're out and about in Catalonia this summer. there's a good chance that you'll be treated to a Correfoc display. Originating from a form of medieval street theatre called 'Ball de Diables'. these spectacular shows of devils and fireworks represent the fight of good against evil. The Correfocs themselves are not medieval. Spanish dictator Franco banned many aspects of Catalan culture, so after his death, Barcelona wished to fill the streets once again with fire and festivity. Their meaning of "fire runs" says it all! Dressed in red and black, wearing horns and masks, 'colles de diables' dance amongst the crowds amidst loud music, waving sparklers, firecrackers, and spitting fire. Great atmosphere, but can be very frightening for small children, animals and the less adventurous adult! And leave your health and safety training head at the entrance! Amongst other useful advice during a correfoc, the Generalitat de Catalunya suggests... "If by any chance your 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". **FESTIVAL FOLKLORIQUE** INTERNATION 3RD - 9TH AUGUST 2015 AMÉLIE-LES-BAINS INFO AND RESERVATION: **04 68 83 99 44**



he Sardane 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. Circles within circles, hands raised and joined together, small, precise steps...... but don't be fooled. This 'hokey cokey' style dance may look like a sedate bit of hop, skip and jump but requires effort, muscle control and coordination.

Music for the sardane is played by a 'cobla', a wind band with double bass including typical Catalan instruments.

During his rule of Spain from the late 1940's to 1975.

Franco considered the Catalan wish

for independence to be arrogant and insulting to his authority. Amongst other anti heritage laws, he banned the Sardana. As often happens in the face of adversity, the dance became a powerful symbol of national unity, as folk from all walks of life, young and old, met up and proclaimed through their dancing, their pride in being Catalan, passing on this important part of Catalan culture from generation to generation.

> Castells - human pyramids, sometimes up to eight or nine storeys high and often topped off with a brave child, a bit like a cherry on a cake!

> Gégants - enormous painted papier-maché figures, up to 14 or 15 ft tall, with traditional clothing and a very hot man or woman inside, parading and dancing in the streets with little "big-heads" or "cap-grossos".

> La Trobada du Canigou and the Focs de la Sant Joan Another symbol of Catalan unity starts with a bonfire on the top of the sacred Mount Canigo, visible all over the Con-

The next day, relay runners carry the 'flamme du Canigou' down and light the "Focs de la Sant Joan", fires that have been prepared in towns and villages all over the region.

and it®s always great fun.

tivities and fireworks throughout France

(although many large supermarkets remain open, in the morning)

.14th July>> Fête de la Bastille (Fête Nationale) Symbol of the absolute power of the monarchy of Louis XVI, the day of the storming of the Bastille was declared a French national holiday in 1880, a celebration of the birth of the Republic.

Commemorating the departure of Mary from this -15th August>>Assomption life and the assumption of her body into heaven.

School Holida Return to school

(Monday 31st August) And don't forget Sunday June 21 is Father's Day!

Restaurant reviews

The following reviews are not adverts, they are just restaurants that I have enjoyed, or that friends have recommended. They are based on that person's opinion, on that day, usually taking into account the whole package. You might not always necessarily agree!

with Kate & Mates

Bon appétit!



St Paul de Fenouillet

resh, Friendly and Absolutely Fabulous! An accurate description of the whole caboodle, the food, the drinks, the location and most of all the staff!

Whether you want to be treated to fresh and well cooked food or simply bask in the sun with a cool glass of wine (and maybe check your mails with their free wifi) you have found the right place!

As they are open throughout the day, the menu is in four parts, Brunch, Le Midi, Afternoon Tea and Le Soir. You'll find little gems in each menu. My favourites are: 'Œuf Benedictine' or 'Petit Dejeuner Sud Africain' for brunch depending on how famished I am. For lunch, I would have the Plat du Jour at €10 or the Menu de Jour (2 courses for €12 and 3 courses for €15) which features local speciality dishes, all cooked to order, often with a twist. Kids and vegetarians are also well catered for.



A short break in the afternoon sun on the terrace with either the (Full English teas or just a cheeky scone or slice of cake), café, fruit juices or some bubbly will keep the engine running until it's time for dinner and some of Ruth's tasty Tapas or one of her specials. See you there!

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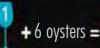
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LE JARDIN DE COLLIQURE

with Kate

This stylishly renovated ancient Dominican Convent is the oldest building in Collioure. With two areas, one a roomy outdoor eating space and the other a comfortable and chic 'bar à vin' for tapas and drinks, it has original secret passages, vaulted interior dining room, and YES,.... free parking- a rarity in Collioure!

The 18€50 menu offers three courses with typically Catalan choices such as pan tomate, cassolette du pêcheur with fish, calamari and mussels or Catalan kebab grilled on the large outdoor barbecue. The 28€ menu upps the game with a cargolade of snails if that's your fancy and a good variety of other dishes. Several other menus are available, and you can choose your own fish and supervise it's cooking on the BBQ. I don't think I'd recommend this restaurant for vegetarians.

There is a children's menu at 12€

A wide choice of desserts is pretty much what you would expect -no surprises - but taking into account the whole package, for me this restaurant stands out as being a little bit special amongst the many indifferent restaurants in Collioure.

The adjoining church was bought in 1926 by the wine growers of Collioure and turned into a 'cave', stocking the Collioure and Banyuls wines of 160 vignerons. A guided tour of the beautiful old building, tastings, and a visit to the pretty little art gallery next door, following lunch or preceding dinner in the 'Jardin' is sure to make a delightful day out.

Cəfé des Artistes



Restaurant Le Portofino

Succulent seafood, fish & meat platters,

plus home-made desserts

Quai Arthur Rimbaud, 66750 ST CYPRIEN PLAGE 09 51 58 89 55 www.leportofino-restaurant.fr

DID YOU KNOW

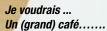
Jellyfish Relief Recipe

Jellyfish stings can be very painful but not mortal! Fresh water will aggravate stinging cells so rinse immediately in (jellyfish free) seawater. Remove visible tentacles with tweezers. Pain can be eased by a vinegar rinse.... or urine, always handy where other ingredients may be unavailable. Take a friend to the

beach, as peeing on the sting neutralises the toxins. If there is continued swelling, or itchiness, apply a light steroid cream such as Hydrocortisone eczema cream, buy a net, catch the little blighter....and make yourself a jellyfish soup. Revenge is a dish served hot or cold!

There was a young man from Canet who when peeing had tendence to spray He was much in demand. For a walk in the sand to soothe jelly fish stinging away

wake up and smell the 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/américain - espresso with extra water **Un express** - plain black espresso

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

Un noisette - espresso with tiny amount of milk in small cup.

Un déca or décaféiné - decaffeinated coffee. Une infusion/tisane - herbal tea

(NB Un café au lait (milky coffee) would usually be served at home in a breakfast bowl - but would be understood in any café as coffee with milk)

....s'il vous plait

Un café gourmand

Many cafés and restaurant now offer a 'café gourmand' - an espresso served with a selection of 'mignardises' (mini cakes and mousses). The first "café gour-

mand" is believed to have appeared in restaurants in Paris around 2005 and probably runs alongside the shorter lunch becoming more fashionable in the 21st century. In place of the traditional starter, main course, cheese, dessert, and coffee, the "café gourmand" saves that litle bit of time and also allows you to test several small desserts in one go.



LE REGAL Argelès Village with Malcom

e stopped for a very impromptu lunch at this new restaurant on Rue des Faisans, just outside Argelès Village, next to the flower shop. We ordered the menu of the day at 10.90 €. Our starters were hot brie and a prawn cocktail respectively, both generous and well presented. Tthe main course was entrecote so I wasn't expecting much, maybe a small medallion of meat - but I was wrong. Ample sized steaks arrived in a good mushroom sauce with home made chips, all perfectly cooked. This was followed by a substantial piece of apple pie and cream. With a demi of wine and two noisette coffees the total bill was 30.80 €. (Normally entrecote carries a 4 € supplement but this was a special offer).

Friendly, efficient staff and smart surroundings.



LE REGAL. Rue des Faisans Argelès-sur-Mer 04 68 39 09 60

DID YOU KNOW

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DID YOU KNOW

Big Breakfast

Le 14 juillet, Bastille Day, marks the beginning of the French Revolution of 1789, leading to the end of the monarchy, and the start of the French Republic. Easier to understand why, knowing that the king's breakfast consisted of 4 chops, a full chicken, six poached eggs and a slice of

ham, washed down with a bottle and a half of champagne whilst the poor starved on the streets! of Paris.



QUALITÉ GOURMANDE

with Elaine

ow about creating your own crèpe in a Céret restaurant? That's what we did in this casual little restaurant round the corner from the music museum in Ceret.

With a changing menu based on local produce, you can have a simple plat du jour (changes daily) such as 'couscous avec merguez, bœuf et poulet' or 'Lasagne bolognaise maison avec sa salade verte' for just 8€ 90...or our choice of DIY pancakes! A plate of pasta will cost you 5€ 90 or make up your own wraps and salads from a help-yourself ingredient base.

We made our own 'crepes sarrazin', choosing fillings from among a selection of meats and vegetables with a griddle brought to our table, our own little bottle of batter, ladle, flat spatulas to flip the crepes, our chosen ingredients, and we were in business. Fun! And tasty!

Eat in, take away, or have it delivered.



QUALITÉ GOURMANDE 6, avenue d'Espagne, Céret. 04 68 56 96 16.

MEZZO MEZZ

Argelès Port

with Leigh and Merry

Wandering along the port at Argeles, we liked the look of the menu in Mezzo Mezzo and were so glad we stopped. Choosing the €19.50 Menu, I started with a tasty goats cheese salad with honey & toasted almonds, parcelled up like a crepe, and Leigh had moules and razor clams which were beautifully cooked. We both chose the fish of the day for our main, whole dorade served with crispy crushed potatoes, honey turnips. carrots and tomatoes, followed by the dessert of the day, a fresh and delicious flan with coconut base, custard and topped with Chantilly - not too sweet. The service was friendly, dogs seemed to be welcome and were hiding under the tables.

They also specialise in tapas so a good stop for a snack.



8 quai Vasco de Gama, Argelès-sur-Mer 04 68 88 81 25



Simple Water Melon Gaspacho

What better season to try this Watermelon Gazpacho, fresh, light, and cool on a hot P-O summer day!



Preparation:

Place about half of the watermelon, cucumber, pepper, onion and all of the jalapeno in a blender or food processor. Add olive oil and lemon juice and puree until smooth.

Combine with remaining melon and parsley in a large bowl and mix well. Add more salt and pepper, to taste.

Chill for at least one hour, to allow flavours to combine, and stir well before serving.

Serve chilled



Ingredients:

- > Approx 3 cups of watermelon. chopped and seeded
- > 1 cucumber, diced
- > 1 red or yellow bell pepper, diced
- > 1 small onion, chopped
- > 2 tbsp lemon juice
- > 1 tbsp olive oil
- > 1 jalapeno (or to taste if you like a bit more ocomph).
- > 2 tbsp fresh chopped parsley
- > salt and pepper to taste



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Ingredients:

- > 1 bottle of dry red wine
- > Juice of 1 large orange and another in slices
- > Juice of 1 large lemon and another in slices
- > 2 Tbsp sugar

Reservations

strongly

- > 1 Shot brandy or rum
- > 2 Cups lemonade or soda water

Preparation:

Combine all the ingredients except for the lemonade or soda in a large punch bowl or jug, stirring well.

Refrigerate overnight. Add lemonade or soda just before serving.

You could also add..... sliced strawberries, peaches, fresh blueberries, raspberries, kiwi, and a shot or two of gin or more brandy or rum to give it a bit more 'olé'!

Salud!

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LE TREMAIL

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Get the treacle out for snakebites!

were probably a little less dessert-like!

When it originally entered English from Old French word 'triacle', treacle was actually an antidote for poisons, snakebites, and other ailments, although the ingredients

quai Arthur Rimbaud, 66750 Saint Cyprien opposite the fountain) 04 68 37 45 81 Voulez vous votre pizza

coupée en 6 ou 12 morceaux, monsieur?

En 6 s'il vous plait. Je ne pourrais jamais finir 12 morceaux.

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Whether whispered murmurs or thundering torrents, our region's waterways have stories to tell.

S naking along the cliffs of the spectacular Gorges de la Guillera are the remains of one of our region's earliest known canals. According to legend, the "Sequia Real de Thoyr" – Royal Canal of Thuir – was constructed by Arabs long before it received its regal name.

With cool mountain water in the canal and an almost ever-present canopy of leaves, this picnic is perfect for a sweltering summer's day. Parts of the walk aren't fenced off and water hurls past at alarming speed, so keep water-mad dogs and very young kids on a leash!

Manoeuvre your car through the narrow streets of Rodès and over the Têt River. Once parked, stroll back across the bridge and head up the steps next to the graffiti-covered structure. (See inset for more details.)

It was 11 am, not a cloud in the sky, and already a fierce 28 degrees when we started our walk. Fortunately, no matter how hot it is, a symphony of water sounds will cool you down: the Têt River drums boisterously down in the valley, while the Corbère Canal hums quietly at your side.

The walkway is flat most of the way, and surprisingly stable, given how ramshackle it looks at times. Peer over the simple rust-red fence and experience the stomach-clenching drama of the plunging gorge. Not for those with a fear of heights! Notice the pearly sheen of the riverbed rocks, polished silver-white by centuries of pounding water.

Long vertical bars on the left bank measure water levels. The highest one reaches 14 metres —a five-storey building! Stop for a moment to imagine the sheer force of so much water roaring past.

Spindly pillars of the original canal clutch the cliff like fingers, but the highlight of the walk is the old aqueduct, Pont d'en Labau. It looks ready to crumble and yet has withstood floods and the Tramontane for over a thousand years, thanks to some pretty nifty engineering, at great height, and with irregular stones. The aqueduct's classification as

historic monument didn't come a moment too soon, and urgent plans are afoot to protect and stabilise this fragile dame.

In the 11th century, the Royal Canal of Thuir irrigated wheat fields, vineyards and olive groves. Decades later, it powered wheat and textile mills, and filled the moats of the Palace of the Kings of Majorcan, but it was eventually abandoned in favour of the Corbère Canal on the safer right bank.

After about forty minutes of walking, the path is blocked by a fence. Cross the narrow cement bridge and follow the sand track to a beautiful detour along peach orchards. Please remember you're on agricultural land and resist stealing the farmer's fruit!

Keeping the Têt River on your left and the orchard on your right, continue along the double sand track until you reach a "casot" or small cabin. An ivy-choked tree marks where you cross a small bridge over the irrigation canal. Keep the next orchard on your right then turn left down a steep cement road to the jade green water of the Têt River.

Time to kick off your shoes, release dogs and kids, and go for a swim!

Son appétit!

Footnote:
for those
feeling energetic
after lunch, the
canal walk can be
continued by following the
path that runs parallel
to the river.

A wolf cult, kidnapped child, and the Tour de Massane create high tension in Shepherd's Prayer, a fast-paced thriller set in Collioure.

Available on Amazon



ABOUT RODÈS AND THE GORGES DE LA GUILLERA

- >This section of the Têt River flows from Vinça Dam into several irrigation canals. Vestiges of the original canal, "Sequia Real de Thoyr" Royal Canal of Thuir, can be seen on the left bank. Our walk is next to the more "recent" Corbère Canal.
- > **Feeling energetic?** Hike up to the 11th century Chateau de Rodès perched on a rocky crest above the village.
- > **Time to spare?** The Ermitage de Domanova with its extensive ex-voto collection is well worth a visit.

(Cross N116 from Rodès then follow signs

HOW TO GET THERE

- > Time needed for walk: allow an hour and a half of easy strolling but longer if you wish to walk further than the picnic spot.
- > Head south from Perpignan towards Prades on the N116.
- > Less than ten minutes after lle sur Têt, turn right to the village of Rodès.
- > Follow "Gorges de GUILLERA" signs through the village.
- > The only time the signage isn't clear is at a small square with a tree: keep to the right, heading towards the mountain until you exit the village on the other side.
- > Drive over the bridge and park next to the water purification plant then stroll back across the bridge and up the steps next to the small graffiti-covered building.

20 Life 30 Life 30 Consists

Good Luck to the Little Yellow Train

If you haven't already taken a trip on the little mountain canary. which winds its way daily between Villefranche-de-Conflent and Latour-de-Carol in the Cerdagne, it could be now or never!

e Petit Train Jaune, powerful symbol of Catalan identity, is in danger of closing down for good in January 2016.

Without investment of a whopping 125 million euros required to renovate and modernise, trains and track risk being dismantled and abandoned - or at best dumped in a museum.

Painted in the Catalan colours of 'sang et or', this Catalan treasure was built at the beginning of the century to link the mountain towns and villages to the plain.



It is the highest railway track in France, rising continuously from Villefranche-de-Conflent (427m) to the col de la Perche (1592m), before descending to Bourg-Madame (1143m) and rising again to Latour de Carol (1230m), where passengers can link up with the 'Transpyrénéen' (Paris-Toulouse-Barcelona).



A chance for the car driver to sit back and enjoy the scenery for once, the views are spectacular as you pass over the viaducts, both named after their builders. Le Viaduc Séjourné, just beyond the station of Thuès-Caranca, was completed in 1908, and sits 65 metres high above the river Têt. Le Pont Gisclard is the only suspension bridge in use on any French railway line, built 80m high overlooking a precipice, and completed in 1909. In that same year, it was the scene of a tragic accident when the brakes failed during the train's first trial run, and the train crashed violently into rocks. Six men were killed including Gisclard himself.



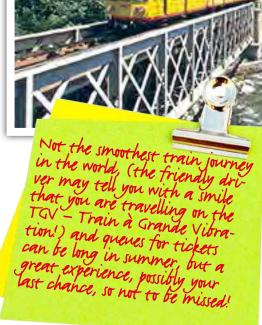
Saturday 6th June Fête du Train Jaune

Support the Train Jaune at the Gare de Mont Louis La Cabanasse.

BBQ (bring your own food), entertainment, chat.....

Trains leaves at 8h55 and 9h58 from Villefranche, Single fare 10.70€

Drive to Villefranche de Conflent and take the train up to Mont Louis. A 20 minute uphill walk from the station will bring you to the highest fortified town in France. home to the French Commandos who train in the surrounding hills. Walk around the perfectly preserved ramparts of this quaint little town or visit the first solar furnace in the world, an enormous construction of 1420 mirrors, and the first company to use a solar furnace for the firing of ceramics, and bronze and aluminium products. In fact, one of the first commercial objects manufactured there was the whistle for the petit train iaune.



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MINAIRE

What a beautiful setting with the newly developed Site de Paulilles and the O Sole Mio restaurant in the foreground and the Alberes forming a stunning backdrop.

There is just time for a quick dip at this stage before launching into our aperitif — a pretty good sangria with nibbles. Then back into the sea again whilst the crew finalise lunch arrangements. We tend to use the more genteel way of descending into the water via a ladder at the front of the boat but there is also a slide at the back. A few younger passengers simply jump in from the deck. Snorkels and goggles are available. The water is generally warm and the exercise provides good preparation for the barbecue to follow.

This is a splendid affair, usually with gambas, grilled fish and sausages plus an abundance of cold meats and salads with a choice of puddings, plus wine, water and coffee. The smart dining area in the main cabin is very convivial and never fails to generate high spirits and lots of laughs all round. We love it

Then swimming and sunbathing again for an hour or so before we set sail again out to sea, using wind power only in this direction. Very impressive. It always provides some amusement at this stage, however, if the sea is choppy and when we eventually turn towards shore the people on the sunbathing nets up front get more than a little wet! But normally it is very calm and relaxing.

We arrive back at 16:30, bronzed, revived and happy. A super day out.



Sail from Canet or Port Vendres

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JOIN US FOR FIREWORKS WITH A DIFFERENCE! 13th July (Canet), 15th August (St Cyprien) & 16th August (Collioure) ..in Arles-sur-Tech

Arles-sur-Tech is our home...... and we love it! Glimpses of the Tres Vents and the Haut Vallespir as I approach the village still make my heart sing. The 'real' village isn't what you see when you drive through the rather uninviting one-way system on your way, perhaps. to Prats-de-Mollo. Instead. venture into the heart of the village to the medieval centre. the Abbev, the Moulin and maybe on to Les Glycines for a tasty lunch.

o, at the first roundabout as you approach the village from Amelie, take the 2nd exit and park at the Salle des Fêtes about 200 metres along on the left. With the Salle behind you, go left and take the 2nd turning, Rue des Glycines, and at the top of the slight incline to your right is the hotel/bar/restaurant of the same name just right for a reviving coffee on their wisteria-covered terrace and perhaps lunch a bit later on.

Turn left out of Les Glycines and follow the road past the Spar and up the hill; facing you are the lovely Mairie gardens and the beautiful building which now houses the Mairie - pop in and see the reception hall and the Salle de Mariage. Diagonally opposite the Mairie is the Tourist Information Office. (At the time of writing this has decamped temporarily into the Abbey Cloisters a few steps away and is clearly signposted.) You can now pick up a village street map and the 'Visite de la Ville' leaflet which will take you on a walking tour

of the historic centre. Before setting off though, consider a guided tour around the Xth Century Abbey. Sainte Marie d'Arles, (open from 9 til 7 in July and August) and see the mysterious Sainte Tombe. The recently refurbished Place du Couvent just beyond the cloisters will then start you off on the short walking tour of the 'centre historique'.

Perhaps return now to Les Glycines for lunch? New proprietors Thierry and Patricia Genot are gradually refurbishing the hotel and have made a great start with their attractive bar and restaurant, but it is the shady outside terrace which is particularly appealing on a hot summer's day. An appetising menu is on offer consisting of four choices for each course, two courses for €13.50 and three for €15. If lunch is not on the agenda today they have a delicious selection of gourmand ice-cream concoctions, very hard to resist!

Turn right and go to the top of the street, turn right again, and next to the tabac is the Patisserie Touron. makers of allegedly the most famous 'rousquilles' in the area – stock up while you can. Now take the lane immediately to your left, turn right at the bottom. then straight on for just over 200 metres, bear left, and facing you 50 metres further on is the entrance to Le Moulin (open 10 til 7 every day throughout summer). Here are the workshops of several artisans including potters, leather workers, iron workers, the old Catalan textile looms and a large exhibition hall displaying (for sale) the beautiful work of over a dozen very skilled artists, craftsmen and women. If you look on the Tourist Information website before you come. you could coincide your visit with one of the falconry displays which take place in the gardens behind the

Moulin throughout the summer and which are very popular.

rousquilles

On leaving the Moulin, turn right and a short walk will bring you back to you car park. If you have a little more time, drive out of the village towards Prats de Mollo for a kilometre and turn left at the new bridge, past the rugby ground to the refurbished Fontaine des Buis 'quinquette' with a picnic area alongside the fast flowing Tech. There are a couple of little beach areas very good for a cooling paddle.



According to legend, around about the tenth century, the infamous Simiots, 'bêtes féroces assez semblables à des chats et même à des singes' terrorised Arles-sur-Tech. These 'monkey men' came down from the mountains, raping, pillaging and destroying crops. In despair, the abbot of Arles, Arnulfe, decided that

the relics of a Saint were needed to balance out the many sins of the villagers, which were surely responsible for their plight. He journeyed to Rome and returned with the relics of Abdon and Sennen, obscure Persian saints who were eaten by lions in the Arena of Rome, hidden in the false-bottom of a liquor barrel. The Simiots disappeared and peace was

"La Sainte Tombe" in which their bones were supposedly stored has run with pure water ever since, defying scientific explanation. Once a year the monks siphon out the water with silver pump and hand out to pilgrims.



DID YOU KNOW

Word Origins: Terrorist

The word 'terrorist' actually sprung up around 1795 during the French Revolution, and referred to the Reign of Terror initiated by the Revolutionary government.

The agents of the National Convention (the new administration of the Revolution) who enforced the French Reign of Terror (La Terreur, 1793-1794) under Robespierre were referred to as 'Terrorists", due to their tactics of torture, assassination and intimidation. Up to 40,000 people were guillotined during this period by the 'Terrorists".



DID YOU KNOW



Carboot sales

'Vide-grenier' litterally translates as 'empty your attic', whilst a 'braderie', similar idea to a vide grenier, comes from the word "brader" meaning to sell at very low prices.

Perpignan – Cabestany – Toulouges

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"Comme son père!"



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temps dormir la fenêtre

Non, je suis cambrioleur. (on devrait - one should cambrioleur - burglar)



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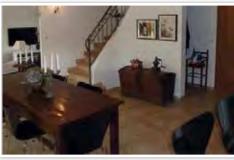


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Near Vinça: On 1549m2 of land with stunning views, this architect designed detached 4 room bungalow boasts garage, double family room of 29m2, 3 bedrooms, bathroom, partly converted loft, with possibility of swimming pool, Ref: 681



Leucate: Extremely rare! 'Fisherman property'. Exclusive location on wild hidden peninsula with authentic surroundings now protected and unbuildable. Stunning views of sea. Six room house with all mod cons - needs modernisation. Ref: 677

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READERS

thank you readers!!

Some great summer photos from around the P-O. We love seeing them so please do keep 'em coming!















OUT for THE DAY





tui ro In th



As you drive along the voie rapide between Argelès and Collioure, the Disneyesque turrets of the Château de Valmy rise out of the vineyards like a fairytale.

hen Joseph Bardou made his fortune from the invention of JOB cigarette papers, his son Pierre commissioned the Danish Architect Viggo Dorph-Petersen, well known for his extravagant Belle Epoque style, to build a château for each of his three children.

For his son Justin, Chateau d'Aubiry in Céret, for his daughter Camille, Chateau Ducup St Paul in Perpignan, and for his daughter Jeanne, recently married to Jules Pams, Château de Valmy. Her portrait hangs today in the salon on the first floor.

Jules Pams became French Minister of Agriculture and the wines of Valmy graced the tables of royalty. Jules and Jeanne died leaving no heirs. In 1930, Victor Piex, a wealthy distiller, bought the château, and the domaine prospered. After his death in 1952, deserted by children and grandchildren, the once magnificent property started to deteriorate... empty rooms, leaking roof.....

In 1997, Victor Peix's grandson and family took up the challenge, breathing new life into vineyards and château.

The Château de Valmy was turned into a chic guest house, peaceful, and picturesque, with five gracious en suite rooms, looking out across the vines and down to the sea.

A smart new tasting 'cave' opened in 2013, with endless views over the perfectly manicured vineyards. The range of Valmy wines runs from a delicate white, vinified in oak barrels, through rosé, a range of



reds to l'Or de Valmy, a beautifully balanced naturally sweet wine.

Taste in the cave before choosing wine with your meal, because in 2014, La Table de Valmy opened its doors, stylish restaurant, showcase for Valmy wines, and reviewed in the last edition of P-O Life. 'Taken as a complete package, the location, the view, the wine, the food and the general ambiance, we thought it was terrific', wrote the reviewer.

And really, dining on that pretty terrace with spectacular views over the vines and the sea -well, what's not to like?

But there's more to Valmy than wine and food.

Whilst the Chateau and vineyards are still owned by descendants of Victor Peix, six hectares of land within the grounds are owned by the Commune of Argelès, free and open for the public to stroll through and enjoy. This council run park with café, play and picnic area, nature trails, fountains and waterfall is all rather less chic than the immaculate new facilities of the cave and restaurant, but it's a pleasant ramble, great for the kids.....oh, and did I already mention the views? Enjoy the impressive family of storks living in the park or spend a magical hour with the charming falconers of the Aigles de Valmy (www.lesaiglesdevalmy.com) watching this spectacular show of birds of prey in free flight.

Sadly, due to financial constraints, this could be their last year.



On the first floor, next to the entrance to the park, you will find a small but rather fascinating exhibition of the Retirada, and the internment on the beaches of Argelès of 200,000 Republicans fleeing the Franco regime in 1939.



Open all year round, this permanent exhibition explains the Spanish Civil war via ancient newspaper clippings and other media from that period, along with historical frescos, television documentaries and works of art showing the pitiful living conditions in the camp.



Several events take place at the Chateau during the year; flower show, antiques festival, pop concerts, and the park closes when hosting large-scale events.

www.chateau-valmy.com



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DID YOU KNOW

Get your boules out!



Did you know that the word 'Pétanque' comes from Marseilles dialect 'pès tancats' or 'pieds tangués', meaning literally 'feet anchored'. as the feet must remain close together within quite a small circle. It

is apparently one of the more sedate boule variations, deliberately so to accommodate the rheumatic and the disabled, as it can be played standing still or even from a wheelchair. According to the rules of petanque, when a player loses 13 to 0 ... "il est fanny" (he's fanny) and he or she has to kiss the bottom of any girl called Fanny. Since it is guite rare to find an obliging Fanny on the boules pitch, there is usually a substitute available in the form of a picture, or sculpture, to ensure that Fanny's bottom is readily available. If your name IS Fanny, my advice would be to avoid a stroll around the petangue pitches!

iust ao and enioy









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pour Attention!

Match up the words, all beginning with A. with their definitions.

(Why not try to work them out first just from the definitions?)

a vérifier la santé

ausculter 2 b tentative pour assassiner

atterrir 3 c dans le passé

d sport dans bateau long et léger asticot 4

ardoise **5** e bande lumineuse multicolore aveugle 6 f grande feuille imprimée

arc-en-ciel 7 g se poser à terre

h plaque de pierre gris foncé attentat 8

affiche 9 i qui ne voit pas autrefois 10 j un ver blanc

Useful Expression

En flagrant délit (To be caught) in the act,

Want to express surprise or disbelief?

Oh là là

Oh là là là là (pause) là là!

Oh la vache

Hou là

Dis donc! Purée!

Punaise!

Putain! (vulgar)

00000000000000000

Creat quote Tout le monde est un génie. Mais si vous jugez un poisson sur ses capacités à grimper dans un arbre, il passera sa vie à croire qu'il est stupide... Einstein

(genie – genius grimper – climl croire - believe)

tongue twister (virelangue)

Repeat quickly three times

Trois petites truites cuites et trois petites truites crues

(Three little cooked trout and three little raw trout)

Donoths.

The following expressions all use the adjective 'bon/bonne'. Can you match them up with their English equivalent?

Bonne journée 1 Bon débarras 2 Bon rétablissement 3

Bon reniflement 4 Bonne sieste! 5

Bonne continuation 6 Bonne promenade 7 Bon retour 8

Nice word

méli-mélo

jumble, mish-mash,

eg Au vide grenier il y a

un méli-mélo d'objets...

The following expressions all use the verb casser - to break

Can you find their English equivalents?

a Happy sniffing (for dogs)

b Enjoy your nap c Safe journey home

d Hang in there e Enjoy your walk

f Have a nice stay g Get well soon

h Good riddance

i Have a nice day

Bon courage 10 i Enjoy the rest of...

Blague bête

Comment s'appelle le frère de Albert Einstein?

a To smash someone's face in

b puzzle or brain teaser

c He's a pain in the neck

d To give the game away

f He's a daredevil

g No pain, no gain h Get lost!

i At the very most

e I'm off!

Au voleur! Qui a pris toutes les étoiles du ciel pour les Franck. mettre dans tes veux? Stop thief! Who stole the stars from

> que tu as trotté dans ma tête toute la journée. You must be tired, you've been running through my head all day!

Y a-t-il un aéroport dans le coin ou est-ce mon cœur que décolle?

the sky and but them in your eyes?

Tu dois etre fatigué(e) parce

Every summer, we

give you a few useful phrases to find love

on the beach... and probably a good slap

tor your trouble!

Here are a few more

Donc, je me présente.

I'd better introduce myself.

inconnus? Non?

tombée du ciel?

Heaven?

Hev...it's just a bit of fun.

Est-ce que tu embrasses les

Do you kiss strangers? No? Then

Ca t'a fait mal quand tu es

Did it hurt when you fell from

Is there an airbort nearby or is it my heart taking off?

Avez vous un GPS? Je me suis perdu dans tes yeux

Do you have a mab? I am lost in your eyes

Encore une blaque bête

Il faut casser le noyau pour avoir l'amande. 4

Un monsieur demande deux places pour aller au théâtre. C'est pour Roméo et Juliette? demande la caissière? Non, c'est pour ma femme et moi.

Un casse-tête 1

A tout casser 6

C'est un casse cou 9

Casse-toi 7

Je me casse 10 j A snack

Un casse croûte 2

Casser la gueule à ... 3

Il me casse les bonbons 8



Language tip la semaine dernière last week la dernière semaine the final week

See Page 67 for answers



When the Brits talk French..
He uses a lot of double entendres

Il utilise beaucoup d'expressions à double sens

Language tip Reflections Is there another Eng: My hair IS blonde (sing) word for

French: Mes cheveux SONT blonds (blural)

English: I bought my trousers at M&S (plural)

French: J'ai acheté MON pantalon à M&S (sing)

Trouvez les pluriels irreguliers

1 fungus	
2 child	
3 tooth	
4 mouse	
5 lady	
6 sheep	
7 knife	
8 mother-in-law	

9 people

10 ox

Trouvez l'équivalent en anglais pour chaque proverbe animalier français

Don't count your chickens before they're hatched 3 c Qui vole un œuf vole un bœuf.

His bark is worse than his bite 4 d Petit à petit, l'oiseau fait son nid

- Beggars can't be choosers 1 a Qui naît poule aime à caqueter.
 - Better safe than sorry **2 b** Chien qui aboie ne mord pas
- A leopard can't change his spots **5** e Faute de grives, on mange des merles.
- The guilty dog barks the loudest 6 f Il faut savoir donner un œuf pour avoir un bœuf

synonym?

- Give and you will receive 7 g Les chiens ne font pas des chats
- Give an inch and he'll take a mile 8 h C'est la poule qui chante qui a fait l'œuf
- The apple doesn't fall far from the tree 9 i Souris qui n'a qu'un trou est bientôt prise.
 - Every little helps 10 j Il ne faut pas vendre la peau de l'ours avant de l'avoir tué.

Right or Wrong

Trouvez l'équivalent en français pour ces expressions qui emploient toutes les mots 'right' or 'wrong'

Don't get me wrong 1 a Tu te trompes

That's about right! 2 b Il n'est pas sain d'esprit

You're barking up the wrong tree 3 c Erreur, mauvaise idée

He wants to do the right thing 4 d Exact!

He's not in his right mind 5 e Il s'est levé du pied gauche

He's right as rain 6 f Il veut bien faire

He got up on the wrong side of bed 7 g Ne le prend pas mal

Quite right too! 8 h Reprenez-moi si je me trompe

Wrong move! 9 i Il est en pleine forme

Correct me if I'm wrong 10 j C'est à peu près ça

E is for Egg

Trouvez les définitions des mots suivants, qui commencent tous avec la lettre E.

(Why not try to work them out first just from the definitions?)

edible 1 a joint in middle of arm

enough **2 b** listen secretly c very happy

elbow 4 **d** not cheap

enjoy **5** e bird of prey

eavesdrop 6 f suitable for eating

eagle 7 greally bad

earwig 8 h have a good time

elated 9 i long bodied insect

expensive 10 ithe amount needed

tongue twister

There's nowt so queer

as folk (Yorkshire)

Ils sont comme ça, les gens

A big black bug bit a big black bear, and the big black bear bled blood



Exbression uti It's nothing to write home about!

Ca n'a rien d'extraordinaire!

You know, somebody actually complimented me on my driving today. They left a little note on the windscreen. It said, 'Parking Fine.' So that was nice (fine **– a**mende ou OK)

See Page 67 for answers

interesting question...

If you try to fail,

have you done?

and succeed, which

BOOKLife



SUMMERTIME ALL THE CATS ARE BORED

By **Philippe Georget** ::: (Reviewed by Helen Alexander)

I've just finished reading this English translation of a French novel published in 2012. The author, Philippe Georget, is described as a news anchor for France 3 and this was his debut novel.

It's set in the PO and the main character is Inspector Gilles Sebag, who works in Perpignan. As with all good crime thrillers it starts with a murder-in this case, a young Dutch wo'man whose body is found on Argeles beach one hot summer.

It's worth a read, although the English translation is amusingly literal, and clunky at times! I discovered the book on Amazon completely by accident and, because it was set in the PO. downloaded it.

Undoubtedly there are better crime thrillers to be read, but this one kept my interest. I couldn't understand why, as a cop team, they hadn't pursued a few obvious things - but let them off, as it was the first time I'd read a crime story set in this part of the world. And, after all, the poor inspector was somewhat preoccupied with his wife's fidelity!

As for the title, heaven only knows! It's a direct translation of the French title - and is probably obscure in the original too. There is a cat in

PROPERTY SHIPT

the story - and there's an element of cat and mouse throughout. But bored cats?

Anyway, I for one wasn't bored - and almost didn't make it to the boulangerie this morning in time for essential bread, so determined was I to get to the end!



By Phil Becker :::

Phil Becker is 31 and lives in Perpignan. Currently a journalist for the weekly newspaper 'La Semaine du Roussillon', he describes himself as a 'job nomad'. He has done a bit of everything... but finds stability in writing. Le Lycan Blanc is his first



LE LYCAN BLANC

novel, a heroic-fantasy that takes place... in Catalonia!

'Le Lycan Blanc', follows an albino werewolf, Corcinos, in a alternative XII century, All the fantasy archetypes are present: wizards, chivalry, fantastic creatures such as werewolves, minotaurs and titans... but the beauty of this fantasy is that it takes place around the Canigo, Perpignan, and Collioure!

Raised on the Mount Canigo, the werewolf begins a journey to discover how he became a monster. He encounters enemies, mysterious characters, and a few ladies who are certainly not prepared for his transformation!

The author shows us the merciless Middle Ages. with an especially dark vision of Perpignan: fights in shabby cellars, prostitute murders everything fans of bloody heroic-fantasy will appreciate.

CÔTE VERMEILLE

By Ellen Turner Hall :::

Since her childhood in New York, Ellen Hall has always been a storyteller. She has written and spun her imaginary world into tales to entertain herself, her friends, and now, a wider public.

In 'Hôtel Belvédère du rayon vert et autres nouvelles de la Côte Vermeille', Ellen portrays the 4 ports of the coast as seen by foreign eyes. In the process of discovering his village, each character reveals something about his own history.

Like her, their previous experiences are far flung. Like her, their knowledge and love of music influences their actions. They embrace their surroundings, sometimes seduced, sometimes seducers, sometimes deceived, often bequiled, never indifferent.

Their stories



twist and turn, basking in and buffeted by the eccentric charms of Catalonia's rocky coast. In these four stories. at least one of which is shortly to become a film, Ellen guides the reader on a voyage of discovery along the Côte Vermeille.

biocoop

- · Llegums del Rossello
- · Carn de Cerdanya
- · Pa amb tomate
- · Oli d'oliva
- · Formatge de cabra
- · Mel i mato
- · Cirera de Ceret

When it's that good, no translation necessary!



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-OLife

Mozzies! Let's start from scratch!

The mosquito, ('little fly' in Spanish) has been around for more than 30 million years. Only the female bites, attracted by our chemical signature -heat, light, perspiration, body odour, lactic acid and exhaled carbon dioxide. In fact, the plumper we are, the more we exhale gas, and the more she loves usso a good incentive to lose those extra kilos! When this mini menace sticks us with her large needle-like mouth part, she is feeling about for a blood vessel into which she 'injects' a not-so-delicous cocktail of saliva to stop our blood from clotting long enough for her to drink herself giddy.

We often feel nothing. Then the itching starts, caused by histamines released by the body, a natural immune response to the foreign mosquito saliva.

We scratch - and our immune system reacts, thinking it needs to up its defences. The more we scratch, the more it swells, and the more it itches!

Around 20% of us are highly attractive to mosquitoes. Diet, perfumes and cosmetics contribute to our attractiveness, as does the bacteria in our bodies, genetics, alcohol consumed, medical treatments. and our metabolism. Pregnant women are more susceptible to bites, as are women in general, possibly because they sweat less. Mosquitoes also prefer certain blood groups, type 0 being the tastiest tipple.

Whatever the reason for the mozzie bite, there are plenty of ways to reduce your "mozzie attractiveness".

THE NATURAL.....

Use only pure essential oil of citronella — not fragrance oil. Put drops across window sills and door ways. You will be amazed how well it prevents the mosquitoes from entering the house.

Garlic

Eat loads of fresh garlic. Mosquitoes can't stand the stuff.

Lavender essential oil

Smells great and is a commonly used and effective mosquito repellent. Best diluted in a carrier oil like apricot kernel, sweet almond, coconut oil, or organic soy oil which also keeps mosquitoes at bay.

Essential oils melange

Mix 30 drops of essential oils, catnip, citronella. layender, neem, and black pepper (about 6 drops of each) into about 30 ml of an unscented and natural oil or moisturizer, and rub a small amount onto skin. Mix into organic soy oil for extra protection.

Lavender and lemon.

Mix 15 drops lavender oil with 3 - 4 tbsp of vanilla extract and 1/4 cup lemon juice. Top up with water.

(Thanks to Cindy le Sauvage Guilbert of St Laurent de Cerdans and her book 'Naturale Magick in the Pyrenees').

THE PRACTICAL...

Citronella candles can help keep mosquitoes out of an area, but don't rely on them, particularly in the P-O as wind can dissipate the smoke and smell quickly.

Be sure door and window screens fit tightly and are in good repair.

Wear shoes, socks, long trousers and a longsleeved shirt (but ditch the hankie on the head!) when outdoors for long periods of time, light colours and tightly woven materials. Remember that the Tiger mozzie can still pierce clothing.

Apply insect repellent, the more DEET the better. Apply to clothes when possible, and sparingly to exposed skin.

Insect light traps ('bug zappers') do very little to help - do not rely on them!

Get rid of breeding places in your garden by removing water-filled containers like old tyres, pots and buckets, check bird baths, pet water dishes and paddling pools by emptying them at least once a week.

AND THE JUST PLAIN SILLY!

Cows give off the chemical signature that mosquitoes crave. Put it at the bottom of your garden.

Drink or even bathe in gin and tonic.

The quinine in tonic keeps them at bay and the ain will stop you from feeling the bite until the next morning!!

And a few mozzie limericks from readers....



A suave PO mosquito called Ben Had a penchant for hairy-backed men It pierced with a thwack Dead-centre of back Gave a whoop and did it again!

A mozzie who thought he was bright. Packed his bags and flew into the night While perched on a log He was ett by a dog Now his bark is much worse than his bite!

Put any of these plants in your garden or on your patio this summer. Mosquitoes absolutely hate them!









Lavender

Lemon balm (Lavande)



Basil

(basilic)

(romarin)



Lemongrass









Garlic (ail)

(soucis)

Airport news

with John Fairclough



If you can get a lift to Figueres bus station, and don't mind sitting through a few stops, you can actually get a bus directly to Barcelona airport, both terminals, It takes a bit longer, but if **you have luggage that you** don't want to hump on and off trains, it's much more practical. Find out more at www.sagales.com

Famous quote

If God had intended us to fly he would have made it easier to get to the airport.

nce again it's time to look at any additions or deletions from the Airlines' summer schedules published in spring. On this occasion it's a pretty short process, as all I can find is Ryanair's late decision to reinstate their Irish routes from GIRONA, with twice weekly rotations from Dublin Cork and Knock over the peak summer months. Nothing axed this year as far as I can see, so please refer to the PO Life spring edition for full schedule details.

With few flight changes, it seems a good opportunity to spotlight P.O.'s hometown airport, Perpignan. Towards the end of April I had the pleasure of meeting with Dimitri Sindres, development manager for both Perpignan and Carcassonne airports, for a progress report on redevelopment work at Perpignan. It's only fair to say that progress, though noticeable, has been slow. At the beginning of May as I write, new facilities are limited to the airport information and Air France desks plus new downstairs toilets, which can now be accessed by lift. The check in area will come into service by June. completely refurbished, and more spacious. Currently there is a temporary café/shop by the entrance, but, by the summer the new versions should be up and running, along with a very welcome addition of a first floor departure lounge, with a big increase in waiting space,

something sadly lacking at Perpignan up tonow. Departure gates will remain at 3.

Over the summer months arriving passengers will be processed through some sort of temporary facility for immigration, baggage reclaim and car hire, while the whole arrivals area takes its turn for a makeover. The

frontage of the building is taking shape, and looks very modern and striking, not unlike a mini version of London's Stansted airport for those who know it.

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When I pressed Dimitri for information on progress made on attracting new flights to the smart new facility, the news was not so good. Though he and his team have been unquestionably working very hard to effect this, the problem, as ever, is that Perpignan is caught in the middle of a zone well served by the low cost operators, already bringing in visitors to the area. Talks with Jet2 and Ryanair to start services to Leeds Bradford and Manchester respectively have so far come to nothing, though he is hopeful that Ryanair could be tempted to serve Leeds next year. Other UK airlines with whom Dimitri has has discussions are Monarch, BMI Regional and FlyBe.

Further bad news is that he had just had it confirmed that Ryanair will NOT be serving Stansted from Perpignan this coming winter.

Most of the positive 'irons in the fire' appear to be

facilities/services that will provide connections out for PO residents, notably a service to Paris Charles de Gaulle (perhaps with Easyjet), development of the new Iberia flight to Madrid, an arrangement with Aer Lingus to provide through fares via Dublin to the USA and Canada, and maybe a regular service to Amsterdam Schiphol.

Final completion of the refurbishment works is not scheduled till Jan 2016. Hopefully, I'll be invited back then to see the finished article and hear better news re new flights!!



Are you 'un phubber'?

Made up of 'phone' and 'snubbing', le phubbing describes the behaviour of smartphone addicts and their antisocial tendency to be You might also come across "nomophobie" (the fear of being out of mobile phone contact), coming from the contraction of the English 'no mobile-phone phobia'.

You are 'un phubber' if you do the following in public:

3. être incapable de laisser votre smartphone/ tablette de côté plus d'une heure d'affilée

2. scruter sans cesse les mises à jour de vos réseaux sociaux au restaurant ou lors d'une sortie entre amis,

> 1. vérifier votre smartphone toutes les 6 minutes même en pleine conversation avec un interlocuteur

4. montrez votre angoisse à vos proches si votre appareil est déchargé et que vous n'avez aucun endroit pour le ranimer,

5. passez des heures sur Candy Crush ou autres jeux addictifs sans yous soucier de votre voisin.

> 6. en société, vous faites automatiquement un check-in dans les lieux que vous visitez. publiez une photo sur Instagram et/ou un selfie sur Facebook

interlocuteur

person you're speaking to scruter - examine mises à jour - up-dates réseaux sociaux - social networks

d'affilée - at a time endroit/lieu - place vos proches - your loved ones (se) soucier - worry about



P-OLife So Very Céret 04 68 87 04 38 4 bld Lafayette - 66400 Céret

n 1911, Picasso and Braques arrived in Céret and began experimenting with Cubism, a painting style that was to revolutionise art. Other artists were drawn to the town, discussions held in the Grand Café were animated, and Céret became a popular meeting place for artists from far and wide.

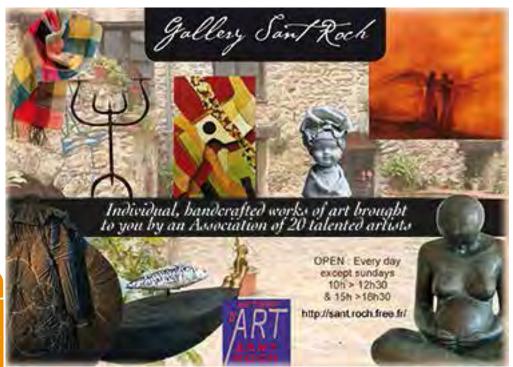
Over one hundred years later, Céret is still a great attraction for artists. Push open the wrought iron gates of the Gallery Sant Roch and enter another world, a shady courtyard, leading to a cool and ancient former Carmelite convent, now a showcase for the individual, handcrafted works of art of 20 local artists.

Painstakingly renovated from a near ruin in the 60s by the Métiers d'Art Sant Roch group, it is now run by artists for artists and art and craft lovers.

O4 68 87 04 38
4 bld Lafayette - 66400 Céret

Looking for that unusual gift or an addition to your art collection?
You are welcome to browse around

With regular exhibitions, workshops and classes, demonstrations of the different arts and crafts and even music evenings, it personifies the Céret that attracted some of the great artists of history.



PORT-VENDRES



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Your property in the South of France! At the foot of Pyrenees and at the edge of the Mediterranean Sea, the region of the Roussillon presents you its treasures: Land of History, breathtaking landscapes of sea and mountain, discovery of the Catalan culture, activities off the beaten tracks, Collioure the local St-Tropez, the Costa Brava and Perpignan airport nearby. The cove of Paulilles, international Port, fishing, yachting, gastronomy and festivities make of Port-Vendres a haven of peace, curiosities and entertainments.



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receive your family or friends in the sun (300 days a year)! Imagine yourselves on your terrace with Mediterranean and Pyrenees view, then take a boat to join an isolated

creek, practise your favorite leisure activity before having dinner in the best restaurant looking at the small port.





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OUT FOR LA Guinguette du Lac here's not much to beat a

here's not much to beat a lakeside lunch, shimmering reflection of Mount Canigo rippling gently in the smooth waters, or dinner as a flaming sun melts into the lake.

Saint Jean Pla de Corts is family fun, aquatic action, picnics, summer swims, lakeside strolls, zip wires, electric pedalos, bouncy inflatable games in and out of the water, lifeguards...... and jazz, blues and swing at La Guinguette!

Think Renoir, 'Luncheon of the Boating Party' and you've got it! The original 'guinguettes' grew up around Paris in the 18th century. Initially small outdoor bars selling cheap wine known as 'guingue', they quickly became popular open air taverns, where tired workers could let their hair down after a hard working week..... a river side outing, simple, home cooked local cuisine, live music and a great atmosphere.

And that's exactly what you get at La Guinguette. Charming Catalan couple Fabien and Anicée invite you to their own little piece of France nostalgia at this 'pieds dans l'eau' restaurant on the lake, open for lunch, dinner, drinks, ice creams...

Supervise the kids lakeside, while sipping your pre-lunch apero, or dine to the sounds of accordion, jazz, swing, gypsy manouche....nautical....but sooooo nice!.





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Take 2 Lakes



Water Sport Saint Jean Pla de Corts

ove water sport but tired of sand in every orifice? Simples.

Follow the wild screams of excitement (and the sign for the Plan d'Eau) to the 'téléski' at Saint Jean Pla de Corts and take a walk on the wild side.

If you're a fan of thrills and spills, (and we wish you more of the first and less of the second bien sûr!). you won't be able to resist a visit to this 'téléski', the most southern in France, to try out, practice or perfect your water-ski and boarding skills. Monoskiing, wakeboard, wakeskate and kneeboard await – maybe with a few 'Air Tricks' once you've become a bit of a pro.

Towed along the water by overhead cables attached to pylons, the 2 pylon run is suited to absolute beginners from 7 upwards, who can quickly progress to the main 5 pylon run, from the age of 10 upwards. This 600m clockwise circuit. travelling at a speed of 30km/h, has jumps and obstacles, adding a bit of spice for the more experienced.

And don't panic if you're more of a landlubber than a water babe! There is a sunny and spacious lakeside terrace and snack bar overlooking the action, the perfect spot for an ice-cream, a cold drink with a burger or crêpe or even a delicious continental breakfast. Take a stroll, soak up the sun, and cheer the skiers on from benches strategically placed around the lake.

Open every day-no need to book.

It's a unique experience, big-time fun for all ages from 7 to 77!

DID YOU KNOW





All at Sea

On 9 August 1917. The cargo boat L'Estérel, was returning from Africa to Port-la-Nouvelle when it was sunk by a Uboat. The crew were able to reach Port Bou in the lifeboats. The wreck lies around 30km off the coast of Port-la-Nouvelle. Because of its depth of 110, it wasn't discovered until 2008.

In his book 'Côte Vermeille Catalane. Histoire et patrimoine sous-marin', Prades dentist and deep sea diver. François Brun traces the history of this and other wrecks to be found around the coasts of the P-O, including German submarines.

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FIFTY SHADES OF ANYTHING BUT GREY

Summer isn't all about the beach. Perpignan rocks and sizzles too! Throughout July and August, 'Les Jeudis de Perpignan' enthrall and captivate locals and holiday makers alike every Thursday evening as the streets and squares light up with a sparkling mixture of free and exciting street entertainment. Throughout the season, there is music, dance and theatre from jazz to flamenco to classical, culminating in the world famous VISA exhibition of Photo-journalism in more than a dozen historic buildings where the world's greatest press photos are exhibited.



b ut should you feel the need to wander far from the madding crowd, stroll through the shady and ancient cobbled streets past inviting inner courtyards to find havens of calm. Take tea with bubbly Laurie & her daughter, Alexandra at 'A l'heure des Thés' tea rooms, (www.a-lheure-des-thes.fr) on the rue de l'Ange. along with homemade apple crumble tart, cheesecake or maybe an english breakfast of bacon and egg - and prepare yourself for a colourfest just down the road!

Just off the Rue de l'Ange, Galerie Joguet greets you with a burst of exuberant colour. The paintings of Veronique Joguet, a confessed colour junkie since the age of 14 when she discovered Turner's abstract landscapes at the Tate Gallery, emit energy, light and the heat of the Mediterranean.

Veronique created Galerie Joguet in 2009 as a permanent exhibition space for her work. She sets a theme - Collioure, été indien, the coastline of Paulilles, the vineyards of Maury, flowering cacti or la femme portraits - and explores its pictorial possibilities in a series of 25 to 30 canvases each telling the same story in a different way.

The Chateau Royal floating on the bay, the Fort Mirador seen through a screen of dancing pines, the Mouret fishermen's houses nestled above the bay and Fort St. Elme rising above a tumble of rock and cactus. Each scene is awash with a bright primary colour: red, yellow or blue.



This year, the exciting main exhibition is entitled 'Fenouillèdes, notre Provence' - vineyards and 'casottes' clinging to hills dominated by the Cathar castles.

But don't take my word for it. Pop along and see for yourself. As summer ends and winter drains the warmth from your surroundings, enter the courtyard at 18 Rue de L'Ange and soak up the radiant colours of Veronique Joguet's world.





A little ass or a load of bull?

Have you noticed the donkey sticker on the back of cars? Well, that little donkey is the symbol of Catalonia, North and South. The rest of Spain has its own unofficial national symbol

So what's the story? The Osborne sherry company put up large black silhouetted images of a bull in semi-profile to advertise their sherry near major roads throughout Spain. In the 1990s, such advertising was banned, but the bull was already nationally famous. The compromise was to keep the bulls but remove the name Osbourne. The bull became a symbol of Spanish pride - so the Catalans 'hit back' by producing their own unofficial national symbol - el burro a symbol of Catalan pride!

Oh regarde un mouche!

Non, pas UN mouche, UNE mouche!

Ben, ça alors, tu as de bons veux!



DID YOU KNOW



On a plateau of the Corbières, near Salses, with panoramic views of sea and lagoon, visible from the A9 motorway and the N9, stands the "Porta dels Països Catalans", or 'Gate of the Catalan Countries', giant arc of four open doors, its uprights symbolising the four bars of the Catalan flag. Created by sculptor Emili Armengol, this gateway to north Catalonia is a symbolic border between Languedoc and Roussillon, a first and last landmark for visitors arriving or departing the Pyrenees-Orientales.

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answers

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1f 2j 3g 4a 5h 6b 7e 8i 9c 10d

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O Life

Mountain Magic

International Sheepdog Trials Osseia:

Sunday 19th July

... at the International Sheepdog Trials in Osseja

his contest, an absolute joy for animal lovers, actually dates back to 1948, and was created to show up the skills required and the great bond that is formed when man and dog work together as a team on a daily basis.

As well as the blessing of the shepherds and their herds, and the competition, there will be sheep shearing, demo of dog search for survivors, market of regional products, weaving workshop, various crafts, castellers, food and music......

Osseja itself is a working village renowned for its healthy climate and invigorating air. It is one of the

DID YOU KNOW

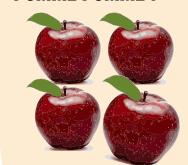
stops for le petit train jaune, and if you're getting a bit hot under the collar down here on the plain, this would be a great family day out, in cooler climes.

Info. 04 68 04 53 86 or e mail: tourisme-osseja@orange.fr



Quel est le fruit préféré de Beethoven?

Anyone for Tenez? **POMME POMME** POMME POMME!



Did you know that tennis was first played in France, and originally named 'tenez' (pronounced tuh-nay) from the 'vous' form of the French verb 'tenir'. translated roughly as 'take that? The game lost popularity in France but became popular with the English who used 'tenez' each time they hit the ball. With the English accent, the word sounded more like tennis, which eventually it became.

MOUNTAIN ... At Jaca D'en Calvet Jenny Rhodes

hen my beautiful dog Lilli pulled me down the stairs last year. I broke my leg in three places. If anyone has done a similar thing and suddenly become unable to walk, and do everyday things, you will know that you become very aware of how difficult it must be for people who are permanently disabled. Kerbs, steps and a thousand things are out there as your own personal

minefield. You can become a prisoner in your own home. Since my accident I have looked for things that make life easier and more pleasant for people with walking disabilities.

This is a small place I have found just on the roadside on the road leading into Les Angles. Someone has had a wonderful idea of building a wooden boardwalk round a small lake, [Jaca D'en Calvet] and picnic tables for wheelchairs, with bench seats on one side and space for the wheelchair on the other. There are two fishing platforms, also accessible to wheelchairs.

They have actually made parking spaces wider for people to get out and access their chair. It is so brilliantly thought out.

It's not huge but it is beautiful. The lake, wild flowers and views make it a magic place to picnic.

If you have friends and visitors with mobility problems, this summer, who feel that the mountains are not for them, think again. This place is a little spot of heaven made easy to access.



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P-O Life

Things You Might Need to Know





The end of the paper part of the old British driving licence could cause problems for car hire from June 8th 2015. This paper counterpart records endorsements and fines.

Drivers may be expected to obtain an online code before hiring a car, which will be valid for only 72 hours. Some, but not all, hire companies will require this code as well as their 'credit card' licence. You are advised to check on this in advance with your car hire company.

At the time of writing, the website generating these codes is not yet online so keep an eye on www. gov.uk/view-driving-licence for more info in the near future.

For those who do not have Internet access, a phone number will also be made available.

Advice from the AA for those hiring vehicles abroad is to take the paper part of the licence with them in case the new law hasn't filtered through to all hire companies.

Speed Limit Changes

atch out for a change in the speed limit from 90km/h to 80km/h on some roads around France form June 30th 2015

Other changes in driving laws include the banning of all hands free devices which might prevent the driver being aware of his surrounding, leaving only the wireless Bluetooth system without headset as an in-car chatting option.

The 1 euro train and a lot of patience!

uch excitement accompanied the introduction of the one euro train early this year. Travel to anywhere within the 5 regional departments of the Languedoc Roussillon (Hérault, Gard, Aude, Lozère, Pyrénées-Orientales) for just one euro? Can't be bad!

However, actually grabbing a ticket before the daily allocated allowance is exhausted requires a whole lot of patience.

Tickets are available ONLY via Internet at www.train1euro.fr, bookable for a designated train, and can be printed or displayed on smart phones, lpads etc. Once you are on the site, look for the red box, on the right hand side, marked 'Valider'. This will only show when there is actually a 1 euro ticket available - and either somebody is getting up very early to bag all the tickets, or they are in very limited supply!

Bonne chance!

SPEED LIMIT REMINDER

		when wet
Motorway	130 km/h (80mph)	110 km/h (68mph)
Open Road	90 km/h (55mph)	80 km/h (50mph)
Dual Carriageway	110 km/h (68mph)	100 km/h (62mph)
Built up areas	50 km/h (31mph)	
Spanish motorway	120 km/h	

(55mph)

Protect your dog!

rom March to October, don't forget to protect your dog against the 'Phlebotomus' or 'sandfly' whose 'bite' can be fatal. This unpleasant little beastie can carry and transmit 'leishmaniasis', by depositing parasites on the skin which invade the dog's cells, and can damage the immune system. Ordinary flea/tick collars do not provide protection.

Use Spot-on pipettes and Scalibor collars with deltamethrin, available from most vets and pet shops.





S ince the beginning of December, the association Route 66 has been experimenting with reduced rates taxis, a system of taxi-based carpooling, directed by licensed professionals for Friday and Saturday nights out and special occasions such as New Year's Eve.

The aim is to offer economic, friendly, and safe taxis at affordable rates.

The principle is simple: create a free account on www.taxis-route-66.fr and enter place of departure and destination, specifying the number of people travelling, followed by the time and payment by credit card.



ROUTE 66



The social charges tax imposed on British and other EU non-resident owners letting or selling their properties has been deemed illegal by the European Court of Justice, who say that a resident of the EU should contribute to only one social security system.

France may now be liable to reimburse millions of euros paid on rental and sale over the past two to three years, since the government added the 15.5 per cent "social charge" to the 20% capital gains on the sale of second homes or rental income.

The addition brought the tax to a massive 35.5%.

A French tax law expert had advised anyone who has not already submitted a claim to the French tax authorities to do so now, and suggests that those who have already made a claim should write to the French tax administration asking for their money back and also asking for a refund of any tax agent's fees.

The new bill was not concluded at the time of writing, so if you are considering selling a property, you may have to pay the charge and claim it back when the law is passed.

OUT for THE DAY

Horsing Around

O K, so you have at least one 'horse addict' in the family who needs her horse riding fix, but what about the rest of you? 'Rando et Chariot' near Argelès-sur-Mer has the solution for everyone to enjoy an unforgettable day out with well-behaved, affectionate horses.

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Experienced riders can enjoy an all day trek each Friday, following the trails along the river to the

beach, and live the dream of swimming in the sea, at one with the horse.

For a complete change of pace, why not take a gentle chariot ride. Meander through peach orchards and vineyards with a visit to the Château Villeclare, and savour the mouth watering fruit that surrounds you.

For more details visit our website

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