

# P.O Life

Life in the Pyrénées Orientales



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A year ago Kate asked me to join her as co editor of her PO Life. I was very flattered and not a little nervous. The year has flown by, full of more ideas than we have had time or energy to put into words and pictures. However, those ideas that have made it onto P O Life's pages have brought a flood of enthusiastic compliments that is more than encouraging.

We may appear an ill-assorted pair. An odd couple...

Appearances can be deceptive.

The deep love of the department in which we have chosen to live and a desire to communicate our infatuation with the Pyrénées Orientales to our fellow Anglophones has made for a pretty perfect partnership. I never imagined the production of a "small" 48 page magazine could take up so much time and effort. Or that it could give so much pleasure as well as information to the thousands who read it.

My second year at P O Life promises to be every bit as exciting as the first. We are as full as ever of new ideas and hope you all continue to enjoy them. Have a wonderful summer and watch this space!

*Jane & Kate*



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## SOMMAIRE

### 4 Walk the region

Camporelles

### 8 French Life

Liber-T badge

### 10 Festival & traditions

### 12 What's on?

Our pick of events around the region

### 16 Food and drink

Restaurant reviews

### 19 Out for the day

Discover the region

### 26 Test your French

Améliorez Anglais  
Language exercises

### 29 En Route

Les radars

### 38 Summer Sports

Canyoning, horses

### 41 Art life

Argelès

### 46 English speaking services



Welcome to the Pyrénées-Orientales!

[www.cdt-66.com](http://www.cdt-66.com)

Comité Départemental du Tourisme des Pyrénées-Orientales

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## LES LACS DE CAMPORELLES

with Mike Rhodes

This popular walk is a great introduction to the higher mountains and is generally done in the summer months of July & August when the chair lift, starting at 9.00am, whisks you up the first 350m climb, but it is also possible, after the winter snow has melted, to drive up the forestry track to the same place.

**Access :** Start from the Ski Station above the Capcir village of Formiguères GPS ref 31N 423751E 4719413N at 1750m altitude. Map IGN 2249ET Font Romeu.

### Walk :

✓ From the top of the lift, follow the wide forestry track on the left, climbing gently to the west, for 700m, past an information board and barrier until you see a path way-marked in yellow leading into the trees on your left. Continue to the right of the ridge crest until after 1km you will see the top lift building of the Formiguères ski station on your right. A steeper climb takes you up into a shallow, rather bleak valley, where all of the stunted trees and bushes have been twisted into tortured shapes by the wind. The rocky path now climbs



DFCI tracks (Défense contre l'incendie) are situated at regular intervals in most forest areas. These are for the fire engines in case of emergency and are strictly forbidden for unauthorised motorised vehicles. Walkers bikers and horses may use these tracks unless there is a fire warning, high winds etc.



gently up to a small col where suddenly the imposing mass of the Pics Peric come into view. (Pic Peric makes a superb walk for the fit hiker but takes an extra 4 hours)

✓ Just after the small col, the path splits and we take the RH one heading towards a small peak, Sierra de Mauri 2428m where we can break to admire the stunning views. Below us to the west, are the dozens of lakes making up the site de Camporells, specially stocked with mountain trout for the keen fishermen. Beyond the lakes are the Pics Peric

Mike Rhodes is an International Mountain Leader / Accompagnateur 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 0033(0)468043728 - mike.rhodes@free.fr - www.pyrenean-trails.com

Private roads and track bearing the sign "Propriété privé - défense d'entrer" should only be used with the permission of the owner.



2810m with the Puig de la Portella Gran 2769m just to the right. To the north, the first peak is La Muntanyeta 2436m, and beyond in the distance you will see the shapely peaks of Pic de la Tribuna

2498m & Pic de Baxouillard 2546m overlooking the Gaube valley.

✓ Our next objective is the refuge de Camporells situated on the banks of l'Estagny del Mig. From the sierra de Mauri we descend slightly to the right and pick up a wide path which bends to the left and descends in wide zig zags until you suddenly turn a corner and the newly extended refuge comes into view. This is a good time to search out a secluded spot by one of the lakes and absorb the beauty of this special place. The refuge is looked after by Jean-Brice, summer and winter and he offers a full restaurant service at peak times. Why not make this a two day trip and stay the night? Blankets are provided but you will need a sheet sleeping bag. Or bring a light set of fishing tackle and try your luck in the lakes, but don't forget to buy a permit at Loosport in Formiguères village.

✓ The most popular way back is to follow the same route to the top of the ski station and then follow the ski piste to the left all of the way back to your car, if you parked at the station. If you drove to the top of the first ski lift then follow the same route as you ascended.

✓ An alternative descent is to follow the Lladure valley to the south. To take this descent, go south from the refuge for approx 400m to where the paths split. Take the LH

one heading east descending steeply into the Lladure valley on a good track. Once in the valley floor at about 1870m you descend gently for 2kms until you see a forestry track climbing up to your left. This track climbs for about 2kms and then descends gently back into the ski station. This alternative descent will take at least an hour longer than the normal descent. If you are planning to go down on the ski lift, check the last descent time and be aware that the lift will not run if there is any risk of a storm in the afternoon.

✓ The total distance is approx 8kms with 500m of climbing, without any detours. Total time, using the ski lifts for ascent and descent will be 4 – 5 hours giving plenty of time for stops and lunch.



## Identifying Makers



There are a number of walks and rides in the region that have been marked out with different coloured paint strokes to represent varying difficulty or activities.

### ✓ Walking

*Yellow paint stroke : short walk (petite randonnée)*

*Red and yellow paint stroke : Cross country (Tour de Pays)*

*Red and white paint stroke : long walks (grande randonnée)*

### ✓ Horse-riding

*orange circle*

### ✓ Mountain biking

*Two yellow circles and a triangle to indicate direction.*

## Stay safe...



*When walking in a high mountain situation, any accident can have serious consequences so make sure that you are well equipped including plenty of water, a map, compass, first aid kit and some sort of group shelter. Check the meteo before you leave (the local tourist office will have updated reports) and have the phone numbers of the mountain rescue service.*

### *Mountain rescue:*

*PGHM (Peloton de Gendarmerie de Haute Montagne) Osséja 04 68 04 51 03 (or ring 112 to be transferred)*

## WEIGHT MATTERS

If you decide to go to Le Perthus or Spain to stock up on cheap booze, bear in mind that if your car is overloaded (and there are regular 'controles' by police and customs on the road out of Le Perthus into Le Boulou), on the spot fines of around 100€ can be levied or in extreme circumstances the car could even be seized.

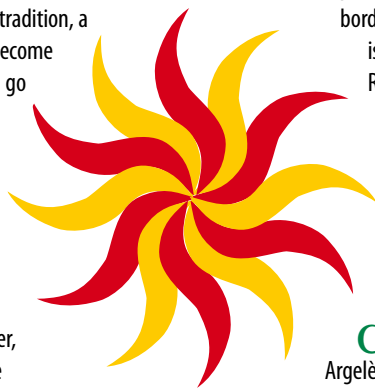
Check your car's manual to find the maximum recommended weight that your vehicle can take.

And don't forget that if you are going across the border into Spain and have prescription drugs and medicines, you should always carry the actual prescription with you in case you are searched, in order to prove that your drugs are legally acquired.

## WITCH BEACH?

According to a Catalan tradition, a person who wants to become a witch (bruixa) should go to the beach, take off

all her (or his!) clothes, roll over in the sand seven times, stand up, draw three circles, and roll around again, whilst muttering witch-like prayers and incantations. She (or he!) will turn into a witch, as long as no one has seen her (or him!) completing this ritual. However, if she is spotted, she will remain a mere mortal (if she has not by then been carted off by the men in their white coats!)



## LOOKING FOR AN EXCUSE...

...for not learning French? According to Belgian academic Philippe van Parijs, speakers at European meetings usually choose English for their speeches as it is the most widely understood language. He adds that it is therefore understandable that many Brits have poor foreign language skills, as the necessity to speak other languages is quite simply often not there! He predicts that in the future, Europe will become Bilingual whilst the good old Anglophones will become even more MONolingual! Ooops!

The expression cul-de-sac originated in England during the period when French was spoken by the English aristocracy. Translated from the French, it literally means "arse of the bag".

## THE PYRAMID MARCA HISPANICA PARK

Built in 1976 from stones excavated from the building of the motorway, the pyramidal monument overlooking the motorway at the French/Spanish border



is a purely decorative sculpture created by Ricardo Bofill, and dedicated to Catalonia.

The architect was given the brief that the mountain had suffered enough when the motorway was built, and he should build something to restore the region's dignity!

## CARRY ON CAMPING

Argelès has actually been developing as a seaside resort since the 1860s when the first pine forests were planted. It's first ever camp-site, Le camping Bouix, created in 1953 next to the beach, is still going strong today but fortunately its facilities have much improved over the past fifty years!

## WELL, WELL, WELL!

Did you know that there used to be six snow or ice wells, « Pou de Neu », in and around Sorède ( Coll Pregon, Puig dels Quatre Termes... ). They were very deep and used to keep snow which turned into ice at the bottom and was then distributed to nearby villages to preserve food and also used for certain medical treatments.

# THINGS YOU MIGHT NEED TO KNOW...

## CARTE EUROPÉENNE D'ASSURANCE MALADIE

If you are resident in France but intending to holiday elsewhere in Europe this year, don't forget to apply for your 'carte européenne d'assurance maladie', entitling you to free or subsidized medical treatment in most other countries, depending on the country visited of course.



To receive this card, simply write, ring or visit your local CPAM at least two weeks before travelling. (the CPAM also have an English speaking telephone line 0820 904 212 to advise and help out with administration) Even if you are leaving in less than two weeks, they can provide you with a temporary document - un certificat provisoire – valid for three months.

## Stuff to ship?

If you want to transport goods within France or abroad, why not try [www.shippy.com](http://www.shippy.com)? You list your items (on a site similar in operation to eBay) and transporters 'bid' for your business, sending by email their delivery prices, with of course no obligation on your part. It's free to register and has feedback ratings and comments like eBay. The idea is to fill vans and lorries that would otherwise be half full so its quite 'green' in concept. You can look through the site and see what other people have moved from place to place and how much they have paid.

## Bank holidays

1 June - Whit Monday (Lundi de Pentecôte).

14 July – Fête nationale, Bastille Day. (Most shops are closed)

## School holidays for our region (Zone A)

Summer 2nd July – 2nd September

## LOCAL NEWS: LE BOULOU BYPASS

The Boulou bypass, originally started in 2007 and abandoned for a time, is back on again. This link road between the RD 900 (Le Boulou Nord) and the RD 115 (Le Boulou Ouest) will pass under the motorway linking the vallée du Tech with the coast, and in high season, will hopefully save hours of traffic queues through this major bottleneck, for those heading into Spain or Céret way. It is now estimated that the bypass will be finished in 2010.

A temporary detour has been in place since the end of summer 2006. The signs for this 'déviation' are still not clear however, even after four years!. Coming from Perpignan, turn right at the roundabout (Netto/Intermarché) and left at the smaller roundabout, following signs 'Nouvel Itinéraire... Vallespir - Espagne'. Up until now, it has only been indicated by a banner on the roundabout.

## NOT-SO-CHEAP flights!

Booking your flight online and checking in on line with Ryanair?

Be very careful with your typing! Web check-in forms are validated against passport for name, passport number, expiry date and nationality. Any discrepancy on arrival could mean that you are sent back to the check-in desk to buy a new boarding card. The name change fee for a typing error is £95!!!

★ Don't forget Fathers' Day  
(la Fête des Pères)  
Sunday June 21st

## PÉAGE WITHOUT PAIN

motorway travel made easy

Sitting in a queue at the motorway 'péage' is no fun at all. Nor is driving a right hand drive car alone, and trying to reach over through the passenger window to pay your toll - particularly if you're a bit of a titch

✓ Regular users of French 'autoroutes', or those with right hand drive cars, can solve their problems by investing in a "Liber-T badge" which allows you to sail through the péage without having to stop or collect a ticket. Payment is 2 euros per month, or 20€ per year (with different price options available) which is only charged for months used, (ie if you don't use it at all for one month, you don't pay the fee) plus of course the toll itself.

### How it works

✓ When you register, you will receive a remote control 'beeper' to place on a bracket (also supplied) in your windscreen. As you approach the reserved lanes (orange T), reduce your speed and stop briefly. Your details will automatically be recorded, you will hear a beep, and the barrier will rise in response to a signal from your beeper. If the barrier does not open, there is a call button to alert a member of staff who will open it manually.

✓ Charges are invoiced and taken from your bank or credit card account once a month and you will receive a monthly detailed invoice.

### ADVANTAGES

✓ You can pay via most UK bank accounts or credit cards

✓ Your passenger can sleep throughout the journey!

✓ You can use it in any car

✓ On your birthday, you can travel on any motorway free of charge!

✓ You can use your badge in most Vinci car parks (unfortunately this does not include Perpignan!)

✓ You qualify for free journeys for frequent

usage, special offers and various discounts on car hire etc

✓ You can have the remote sent to your address in the UK

### THINGS TO THINK ABOUT....

✓ You may use the beeper on all motorways in France, **BUT NOT IN SPAIN.**

✓ Check the battery occasionally to avoid embarrassment if it doesn't work and you have to back out (you can also use it through the manned 'péage' booths if the worst comes to the worst!)

✓ Put it out of sight when you are away from the car as it is a target for thieves

### HOW TO REGISTER

✓ Register with ASF at the toll booth of Perpignan sud (just before Rivesaltes) taking with you a RIB (bank details), ID and proof of home address.

✓ Apply and register on line at [www.asf-telepeage.fr](http://www.asf-telepeage.fr). (some banks may also require you to send them a copy of the details to confirm the direct debit).

Useful vocab

*Un badge télépéage* remote control

*La barrière de péage* the toll barrier

*Un signal sonore* a 'beep'

*Je voudrais m'abonner au télépéage* I would like to register for the télépéage

*Pouvez vous m'envoyer mon badge en Angleterre (Irlande, Norvège...?)* Could you send the remote control to England (Ireland, Norway...?)



Free cocktail  
on presentation  
of P-O Life

# Bar Restaurant



Tucked in between purveyors of pizza and moules frites in Argeles Port is Las Papallonas, a gem of a restaurant serving fresh local food cooked with a flair learned, would you believe, in London.

Frank, proprietor/chef extraordinaire, spent eighteen years working under such culinary stars as Marco Pierre White and Gordon Ramsay, acquiring his considerable skills as well as a very colourful brand of English... He is widely travelled, always cooking, "It's all I do, I love it!"

And his love shows. His menu of the day at 12.90 euros changes daily. Having eaten his Tapas Menu of a selection of ten hot and cold tapas, a fillet of cod topped with finely chopped chorizo and cranberries, I knew each dish he proposed would be delicious, the seasoning complimenting rather than overpowering the main ingredient. Tapas with a view: from the tables you look through a sea of

masts to Fort St Elme standing guard over Collioure.

He cooks simple food as well. His hamburgers are made from steak he minces himself, his menu a la planxa at 19.50 has king prawns, sea bream and steak all grilled, served with frites and seasoned with local herbs. Last summer, when the rest of Port Argeles was awash with Moules Frites, Frank served nine versions of 500 grams of king prawns, salad and chips for 10 euros a dish and got through two thousand kilos of prawns in two months... Les Gambas Papallonas are available this summer as well.

He loves the Brits and is keen to do Sunday Lunches of Roast Beef and Yorkshire Pud. All he needs is a booking for eight... P O Life readers will be guaranteed a warm welcome and a great gastronomic experience. Booking is recommended.

3 Quai Vasco de Gama - Port Argeles 66700

Tél : 04 68 56 85 23



## LA TROBADA DU CANIGOU AND THE FOCs DE LA SAINT JOAN



A lovely tradition to celebrate the Summer Solstice of St Jean around the 22nd June is the meeting of Catalans from both sides of the Pyrénées on the summit of the Canigou. Troops of walkers and representatives of villages and towns throughout Catalonia,

meet up on the Plateau des Cortalets, where they set up tents and prepare for a sleepless night! The ultimate goal of the Trobada is to get up to the peak at 2,784m high, with bunches of wood to contribute to the huge bonfire prepared on the summit. This gathering is known as the "Trobada" (a catalan word meaning "meeting" or "reunion"). At midnight a flaming torch, kept throughout the year at the Castillet in Perpignan, is carried to the top of the mountain and used to light a bonfire which can be seen over much of the Conflent. The next day, relay runners carry the "flamme du Canigou" down onto the plain to light the "Focs de la Saint Joan" or "Feux de la Saint Jean", fires that have been prepared in towns and villages all over the region, and in the evening, with the arrival of the torch, and the lighting of the fires, the festivities begin. It is a night for celebration and an important symbol of the unity of the Catalan culture

Herbs are an important part of the tradition of the Feux de la Saint Jean as it is said that their curative powers are 100 times stronger on this particular evening. Rosemary, thyme and verbena and other herbs are picked, made in bouquets and garlands – verbena in particular is supposed to have mystical properties and act as an aphrodisiac whilst the carlina (a type of thistle shaped like the sun) is also believed to have aphrodisiac qualities and is nailed to the doors to protect from evil spirits and to prevent 'mauvaises fées' (bad fairies) entering the house.



## CORREFOC

A Catalan tradition which ensures that any festival goes with a bang! Its meaning of "fire run"

really says it all! It consists of a parade through the streets, accompanied by loud music, bangers... a fiesta of sparklers, firecrackers, and roman candles with colles de diables, - groups of devils - who dance amongst the crowds as they play with fire and set off their fireworks, amidst a shower of sparks.

Great atmosphere, great fun but can be very frightening for small children and animals. Wear a hat and clothes that will protect you from the sparks. (Although there is usually a fireman or two there to put you out if the worst comes to the worst!!!)



## CASTELLS

(Catalan for castles)

A tradition which originated at the end of the 18th century in Valls, Tarragona, when rival groups of people called "colles", began to compete in constructing human towers. Those who take part in these tours are called castellers (castle-makers),

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

If you look at a euro banknote, you will see that the word **euro** is always in the **singular** (eg 20 euro) even if you are lucky enough to have lots of them! In fact, guidelines on the use of the euro state that the plurals of both 'euro' and 'cent' should be written without the 's' as not all of the countries in the euro zone form the plural in the same way.

## HAVANERES

Named after the capital town of Cuba, La Habana (Havana), these sea shanties were brought back from Cuba by sailors in the 19th Century, and tell of lost loves and faraway ancestors. These lovely 'sing-songs' are usually accompanied by guitar and accordion, and sometimes bass, along with the traditional drink to accompany Havaneres, ron cremat, a mixture of rum, sugar, lemon peel and coffee beans, with optional cinnamon stick, served in an earthenware bowl and flambéed to burn off the alcohol.



## GÈGANTS

Enormous painted papier-mâché figures, sometimes 14 or 15 ft tall, with traditional clothing and a person inside. They usually appear in couples during the patron saint holidays

(Festa Major), carnivals and parades, often as king and queen, or some important person in the history of the town. They dance in the streets with little "big heads" or "cap-grossos".

## LLEVANT DE TAULA

The expression 'Llevant de taula' literally means 'dessert' - that which is placed on the table last, then taken away. During a 'festa major', the Llevant de taula is the means by which a village raises funds for the fetes and entertainments. Strolling musicians with wind instruments (or these days floats with people in fancy dress or Catalan colours piping traditional Catalan music through speakers) travel from house to house, receiving small amounts of money to be put towards the village festivities.!



## THE SARDANE

traditional Catalonian circle dance, believed to be of Greek origin, designed to bring whole villages out onto the village green and get them in party mood - a little like a more complicated version of the 'hokey cokey' in fact!

Music for the sardane is played by a cobla, a wind band with double bass including typical Catalan instruments tenora, tible, flabiol and tamborí, alongside trumpet, trombone, fiscorns and double bass.

During his 30 year rule of Spain from the late 1940's to 1975, Franco considered the Catalan national pride and wish for independence to be arrogant and an insult to his authority. He passed a series of laws attempting to squash their traditions, language and culture. Among these laws was the banning of the Sardana. As often happens in the face of adversity, the dance soon 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.

A la plage, Lucien dit à son papa  
 "Oh, regarde le beau bateau !"  
 Papa lui répond : "Ce n'est pas un  
 bateau, c'est un yacht."  
 "Ah bon ! Comment ça s'écrit ?"  
 Papa réfléchit et dit : "Hmmm! Tu  
 as raison, c'est un bateau"

# What's on?

Our pick of events around the region. For a more detailed events calendar, visit us on [www.anglophone-direct.com](http://www.anglophone-direct.com)

**Vernet-les-Bains**

6th-7th June

## COUNTRY IN VERNET

Yee ha! Country and western weekend. American cars and motor bikes, stalls, rock concert and other surprises await you

## Kiddie discounts

5th-11th July

**Argelès**

Free to all children under 12, this 'passport' offers reductions and discounts on loads of shows and attractions and organised evenings for the U12s at the beach with games and shows

More info: Office de Tourisme Tel : 04 68 81 10 15

3rd-5th July

**Argelès**

## LES DÉFERLANTES



Les Déferlantes d'Argelès-sur-Mer (Déferlantes means breaking waves or surf) "Les Déferlantes" will take place once again in the magnificent grounds of Valmy, but also on the beach and in Argelès village. Featuring rock, French and English variety, world, blues, hip-hop, électro and even a special rock concert for children..... in fact something for everyone! Highlights of this year's festival are Simple Minds, Duffy, Paolo Nutini..... All street entertainment is free.

For more info, visit [www.lesdeferlantesdargelessurmer.com](http://www.lesdeferlantesdargelessurmer.com)

13th-14th June

**Torreilles plage**

## FESTIVAL CERFVOLAND



Don't miss this festival of giant kites on the beach in Torreilles. Demonstration of kite flying, air ballet, and lots of fun and colour, including a kite building workshop for the children. More info: Office de Tourisme Tel:0468284110

## LES QUERENCIAS

26th-27th June

**Céret**

Catalan music festival featuring well known artistes with the accent on flamenco music and dancing. "Querencias" is actually a bull-fighting term, signifying the spot in the bull arena where the bull makes his stand and prepares himself, ready to charge!

More info: Office de Tourisme 04 68 87 00 00

## *A selection of...*

### FIREWORKS & ENTERTAINMENT FOR JULY 14th

La Fête de la Bastille or Fête Nationale marks the storming of the Bastille prison in 1789 and the beginning of the French Revolution of 1789. Fireworks, dancing, and a lot of celebrating mark the event every year throughout France. (Check with Tourist Offices for exact dates and details)

- ARGELES-SUR-MER** fireworks and various entertainments
- CERET** (13th) fireworks
- CANET** musical fireworks + bal
- COLLIOURE** procession, sardines, bal
- CORSAVY** fireworks + bal
- FORMIGUERES** (13th) fireworks
- ILLE-SUR-Têt** bal
- LAROQUE-DES-ALBERES** sardanes, BBQ + bal
- PERPIGNAN** fireworks, son et lumière
- PORT-VENDRES** fireworks from the middle of the harbour
- PRATS-DE-MOLLO** fireworks, sardanes
- SOREDE** bal

Visit our site and register  
for our free **weekly newsletter** !

11th-12th July

**Céret**

## FÉRIA DE CÉRET

Bull Run through the streets, market, bands, street entertainment and party atmosphere, Céret Feria is not for everyone, due to the perceived animal cruelty of these bullfights to the death, which take place in the purpose built bullring just out of town. Shops and restaurants close and food and drink, from a full meal to a burger, is on sale from the many 'bodegas' (street bars), run by the different 'associations' of Céret. If you don't want to stand out from the crowd, wear the traditional féria colours of red and white.

## FÊTE DE LA MUSIQUE

21st June

**National**



Every year, around the summer solstice, the longest day of the year, musicians from all over the world perform free concerts in venues throughout France. The festival aims to celebrate music in all forms and is open to anyone. It all began in October 1981, when Maurice Fleuret became Director of Music and Dance. He expressed the desire to be "the director of all kinds of music, from the accordion to the recording industry". He wanted to find a way to bring people and their music out on to the streets. Three weeks later the Fête de la Musique was born.

If you are in France on this day it will be hard to avoid the vibrant sounds of salsa bands parading the streets, string quartets and steel bands playing on street corners, rock, pop, jazz and soul together with accordionists wandering among the crowds.

Carnival atmosphere, food, drink and laughter, and music of all sorts in the bars and cafés, streets, squares and courtyards, this national festival is not to be missed.

## Cycling...

### TOUR DE FRANCE 2009

8th July

**Perpignan**

The fifth leg of the Tour de France, Cap d'Agde to Perpignan, will pass through Port-Barcarès, Saint Laurent de Salanque, Canet-en-Roussillon, Saint-Cyprien and Argelès-sur-Mer, with the finish taking place in Place de Catalogne in Perpignan at 17.00hrs.

This 197km long fifth leg is dedicated to Salvador Dali, who called Perpignan railway station the "cosmic centre of the universe" and was himself fascinated by cycling.

The route approaches Perpignan via: Route Départementale 914, Route D'Elne, Avenue d'Argelès-sur-Mer, Avenue John F Kennedy, Avenue P. Cambres, Boulevard H. Poincaré, Boulevard F. Mercader, Boulevard des Pyrénées, Place de Catalogne. Over 5000 spectators are expected along with 2000 vehicles (sponsors, team and support vehicles etc), so not a good day to pop into Perpignan for shopping!!!

## And sailing...

### LE TOUR DE FRANCE À LA VOILE 2009

**St Cyprien / Port Barcarès**

June/July

A four weeks regatta - national

Once again, the Tour de France à la Voile (TFV) takes place around the French shores from the Channel, into the Atlantic and the Bay of Biscay and on along the Mediterranean. Pop along to Saint-Cyprien, (14th - 16th July) or Port Barcares (17th - 18th July) to cheer on the arrival of this great national and international sailing event.

More info: [www.tourvoile.fr](http://www.tourvoile.fr)

# What's on?

Our pick of events around the region. For a more detailed events calendar, visit us on [www.anglophone-direct.com](http://www.anglophone-direct.com)

17th-18th July

## Le Boulou LA FIESTA

Beginning with the « la course des plumards » (speedy bed race through the streets, including lots of water throwing by the spectators), this is a weekend of bands and bodegas, drinking and dancing  
More info : 04 68 87 50 95

23rd-26th July

## Tautavel FESTIVAL d'ASTRONOMIE

Tautavel hosts the Festival of astronomy, dates chosen to coincide with the 'fêtes de la préhistoire' and the 'nuit des étoiles 2009'.

Free, and aimed at a public of all ages, there will be a variety of different workshops, shows and lectures for young and old, with astronomy experts to answer your questions and acquaint you with a whole new world!

For more info, visit [www.astreschevelus.fr](http://www.astreschevelus.fr)

29th-31st July

Valmy, Argelès



## FESTIVAL INTERNATIONAL FLAMENCO

This unique flamenco festival offers a programme of music and dance to delight all, along with stands and

workshops during the day if you would like to have a go! Passionate, angry, deep, joyful, expressive, plaintive - if you are not already a fan of flamenco, you will be after this!

For more info, visit [www.festival-flamenco.com](http://www.festival-flamenco.com)

## Debonair

A few people have described my dear old Dad as a 'debonair gentleman' but did you know that it actually came from the French for "of good air". In the Middle Ages, people's health was judged partly by how they smelled. A person who gave off "good air" was presumed healthier and happier.



## BETLES

30th-31st June

Argelès beach

For Beetle fans (the VW type)! Exhibition and display of Volkswagen Beetles

## Vide-greniers (car boot sales)

Taking place mainly on Sundays, the vide-grenier, the nearest equivalent to the car boot sale, is a chance to get rid of those unwanted bits and pieces. Get there early if you want to get the bargains and avoid the rush! NB If you wish to display/sell at a vide-grenier, you will normally need to register in advance to book your 'emplacement' and show some proof of identity when registering. More information on how to do this from your local town hall.

### JUNE

#### Monday 1st

Peyrestortes  
Saint Estève

#### Saturday 6th

Sirach

#### Sunday 7th

Osseja  
Prats de Sournia  
Amélie-les-Bains-  
Palalda  
Villefranche-de-  
Conflent

#### Saturday 13th

Saint-Laurent-de-la-  
Salanque  
Llupia

#### Sunday 14th

Llauro  
Ortaffa  
Perpignan  
Ille-sur-Têt  
Peyrestortes  
Théza  
Trouillas

#### Sunday 21st

Corneilla-de-Conflent  
Saillagouse  
Thuir

#### Sunday 28th

Calce  
Caldégas  
Palau-del-vidre  
(Rencontre Canine)  
Terrats

### JULY

#### Saturday 4th

Corneilla-de-Vercol

#### Sunday 5th

La Cabanasse  
Sournia  
Théza

#### Sunday 12th

Palau-de-Cerdagne

#### Sunday 19th

Saint-Paul-de-  
Fenouillet  
Olette

#### Sunday 26th

Espira de l'Agly  
Llo

Always check with the local tourist office in advance, as dates can change.

## DIADES CATALANES

Celebration of Catalan culture and tradition over a three day period.

Catalan folklore, cargolade, (25 000 snails grilled over a fire of pruned vines) parade of giants, corefoc, folk dancing.....

Thuir

16th- 18th July



Prades 26th July – 13th August

## Pablo Casals Festival "Cosmophonia"



Now in its 58th year, the Pablo Casals festival is one of the most respected chamber music

festivals in France and, indeed, Europe, taking place in the beautiful abbey of Saint-Michel de Cuxà, the église Saint-Pierre de Prades and other churches in the Prades area. As you might expect from a festival named after a world famous cellist, many of the concerts focus on the cello, although there are also evenings devoted to Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven and many other greats. For full programme, see [www.prades-festival-casals.com](http://www.prades-festival-casals.com)



## LES ESTIVALES

The Estivales began more than twenty years ago when a group of friends, passionate about theatre in historical surrounding, created « Nuits Estivales» based around a

programme of classical theatre and held at the Palais des Rois de Majorque. An immediate success, the festival grew quickly, turning to southern culture for its theme: Mediterranean, Catalan, Spanish, African, gypsy, Middle East, Latin America . . . Opera, ballet, flamenco and music from Julien Clerc are just some of the events on the main menu this year, along with some fabulous 'side dishes' in the fringe 'scenes ouvertes' .

For more info, visit [www.estivales.com](http://www.estivales.com)

July & August

Perpignan

## LES JEUDIS DE PERPIGNAN

Music, street theatre, jugglers, acrobats, flamenco, salsa, jazz..... and late night shopping! This is Thursday evening in Perpignan when local, national and international artistes light up the streets and the 'places' with a sparkling mixture of colour, sound and rhythm. A weekly event throughout July and August. Sit on the café trottoir with a glass of wine and be a part of it all!



Selection of events from the Palais des Congrès, Perpignan

For the full programme of events visit [www.congresperpignan.com](http://www.congresperpignan.com)

The Palais des Congrès wish you a happy summer. Keep an eye out for our new programme of events, exhibitions, concerts & conferences starting in September 2009.

## Restaurant reviews

Catalonian collection 2009

with John Fairclough

This month I have put together a résumé of some of the restaurants I've enjoyed over the past year, in both France and Spain, of differing styles and prices but which, to my mind, offer good value for money. Where possible, I'd strongly advise ringing ahead to check on opening hours etc. Do not forget to add 0034 when ringing Spain!

✓ **PERPIGNAN** is easily accessible for most, and the old town is quite the most fashionable place to eat nowadays. *La Table* at no 5, Rue de la Poissonerie (0468 285321) is sympathetically restored and offers excellent upper-medium priced fare which is imaginatively presented, with an open kitchen where you can see your meal being prepared. Closed Mon and Sat lunch.

✓ In St **GENIS DES FONTAINES**, the *Auberge des Alberes*, (0468 898838) on the main street features an ever changing "blackboard" style set menu at 16€. The "owner" calls his cuisine "Mediterranean" as opposed to "Catalan", with plenty of choice of such dishes served either in the covered veranda frontage or an open back patio in summer. Closed all day Monday



✓ The next village, **ST ANDRÉ**, is home to *La Table De Cuisine*. (0468 954206). Open every day except Weds, the owners offer imaginative menus, 3 courses for 26€, using only fresh, seasonal ingredients, so the blackboard menu changes literally every few days. A little off the beaten track, in a side street (8a Rue de Taxo) off the main road.

✓ **CERET'S** dining scene is experiencing a much needed renaissance, with the opening of several new places. The Neuf Jets square is a very pleasant spot, and one corner is the home to *La Fontaine* (0468 872347). Under enthusiastic new ownership, this tiny place spills out onto the square in sum-

mer, and the constantly changing menu features 100% home cooked fare; remarkable value at 14€. Closed on Tues.

✓ Into Spain then. Before the coming of the new fast roads, most people's first taste of Spain was picturesque frontier town of **PORT BOU**. There are several restaurants on the main promenade, Paseig de la Sardana, but I particularly like *L'Ancora*.

A very comfortable place with impeccable service, it offers several menus to suit all pockets, but fish is a very strong point. (972 390025)

✓ Moving southward, and slightly inland, **GARIGUELLA** is a wine village on the south side of the Albères. The *Moli de Vent*, (972 530096) a very well converted windmill, boasts hearty portions, and the Paella is one of the best I've had. Closed Mons. In the same village I chanced upon *Can Batlle*, just off the main through road., (972 530598). The Batlle family made us very welcome in their recently restored farm building. Unusually for Spain, there is no "menu" available here, but prices on the carta are reasonable, and the fare is imaginative and professionally presented. Tues is their closing day.

✓ Heading back to the coast, **ROSES** is awash with eateries, and you'll get a good Spanish style fish meal in most of them, but just for a change, I found the *Thai Sawadee* at 6 C.de les Olles, just off the main seafront (look for the BBVA bank), offering excellent Thai food, and gracious Thai service at a very reasonable price. (75€ for 4)



✓ The other end of Roses Bay sees **L'ESCALA**, one of my favourite seaside places in the area, with its three magnificent beaches and picturesque rocky inlets. We chose the superb **El Roser** (972 771102) overlooking the sea on Psg Lluís Albert. Unashamedly plush, and not cheap, but the family Sabadi owners are renowned in the world of Catalan gastronomy. I particularly recommend the "tasting menu"; 7 small courses of freshly prepared dishes for 40€ or 58€ with accompanying wines. Closed Mon.

✓ Just south of L'Escala is **CALA MONTGO**, a breathtakingly beautiful sea inlet with a lovely sandy beach. The adjacent campsite can make it busy in the high season. For the best "pieds dans l'eau" feeling, go for either **Port Del Rei** or **La Garota**, on the left when looking seawards. Both are open all day, everyday in season, and do a decent Spanish menu including wine for 13€.

✓ Of course, the seaside is not everyone's cup of tea, so the medieval town of **BESALU**, some 25 km inland from Figueras might suit. A bit of a magnet for coach tours, nonetheless it's worth a visit, to walk its ancient streets, walls and massive fortified bridge. There are several nice looking restaurants in the old centre, but we plumped for **Can Quei** on C Sant Vicenc (972 590085). A well modernised ancient stone village building, the 14€ menu with wine/water was superb value, with a wide choice of Catalan dishes, including some



*J'ai été serveur à une époque. Quand un mec me demandait un café fort, je lui servais une tasse d'eau chaude. Le mec gueulait et je lui disais : « Vous voyez que vous êtes bien assez énérvé comme ça ! » Coluche*

"specials" that are not usually seen on most menus. Just round the corner from the Market, (operates weekly on Tues).

✓ Nearly back in France now via the new road, **LA JONQUERA** does not have a great gastronomic reputation, with its all-you-can-eat buffets and lorry driver "caffs". However, the **Can Santos** at the south end of the old town near Tramontana Garden Centre specialises in fresh fish, and for 24 € a head you get as much wine as you want, a plate of crusty tomato bread and Catalan charcuterie to nibble on while a vast array of shellfish is prepared for you, followed by an equally huge choice of grilled and fried fish. Non fish lovers need not apply! 12 Avda Carles Bosch de La Trinxera (972 555371))

As always if YOU find somewhere good on your travels we'd like to know about it. Contact us by any of the methods mentioned in the front of this magazine, or why not write your own report in the restaurant section of our sister website [www.anglo-phone-direct.com](http://www.anglo-phone-direct.com)

**BON APPETIT / BUEN PROVECHO !!!**



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## Sandy coast



ETANG DE CANET

**CANET** has a long and gloriously sandy beach backed by numerous cafes, bars, restaurants and towering blocks of predominantly holiday apartments. At one end is the yachting harbour and an interesting aquarium (04 6880 4964), and at the other end the lagoon. Beautiful, calm waters, Canigou, magnificent in the background and, in the foreground, carefully preserved fishermen's reed huts. Bird-watching and windsurfing opportunities abound as well as walking and cycling through the surrounding nature reserve. North of the town, in the attractive old village part are the ruins of the XI century castle.



*"The Oppidum de Ruscino... original IV century BC hill fort..."*

**A**t Mas Roussillon is an Arboretum: Entrance is free, 11 hectares of trees, shrubs, bamboo, medicinal plants to wander through and a useful information centre.

**C**hâteau de l'Esparrou, in the direction St Cyprien, is a large Domaine overlooking Canet Lagoon. You may walk through the vineyards, see video on the wine-making seasons and be offered a tasting.

Check opening hours: 04 6873 3093 Tourist Office: 04 6873 6100

**I**ndland from Canet on the expressway to Perpignan turn off to Château Rousillon and you will find the archaeological site of the Oppidum de Ruscino where that original IV century BC hill fort is being painstakingly excavated. Visits can be arranged with the Tourist Office in Perpignan.

**T**here is a XI century church and an impressive XIII century look-out tower dominating a huge expanse of market gardens, Les Jardins St Jacques. The views over the entire chain of the Pyrénées and of the coast as far as Leucate are pretty impressive as well.





A signpost reminds you the Via Domitia passed this way, later known as the Chemin de Charlemagne.

ST CYPRIEN is famous for its excellent 18 hole golf course, the best in the region. In the town are two Fine Art galleries. The beaches are superb, long and sandy. There is an interesting little port and jetty backed by numerous cafes and restaurants.

*"excellent 18 hole golf course"*

Nearby Aqualand, an extremely popular watery playground between St Cyprien and Argeles, has fast food restaurants and watery fun for all. There are also numerous riding ranches in the area. Tourist Office: 04 6821 0133

At the mouth of the Tech, Le Bocal du Tech, on either side, is a large nature reserve called Mas Larrieu. Sand dunes, reeds and rushes are home to many birds and insects.



Various gulls, herons and bee-eaters abound, it is very beautiful and a discovery footpath with informative notices leads to a picnic place. Guided visits are arranged by the tourist office from April to September.

However you should be aware that it is an area much favoured by the gay community so the wild life can sometimes take a surprisingly human form.

The last (or first) of the sandy coast towns, ARGELES VILLAGE (the town itself) is slightly inland with a charming centre, a XVI century church and a market on Fridays. ARGELES SUR MER is a lively seaside town whose beautiful long and sandy beach is backed by a promenade with well kept gardens and villas. Loads of boutiques, fast food restaurants, slower food restaurants, bars and a sparkling night scene ensure that it is popular with holiday makers of all ages, particularly the young.

Hard to imagine how it must have been in 1939 at the time of the Retirada when thousands of Spanish refugees fled Franco's Spain and camped in freezing conditions on the sands. Small wonder they were so swift to volunteer to serve in the French army in the autumn of that unfortunate year.



CHATEAU XI CENTURY - CANET VILLAGE



ETIANG DE CANET

Argeles Port, built in the late 70s and early 80s is now an established yachting and pleasure boat port with all the amenities a yachtsman could require. Between **PORT ARGELES** and the Côte Vermeille is **LE RACOU**. At the beginning of the XX



SAINT CYPRIEN PORT

*“established yachting and pleasure boat port”*

century just a collection of fishermen’s huts and the odd beach hut built on the sand, it has grown into a much sought after seaside village. Indeed, in the 60’s, the inhabitants declared their village “inde-



CANET PORT









pendent”. The “free village of Le Racou” was never recognised but, when the old huts change hands, and they seldom do, it is for large amounts of euros.

This is the last stretch of sand before the rocky coast begins. The sea gets deep quickly, the swimming is easy and the whole place has a 50’s California feel about it. You half expect to see Ava Gardner washed up on the shore.

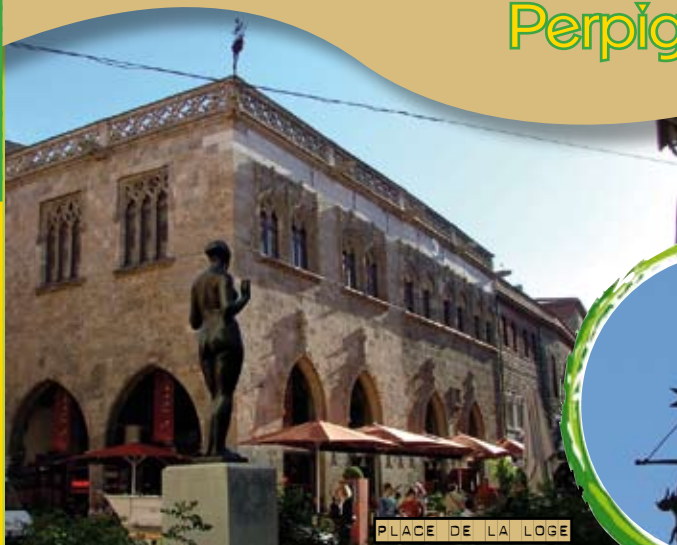
**TIME OUT AT THE BEACH**

Look out for the following coloured flags on the beach to find out swimming safety and water conditions.

-  **no flag** Plage non surveillée (no lifeguard)
-  **Baignade autorisée** (supervised and fine for swimming)
-  **Baignade autorisée avec précaution** (Supervised. Swimming allowed but may be dangerous)
-  **Baignade interdite** (no swimming) details of any danger may be posted next to lifeguard’s hut
-  **«sélectionnée pure»** (pure, clean water)
-  **Presence de méduses, pollution etc** (possible pollution, jellyfish etc)



# Perpignan



PLACE DE LA LOGE

**P**ERPIGNAN with its narrow streets of brightly coloured houses, wide selection of shops and designer boutiques, small and large squares all bursting with cafes, restaurants, bars and street entertainment, is an easy city to wander through. Gentle, laid back, a city of mixed races as befits the capital of the Pyrénées Orientales. It has absorbed Spanish fleeing Franco, French Moroccans and Algerians after Independence upheavals, a gipsy population and North Africans in search of a better future. Not to mention English and other Northern Europeans on a similar quest.

*"Gentle, laid back, a city of mixed races as befits the capital of the Pyrénées Orientales."*

**T**here is almost always something special going on. Especially in summer when, from July 16th to August 20th, the special Thursday evenings draw crowds of locals and holidaymakers alike. Street entertainers and music of all descriptions: giants, jazz, fire-eaters, flamenco, puppets and performers fill the squares and streets. People flock to enjoy free entertainment for all ages. The warm summer air and festive atmosphere combine to make an evening out in Perpignan very special.



**T**he Tourist Office in the old Palmarium on Place Arago offers a selection of interesting tours of the historic centre and is well worth visiting. Tel 04 6866 3030

**T**he centre affords fascinating glimpses of the

city's 800 years of history. Most of the city's medieval walls have gone. 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. From the roof terrace there are wonderful views over the rooftops, up to the **Palais Royal** and, in the opposite direction, to Canigou. Under the adjoining **Notre Dame Gate** is a model of the city as it was in 1686, showing the proposed Vauban Fortifications.

**T**he **Place de la Loge** is at the heart of the pedestrianised centre. Marble paved, it is 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 Mer**. Next door is the XVI century Town Hall, a classic example of Catalan architecture, and, relaxing in the courtyard, La Mediterranee, another Maillol



CATHEDRALE SAINT JEAN



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: Garrotting, hanging, or beheading, depending on the prevailing nationality of the city at the time. During the last war the Place de la Loge cafes were where the "Passeurs" could be met to lead refugees over the border into Spain.

*"the XIV century Castillet, symbol of the city"*

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 houses some spectacular religious art, an impressive XIV 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 as it houses some very secular electricity

equipment. A pity as it also houses the tomb of Sanch I.

On the other side of the cathedral lies the Campo Santo, the only cloister cemetery in France. A grand square, the graceful arcades of which contained the tombs owned by wealthy burghers in the Middle Ages, their dead interred vertically. It is now used for open-air concerts and lectures.



The other side of the Notre Dame Gate, just outside the city walls, on Boulevard Wilson, is called, naturally enough, Le Castillet. Recently restored, it competes with the Mega-Castillet, a modern 10 screen monster on the outskirts of Perpignan, near Cabestany. Original version films are shown at the Rive Gauche, on the Quai Vauban.

Back through the city walls, passing the medieval houses of the Rue des Marchands, their half-timbered first stories supported on pillars, a maze of narrow streets open onto delightful squares. The magnificent Place de la Republique has had a hideous multi-story car-park removed from its



# Perpignan



centre and placed underground and is now a delightful place 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 in 1813, 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 except the plane trees no longer offer shade and one of the original fountains is now in front of the cathedral, the other is in **Place Bardou Job**. Not far away is the Place

## *“Hyacinthe Rigaud, Court Painter to Louis XIV”*

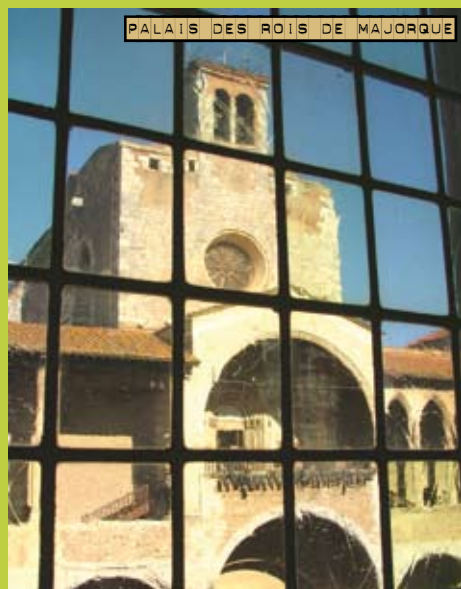
Rigaud with jazz café, old labour exchange and statue of Hyacinthe Rigaud, Court Painter to Louis XIV. (His work can be seen in the Museum that bears his name). Down Rue de la Fusterie is Place Pouilus (the hairy ones), named after the soldiers returning from the First World War, more restaurants and cafes and a fish market. Note the fish design pavement...

The **Palais des Rois de Majorque** is a must-see if only for the fine view from the impressive red brick ramparts across the city roofs to Canigou, to Queribus and the plain in between. 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. In summer free concerts can often be enjoyed within its walls.

At the top of the town is the **Church of St Jacques**. It is huge. It is the starting point for the Good Friday Procession of the Sanch.

In the nearby **Place Cassanyes** the influence of North Africa is omnipresent. Great bunches of coriander and mint, Moroccan bread and halal meat are sold in the daily market, and Arabic is the lingua franca. On Sundays the market spills into all the neighbouring streets. As well as the Arab Market in Place Cassanyes there is a flea market every Sunday near the Palais des Expositions and a Bric a Brac market each







PLACE BARDOU JOB

Saturday under the Plane Trees in front of the Palais de Congress.

Salvador Dali once claimed that Perpignan Railway Station was the "Centre of the Universe, because its waiting room is where he got all his best ideas." From it leads a palm-lined avenue ending in the **Place Catalogne** and Les Dames de France, a Belle Epoque Department store, well restored and now housing the FNAC.

**Chapelle Ste Dominique**, a beautiful Gothic building of the XIII and XIV centuries is now used for exhibitions such as VISA. The nearby and somewhat rambling **Couvent des Minimes** is also a popular venue for concerts and exhibitions.

Two splashes of green line a couple of sides of the old city: The river **La Basse** has been canalised and has carefully tended gardens on either side. The **Promenade des Platanes** along the Boulevard Jean Bourrat and Avenue Wilson encloses the Palais des Congres (main Tourist Office) and contains the last of the great plane trees planted in 1728.

Perpignan's fountains alone would make an interesting tour: The frogs in the **Place des Orfevres**, the old hospital fountain now in front of

the Cathedral, the lizard in the **Place de la Revolution Francaise**. Three sirens hold up a vast marble bowl in the **Place Bardou Job**, (originally in front of the Jesuit Convent that became the theatre in the place de la Republique), lines of spouting water lead to Francois Arago's statue in **Place Arago** and more spouts spout in front of Les Dames de France.

*"the last of the great plane trees planted in 1728."*

**Casa Xanxo**, the house of Art and History, is a shining example of the XVI century wealth of the Perpignan merchants. Other Museums include the **Casa Parail** in the Castillet, the **Museum of Beaux Arts Hyacinthe Rigaud** containing a collection of art from the XIII century to the present day. Picasso once lodged there and his painting of his hostess hangs in his old room. . . . The **Museum of Natural History** is in Rue Emile Zola as are many "Maisons Particular" well worth visiting with a guide from the Tourist Office.

LE CASTILLET



# Test your French

## ✓ Language tip

C'est terrible -> That's brilliant !!

Ce n'est pas terrible -> It's not great !

### CAT AND TONGUES

TU AS PERDU TA LANGUE? = THE  
CAT GOT YOUR TONGUE?

BUT

JE DONNE MA LANGUE AU CHAT =  
I GIVE UP (CAN'T ANSWER)

## 2 Test your idiomatic French

1. 'J'ai les crocs' (pron: crow) means

- a) I have tooth ache
- b) I'm peckish
- c) My skin has turned green and scaly

2. 'J'ai perdu la boule' means I have

- a) lost my balls
- b) lost my mind
- c) lost the game of petanque

3. Il est tombé dans les pommes means

- a) he has drunk too much cider
- b) he has fallen from a tree
- c) he has fainted

4. 'On m'a posé un lapin' means

- a) One rabbit has escaped
- b) I have as scared as a rabbit
- c) I have been stood up

5. Elle n'est pas dans son assiette means

- a) she's not well
- b) She's disappeared
- c) she has no plate

## B pour bateau! Match up these words, all beginning with B, with their definitions.

- |   |  |    |   |              |
|---|--|----|---|--------------|
| 1 | les lèvres d'un chien                            | 1  | a | balance      |
|   | objet qu'on ne sait pas nommer                   | 2  | b | barbe        |
|   | pousser assez fort                               | 3  | c | bague        |
|   | petit chariot pour transporter des choses        | 4  | d | bidule (fam) |
|   | querelle violente.                               | 5  | e | bavard       |
|   | le bruit de beaucoup de voix.                    | 6  | f | brouhaha     |
|   | appareil pour peser des objets ou des personnes. | 7  | g | babines      |
|   | poils qui poussent sur le menton.                | 8  | h | brouette     |
|   | qui parle beaucoup                               | 9  | i | bagarre      |
|   | bijou qu'on porte au doigt                       | 10 | j | bousculer    |

## ✓ Language tip

Have you noticed that, whilst most adjectives come AFTER the noun they are describing (un livre intéressant), there is a small group which comes BEFORE the noun (la petite fille)

These tend to be adjectives describing : Beauty, Age, Good and bad, Size  
Here are some of the most common.

joli - pretty, beau - handsome, jeune - young, vieux - old, nouvelle - new, bon - good, mauvais - bad, petit - small, grand - big, gentil - kind, long - long, gros - fat  
eg une mauvaise idée, un gros garçon

## 3 Match up these idiomatic sayings

- |                                   |    |   |                                       |
|-----------------------------------|----|---|---------------------------------------|
| Notre projet est tombe dans l'eau | 1  | a | Heads or tails?                       |
| Je deviens dingue                 | 2  | b | What are you trying to suggest?       |
| Ca me dit quelque chose           | 3  | c | It's nothing to do with me            |
| Plein à craquer.                  | 4  | d | Tell him from me...                   |
| Il cache bien son jeu             | 5  | e | I'm going bananas                     |
| Dites-lui de ma part....          | 6  | f | That rings a bell                     |
| Où voulez-vous en venir ?         | 7  | g | Bursting at the seams                 |
| Sans blague !                     | 8  | h | Our plans have fallen through         |
| Pile ou face ?                    | 9  | i | No kidding!                           |
| Je n'y suis pour rien             | 10 | j | He keeps his cards close to his chest |

Répetez cinq fois ! **Virelangue**

Sa sœur choisit ces saucisses chères!  
Her/his sister chooses these expensive  
sausages

✓ A little bit of slang...

poireauter – -pwa-rot- ay)  
to wait, hang about

*Il m'a fait poireauter une heure*

Like any language,  
French has quite a bit  
of 'baby talk' Try some  
of the following if you  
want to talk to a small  
child (or your partner!!)

le cucu – bottom  
un bibi – baby's bottle  
un doudou – favourite teddy  
un bobo - a wound, a poorly bit  
faire caca – to have a poo  
faire pipi – to have a wee  
le dada horsey, gee-gee  
faire dodo - go to sleep  
tonton/tata – uncle/auntie  
le toutou - doggy  
le zizi - willy !

## Choose the correct definition

4

### 1. Fumier

- a) ashtray
- b) smoker
- c) manure

### 2. Point d'interrogation

- a) police interrogation office
- b) question mark
- c) information centre

### 3. Limace

- a) lime
- b) lemon
- c) slug

### 4. Douleur

- a) dollar
- b) twice
- c) pain

## Match up the acronyms

5

- |        |                               |
|--------|-------------------------------|
| SMIC ❶ | ❷ tax not included            |
| TIP ❷  | ❸ income support for over 25s |
| EDF ❸  | ❹ French rail                 |
| SNCF ❹ | ❺ payment slip                |
| RER ❺  | ❻ Parisian train system       |
| RIB ❻  | ❼ genetically modified food   |
| OGM ❼  | ❽ mountain bike               |
| TGV ❽  | ❾ homeless person             |
| SAMU ❾ | ❿ minimum wage                |
| SDF ❿  | ⓫ mountain bike               |
| HT ⓫   | ⓬ bank account details        |
| RMI ⓬  | ⓭ French electricity company  |
| VTT ⓭  | ⓮ emergency medical service   |

...and here they are in full  
Salaire Minimum Interprofessionnel de Croissance.  
Titre Interbancaire de Paiement  
Électricité de France  
Société Nationale des Chemins de fer Français  
Réseau Express Régional  
Relevé d'Identité Bancaire  
Organisme Génétiquement Modifié  
Secours d'Aide Médicale d'Urgence  
Sans Domicile Fixe  
Hors taxe  
Revenu minimum d'insertion  
Vélo tout terrain

✓ Language tip

la semaine dernière - last week

la dernière semaine - the final week

## Match up these French expressions with their English equivalent

6

- |                         |                            |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| la veille au soir ❶     | ❶ Everything has its price |
| Tant mieux ❷            | ❷ who asked you?!          |
| Tout se paie ❸          | ❸ What's new?              |
| Trouver l'oiseau rare ❹ | ❹ to find Mr. Right        |
| On ne t'a pas sonné! ❺  | ❺ the previous evening     |
| Quoi de neuf? ❻         | ❻ All the better           |

## ANSWERS TO 'TEST YOUR FRENCH!' PO Life n°22

- 1 1d 2i 3b 4g 5h 6j e7 8a 9c 10f
- 2 1b 2c 3c 4a 5c
- 3 1d 2h 3b 4j 5a 6i e7 8g 9f 10c
- 4 1i 2c 3a 4e 5j 6b 7f 8d 9h 10g

## Go for it NATHALIE !

Auto-entrepreneur



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Nathalie Cousserans is a great example of the auto-entrepreneur.

Tri lingual, (French, English, Spanish) with a **degree in inter-**

**national affairs**, she nevertheless found herself amongst thousands of other job hunters when she recently returned to France from Canada, despite ten year's experience in her field. She did not surrender.

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anything really that you need relating to the three languages.

She will **create** and **translate** your CV, letters, emails, present your reports, organise and translate your brochures, flyers, internet sites, newsletters ... She will also act as '**go between**' for non French speakers and their builder, gardener, service provider, follow up your complaints ...

It is always good to meet people who are **highly motivated**, despite a present gloomy economic climate. Go for it Nathalie!

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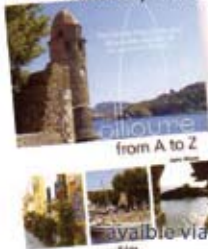
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Répétez cinq fois ! **Tongue twister**

Three thick fat thieves fight  
Trois gros voleurs bêtes se battent

✓ **Good or Well?**

Good décrit une personne ou une chose

He is a good boy

Well décrit COMMENT on fait quelque chose

He speaks French very well

## Confusing words

1

1 Do they still \_\_\_\_\_ your passport at the Spanish border?

A check

B control

2. I haven't been to Paris \_\_\_\_\_ over five years.

A since

B for

3. I would like to get the \_\_\_\_\_ for Spanish omelette

A receipt

B recipe

4. I usually finish work \_\_\_\_\_ 6pm

A by

B until

5. It is difficult to choose \_\_\_\_\_ the two

A amongst

B between

6. You must \_\_\_\_\_ him to buy me a present

A remember

B remind

7. He gets \_\_\_\_\_ very easily.

A boring

B bored

## Match up these idiomatic sayings

2

- |                                   |    |   |                                  |
|-----------------------------------|----|---|----------------------------------|
| you are splitting hairs           | 1  | a | Il est en colère                 |
| I had a narrow escape             | 2  | b | Quel toupet !                    |
| put a cork in it!                 | 3  | c | écrivez moi                      |
| we must get to the bottom of this | 4  | d | ça va, ça vient                  |
| He is hopping mad                 | 5  | e | vous cherchez la petite bête     |
| It's all Greek to me              | 6  | f | Tais-toi!                        |
| What a cheeky monkey!             | 7  | g | J'y perds mon latin              |
| I'm trying to kick the habit      | 8  | h | il faut aller au fond des choses |
| Drop me a line                    | 9  | i | Je l'ai échappé belle            |
| Easy come, easy go                | 10 | j | J'essaie de me décrocher         |

✓ **Silly joke!**

What do you call a deer with no eyes?

No idea (think hard – this is l'humour anglais!!)

## C is for cat! Trouvez les définitions de ces mots suivants, qui commencent tous avec C

3

- |  |    |   |          |
|--|----|---|----------|
| young cow  | 1  | a | cavity   |
| floor covering made of thick fabric              | 2  | b | coin     |
| a stick of wax that can burn                     | 3  | c | computer |
| piece of metal money                             | 4  | d | cherry   |
| used to untangle hair                            | 5  | e | calf     |
| machine which stores large amounts of data.      | 6  | f | cork     |
| sweet, red fruit.                                | 7  | g | chin     |
| part of the face below the mouth.                | 8  | h | carpet   |
| rotten spot in a tooth                           | 9  | i | comb     |
| made from tree bark and used as a bottle stopper | 10 | j | candle   |

✓ **Expressions with 'put'**

put something away - ranger

put somebody away – mettre quelqu'un en prison

Put somebody up – héberger quelqu'un

Put somebody down – rabaisser quelqu'un

## RÉPONSES D'AMÉLIOREZ VOTRE ANGLAIS PO Life N° 22

- 1 1f 2j 3e 4a 5i 6c 7d 8g 9b 10h  
 2 1b 2f 3d 4e 5c 6g 7a  
 3 1j 2d 3f 4n 5h 6m 7o 8i 9a 10e 11c 12k 13b 14g 15l

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THUIR-LLUPIA

## PHLÉBOTOMES



From March to October, don't forget to protect your dog against the 'Phlebotomus' or 'sandfly' whose 'bite' can be fatal to dogs. This unpleasant little beastie can carry and transmit leishmaniasis, (pronounced leash man eye a sis). Any dog can catch this disease although there is some evidence to indicate that larger dogs are more susceptible. Symptoms can be quite vague initially, and the disease can really only be detected by a blood test. Some vets recommend a once or twice yearly blood test to ensure that your dog is not infected. Eventual symptoms may include loss of hair around the eyes and nose, unusually fast nail growth, weight loss despite continued good appetite, unexplained scabs on the body, dandruff, bald patches on the skin, conjunctivitis... Use Scalibor collars with deltamethrin from March to November. Ordinary flea/tick collars do not provide protection. Use anti-repellent soap to bath dog from May to Nov. Don't walk your dog in rural or wooded areas after twilight. Keep well informed about the disease in order to give your dog the best protection you can.

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

## A PAIN IN THE GRASS

During the months of May and June, foxtail barley and similar species of grass growing in the PO can be very harmful to your pet (and to your wallet if you have to visit the vet). The seeds, similar to tiny spears, dry out and detach themselves from the plant.

If your dog goes gambolling in the grass, the seeds can penetrate various orifices, particularly ears, nose and mouth, becoming embedded in the eardrum, lodged in the nasal passageway...

If your dog sneezes repeatedly and violently, paws at his eye, shakes his head violently from side to side, rubs his head on the ground, this could be due to grass seed. Don't panic! This is not an every day occurrence but it is worth being aware. A visit to the vet is recommended if these symptoms continue.

## TREATING A JELLYFISH STING



If you are stung by a 'méduse' don't panic ! The sting of our wibbly, wobbly friends is apparently very painful, but not mortal!

Do not scrub or wash with fresh water which will aggravate the stinging cells. Rinse it immediately in (jellyfish free) seawater. Any visible tentacles remaining in your skin should be taken out with tweezers or similar - the pain can be eased by a vinegar rinse or urine (yes, really, peeing on it neutralises the toxins so make sure you take a friend with you to the beach!) After all tentacle sections have gone, pain can be treated with a cold pack and/or a local anaesthetic such as a sunburn lotion or insect bite treatment that lists '...ocaine' as an ingredient. If there is continued swelling, or itchiness, apply a light steroid cream e.g. Hydrocortisone eczema cream. If muscle spasms or pain persist, see a doctor. After this, go and find the jellyfish responsible and make it into soup!

## RADARS

### Speed traps in the Pyrénées-Orientales

Whilst some may say the EIGHTEEN speed traps in one small department, with more to follow, plus another SIX mobile speed traps belonging to the gendarmerie and the CRS, is going over the top, there is evidence nationally that the programme of 'radars' or speed traps popping up throughout France is already proving its effectiveness and average driving speeds are dropping.

However, speed related deaths on the roads continue DESPITE the 'radars'.

The préfecture of Perpignan explains that the



growing number of radars

in the PO is due to the department being a touristic and border region, with 10,000 - 15,000 heavy goods vehicles passing through per day and thousands of visiting tourists. The new form of radar is so precise that more than one km out will still result in a fine.

*WATCH OUT, WATCH OUT, THERE'S A RADAR ABOUT!*

*Just in case you thought that your foreign registered car was immune to the many speed traps around France.....more European police forces are entering into agreement to share their car registration database, meaning you'll soon be receiving tickets through the post for speed infractions and other offences committed in foreign countries..... if you haven't already!*

- A9 - LES CLUSES - direction south -> north - Limit: 110 km/h
- D83 - LE BARCARES - direction Perpignan -> Leucate - Limit: 110 km/h
- D900 PERPIGNAN - direction Narbonne -> Perpignan - Limit: 110 km/h
- D900 PIA - direction Narbonne -> Perpignan Limit: - 110 km/h
- D900 - VILLEMOLAQUE - direction Le Boulou -> Perpignan Limit: 90 km/h
- D914 COLLIOURE - direction Perpignan -> Cerbère - Limit: 90 km/h
- D914 PERPIGNAN - direction Perpignan -> Argelès sur Mer - Limit: 110 km/h
- PERPIGNAN (Boulevard Felix Mercader) - direction Bd Mercader -> Bd des Pyrénées - Limit: 50km/h
- D115 - SAINT-JEAN-PLA-DE-CORTS - direction Le Boulou -> Céret - Limit: 90 km/h
- D612a - TOULOUGES - direction Thuir -> Toulouges - Limit: 90 km/h
- D617 - CANET-EN-ROUSSILLON - direction Perpignan -> Canet-en-Roussillon - Limit: 110 km/h
- D618 - SAINT-GENIS-DES-FONTAINES - direction Argeles -> Le Boulou - Limit: 90 km/h
- D81a - SAINT-CYPRIEN - direction Canet-en-Roussillon -> Saint-Cyprien - Limit: 50 km/h
- D900 - PERPIGNAN - direction Perpignan -> Le Boulou - Limit: 90 km/h)]
- D914 - ELNE - direction Argelès-sur-Mer -> Perpignan - Limit: 110 km/h
- N116 - LE SOLER - direction Prades -> Perpignan - Limit: 110 km/h
- N116 - RODES - direction Prades -> Perpignan - Limit: 90 km/h
- D618 - SAINT GENIS - direction Argelès -> Le Boulou - Limit: 90 km/h

There is a specific phone number (French only) to ring, if you have any questions resulting from being 'flashed' Tel: 08 11 10 20

30 To check out speed traps throughout France, visit [www.securiteroutiere.gouv.fr](http://www.securiteroutiere.gouv.fr)



## Drink drive limit



The drink drive limit in France is 0.50g per litre of blood (as opposed to 0.80g/l in the UK) allowing no more than two small glasses of

wine for an average person.

Most large festivals will have a stall offering free Alco tests.

## Visibility VEST

It is obligatory for all vehicles travelling in France to carry a fluorescent visibility vest in addition to the triangle already required by law. Failure to do so will result in a fine.

NB: TWO warning triangles and a fluorescent visibility vest per person required in Spain



## SPEED LIMIT REMINDER

### Motorway

130 km/h (80mph)  
110 (68mph) when wet

### Open Road

90 km/h (55mph)  
80 (50mph) when wet

### Dual Carriageway

110 (68mph)  
100 (62mph) when wet

### Built up areas

50 km/h (31mph)

Believe it or not, the noun, pimp (meaning someone who lives off the earnings of a prostitute) comes from the Medieval French pimper "to dress elegantly", although these days the stereotypical pimp is hardly known for his attention to style!

## You say



### AUCHAN ROUNDABOUT

"Don't use your indicators, they regard it as a sign of weakness"... - "Avoid going at midday: hungry people are aggressive - especially men!" "Not as much fun as Chiswick roundabout or the Arc De Triomphe roundabout but still great fun." "Eyes shut. As a passenger that is how I cope with the ordeal." "It never ceases to give you that feeling of achievement when you get round unscathed". "There's a roundabout near Auchan? - do the French know?"

### PAIN IN SPAIN

"If you visit Barcelona, watch out for gangs on scooters who slash visitor's car tyres whilst they are queuing at traffic lights, wait for the tyre to go flat, and steal from the car whilst the driver is trying to change the tyres." "As we were walking in Barcelona, a thief cut through the straps of my handbag with large scissors" "Never stop on Spanish rest areas where you are the only vehicle. Always use the Petrol Stations." "Friends stopped for a drink at a motorway services near Girona. When they set off again, they discovered they had a puncture. A helpful chap stopped and helped them change the wheel. He also helped himself to their money, credit cards and passports."

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## DOMAINE DE LA PERDRIX

Outside the Domaine de la Perdrix in Trouillas is parked a large white van across the front of which PERDRIX EXPRESS is written. And when you meet Andre and Virginie Gil and taste their wines you have the feeling that Domaine de la Perdrix is indeed going very far and very fast.

They have all but outgrown the 1830 wine cellar built from vineyard stones and hidden in the depths of old Trouillas and are building a new air conditioned one on the road from Trouillas to Mas Sabole. They both talk with enthusiasm of the project and will bring to it the same energy that has seen the rebirth of the domaine they took over in 1997. Giving up life as Parisian restaurateurs they are determined to make quality wine at a reasonable price whilst respecting the environment and considerable legislative restrictions. Quite a challenge. Andre has returned to his roots. In most of the villages of the Aspres there is a Rue Joseph Sebastian Pons. A famous poet and a literary giant on the Roussillon scene in the first part of the XX century he was born in Ille sur Têt in 1886. He is Andre's Great Grandfather. He had one daughter who married Doctor Susplugas, an artist and lover of nature: Andre's Grandfather. It is his drawing of a partridge that has given the Domaine its name and that appears on many of the labels.



*There are no fewer than fifteen different wines made from the many small and varied parcels of vines that the "Perdrix" represents. It takes all the Gil's enthusiasm, energy and skill to balance the combination of soil, grape variety, weather condition, and production techniques and end up with a selection to please every discerning palate.*

### PARTICULARLY RECOMMENDED

#### Côtes Catalanes Rosé

*Light and delicious fruity wine for easy summer drinking. 4.70€*

#### Cuvée Joseph Sebastian Pons 2006

*Won a star in the Guide Hachette 2009. Supple and rich wine matured for a year in oak and made from a classic mixture of Syrah, Grenache Noir and Carignan grapes. Potential to mature for a further five years but tempting to drink now. 9.80€*

#### Rivesaltes Ambre 2005

*Naturally sweet, rich golden wine of which they are justly proud. Perfect dessert wine but can be appreciated equally well with blue cheese or foie gras. 12€*

*If you see any Perdrix wines on a restaurant list or in a wine shop you can be confident of excellent quality for the price.*

*Ring 04 6853 1274 before visiting Caves of the Domaine de la Perdrix at 7 rue des Platanes, 66300 Trouillas*

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## TGV

Perpignan - Barcelona in 50 mins...  
or did they say 50 years?

When the symbolic 'first rail' was placed in 2005, signalling the sealing of the contract to take the TGV (train à grande vitesse) from Perpignan to Barcelona, there was great excitement in the region.

- ✓ More industry, more jobs, a great boost to economic and tourist development, and with speeds of up to 186mph, it looked like it could very soon be apéro hour with tapas in Barcelona and back to the P-0 in time for Coronation Street!
- ✓ Massive 'tunneliers' aptly named the 'Tramontana' and

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the 'Mistral' were brought in to pierce the two 'tubes' of the 8.2 kilometre tunnel through the Albères mountains. On the French side of the Alberes tunnel alone, 1.4 million square metres of earth were moved and more than 200 tons of explosives used to break through 800,000 square metres of rock.

✓ The line started to take shape quickly. Everything was looking good and the provisional date for the first train

from Perpignan to enter the station at Barcelona was to be 17th February, 2009.

✓ Suddenly, everybody was talking of delays. The completion of the 'LGV' (ligne à grande vitesse) was to be postponed – by three to five years! At present, we are looking at 2013 – et encore!

✓ These problems arose due to a change of plan by the Spanish. They decided to take the track UNDER Barcelona via a tunnel, rather than following the initial plan of taking it OVER ground around the western side of the town, as the initial option was weakening the foundations of buildings such as Gaudí's Sagrada Familia. The construction of a tunnel was believed to be safer, despite requiring a further three years to complete.

✓ However, the news is not all bad. It seems that the section of the TGV line between Perpignan and Figueras WILL soon be ready for use, and the first passengers are expected to go choo choo-ing along these 44.4 km of track in the spring of 2010.

✓ Between 2010 and 2012 passengers will take the TGV to Figueras (20 minutes) and cross a platform for a conventional train to Barcelona (1½ hrs), a change made necessary for the time being because Spanish conventional tracks have a wider gauge (1668-m) than the standard European ones (1435-m).

✓ At a cost of 1,096 milliard (one thousand million) euros, for the Perpignan – Figueras stretch, we will await the publishing of the prices of the first tickets with bated breath! Bon voyage!

## RAFTING AND OTHER ADVENTUROUS ACTIVITIES

What could be more exciting on a summer's day than hurtling down a rushing river on a raft?

Possibly Hotdogging, two people in an inflatable canoe as opposed to eight on a raft?

All roads leading to "Roc Aqua" are a delight to drive. Whether the D117 from Estagel towards Quillan or from Prades to Mosset and over the Col de Jau to Axat, either way the countryside through which you pass is dramatic and grand. Arriving at the roundabout of the Bears, at the junction of the D117 and D118, continue towards Quillan. Almost immediately on your left is a restaurant. Take the next left and you will see Roc Aqua. There you will be kitted out in wet suits, life jackets and



helmets till you resemble a team of Buzz Lightyears. You will be driven to a launch pad, given instructions and then you're off: 8 to a raft, 2 to a hotdog. 1 to a hydrospeed.

All the guides have state diplomas, they speak English, they are experienced, professional and fun. During your hour or so's white water experience they will make sure you are safe and enjoying every moment.

Swish through rapids, catch your breath in cool pools, race through narrow gorges, under low growing trees; swirl through Axat, round the Bear's roundabout and finally, after St Martin de Lys, swim to shore. Your exhilarating, exciting whirling watery ride down the Aude is over.

Same Enterprise, different river: At Têt Adventure in Marquixanes just off the N116 between Ille sur Têt and Prades, canyoning is quite a bold way to explore parts of the P-O lesser mortals never see. From the Discovery Version (jumps up to 6 metres, short natural slides and abseiling up to 10 metres) to the Canyon Sport Version (jumping and sliding up to 10 metres, and abseiling up to 40 metres, some through waterfalls), all you need is to be over 8 years old, know how to swim and be in good physical condition (these are also requirements for rafting). Wear swimwear and a pair of tennis shoes.



Did you know that there is no word for shallow in French? 'Peu profond' is the nearest equivalent (not very deep) so shallow water would translate as 'eau peu profonde'

You will get wet. All other kit is provided.

Another idea, slightly gentler, is Tubbing down the river on a specially designed inflatable tyre. Great fun. But Têt Adventure is set in a wooded adventure playground by the river Têt. Why not attack any of the increasingly difficult runs high up in the trees? A series of nets, ropes, zip wires and other obstacles challenge your skill and courage. Once again all is well supervised, well equipped and, for the non participants, a café offering drinks and snacks is the place from which to watch your loved ones swinging through the branches or bobbing down the stream.

All the guides and instructors are passionate about their work and the beautiful environment in which they operate. Their enthusiasm is infectious. Ring 0624038060 or 0468057212 and catch some! (Please mention P O Life)

Tarif varies from 12 euros for an hour's Tubbing to 75 euros for 6 hours Rafting.

Rafting, Hydrospeed, Hotdogging and Canyoning are only available in August, Têt Adventure is open till the end of September.



## DISCOVER THE PYRÉNÉES WITHOUT FRONTIERS ON HORSEBACK WITH YVES REGNE AND CLAIRE BEAUDOIN

Up in the High Pyrénées three wolves have made their home. When wolf packs get too large, 20%



or so of their members leave to seek fresh pastures. These three have wandered over from the Italian Alps. No danger to humans, their main prey is the mouflon. Gentle looking creatures with dramatic curling horns, mouflon are plentiful here and compete with the local cattle for grazing. Coming originally from wolf free Corsica, they have no inbred sense of their danger... I learned of this from Yves Regnes, a qualified mountain guide with knowledge of fauna and flora of the Pyrénées that is positively encyclopaedic. He leads groups of up to six riders from Les Chevaux de la Tramontane Equestrian Centre in La Llagone up as high as it is possible to go into the high Pyrénées. His "Randonnee Bivouac" weeks allow up to six riders to appreciate the beauty and grandeur of the surroundings in all their glory far from any trace of human civilisation. Two packhorses carry the camping equipment and stores. The riders' personal possessions, stored in saddlebags attached to the comfortable "Western" saddles, allow the horses to trot and gallop at will. (Basic riding skills are necessary although complete beginners can be catered for). Each night a communal Tepee is erected in the centre of the circle of tents, the communal meal cooked by the participants while Yves takes care of the horses. His enthusiasm for the wild beauty of the land he knows so well, boundless, his beautiful half bred Arab horses ideally suited to the task.

Yves and his partner, Claire Beaudouin, offer a

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selection of "Randonees" ranging from 2 – 3 hours or 2 – 3 days or considerably longer journeys through the Pyrénées from the Atlantic to the Mediterranean. Accommodation is in tents, gites or mountain refuges, some tours use old transhumance routes, passing through summer grazing grounds, others take in the natural hot springs with which the region is blessed. The 2 - 4 hour circuits all around La Llagone take in very varied countryside: Mountains, lakes, forests, valleys allow Claire to put together differing programmes on a daily basis depending on the weather and riding skills of the groups. [www.chevauxdelatramontane.com](http://www.chevauxdelatramontane.com) or ring 04 6804 17 98 for details and prices.



## Downhill MOUNTAIN biking...

For a completely different summer sport in the mountains go to the Chalet du Ski in Les Angles and hire a downhill only mountain bike! The hire prices start at 18 euros a day, and fun for anyone aged seven onwards is guaranteed. The telecabine starts running on June 20th taking riders to the top of the slopes. The descent by either the long and gentle green run or the slightly steeper blue run is exhilarating to say the least. The top of the telecabine is the perfect place for a picnic or to eat in the pine log chalet restaurant. Those not hurtling down the slopes on bikes can wander in the high pastures, enjoy the mountain flowers and breathe the fresh pine scented air.



## Cops PYRENEAN Ride for LIVES

*Lincolnshire Integrated*

*On 14th June 2009 six Lincolnshire Police officers will embark on the ultimate cycling challenge the 'Raid Pyrénées'. The Raid is a journey of some 450 miles (750km) from Hendaye on the Atlantic coast border with Spain across the back bone of the French Pyrénées Mountains to Cerbère on the Mediterranean. The route tackles 18 mountains, many of which feature prominently in the Tour de France, with a total ascent of 11,000m.*

*The aim is to complete the challenge within 100 hours.*

*LIVES First Responders are volunteers who give up their time to respond to emergencies in their local community. When you dial 999, not only is an ambulance mobilised, but also the LIVES volunteers on call in your area will receive notification that you need their help. LIVES aim to be at your side within 5 to 6 minutes of you making that call. Those few extra minutes are vital to the patient.*

*Heart attack at the shops ... injury at work ... chest pains at home ... .. asthma attack in the office ... road traffic collision... You won't realise how important LIVES are until the day you or your family need them!*

*To make a donation, visit [www.lives-responders.co.uk/CPRSteveB.htm](http://www.lives-responders.co.uk/CPRSteveB.htm) or come and cheer them on during the ride and donate in person when they arrive in Cerbère around lunchtime on the 20th June.*

Deux saucisses dans une poêle  
 L'une dit à l'autre « Il fait chaud ici !  
 L'autre répond « Argghh ! Une saucisse qui parle !

## MOTHER NATURE NEEDS YOUR HELP!

Argelès

with Ellen Hall

A free outdoor photography exhibit ( from 3 April to 27 September) has been installed on the promenade of Argeles Plage. Large panels with stunning images emphasising the beauty of the animal world are displayed back-to-back with grim information about what we have done to the planet . All texts are in French and English.

The 92 photographs and 64 texts are the creation of GoodPlanet, an association founded by photographer and passionate ecologist, Yann Arthus-Bertrand of "Earth from Above" fame. The aim of the project is to raise awareness that "each one of us is personally responsible for the future of the planet".

### THE IMAGES ARE EYE-CATCHING:

- 1. Most Flamboyant:** Pygmy Seahorse, a submarine version of "Priscilla, Queen of the Desert" in its camouflage of scarlet boa-like coral.
- 2. Most scary:** The Dust Mite. As many as 2 million of these green monsters, luckily invisible to the naked eye, may be lurking in your mattress.
- 3. Most elusive:** See if you can spot the flying white monkeys of Madagascar!

### THE SCARY NEWS IS PRESENTED IN TERMS OF STATISTICS:

1. France is the **largest European consumer** of chemical fertilisers, pesticides, herbicides, fungicides and insecticides.
2. In France **2/3 of river and ground water** are polluted.
3. Only **5%** of the planet's fresh water can be used by humans.

Luckily, each horrifying fact is followed by an explanation of the problem and, printed in hopeful green, projects all over the world that are working toward solutions. For example: In France 22 million tons of wood are saved every year through recycling paper and cardboard. In Japan 3/4 of industries and more than 1/3 of households reuse their wastewater. Rainwater from roofs is collected and recycled.



Go and take your children and your grandchildren, too! Preferably on foot or rollerblades or bike! Otherwise, we may all end up like the grim Fog-Basking Beetle of Namibia, alone in an expanse of desert dunes collecting drops of early morning dew for survival.

For the full program & informations:  
[www.enfants-de-la-mer.fr](http://www.enfants-de-la-mer.fr)





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Généralement, les gens qui savent peu parlent beaucoup, et les gens qui savent beaucoup parlent peu.

Generally speaking, the people who know little speak a lot and the people who know a lot speak little. **Rousseau**

## CENTRE D'ART CONTEMPORAIN

**Dali vision revived**

with Michael Brady

**Perpignan**

In 1963, painter Salvador Dali had a vision that led him to claim that the Perpignan railway station was the centre of the world

Aside from Centre Du Monde, his words quoted on the platform pavement, little in or around the station suggested the world of art.

Forty years on, Perpignan art collector Vincent Madramany changed that. He bought a former vegetable wholesale depot just five minutes walk north of the station and renovated it to Centre d'Art Contemporain, which opened in June 2004. Some 1400 square metres of floor space, chalk white masonry walls and huge wooden beams bespeak the former function, while contemporary metal and glass accoutrements signal that this is transformed space. In addition to its exhibitions, the Centre offers art awareness events, concerts and other entertainment. Fittingly, its website address

includes [centredumonde.com](http://centredumonde.com).

Centre d'Art Contemporain, 3 av. de Grande Bretagne, 66000 Perpignan, Tel: 04 68341435, [www.acentmetresducentredumonde.com](http://www.acentmetresducentredumonde.com), open 3 to 7 p.m.



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