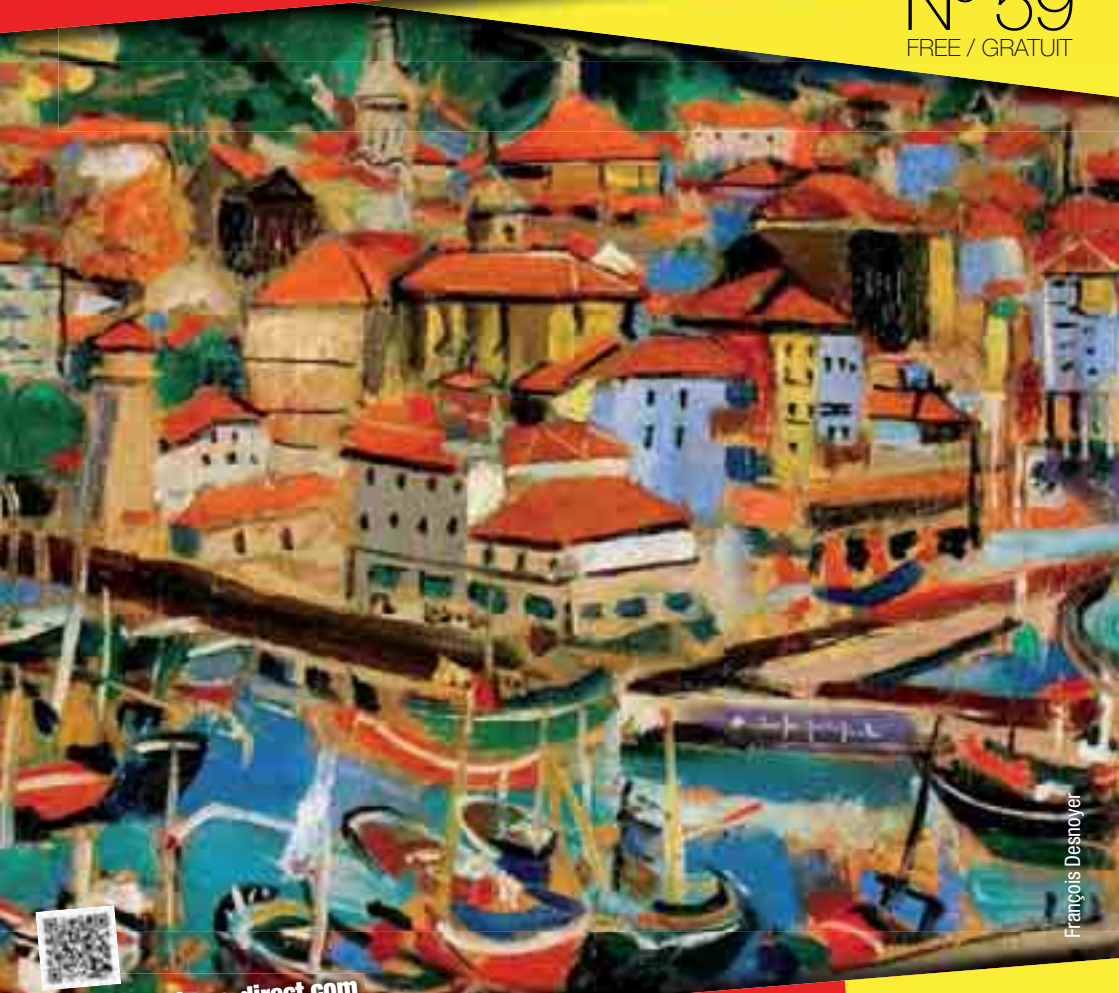


spring 2018

P-O Life

Life in the Pyrénées-Orientales

N° 59
FREE / GRATUIT



François Desnoyer



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P-O LIFE
Airport News

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this Spring

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EDITO:-)

Hola companys

I am sitting on a bench under a blue sky, surrounded by splodges of emerald green and shots of poppy red and iris yellow as the wild flowers explode into **springtime and the P-O** shakes off its winter colours - **and I feel so privileged to be able to bring you another P-O Life.**

The pound and the euro are still dancing around each other warily but there is so much you can do here in the Pyrénées-Orientales without spending a centime. Wander around the **sweet smelling peach** and cherry orchards, explore the vineyards, walk, **swim and picnic along the coast**, clamber around the mountains and waterfalls, follow our 'Out for the Day', our **walks..... or just sit in the sunshine and watch the world go by.** The possibilities are endless and will not cost you 'la peau du cul' (great French expression, just a little vulgar, referring to the skin off your bottom)!!

Wherever you are, whatever you choose to do, **we wish you sunshine and a springtime of laughter and relaxation in this beautiful region. FINS AVIAT!**

Kate

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CERET: Renovated village house comprising 2 master bedrooms with en-suites (spacious shower room, bath), lounge/kitchen approx 28m² leading out onto a large terrace approx 25m², office, separate WC. Mountain views. **AMAZING LOCATION!**

PRICE : 193,000 € • REF: 5840 Dpe C



AMELIE LES BAINS PALALDA: Minutes from local shops, spacious and sunny 3-bedroom villa in quiet area. Large living room and lounge (approx 41m²/31m²). Separate kitchen approx 12m². Independent 1st floor apartment. Landscaped plot with pool. High quality furnishings. **MUST BE SEEN!**

PRICE : 398,000 € • REF: 5923 Dpe C



SAINT JEAN PLA DE CORTÈS: Superb Catalan stone house in centre of village. Ground floor: large room approx 38m². 1st floor: lounge/kitchen approx 43m². 2nd floor: bedroom and office. 3rd floor: bedroom, spacious shower room, WC. No work to do. **AVAILABLE FURNISHED.**

PRICE : 139,000 € • REF: 5846 Dpe D



MAUREILLAS-LAS-ILLAS: Minutes from pleasant village centre and local shops. Attractive, semi-detached, 4-bedroom bright and spacious house with garage. Lounge/living area, separate kitchen all leading out onto terrace. Living space approx 105m². Some work, but lots of potential. Approx 20-25 minutes away from Perpignan and sea. **DON'T DELAY!**

PRICE : 193,000 € • REF: 5924 Dpe D



MONTESQUIEU DES ALBERES: Quiet location. Beautiful villa on one level with pool. Fitted, open kitchen leading to spacious 52m² lounge. 2 bedrooms, bathroom, office, conservatory and fully tiled garage approx 36m². Superb, ecological fixtures & fittings. Plot approx 4272m² in sunny position. **OPEN VIEWS.**

PRICE : 450.000 € • REF: 5822 Dpe B



CÉRET CENTRE: Charming, renovated village house. 5 rooms. Bedroom with shower room, walk-in wardrobe, plus cellar on ground floor. 3 bedrooms, WC and shower room on 1st floor. Superb, fitted kitchen leading to living area and terrace on top floor. **CONTACT US NOW TO ARRANGE A VISIT!**

PRICE : 225,000 € • REF: 4690 Dpe C

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Le Dolmen de la Siureda



ACCESS


map IGN 1:25000 Céret Amélie les Bains Palada 2449 OT

A circular 10.5km walk with approx. 440 metres of ascent. Allow 3 hours. Suitable for all with a reasonable level of fitness. Yellow waymarking which is a little patchy in a couple of key places! Walking boots recommended. Walk includes visit to Neolithic burial chamber, remnants of old mines and views from la Tour de Bel Oeil.


GETTING THERE


Take D900 in the direction of Le Perthus. Follow directions to Maureillas-las-Illas, taking D618 under A9 motorway. Cross the town following direction Céret to emerge at roundabout by the entrance to the park and boule ground, Prat de la Fargue, just before a bridge. Cross roundabout to park in car parking area. (Toilet available).

THE WALK:

 Cross the bridge and immediately go down steps on left, following waymarks to cross land beside Equestrian centre – keep this on your right. Enter woodland, keeping to path on left and climb gradually to emerge in a residential area.

Follow road straight on for 50 metres then bend left across grassy area behind recycle bins to follow path behind houses (properties directly on your right).

 Emerge on section of tarmac road, soon branch left to reach large, gated white property. Take path on left to enter woodland again. Path climbs gradually through cork oak woodland and eventually follows mesh fencing protecting pretty goats, to emerge, 30 mins from start, on an open, recently planted area with great views of Canigou.

 Bend left with the fencing then immediately right to continue upwards. Quickly arrive at panel indicating direction of the dolmen and the old watchtower. Follow yellow waymarks and ignore path to left – this is return route.



WALK The REGION

with Tim and
Chris Parker



View to St Cristau from la Tour >

➡ Continue to climb and soon find path going left to la Tour de Bel Oeil. A diversion to visit the site is worth it for the views. (8 mins aller-retour)

➡ Return to main path, and continue upwards and contour round the forested hills, emerging near the properties of les Hauts de Céret and a water cistern. Turn left to follow the broad track. Reach tarmac road, turn left and follow this uphill for about a kilometre to reach the Dolmen de la Siureda on left just after a sharp right-hand bend. (1.5 hours to this point).



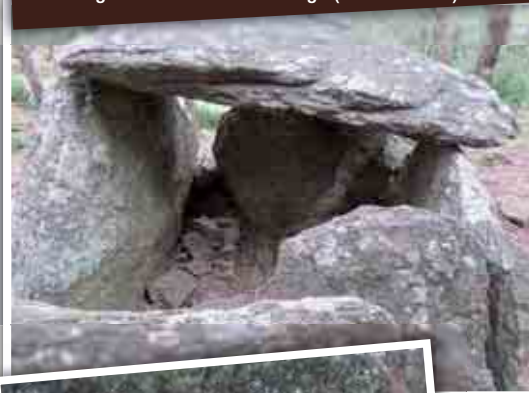
La Tour de Bel Oeil

THE DOLMEN



is a Neolithic burial chamber. Point to ponder - how did they build with stones that size in those days?!

The dolmen was discovered in 1985, buried under a lot of earth and vegetation and with a tree growing out of it. Archaeological studies of the site revealed some bones, a bronze bracelet and other artefacts dating from 2000 BC. Evidence also suggests it was used again in the late Bronze age (1000-700 BC)



Le Dolmen de la Siureda

➡ From dolmen take broad path to left (ignore yellow cross on a tree) and follow it downhill. After 10mins, ignore broad track on right (yellow cross) and bend left to cross a wire fence, currently marked with a white cross, cross a stream bed and contour straight on round the hill. (**Do not take the track descending alongside stream on right – waymarks are lacking at this point**)

Arrive quickly at an intersection, turn right and continue to follow path, mainly descending, to emerge after a further 50 mins, at the panel encountered on the ascent. On the way, near another stream bed, notice the remains of talc



mining in this area. Also take care soon after these - **the path goes slightly up to left. (3 red dots on tree but no yellow waymark!)**

At the panel, turn right to retrace your steps back down to Maureillas – 30 mins – and a welcome drink in one of the village cafés.



Remnants of talc mining

DID YOU KNOW?



Pain in the grass!

Does your dog love running around in long grass?

Keep an eye out for signs of him shaking his head violently, or pawing his ear, as this could mean that a seed of foxtail barley or similar species of grass has entered his ear. **If not removed, this can cause infection and even perforate the eardrum.** Seeds can become embedded in the paw, or even eyes and nose, all of which can be very harmful to your dog (and to your wallet if you have to visit the vet). Take particular care where grass has been cut, and had time to dry.



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Céret Street Art

New Faces in Céret

Spotted any new (or should that be old?) faces of late while strolling the streets of Céret? These faces are acrylic, and they make their appearance on walls and the sides of buildings scattered round the town centre.



FAS has completed six thus far, with three more in the pipeline. Perhaps as no surprise, the first face to appear was that of Pablo Picasso. It can be found tucked around the corner of a building down the street from the Tourist Office. Actually, the portrait is more than just a face. Picasso is depicted with paintbrush in hand, painting birds, some in the process of escaping off the edges of the work.



Other faces have since joined Picasso. A group of three grace a wall on a narrow cobblestone street leading down from Place des Neufs Jets. One of them is **Chaim Soutine**, smartly decked out in a suit and tie in sharp contrast to his actual uniform of the day while in Céret

FAS

The artist behind the faces prefers to be known only as FAS.

"I am very proud of our artistic history," explains **FAS**, who lives in Céret with his family.

"I decided to create these portraits in tribute to a handful of the many painters and other artists who were either locals or were drawn to Céret's charms as visitors. My portraits include both well-known and lesser-known painters."



-- shabby blue overalls stiff with paint. Next to Soutine is **Jean Capdeville**, a Céretan who began to paint at 30, died at 93, and claimed that painting for him was like a blind person's walking stick, a way to stay upright. Rounding out the trio is **Laurent Ribérat**, a self-taught painter whose style was "rustique" and who lived and worked in St. Jean Pla de Corts. **The little girl shown on tiptoe hanging up Ribérat's portrait is FAS's daughter.**

Two additional portraits complete the current group. One is distinctly visible from Place Picasso and features **Felip Vilà**, a flower in his hair. Born in Figueres and befriended by Salvador Dali, Vilà arrived in Céret in 1968, where the local penchant for bullfights became a source of inspiration. The other is



a second portrait of Picasso, this time only his head, his piercing eyes dominating his facial features. It happens to be **FAS's** personal favourite of the group. None of the portraits has been weather-proofed, a

conscious decision on **FAS's** part. He says he prefers that, like the cycle of life, they naturally fade over time as they interact with the elements.

The additional three faces likely will not appear until sometime during the coming summer. In the short term, **FAS is preparing some of his work to be shown in an exhibition at La Capelleta**, a former chapel that was once part of the 17th century hospital L'Hôpital Saint Pierre.

His choices for his final three portraits?

First, there's Saint-Etienne native **Pierre Brun**, who reportedly realized he wanted to become a sculptor while imprisoned in World War II. Second is Catalan painter **Joan Ponc** whose work, coincidentally, will be featured at Céret's Modern Art Museum from March 3rd until May 27th. And finally, there's **Georges Braque** who, together with Picasso, helped to pioneer the Cubist movement with works they produced while renting an apartment in a Ceretan family home just off Place de la Liberté.



Oh, and if you happen to come upon an arresting portrait of Muhammed Ali, that's **FAS** too. Not part of this artist portrait project of course but perhaps it could be claimed that Ali was an artist of sorts.

**WHERE TO EAT
IN CERET**

See page 29

Perpignan Indoor Markets

By Laura McLellan

THE LONG-AWAITED
€1.5 MILLION PROJECT
IS **NOW OPEN!**

A year and a half in the making, a project beleaguered with delays, rumours and gossip... the long-awaited indoor markets 'Les Halles Vauban' on the Quai Vauban, and Le Carré Arago have finally opened.



LES HALLES VAUBAN

Divided into two separate spaces, the largest area is situated in the Passage Robert Doisneau, a transformed shopping arcade midway along Quai Vauban.

Boasting a modern, stylish 1,500m² floor space, shared between around 20 vendors, this is a vibrant, colourful addition to the pedestrianised banks of the canal. Enter via the tempting array of pastries, cakes and goodies, with the aroma of freshly ground coffee leading the way. You can even sit and watch the pâtissiers working their magic thanks to the gold-fish bowl style kitchen.

Penetrate deeper into the heart of Les Halles to a sensory delight of colours and savours. The beautiful, fresh, organic fruit and vegetables catch the eye first, but this is so much more than just a market. This is veritable foodie-paradise!

From tapas and light bites to gourmet burgers, from traditional moules-frites to the exotic flavours of the Middle East, be sure to do a complete tour

before committing! And the best part, seating is arranged across les Halles and you can eat anything, anywhere, so no arguments as to who wants what.

Les Halles are accessible from the Quai Vauban until 8pm everyday except Monday, but once the weekend arrives and the sun goes down, the party really starts! The bar and its terrace (open until 2am Thursday, Friday and Saturday) are already a popular spot where a great mix of ages and nationalities come together over a glass of their favourite tippie.

"LOTS OF ENTHUSIASTIC SELLERS, BUZZY ATMOSPHERE AND A CHILLED BAR AT THE BACK."

Many of the food stands stay open until 11pm too so if you fancy something a little different, or can't decide on a restaurant, les Halles could be the answer! Don't forget though, this is not a restaurant! In colder months, be sure to wrap up warm!





LE CARRE ARAGO

For a dedicated market shopping experience, walk up the Quai, away from the Castillet, and you will find yourself on the doorstep **of the annex of les Halles, le Carré Arago**. It's an intimate affair, a snug collection of 7 or 8 vendors nestled in another newly-renovated, formerly-derelict building.

Accessed from place Gabriel Péri, this is a smaller, calmer version of the Quai Vauban markets, but it still very much adheres to the same clean, modern style. The high ceilings give the space a light and airy feel, with vendors occupying open-fronted shops on either side of the walkway. It is home to top-quality produce and passionate, talented producers. **Discover cheeses, meats, fish, bread, flowers, wine...**

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Readers'

Restaurant REVIEWS

Yay, it's spring and open air eating is back on the menu!

Please keep sending us your reviews. We love publishing them, we really do. They're honest and objective (we hope), unrelated to advertising (*bien sûr!*) and cover a wide range of tastes, prices, and places. You might not always agree, the chef might be having a bad day, your standards might be higher....or lower – but they give you an idea of what's available.

LE LIBANAIS

Perpignan.....with Suzanne

Lebanese chef, Mehdi Reda, recently opened this spotlessly clean, modern and relaxed restaurant. Something for everyone including **vegan and vegetarian**. Cold or hot starters such as fish caviar or lentil salad at 4 and 4,50 euros, hearty main of Couscous (vegetarian, boulettes, poulet or merguez), marinated fish or a chawarma at 10 and 12,50 euros. We tried the Mezze plates a combination of hot and cold appetizers. What a feast! My favourites were the Felafels, spinach wraps and beef chawarma. **Everything is made with the freshest of ingredients.** Desserts including cajou nut baklava and Libanais flan, looked delicious and were just 1 euro! No, this is not a misprint!

I recommend without hesitation.



45 rue Foch, Perpignan. Tel 0769 2826 10.
(No reservation needed)

LES CLOS DE PAULILLES

PORT VENDRES.... with Gillian and Mark

Idyllic setting for lunch or dinner. We chose the lunch Menu of the Day for Euro 32 for 3 courses but there are differently priced menus to suit everyone. A glass of Rosé at the outdoor bar adjacent to the vineyard with views to the sea was a delightful start. The actual restaurant seating is set in a tree covered courtyard, surrounded by old stone walls. The walls have long rectangular viewing slots cut at seating height providing views over the vines. The food on each visit was extremely well presented and delicious. The staff were helpful, not too attentive and very pleasant even though it was busy each time we were there. Definitely a restaurant

I would recommend. I think it would be lovely in the winter as there is a fireplace inside the main restaurant.



Baie de Paulilles, Port-Vendres,
Tel: 04 68 81 49 79

THE GLOBE

SALEILLES.... with Malcom

I'm tempted to keep this to myself. You'd certainly be unlikely to stumble across it. Take the voie rapide Argelès- Perpignan, come off at the sign for Saleilles, turn right and right again. The industrial looking building with a blue wave frontage is the Globe. It looks closed as you play with the doors but it isn't. Inside it's huge with an enormous ship shaped bar and gallery staircase to the restaurant and a landscaped lake and walkways at the back. Large, comfortable seats and generous tables with friendly staff. We ordered the lunch menu du jour at 18.90 with a well executed duo of slow poached eggs served

with smoked Salmon and wholegrain toast, Confit du Canard and a sharp and lovely citrus ice cream and meringue desert. **All excellent and good value for money in spacious surroundings.**



16 Rue de la Cerdagne, Saleilles.
Tel: 04 68 22 22 22

CHEZ FRANCOISE

CORSAVY.... with Jeff

In the back room of a grocery store, 5 or 6 course meal, all local products, all very good, (best carrots we have ever tasted), with wine included usually costs around €32. Well worth it if you can afford it. Corsavy is 850 metres above sea level and there is a wonderful panorama from the restaurant. If you ask, the owner will give you

the key to the church in the village and you can visit it. **Better to call in advance to be certain that it is open.**



Rue Baptiste Pams, Corsavy
Tel: 04 68 39 12 04



LES HALLES, LE HAUT & LE BAS

CANET PLAGE....with Kate

Formerly **Mar I Bouddha**, this restaurant has been taken over by Pierrot, Canet born and bred, who used to work alongside Heston Blumenthal at the Fat Duck.

Friendly, spacious, clean and several interesting twists in the food, **the 'cadre' is fabulous**, with boats coming in and out of the port mouth, the sandy beach on one side and the marina on the other. Meat and fish are set out market style (Les Halles - indoor market) for you to see and choose and everything is fresh of course.

Menus priced at 18 and 24 euros + à la carte and an upstairs terrace and cocktail bar with comfy chairs and cushions is the perfect setting to watch the sun sink down over the ocean surrounded by sea sand and sail.



Promenade Al Cudia, Parking d'Ajaccio, Canet
Tel: 06 70 61 51 33

LE SÈME PÉCHÉ

Collioure.....with Richard and Sharon



Japanese owner/chef Masashi Iijima delivers creative fusion of Japanese and Catalan flavours. I am not generally a fan of fusion, but this is done beautifully and it works. **Alchemy with food!**

It is not cheap eats, but I think it is decent value considering the quality. My guess is he will gain a Michelin star before too long, so maybe worth trying before it inevitably gets more expensive.

A tip: if you enjoy watching a talented chef work his magic, ask for a seat at the counter rather than a table. Most ingredients are locally sourced - except the flying fish that is. We've not spotted them in the bay lately!

16 Rue de la Fraternité, Collioure
Tel: 04 68 98 09 76



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FOOD & DRINK

Restaurant REVIEWS

L'ARCHIPEL

Port Vendres....with Fiona

Situated on the shady side of Port-Vendres, **this is a real find.** I went recently with friends and we had a truly delicious meal, served with a smile from Elisabeth. Good range of menus, plus à la carte at excellent prices. The fresh fish of the day and the duck in a Banyuls sauce come highly recommended. If you're rather partial to Banyuls, then you won't want to miss the 'Pruneaux Marinés Maison au Banyuls et sa glace' to follow. There is also a rather tempting huge, home-made profiterole. **The setting is exotic, with tables set amongst foliage and a bridge over water.**



6 Quai de la Douane République,
Port-Vendres
Tel: 04 68 82 23 26



OVER THE BORDER

THE LONDON BUS CAFE

Castelló d'Empúries....with Peter

If you yearn for good old UK cooking then you'll love the red London Bus Cafe (exactly that; a London bus) as it serves up excellent traditional Sunday roast dinners and the best fish and chips this side of the channel. They also provide good local menu options with the accent on Catalan cuisine. Jez runs the show and Sam does the cooking and you also get a superb pint of Guinness. Situated on the golf pitch and putt near Castello del Empuries, there is golf for those who partake, great shopping in nearby Figueras centre, beach at Roses or Empuriabrava..... a great day out.



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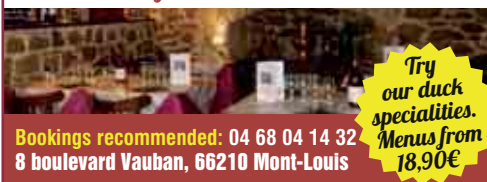
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Cherry Smoothie

A thick, frosty drink of cherry juice concentrate, frozen cherries, blueberries, lowfat milk, lowfat yoghurt and vanilla, topped with a mix of dried cherries and chopped nuts.

Ingredients:

1/2 cup cherries pitted
1/2 cup low fat milk
1/4 cup plain yoghurt
2 tablespoons fresh blueberries
1 tablespoon cherry juice concentrate
1 tablespoon honey
1/2 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
Sprinkle of cinnamon (optional)
8 ice cubes
slivered toasted almonds
chopped cherries

Method:

Blend all ingredients in blender until smooth. Pour into two chilled glasses. Garnish with the almonds and chopped cherries. Serve immediately. Sit back and imagine you're surrounded by cherry blossom.



The Origins of the Rousquille



The word **rousquille** comes from the Spanish word 'rosquilla' meaning 'little wheel'. Traditionally flavoured with aniseed and orange blossom, this medieval speciality started off with a biscuit texture, but has been developed over the years to become more of a cake than a biscuit.

They are very much a speciality of the Vallespir villages, and the addition of the sweet meringue glaze was actually the invention of Amélie-Les-Bains baker, Robert Seguela in 1810, to keep the rousquille moist inside. Poured on and smoothed over by hand in artisan bakeries, the glaze fills up the hole in the middle.

The rousquille rings used to be fried on long thin sticks called '**rosquillare**' that street vendors carried on their shoulders, and sold in the streets at fairs and markets, or held up to windows for people to reach down and help themselves.

Traditionally accompanied by Muscat, Banyuls or any Roussillon dessert wine, they also go down rather well with a cup of tea!



La Baguette

The best thing since sliced bread

France's bakers, supported by president Emmanuel Macron, have called for the French baguette to be recognised and listed with UNESCO AS ONE OF THE WORLD'S CULTURAL TREASURES.

"La France est un pays d'excellence dans le pain parce que la baguette est enviée dans le monde entier" M. Macron told a group of master bakers in Paris.

He also described the baguette as "le quotidien des Français. Le pain c'est une histoire particulière, c'est le quotidien le matin, le midi et le soir pour les Français".

(Quotidien – daily, everyday life)



Lamanère Notre Dame du Coral

By
Madeleine McMullin

A lovely walk up through the forest to the Ermitage de Notre Dame du Coral, followed by lunch at the Auberge, and the same walk back down to Lamanère. It is just under 6 km and takes about 2 hours even for slower walkers.

THE WALK

Start from Lamanère, the most southerly commune in France, situated on the south side of the Vallespir. Take the D115 from Arles sur Tech and turn off direction Serralongue on the D44.

Park the car in the village in front of the Bistro du pays (another possibility for lunch if the auberge is closed) and walk down the steps beside it, then turn right and go down the next set as well. There are signs for Notre Dame and N.D. painted on the walls.

Lamanère, the village the furthest south in France, is almost lost in the wooded valley of the Lamanère river, its solid houses and sturdy church built on steep riverbanks, their stones a rusty red from the iron they contain. Once two small espadrille factories and nearby mines provided work. Now all that remains of village industry is the small museum dedicated to La Vie d'Autrefois, lives spent iron mining and sewing espadrilles. Collect the key from the Centre d'Accueil (Welcome Centre) if you wish to visit.



Follow the path through the meadow, across the stone bridge, past the mill and up to the track. From there you will see a path up through the woods with a sign in yellow to Le Coral. Take it and continue walking through chestnut woods and through a snicket gate, following the wide track.

The trees gradually change from chestnut to beech, and there are a few junctions, but it is well signed with yellow markers with the number 2, as well as occasional signs with Notre Dame or ND on them. The red and white of the GR is also present for most of the way.

Eventually you will start to catch glimpses of Notre Dame du Coral between the trees up to your right.

After about 3 km the path becomes narrower and starts



to descend, before crossing a wooden bridge over a river and heading up the other side. Here you will see an oratory or shrine built in 1599 with a statue of the virgin and child inside. Carry on up and you will eventually come out at the Ermitage.



Plan another walk for another time to the nearby three Towers of Cabrens (also spelt Cabrenç), easily visible, perched on a nearby mountaintop. The first tower is the remains of the 10th century castle, the second the keep of the castle added in the 12th century and the third the signal tower built in the 14th century. Serralongue village below was built in the 10th century to provide lodgings for the serfs of the Castle of Cabrenç. A fine ceramic table of orientation points out Barcelona, 112 kms away, the Bay of Roses easily visible in the distance, and just 40kms to Collioure if you're a bird.

in Serralongue, behind the fortified church is the last remaining Conjurador in France. In olden times it was used to defend Serralongue from evil spirits, famine, drought, floods and war, the Priest performing the ceremony as inhabitants held hands, prostrated in a circle.



WALK... DRIVE... LUNCH...

THE ERMITAGE DE NOTRE DAME DU CORAL

The building is an old hermitage built in 1690 with later additions. **The chapel is well worth a visit. Remember to climb the stairs to the side of the altar to view the paintings in the room behind.** The rest of the building has been converted into a walkers' hostel and inn which is open throughout the year. In the winter months, you need to phone or send a Facebook message to book - or risk having nothing to eat. It is probably advisable to book in summer too, just in case. There is a pilgrimage and festival in August when all the locals come up.



Dogs are welcome which was good as our party of 10 had 5. It was a freezing day outside with nowhere to leave them out of the wind. We had tied them all up to the banisters in the hallway but were told to put them into the visitors lounge instead, as they wouldn't like being tied up for that long.

THE MEAL

The food is a set menu with no choice except for desserts, but it was good. The starter was a chicken salad with crunchy garlic croutons. The main course was chicken in an orange and saffron Tunisian style sauce with couscous. Isabelle, the cook, lived with a Tunisian for 15 years and his mother taught her how to cook the cuisine. Dessert was a choice of "Milky Way", a sort of apple compote with spices in it and almonds flaked on top,

or egg flan. The Milky Way was very nice and the only criticism of the whole meal was that the egg flan was a bit bland, but then in my opinion, it normally is. It cost €18.50 each plus drinks which amounted to about 4 litres of wine and 8 coffees. We rounded the bill up to €25 each which meant a big enough tip to bring a big smile to the owners' faces and then made our way out to walk back to the cars.

The way back is the same as the way there, except, being downhill, it was only about an hour even for the slowest of the party. **Lamanère appeared bathed in sunlight at the end of a delightful day.**



PILGRIMAGE NOTRE DAME DU CORAL Monday May 21st

Pilgrimages to Notre Dame du Coral have been taking place since the 15th century. Why not join the traditional pilgrimage to the Ermitage Notre Dame du Coral on Lundi de Pentecôte, or Whit Monday?

In 1428, the hamlet of 'Miralles' was destroyed by an earthquake but its chapel was miraculously saved! According to legend, a wooden statue representing the Virgin and previously from the original tiny chapel built on the site, was found in a tree trunk, sparking off pilgrim fever and leading to the building of the present church and hermitage.

From 1730 to 1911 the chapel was occupied by a wandering hermit (un ermite forain) who travelled from door to door with his Capelleta, a sort of portable trunk containing religious objects, to obtain funds to maintain the buildings. Over the years, the chapel has sheltered pilgrims, soldiers, hermits, and even religious cults.

The imposing buildings have been restored and offer lodgings on the first floor above arcaded farm buildings. There is a vast hall and a XIII century church. The site is surrounded by grand hundred year old trees.



The friendly, talkative owners have a couple of pot-bellied pigs that they took in when they got too big for their owners, ducks and geese and two Catalan donkeys.

OUT for THE DAY...

...in Port Vendres

With Suzanne O'Reilly



It's a four season kind of place, Port Vendres. Saturday is my favourite day in my adopted and beloved hometown where I have lived full time since 2010. Saturday/Market day is the busiest day in this unique part of the Pyrenees Orientales.



What makes Port Vendres so unique? The Port itself – the only active fruit and veg Port in the P.O. with wonderful nautical activity, hustling and bustling, employment. Much more than a quiet, peaceful fishing village.

We have free street parking on rue Arago (lieudit rue de Soleil) outside the church and walk along this cul de sac that leads to La Vierge. I'm not a particularly religious person but this is where I come when I need a quiet moment. There is a special energy here that I don't find in churches.

On my way back towards the village I take the steps on my left down to the quay front until I come across the fishermen selling their catch.

This is a place of great banter where one can catch up on all the local gossip. My favourite of them all is **Joel Chiajese**. A fisherman, Joel is also the man to call on when your trampoline net needs repairing ! Today he was out fishing until 2 o'clock in the morning and came back with fresh dorade, seiche, rascasse and langouste He always cleans the fish for me and has just the right advice on how to cook with easy to follow and deliciously simple recipes. He is usually there from 7 in the morning and sometimes



Joel Chiajese and his daughter



Free street parking on rue Arago



**WHERE TO EAT
IN PORT VENDRES**

See page 30

OUT for THE DAY...

...in Port Vendres

is completely sold out by 11.30. The locals know you can't get fresher than this (both the fish and the gossip !).

Right opposite the fishermen's stalls I go up the steps to the market square to grab the few ingredients needed. The daffodils are in full bloom and there is a definite hint of Spring in the air as the sun fights to come out. Starting to get hungry already we grab some crepes from «**La Tonnerre de Crepes**» at the market, they are super tasty and not pricey at all.



Ready for coffee now we stroll down the main quay, which is sheltered from the wind and catches the sun in the mornings. **The Quai Bar** is the place to go, it serves the best coffee in town and if you pick the right table you can be in the sun until early afternoon, it offers a great view of the Port, the waiters are easy going and rather cute.

Turn to your right when you leave the Quai Bar and you will see **our Tourist Office with all the local info and maps you need**. Behind the Tourist Office there is an outdoor stairwell built into the hills (there are lots of these in Port Vendres so be sure to visit with suitable footwear). There is, thankfully, very little graffiti in this wine growing village but there is some by this stairwell – sprayed on the wall is « NO BLIND DATE »



Just so you know !

I make a mental note to cancel all blind dates in my diary and turn right at the top of the stairwell, up the hill to the very top of Boulevard du 8 mai 1945, take the steps beside the children's creche, turn left at the top of this stairwell and keep climbing. Living in this town you will have great shapely calves!

Cross the next street which is Bd des Evadés and yes, climb the stairwell in front of you...believe me, it is worth it. This leads you to Route Strategique... strategically designed for one of the best panoramic views Port Vendres has to offer.



Alain Bozier and Suzanne

Turn right here and after 50 meters or so you will come to **Alain Bozier's house**.



Alain Bozier is known to me as Honeyman. He is one of the region's most highly respected apiarists. Every Saturday and Sunday he opens the gate to his home for visitors to meander down the steps and into his living room where the fire is lit and the bay view windows offer an incredible view. Here you can sample his whole range of locally made honey and visit his in-house « **miellerie** ». You can get a litre jar of the finest honey here for 10 euros...but so much more than that is the warm welcome you will get from Alain who is so passionate about his trade.

Alain Bozier. Tel 06 47 47 90 49

OUT for THE DAY...

...in Port Vendres

We meander our way back through the town where we spot the most bizarre staircase leading to...well, mid air! Be prepared when coming to Port Vendres to stumble across the weird and wonderful.



On the far side of the quays now we dip into **the 7 grille restaurant** for lunch. There is no sign above the vitrine of the restaurant which has a very narrow shopfront. If you didn't know it was there you could easily walk straight past it and what an opportunity missed that would be. The interior however is quite spacious. Open since October 2017 the proprietor, Joy, from Nord pas de Calais has won the hearts of the Port Vendres. She is open all year round (except on Wednesdays) midi et soir.

This is a meat lover's haven but she cleverly provides lots of fresh salads and one or two fish

dishes. All of her produce is sourced in France. The servings are huge and filling – ideal for walkers in the area. There is a choice of entree, plat and dessert for 14 euros ! There is a short but well chosen wine list – again all locally sourced. This is a restaurant you can recommend without hesitation.

7 Grille. 7 Quai de la République, 66660 Port-Vendres Phone: 04 68 82 03 24



View from 7 Grille



Joy and Suzanne



Joy and her meat

Turn right when you come out of Joel's and keep following the path along until you get to a crossroads and turn left. Follow this road around until you see the diving club, Scuba Passion on your right and take this road called **Chemin du Cap Bear**.

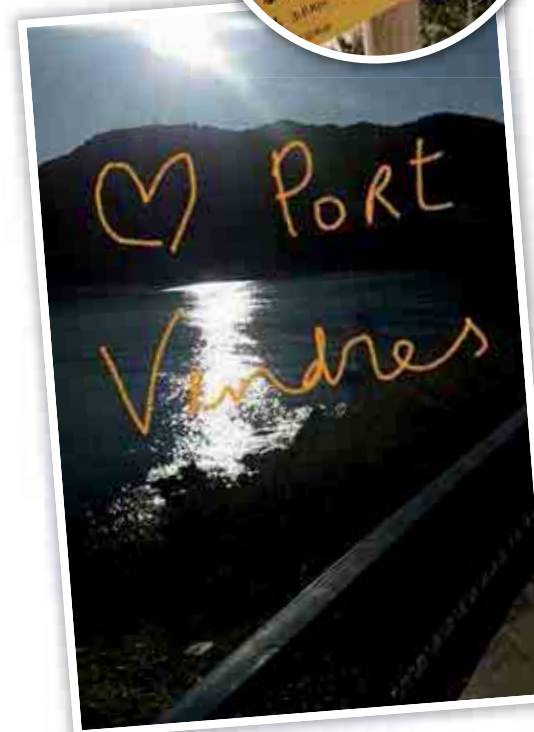


Joel Lefrancois

Time to burn off some calories and clear our heads as we set off for a beautiful walk towards the creek known as Sainte Catherine. But first, turning right as we come out of the restaurant, we are stopped in our tracks as we stumble across the « **Les Poissons Fumés de Port Vendres.** »

Joel Lefrancois owns this fish smoking workshop. Here salmon and other fish is filleted, salted, smoked, hung, cut and presented for you to buy! All done by Joel himself! The premises alone are worth a visit with their incredibly high ceilings and where old Algerian wine vats remain intact. Joel is keen to make his workshop an open house where artists and musicians can come and exhibit or play, while he does tastings and tours.

Les Poissons Fumés de Port Vendres. 10 quai de la République. Tel 04 48 07 06 23



It is a narrow winding less travelled road which always reminds me of being back in West Cork, apart from the sky is blue and the smell of cow dung is replaced by the heady scents of fennel, mimosa and wild lavender!

OUT for THE DAY...

...in Port Vendres



Follow the road until we get to the **stone lighthouse of Cap Bear**, just to the right is a pathway down to the creek of **Sainte Catherine** which I know from experience is perfectly sheltered from the Tramontane wind. The clouds are starting to lift and we can clearly see as far as Cap de Creus and beyond. The vista really is breathtaking.

Continue down the steps down to the seafront to the creek. In the summertime this is a great spot for snorkelling. We double back by the mountain paths which are well marked with yellow arrows and make our way back towards rue de Soleil. This is about an 8 kilometer walk so we now feel we deserve a treat.

To the left of the church there are one or two small businesses still open. We decide to finish our busy day with a little pampering and book in with Fanny Lecoq (no I'm not making this up!) at **Escale Beauté** for a manicure. It's the perfect end to a fun filled day with some of the great characters in Port Vendres.



Suzanne and Del run children's cooking workshops in Port Vendres. Next workshops will be held on April 8th, 15th and 29th and on May 6th and 13th. For more information see their **Facebook page: Cuisiner en Anglais.** Tel: 0 674 005 856

Vermeille internationale Art Expo. New artists and a members always welcome; get in touch via **vermeille-internationale.com**

VERMEILLE INTERNATIONALE	Exposition D'Art
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	Du 2 au 8 juillet 2018
	11h à 19h
Soiree Musicale avec Tapas	Port Vendres
dans les jardins du Dome	Peintures Sculptures Photographes
Samedi 7 juillet 19h30 à 23h	Entrée 10€



Le Dôme

Designed in the late 18th century by royal architect Charles de Wailly as one of the grand buildings of Port Vendres, the neoclassical **Le Dôme** was originally meant to be a hotel for foreigners.

It didn't last long, and in 1835, five years after Port Vendres became the principal port for dispatching soldiers and supplies to the French colony in

Algeria, Le Dôme was given to the Army as a flat for the military governor of the adjoining barracks.

Partly destroyed during the Second World War, Le Dôme was restored afterwards as an art and culture centre. Today, there are regular art exhibitions and cultural events, often in its lower-level garden with splendid view of the harbour.



HERMIONE
(1777 -1793)

THE REPLICA FRENCH WAR SHIP "HERMIONE" will sail into Port Vendres on the 20th April 2018 in a rare presentation for the public.

The historic ship measures 80m long and a little over 10m wide. She can host a crew of more than 90 mariners. Equipped with 26 canons, the original vessel **was in service from 1779 to 1793 as part of the Concorde fleet constructed in 1777 by Rochefort.**

The ship will be docked in Port Vendres from 20th to 22nd April open to the public from 2pm to 5.30pm on Friday, 10am to 5pm on Saturday and 10am to 4.30pm on Sunday, when the boat will retake the high seas.

Visits should be pre-reserved online
www.port-vendres.com
and visitors should **bring a piece of identification**
(CNI, driving license ...)

- Flat shoes recommended
- Backpacks must be left at the entrance of the building, before the visit
- Photographs and videos not allowed
- Some areas of the ship will not be accessible
- to people with reduced mobility
- 5€ for adults, 2€ for children, free for under 6s

The Devil and Mr. Ponç

The Spring exhibition at the Musée d'art moderne de Ceret is dedicated to the intriguing works of Joan Ponç, a Catalan artist whose paintings resemble both the distortions of Dali and the fantasy of Miro. And then there is the devil.



Titles like "Omens, Delusions and Hallucinations" give an insight into the artist's struggle with his inner demons. Ponç portrays his disquiet as a delicate balancing act, like riding a bicycle wearing a top hat from which is suspended a fishing line with a sea monster attached. In self-mocking caricatures, he appears often as a harlequin, identifying with the comic-tragic figure.



A painting of a fantastical two-headed cat-like creature in harlequin patches seems to indicate the play between good and evil.

Ponç confronts the darkness both metaphorically and physically. When towards the end of his life his sight was failing, black dominates many of his canvasses, though flashes of light illuminate the subject. In the context of his encroaching blindness, the most touching work is a painting of three heads, their eyes disintegrating into shafts of light. With the aid of an enormous industrial magnifying glass, he still managed to draw a series of 424 miniature "Secret Boxes" - visions of magical beasts - before his death in 1984.

He wrote, "If I were reborn... don't look for me behind my easel. You will find me sharpening my thoughts, seated under a tree or on a rock."

In the end, Ponç's vision is neither pessimistic nor optimistic but ironic, sharpening his thoughts and, by extension, his pencils.

"Joan Ponç Diabolo"
runs from 3 March to 27 May.
For further details, see:
www.musee-ceret.com.

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- ***Purple** for enchantment, mystery and attraction

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f: les-roses-de-la-prade

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Argelès-sur-Mer

GUIDED WALKS

From the Albères mountain range to the coastal paths and 'réserve naturelle' of Mas Larrieu, Argelès has some amazingly contrasting landscapes. Join one of the thematic, guided walks with guide (English speaking if required) who will also be your story teller. Prices: 4 €

Free for U13 accompanied by an adult

FIND OUT MORE AT THE TOURIST OFFICE

PROGRAMME

There's always something going on in Argelès. Here are some highlights. Pop into the Tourist Office for full details.

APRIL

1st & 2nd	Fête américaine
8th	Foire des Éleveurs
8th	Fête de la Randonnée
21st & 22nd	Festi Pâques

MAY

1st	Vide Grenier (Village)
6th	Jardin en Fête
8th & 9th	Argelès Paddle Race
10th	Vide Grenier (Port)
20th	Retro Attitude (Village)
27th	Triathlon

JUNE

9th & 10th	Les Nautiques
21st	Fête de la Musique
22nd-24th	Fête de la Saint Jean
23rd	Le Swimrun
30th	Corso d'Été



©Laurent Lacombe

THE VILLAGE

Stroll around the narrow streets of the pretty, bustling, village, perfect for people-watching on the trottoir of one of the many cafés and restaurants, follow the old ramparts, **visit the church and its treasures and climb to the top of the 23-metre tower** to enjoy the unique view of the Plaine du Roussillon (guided visits only).

THE PORT

Sails moving gently in the breeze, totally pedestrian, stroll past cafés, shops and restaurants, or watch the world go by - a refreshing change to the manic pace of life.

THE HISTORY

Coming from the Latin 'argila' meaning clay, development of the resort started in the 1860s, when the first settlements were followed by the installation of a French army camp, and the arrival of the first campers. WW2 brought barbed wire, squalor and heartbreak as beaches became prisons for refugees fleeing the Franco regime. **Today, the sea has washed away the blood and tears and the beaches are safe and golden but a small museum in Valmy Park and plaques along the seafront remind us that we must never forget.**



©OMT Argelès



©Interaview



©OMT Argelès

THE BEACHES

With 7 km of long sandy beaches, two nature reserves, (Mas Larrieu and La Forêt de la Massane), the timeless Racou beach, and a mountain summit towering at 1156m (Pic des 4 Termes), Argelès is a limitless playground for walkers, cyclists, swimmers, runners and watersports fans!

SO MUCH TO DO....

Visit the **Galerie Marianne**, free municipal art gallery, take a delightful, stroll along the prom, prom, prom and enjoy the outdoor **photographic exhibition 'Enfants de la Mer'**, or a more demanding cliffside walk to Collioure. Shed a few calories up to the ancient watch tower de la Massane, **(watch or join in the Massane race on 28th & 29th April)** passing by the Romanesque Chapelle St Laurent.



On the way, pop into the beautiful **Chateau Valmy** for a dégustation of the wines or lunch looking across the vines and down to the sea, or **visit Valmy park** with its trails, play and picnic areas and fabulous views down to the Mediterranean.

IT'S FUN, IT'S FREE, IT'S SPRINGTIME IN Canet!

by Canet
en Roussillon

Canet-en-Roussillon needs no introduction. With the iconic Canigou ever present in the distance, fabulous walking, riding and cycling for every level through the surrounding nature reserve, carefully preserved fishermen's reed huts, aquarium, arboretum, bird-watching, watersports, a long and gloriously sandy beach, shops, cafes, bars and restaurants....and a varied spring and summer events programme, **it's fun, it's free, (unless indicated) - it's springtime in Canet!**

7th April VOILES ROUGES

Les Soirées Rouges

Child of the 70s and 80s? They're playing your song! Don't miss this cracking evening with music and dancing from the Phil Marny Band. (15€ including drink and pâtisserie). **Book ahead at the tourist office!**



1st - 27th April FESTI'KIDS

Espace Méditerranée (14h30 - 18h)
FREE ACTIVITIES FOR THE KIDS EVERY AFTERNOON

Painting and craft workshops, bike rides, sandcastle competition, climbing wall, archery, judo, rugby, basket, tennis, beach tournament ... Choccy Easter Egg hunt at the beach on 1st April at 10h

**FIND OUT ALL ABOUT THE
GREAT WALKS AND GUIDED
VISITS IN AND AROUND CANET**

21st – 22nd April CANET FAIT LE PRINTEMPS

Canet Village

Welcome in the spring with fun for everyone as Canet village turns into a garden centre. Floral deco, flower and plant sales, advice, demos, market, music and entertainment - what better time for a stroll round the pretty village?



7th - 8th May FÊTE DE LA VICTOIRE

Théâtre de la Mer

Who do you think you are kidding Mr H? Over 100 period military vehicles, a carefully reconstructed military encampment, vehicle exhibition and parades through the streets, with hundreds of 'extras' dressed in period costume, showtime musical from 'duo Madeeson', open air cinema screening 'La Grande Vadrouille', period dance with live music from the Orchestre Destination, playing the great Glen Miller classics.....



12th - 13th May L'EFFET MER

Théâtre de la Mer

Festival of Transient Beach & Street Art. Magnificent sand sculptures, graffiti on specially constructed units, urban art on the theme "Le monde marin", initiation workshops, body painting, art and photography.....

Check out the full programme at the tourist office



20th May BOUEILLES A LA MER

Air du Mas (NOT FREE)

Meet the vigneron on a morning stroll around the Canet vineyards, in festive atmosphere with music and food and wine tastings, followed by a gourmet sea food platter and wines based on a sea theme, prepared by the talented 'Toques Blanches du Roussillon'. A great wine and food experience and a must for foodies! (and winies!)

Prices and reservation from Tourist Office.



26th - 27th May FISE XPERIENCE

Théâtre de la Mer

International Extreme Sports Festival. Thrills and spills in this exciting festival bringing together the best of Europe's BMX and skateboard and roller champions, with a chance to try them out yourself. Want to try something new? Why not try 'le Flat?', (acrobatic biking).

Come and have a go if you think you're hard enough!



**AND THERE'S MORE, MUCH MORE!
POP INTO CANET TOURIST OFFICE AND
MEET THE TEAM
+33 (0)4 68 86 72 00 – www.ot-canet.fr**



Cherry Blossom!

Cherry trees are the last to blossom and the first to bear fruit. As the pink of the peach flowers fade and fall, a white lace spreads itself over the cherry orchards.

By May, the first case of luscious ripe red fruit is on its way to the President – a long established tradition in Céret, cherry capital of the P.-O., and probably the whole of France.

As this celebrated tree springs into life, its delicate, fragrant blossoms can be a great addition to your health and well-being.

These blossoms are special in their own right. They can be used to decorate deserts, added to jams, chutneys or pickles and make an elegant addition to salads and garnishes.

What's more, cherry blossom contains antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties and can be very

beneficial in soothing inflamed and sensitive skin. **Add the blossom to your bath water and soak in fragrant luxury.**

Cherry blossom also helps to regulate the heart rate, and aids indigestion and constipation.

Put cherry blossom in a mug and fill with hot water. Cover and leave to steep for 15 mins for a healthy and refreshing cuppa.

.... **but remember to leave some on the tree or there'll be no cherries.**



IT IS WITH HEAVY HEART THAT I WRITE THIS SEASON.

Regular readers of Living off the Land will know of my good friend and herbal medicine partner Fiona Sass who always writes the article with me.

Sadly, my dear friend slipped away on 16th January this year.



A South African who had travelled much of the world, **she was intelligent, funny and a natural carer, happy to help others whenever she could.**

She seemed to be at her **happiest foraging for herbs and flowers to create herbal medicines or swimming and laughing then collapsing on the sand soaking up the sun.**

She will be very sadly missed by her international group of family and friends.

She leaves a large ***Earth Angel*** shaped hole.

Whilst I am a great believer in natural medicine which can be incorporated into your daily diet to aid health and support your system, I would never recommend that it be substituted for conventional medicine unless your professional medic agrees.

DON'T MISS THE CERET CHERRY FESTIVAL ON SATURDAY 26TH SUNDAY 27TH MAY.

A colourful weekend of stone spitting, music, dancing and entertainment in the streets, and inventive recipes involving cherries served up in the local restaurants.... or why not try a glass of cherry beer, cherry wine, cherry pie, cherry pasty, cherry burger, cherries on toast, cherries with spam.....

Celebrate spring with this cherry blossom cocktail

INGREDIENTS

Crushed ice
2 oz Cherry Vodka
1 1/2 oz. Sake
1/2 oz. cranberry juice
1/2 oz. peach puree



- 1 Prepare an ice-filled cocktail shaker, and add the Cherry Vodka, Sake, cranberry juice, and peach puree.
- 2 Shake well and strain into a glass.
- 3 Garnish with a cherry and a small cherry blossom flower.

AIRPORT NEWS



After many years of trawling local airport sites to bring us the ever changing possibilities for flying back to the UK, John Fairclough has moved on to pastures new and will be greatly missed.

However, I am delighted to say that we have found ourselves another 'geek'!

Robbie Shaw lives near Gatwick where he was an Air Traffic Controller and travels regularly to his place in Collioure. His wife describes him as an 'aviation geek', just what we need in fact. :-)

He travels all over the world photographing aircraft, and in the future will be keeping you up to date with flights between the region and UK & Irish airports, and any other airport news that seems relevant.

Welcome Robbie.

with Robbie Shaw

Overall there has been an increase in flights to the region, but mainly to Barcelona's El Prat Airport and Girona. The latter has seen a surge of flights by Leeds based Jet2, often going head to head with Ryanair, primarily from the North of England and Scotland, but also from Stansted. Unfortunately there are still no flights from Gatwick to airports anywhere between Barcelona and Montpellier, despite an average of 91 flights a week from Gatwick to Barcelona alone.

Many of the Irish and smaller UK airports' routes to regional French airports do not start until May/June time to coincide with school holidays.

APRIL-JUNE 2018. SPAIN

BARCELONA / EL PRAT

So, a huge variety of flights to Barcelona, most of which run all year round, but with seasonal increases. For those unfamiliar, take care on the nightmare Barcelona ring-road, one wrong turn could be very time consuming.



FROM NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS AIRLINE

BELFAST	5	EASYJET
BIRMINGHAM	2	RYANAIR
BRISTOL	14	EASYJET
CARDIFF	3	VUELING
EAST MIDLANDS	7	RYANAIR
EDINBURGH	7	NORWEGIAN
GATWICK	14	BRITISH AWYS
	42	EASYJET
	7	NORWEGIAN
	28	VUELING
GLASGOW PRESTWICK	7	RYANAIR
HEATHROW	58	BRITISH AIRWAYS
LIVERPOOL	10	EASYJET
	2	RYANAIR
LUTON	20	EASYJET
MANCHESTER	5	JET2
	3	NORWEGIAN
	14	RYANAIR
NEWCASTLE	4	EASYJET
SOUTHEND	4	EASYJET
STANSTED	28	RYANAIR
CORK	3	AER LINGUS
DUBLIN	14	AER LINGUS
	18	RYANAIR



A buzzard turns up at the airport with two dead animals. The lady at check in says, "Sorry, only one carrion per passenger".

GIRONA

There has been a big increase in flights to Girona. Ryanair's spat with the airport not paying them enough seems to be over and several routes have been reinstated. It seems as though Leeds based Jet2 have suddenly found the airport, and have introduced a whole raft of flights, though most do not start until early May.

FROM NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS AIRLINE

BELFAST	1	JET2 (fm 04/05)
	2	RYANAIR
BIRMINGHAM	2	JET2 (fm 03/05)
	3	RYANAIR
BOURNEMOUTH	4	RYANAIR
BRISTOL	5	RYANAIR
EAST MIDLANDS	2	JET2 (fm 05/05)
	2	RYANAIR
EDINBURGH	2	JET2 (fm 04/05)
	2	RYANAIR
GATWICK	2	TUI (fm 15/05)
GLASGOW INT'L	2	JET2 (fm 13/05)
GLASGOW PRESTWICK	2	RYANAIR
LEEDS BRADFORD	2	JET2 (fm 10/05)
	2	RYANAIR
LIVERPOOL	2	RYANAIR
LUTON	3	RYANAIR
MANCHESTER	2-4	JET2
	3	RYANAIR
NEWCASTLE	2	JET2 (fm 04/05)
	2	RYANAIR
STANSTED	3	JET2 (fm 04/05)
	3	RYANAIR
CORK	2	RYANAIR (fm 04/06)
DUBLIN	2	RYANAIR (fm 02/06)





CARCASSONNE

Ryanair remains the sole operator here, with the Edinburgh service being added this year.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
EAST MIDLANDS	2	RYANAIR
EDINBURGH	2	RYANAIR
GLASGOW INT'L	2	RYANAIR
MANCHESTER	2	RYANAIR
STANSTED	7	RYANAIR
CORK	2	RYANAIR (fm 04/06)
DUBLIN	3	RYANAIR (fm 04/06)

MONTPELLIER

This is the airport we use as easyJet has daily flights from Gatwick in the summer, and in fact has increased their service by often going double-daily this year. If only they would move one of those flights to Perpignan! In the winter months some of the flights were operated by 186 seat Airbus A320s instead of the smaller 162 seat Airbus A319s. So overall there is an increase in capacity. They also operate to Montpellier from Luton. The British Airways flight from Heathrow which started last year appears not to be operating this year.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
DUBLIN	2	AER LINGUS (from 04 May)
GATWICK	12-14	EASYJET
LUTON	3	EASYJET (fm 26/06-01/09)
DUBLIN	3	RYANAIR (fm 04/06)



Un pilote veut atterrir sur la piste.
La tour de contrôle lui dit :
« Donnez-moi votre position et votre hauteur »
Le pilote répond :
« Je suis assis et je mesure 1,80m ! »

atterrir - to land
la piste - runway.
La tour de contrôle - control tower
votre hauteur - your height
Je suis assis - I'm sitting



PERPIGNAN

Sad news is that we again have a winter with no direct UK flights. I am afraid that Ryanair do seem to have the blinkers on. Argeles-sur-Mer is one of the biggest camp site resorts in Europe and there is a definite need for a low-cost service to Gatwick. As Ryanair operate Stansted-Perpignan about three times a week (except peak season) I'm sure they could easily fill Gatwick-Perpignan flights two or three times a week.

The airport has been trying hard for a Gatwick service, but Gatwick's single runway is just so busy that there is no availability of slots at the right times.

The Stobart / Flybe Southend service will not be repeated in 2018. Whilst the airline offered very attractive fares it was inevitable it could not compete with nearby Stansted.

If you are looking at the websites and find the fares to P.O. are very high, look at the rugby fixture list – it might explain a lot. Often changing just a few days can reduce the fare. Also fares are generally cheaper midweek, especially in the summer months – or ridiculously expensive in school mid-term.

As can be seen in the table below, Perpignan comes to life in the spring.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
BIRMINGHAM	2	RYANAIR (fm 27/03)
DUBLIN	4	AER LINGUS (fm 15/05)
SOUTHAMPTON	1	FLYBE (fm 26/05)
STANSTED	5	RYANAIR (fm 25/03)

TOULOUSE / BLAGNAC

There tends to be more flights to Toulouse from UK regional airport in the winter due to skiing opportunities, with Andorra not too far away.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
BIRMINGHAM	Winter only	FLYBE
BRISTOL	7	EASYJET
EDINBURGH	2	RYANAIR
GATWICK	21-28	EASYJET
HEATHROW	21	BRITISH AIRWAYS
LUTON	4-6	EASYJET
MANCHESTER	7	FLYBE
STANSTED	14	RYANAIR
DUBLIN	4-6	AER LINGUS



Please note that these are the average number of flights per week, and will be variable in the shoulder and peak seasons, when you will sometimes see a minimum and maximum number listed. Please do bear in mind airline schedules do fluctuate. At Perpignan last year a French airline decided to cancel planned flights at three weeks notice – after the airport had spent money advertising the said route.

If you think I have missed any, please contact
P-O Life on info@anglophone-direct.com



WILD ABOUT FLOWERS?

By Lesley McLaren

At this time of year, the P-O transforms into a kaleidoscope of wildflowers. Here are a just a few of the more common ones to be found in the verges, hedgerows and rocky slopes around the Albères and Vallespir.



MULLEIN (PROBABLY DARK MULLEIN – LA MOLENE NOIRE)

Look out for tall, bright spikes of yellow in the verges. During Roman times the spike-like flower clusters of the common mullein were dipped in grease and used as torches. And Native Americans used its velvety leaves as moccasin liners to protect against the cold.



A TYPE OF SCABIOUS (LA SCABIEUSE) with spotted rock-rose (L'HÉLIANTHÈME TACHÉ). Each rock-rose's flower lasts only one day.



CUT-LEAVED CRANESBILL (LE GÉRANIUM À FEUILLES DÉCOUPÉES).

You'll only ever see one or two delicate, lightly striped flowers peeping through the greenery in verges. "Cranesbill" is a reference to its beak-like seed capsule – reminiscent of the long beak of a crane.



SELF-HEAL (LA BRUNELLE COMMUNE).

Renowned for healing properties at least as far back as the 17th Century, we now know it has anti-allergenic constituents and acts as an anti-inflammatory agent.



COMMON CENTAURY (LA PETITE-CENTAURÉE COMMUNE). It flowers every other year and, like other members of the gentian family, those tiny pink flowers close during the afternoon.



NATURALLY

A lot of white flowers appear at the same time in April – but they aren't all the same species.



BLADDER CAMPION (LE SILÈNE ENFLÉ).

Unlike some of its cousins, which prefer shady spots, this thrives in the full glare of the sun. Its leaves are edible – used in salads and other dishes in some Mediterranean countries.

Some varieties of campion have roots that contain the compound saponin, which, although a mildly toxic substance, has long been used as soap for washing clothes, hair etc. It's also said that different kinds of campion have been used to treat snakebites and cure corns and warts. At the time of writing I cannot verify this!

GREATER STITCHWORT (LA STELLAIRE HOLOSTÉE) has many other common names including 'Wedding Cakes', 'Star-of-Bethlehem', 'Daddy's-shirt-buttons' and 'Snapdragon' – the latter because its stems are brittle and easily break. Ripe seed capsules can be heard popping in late spring. Look out for it in shadier areas by roadsides.



WHITE CAMPION
(LE COMPAGNON BLANC)



TASSEL HYACINTH (LE MUSCARI À TOUPET) belongs to the asparagus family. Wherever this grows, so might that other variety that is gathered for omelettes.



POPPY (LE COQUELICOT) AND CORNFLOWER (LE BLEUET). British and French symbols of the 1914-1918 War grow side by side.



HOLLOW-STEMMED ASPHODEL (L'ASPHODÈLE FISTULEUX).

This tall (up to 70cm) beauty is an annual or short-lived perennial, whose flowers close at night or in low light conditions. Another, less attractive name, is onionweed.



TUFTED VETCH (LA VESCE CRAQUE).

This member of the pea family has climbing stems, subterranean runners anchoring it to the ground, and deeply penetrating roots. The result is a robust green tangle, from which eye-catching violet flower spikes emerge.

MYSTERY FLOWER This must be a type of clover (Trèfle)? It is three-leaved, like all clovers – but these leaves are long and narrow, and it grows tall – around 30cm. Spotted mid-May beside tracks in the Albères between Laroque and Sorède. If you can identify it, please let me know!



Lesley McLaren is one of "The Warblers"
– a group of natural history enthusiasts in the PO.
Photos by "The Warblers" unless otherwise stated.

www.mediterraneanpyrenees.com
Twitter @66warblers

NANA MANIA

By Ellen Turner Hall

Each of Capdeville's portraits starts with a pair of enormous eyes with feathery lashes protruding from an elongated Giacometti-like head.

Like an exotic flower bursting into flamboyant life atop a slender stem, each nana reveals her vital energy. Updos launch themselves in all possible directions – a volcanic explosion completely out of control. One can imagine the blood-red lips joyously uttering profanities. Just for the hell of it. Clothing is scarce. Earrings spin out into their own orbit.

Necklaces emphasize the contrast between the thinness of the neck and the fullness of breasts.

Towards the end of the exhibition, Capdeville's collection of rocks, each one painted with a single flower, illuminates the meaning of the nanas: an elemental mixture of mineral strength and solidity on the one hand and the delicacy and fragility of the flower on the other.



“Les Nanas”, an exhibition by Jacques Capdeville at the Musée d’Art Moderne de Collioure, is 100% female. “Nana”, refers familiarly to girl, woman, chick or babe. Capdeville presents a series of portraits of women unbound – hair astray, lipstick smeared, breasts frankly exposed, eyes defiant.

In this post-Weinstein, #MeToo era, it is refreshing to meet these exuberant nanas who have no inhibitions. Neither marginalized victim nor mere survivor, each nana is empowered by her own energy, her own essential mystery.

Capdeville's “Les Nanas”:
1989-2018 runs from
10 February to 21 May.

For details see:

[www.collioure.mobi/
museedartmoderne](http://www.collioure.mobi/museedartmoderne)

DID YOU KNOW



April 23rd

Books and Roses - unlucky date for some

You may already know that 23rd April is the Festival of Sant Jordi (St George) Patron Saint of Catalonia and the day of the rose and the book, but did you also know that on April 23rd, 1616 both William Shakespeare and Miguel de Cervantes (Don Quixote) died - and that William Wordsworth also died on that date in 1850?

BANK HOLIDAYS

As you can imagine, the many bank holidays in April and May are a joy to schoolchildren! Often extended into a long weekend if the holiday falls on a Tuesday or a Thursday, many smaller businesses will 'faire le pont' and take the Monday or the Friday off as well.

Tuesday 1st May:
May Day
(La Fête du Travail)

Thursday 10th May:
Ascension - 40 days after Easter
(Le Jour de l'Ascension)

Sunday 27th May
Mother's Day

Tuesday 8th May:
La Fête de la Victoire 1945
(WW2 Victory Day)

Monday 21st May:
Whit Monday
(Lundi de Pentecôte)

School holidays
for our region (Zone A)
Half term:
14th - 30th April

VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THESE AND OTHER FASCINATING EASTER TRADITIONS IN CATALONIA

We'd love to hear from you!

Tell us a P-O story. What do you love here? What do you hate here? Have you had a good experience? A bad one? A weird one? Tell us about your favourite restaurant, a fascinating 'Did you Know' about the region, a favourite walk, drive or picnic spot. Maybe you have a French language booboo to pass on or a good French joke...or even better, a really bad one!

If you'd like to share it, we'd love to publish it.

Contact us on info@anglophone-direct.com



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Then God Created Adam and Eve

Lorsque Dieu créa Adam et Eve, il leur dit :
 "Il ne me reste que deux cadeaux :
 Le premier, c'est l'art de faire pipi debout...."

Adam ne le laissa pas continuer et s'écria :
 "Moi! Moi! Pour moi!
 S'il te plaît, Seigneur, je le veux ce cadeau !
 S'il te plaît !
 Cela va énormément faciliter ma vie ! S'il te plaît! Donne-le-moi !!!"

Eve acquiesça, ajoutant que pour elle, cela n'avait aucune importance.

Dieu alors offrit ce cadeau à Adam, lequel se mit à crier de joie !

Il courait partout dans le Jardin d'Eden, faisant pipi contre tous les arbres et arbustes, allant vers la plage où il faisait sur le sable des dessins avec son pipi....

Il n'arrêta pas de manifester ainsi son immense bonheur!

Dieu et Eve contemplaient l'homme fou de joie.

Eve demanda alors :

"Seigneur, quel est l'autre cadeau ?"

Et Dieu répondit :

"Le cerveau, Eve! Le cerveau! Et il est pour toi!"

VOCABULARY

Lorsque - when
 créa - created
 Il ne me reste que - I only have....left
 debout - standing up
 acquiesça - agreed
 ajoutant - adding
 offrit - gave
 Il courait partout - he ran around
 arbustes - shrubs
 Seigneur Lord
 Le cerveau - brain

LINGUISTS & LANGUAGE LEARNERS. DONT PANIC!

This funny story is written mostly in the past historic (passé simple) or 'story telling tense' so if you don't recognise verb endings, dont worry - it is only in writing and never used in everyday speech.



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P-OVines

Tried
and
Tasted

Tony Goodman continues his tour of regional wine producers, chatting to the vigneron and recommending wines that have inspired him. Once again, a bit of poetic licence will allow you to enjoy some fun observations from this talented amateur wine taster.

This spring he visits another four fabulous domaines; Les Vignobles de Constance et du Terrassous, Terroirs Romans, and Clos Saint Georges.

Whether you're the French president, a summer time resident, passionate about French cycling or household recycling, there is one person whose advice you need to enjoy your time in France - your local caviste. Cavistes know their stock, the local producers and take pride in being able to match wines to any meal or occasion. Usually personable and professional, most have at least basic English if you need it. Next time you're in town, drop in and meet your new best friend.

Les Français sont si fiers de leurs vins qu'ils ont donné à certaines de leurs villes le nom d'un grand cru.

Oscar Wilde

LES VIGNOBLES DE CONSTANCE ET DU TERRASSOUS

www.terrassous.com

YOUR VISIT

A.O.C. Les Aspres is sweetly placed on the pebbled alluvial plain between Canigou and the soft waters of the Mediterranean sea. Founded early in the 20th century its 70 producers are deeply committed to secure recognition for it to be one of France's best bespoke domaines. They are absolutely determined to match consumers' 21st Century expectations.



Trading from three outlets, the store at Terrats is particularly user friendly, modern and bright with parking at the door. Nothing but the most basic French required as the wines are displayed on open shelves. Relaxed friendly staff.

VIN ROUGE

CHATEAU MOSSE 2016

Syrah, Carignan Mourvedre

A flexible youthful wine with matchless soft southern French tannins. Deep ruby red, enticing fruit aroma with a hint of pepper. Upright, genteel and steadfast. Serve this and Gregory Peck will join you for the Sunday Roast. While age will imbue the tannins with further wisdom, it is fully briefed and ready to make the opening statement for the defence now. Decant no more than 30 mins before and it will appreciate being served around 18C.



LES PIERRES PLATES 2015

Syrah 70%, Carignan 15% Mouverde 15%

A gold medal winning, rock rolling, smooth roller skater of a wine. Plenty of red fruit with hints of pepper. Impressively purple almost black colour. The Mouverde and Carignan pack down nicely with the Syrah. Light touches of the new oak in the background which will come forward and add another layer of complexity if put aside. Grilled red meat or a spicy Friday night tajine but give it a few minutes to freshen up before dinner. Avoid the hipster urge to serve chilled, this is the Sud de France not Shoreditch.



VIN BLANC

LA RESERVE BLANC 2015

Grenache Blanc 52% Vermentino 48%

A fresh crisp, citrus apple blossom special. Vermentino, a recently permitted grape type together with the Grenache Blanc creates a wine with an intense affinity for seafood. While it has sufficient structure to be put aside for 12 months or so, it is ready, willing and able to be enjoyed now. Fantastic value there is no excuse for not having a bottle on hand for an impromptu al fresco lunch or an early summer apero on the terrace. Serve chilled around 12C.



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WINE CLUB

TERROIRS ROMANS
www.terroirs-romans.com



YOUR VISIT

A skilful, relatively fresh faced cooperative founded in 2005 and now consisting of around 50 vineyards. Using traditional grape varieties raised on the rich alluvial terroir of the Plain de Roussillon their mission statement is to craft great value, modern dry wines alongside their traditional sweet wines.

Three modern user friendly outlets in Elne, Cabestany and Villeneuve de la Raho, the latter a favourite with its traditional stone and timber ambience hosted by Anne Sophie. Plenty of parking at the door. Open displays of wine so nothing more than a smile and a mot or two of French required.

VIN ROUGE



DAME D'ELNE AOP CÔTES DU ROUSSILLON 2014

60% Syrah 20% Carignan 20% Grenache Noir.

A powerfully garnet and ruby red wine. An articulate example of the region's strengths and the skills of a master winemaker. Plenty of wood, leather and grenache cherry jam ready for a pink lamb shoulder or herb crusted pork medallions. Ready for duty now or put it aside for 12 months. Decant and rest for 30 mins then serve around 16C.



MAÎTRE DE CABESTANY LA CUVÉE AOP CÔTES DU ROUSSILLON 2016

30 % Grenache 70 % Syrah

A skilfully constructed modern classic. Deep purple red. Plenty of syrah pepper with attractive apricot highlights. An incredibly good value performer capable of entertaining a thick grilled entrecôte drizzled with green pepper sauce or a late night selection of regional cheese. Background hints suggest it will age quite well, however put it to work now. Let it breathe for 30 mins and serve around 18c.

VIN ROSE



VOLONTÉ D'UN HOM BIO IGP CÔTES CATALANES 2015

100% Grenache Noir and Blanc

An interesting Rosé which has a robust crispness from the Grenache Noir, floral notes from the Grenache Blanc and an attractive smooth slightly citron and bay finish. Rosé aficionados looking for something different will love it. It will tackle Friday night spices with élan, a pepper and apricot laden Guinea Fowl or a goat cheese and honey buckwheat galette with style. Serve chilled, around 12C.

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(Also Elne and Cabestany)

Je boirai du lait le jour où les
vaches mangeront du raisin.

Jean Gabin

Après la guerre, deux choix s'offraient
à moi : finir ma vie comme député ou
la finir comme alcoolique. Je remercie
Dieu d'avoir si bien guidé mon choix:
je ne suis plus député !

Winston Churchill



CAZES
www.cazes-rivesaltes.com

YOUR VISIT

A well known and much loved winery which really needs no introduction. Located in the Rivesaltes heartland, for over a 100 years, four generations of the Cazes family have dedicated themselves to producing superb wines from its fabulous pebbled terroir. 100% certified biodynamic.

The visitor centre is located within the Rivesaltes HQ. Surrounded by a working winery you could find yourself rubbing shoulders with master winemakers and Cazes family members. Well signposted. Plenty of parking. Good English.

VIN ROUGE



EGO 2014

40% Syrah 40% Grenache 20% Mouverde

A lovely rush of smooth berry laden aromas, deep garnet colour. Un-oaked which allows Syrah's pepper and Grenache's raspberry spice to step forward and impress. Background hints of liquorice. Structured enough to be put aside for 12 months however that would be like having Michael Bublé over for a soirée and not letting him sing. It's the red for your next Saturday night Entrecôte. Let it rest in the best decanter for no more than 40 mins. Serve at no more than 16C.

CLOS SAINT GEORGES
http://clossaintgeorges.com

YOUR VISIT

Located in the heart of Trouilla's golden triangle, Dominique and Claude Ortel are applying their deep dedication to the region to produce dry wines alongside the estate's traditional sweet wines. The estate is evolving. For tastings please ring ahead to ensure Mr Ortel is available. Well signposted. A reasonable level of French required. Excellent facilities. Ample parking.

VIN ROUGE

Cuvée de Pierre 2008

Syrah 85% Grenache Noir 10% Carignan 5%
The estate is still building its repertoire of dry wines, so for the moment focus on this its flagship offering. An intense red-purple fruit driven wine. The peppery Syrah provides structure, the Grenache deepens the hue and the Carignan contributes spice and liquorice. An honest and charming year

round wine, it will help the bride and groom negotiate the speeches with aplomb and keep the guests attentive. Perfectly drinkable now it would benefit with say 30 mins in the decanter before serving. Serve around 16C.



MAS RIPOLL, TROUILLAS

TEL: 04 68 21 61 46

contact@clossaintgeorges.com

webtv4me

Your UK television friends in the P-O

News update from **PHIL MONAGHAN**



It's been a year now since I last brought you up to date with the reception of British and Irish TV whilst in France, and especially here in the southwest.

I think that it's pretty safe to say that, with the exception of a handful of channels, satellite reception is not possible here

The services or systems used to deliver TV from the UK in this part of France will vary, but at the end of the day it's necessary to use an Internet connection and it needs to be a connection that provides unlimited data usage. This will normally mean entering into a contract with Orange, SFR, Free, or Bouygues, and installing one of their routers.

Without "unlimited data" it is possible to run up very large bills streaming data for TV or movies.

without a very large dish! It's hard to believe that this situation was brought about almost 4 years ago. Please do not live in the hope that your service will return. Probably time to hand over that Sky or Humax box to a relative back in Blighty.

For people in areas where broadband speeds are very slow, and will not allow for "streaming" data, there are satellite broadband providers. These systems use a 2 way satellite connection to bring broadband to the home. An example is skyDSL – they have some great deals and offer a competitive alternative to terrestrial broadband.

There is an on-going program of network improvement here in the P-O. Where speeds are dismally low, Orange is installing Fibre Optic



networks, for example a large company with home workers. There are alternatives to VPN that work better – call me.

Here at webTV4me we have been developing the ways in which we can deliver our TV and Movie packages. Now, not only is it possible to receive our service using our EuroBox, but also directly

to Samsung and LG Smart TVs, and through a mobile service to an App running on a Tablet, Smartphone, or Android Box.

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ONE HUNDRED YEARS FIGHTING AGAINST CANCER!

by Penny Parkinson

Did you know that the French charity which most closely resembles Cancer Research UK is La Ligue nationale contre le cancer? It celebrates its 100th anniversary this year. And I am sure that you DON'T know that it was first called La Ligue franco-anglo-américaine contre le cancer, aiming to fund research into the disease across the three countries.



La Ligue now provides support across France through its network of 103 affiliated comité départementales, all registered charities relying on the **generosity of volunteers giving their time freely and funded entirely by donations.**

Like Cancer Research UK, La Ligue is the largest non-governmental funder of research into cancer in France providing positive help to patients and their families. Its national helpline gives a caller access to emotional support as well as information, lawyers give their time freely and there is a service to help those in financial need.

La Ligue also supports many patient centred associations, themselves charities, through grants. Examples here in the Pyrénées-Orientales are Equilibre 66 and CAMI 66.

The former is an association which, through its Maison 'Entre Parenthèses' in Perpignan **provides support for women touched by cancer.** As well as activities, the 'Maison' has a team of

therapists to aid relaxation and a feeling of well being.

It has been recognised that **suitably adapted sport** during and after cancer treatment **gives enormous benefits** both physically and mentally to a patient. Here in the P-O, this is provided through **CAMI 66** which runs twice weekly classes called 'sport après cancer'. You may have seen them in action around the lake at Villeneuve de la Raho.

Both these associations rely on volunteers, the generosity of donors and organisations like La Ligue.

And did you know that our own anglophone cancer support organisation, Cancer Support France, is in partnership with La Ligue? CSF provides language skills to La Ligue nationally and locally we work together to better support everyone in France touched by cancer.

So next time you see someone shaking a La Ligue tin for a donation, remember that the money isn't just for research. And they have been fighting cancer for 100 years - **worth a euro in the tin!**

SUPPORT LA LIGUE at their annual vide grenier on Sunday 13th May in Saint Cyprien. Don't forget to pop along and say hello to Penny and the other volunteers manning (or womanning) the CSF stall.

TO FIND OUT MORE:

<https://www.sportetcancer.com/cami-66>

<http://equilibre66.com/programmes-adaptes-femmes-et-cancer>



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Termites are nothing new to the P-O and are on the increase owing to the warming Mediterranean climate, with only the upper mountain areas escaping them.

BUT WHAT ARE THEY EXACTLY?

Social insects living in organized colonies just like bees for instance. In fact there are some 2000 different types – the vast majority of whom inhabit tropical climes thankfully.

In France, 6 similar types prevail and cause damage to property. However, there is an endemic species found here in Northern Catalonia – its unpronounceable name *Reticulitermes Banyulensis* comes from the town of Banyuls-sur-Mer in fact – and to date it has spread as far as Marseille.

HOW DO YOU KNOW IF YOUR PROPERTY HAS TERMITES AND WHAT CAN YOU DO TO GET RID OF THEM?



They're not easy to spot, being nocturnal insects – and seek damp, warm places and, in particular, wood. The answer is to call out a professional. **Companies such as SUD TRAITEMENT have 30 years' experience behind them** – and they make it their business to identify and root them out using the most efficient and appropriate methods. One of the most common ways consists of a series of natural wooden baits strategically placed around the building or affected area, so as to entice, encircle, trap and ultimately kill the termites.



If you suspect termite activity in your property, don't delay and let the damage get worse, call SUD TRAITEMENT NOW for a FREE quote, friendly advice and expert service.

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TEST your FRENCH

1

M pour Maman!

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

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

- | | | | |
|------------|----|---|-------------------------------|
| mâcher | 1 | a | qui voit mal |
| mollet | 2 | b | animal de mer transparent |
| myope | 3 | c | jeune sanglier |
| meuble | 4 | d | fleur des champs |
| malin | 5 | e | écraser avec les dents |
| marcassin | 6 | f | truc, chose... |
| mensonge | 7 | g | table, chaise, canapé... |
| marguerite | 8 | h | qui sait se débrouiller |
| machin | 9 | i | entre la cheville et le genou |
| méduse | 10 | j | qui n'est pas vrai |

See Page 86 for answers

2 Find the English for the idiomatic expressions below

- | | | | |
|---|----|---|---------------------------------------|
| Motus et bouche cousue | 1 | a | To go off in a huff |
| Etre à deux doigts de faire quelque chose | 2 | b | To miss out on something |
| Vivre sur son petit nuage | 3 | c | To have a lot of work on |
| Avoir du pain sur la planche | 4 | d | To be late |
| Manger à l'oeil | 5 | e | To get on someone's nerves |
| Manquer le coche | 6 | f | To be a dreamer |
| Prendre la mouche | 7 | g | To eat free, for nothing |
| Arriver à la bourre | 8 | h | To be at the end of your tether |
| Casser les pieds à quelqu'un | 9 | i | Mum's the word |
| Etre au bout du rouleau | 10 | j | To be on the verge of doing something |

Tongue Twister

Répétez 3 fois
Ces cerises chaudes
sortent de Céret!

3

Test your French slang!

- | | | | |
|------------------|----|---|------------|
| dingue | 1 | a | to burn |
| kiffer | 2 | b | disgusting |
| une clope | 3 | c | policeman |
| cramer | 4 | d | cigarette |
| dégueulasse | 5 | e | cheap wine |
| bousiller | 6 | f | to ruin |
| un flic | 7 | g | crazy |
| un(e) frangin(e) | 8 | h | sibling |
| le fric | 9 | i | to like |
| le pinard | 10 | j | money |

Language tips

Eng: My hair IS blonde (sing)

French: Mes cheveux SONT blonds (plural)

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

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



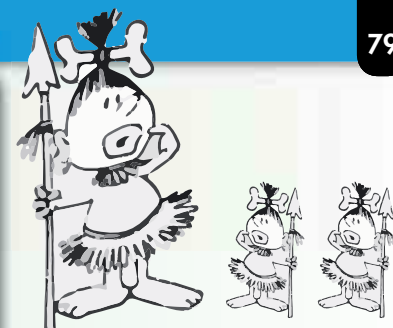
Rain, rain, go away....

Il pleut – it's raining

Il a plu – it rained

Il pleuvait – it was raining

Il va pleuvoir – it's going to rain



Blague Bête

Un papa canibale et son fils se promènent en forêt.

Ils rencontrent une jolie femme blonde et sexy.

Le fils : "Dis papa, on la mange?"

Le père : "Mais non. On la ramène à la maison...et on mange ta mère!"

son fils – his son

on la ramène –

we'll take her home



Wave your baguette

It's not just about the bread
It can also be....

...a magician's wand

...a conductor's baton

... a chopstick

... a drumstick



Interesting expression

C'est une histoire sans queue ni tête
It's a shaggy dog story

Blague (très) bête!

Généralement, quand on parle de Mozart, il n'est pas là, mais quand tu ouvres le frigo.....

Mozzerella

TEST your FRENCH

Useful expression
Ne prends pas la mouche
Don't go off in a huff

4 Match up these useful expressions

- | | | | |
|-------------------------|----|---|-----------------------------|
| être sain et sauf ! | 1 | a | Who's next? |
| à fond | 2 | b | To French kiss |
| attends, je cherche | 3 | c | To get over it |
| tant mieux | 4 | d | To talk rubbish |
| hors service | 5 | e | To be safe and sound |
| raconter n'importe quoi | 6 | f | Out of order |
| rouler une pelle (fam) | 7 | g | Hang on, I'm thinking |
| On verra bien ! | 8 | h | Thoroughly |
| reprandre le dessus | 9 | i | We'll see about that |
| Au suivant ! | 10 | j | Great! (so much the better) |

Blague bête!

Quel est le fruit préféré de Beethoven?

POMME POMME POMME POMME



How to say...

I'm full (I've had enough food)

*J'ai trop mangé
je suis rassasié (ra- sa-see-ay)
je n'en peux plus*

It's full (an event, cinema etc)

C'est complet

EEEE ('COS THAT'S HOW YOU PRONOUNCE IT)

Depending on how you use it, Y can mean there, itor be completely lost in translation.

Here are a few set expressions which just need learning off by heart

allons-y
let's go (there)

j'y vais
I'm going (there)

on y va
let's go

ça y est
that's it, it's done

Il fallait s'y attendre.
It was to be expected.

il y a
there is, there are

je n'y peux rien
I can't do anything
about it

je n'y suis pour rien
It has nothing to do
with me

**Va voir ailleurs si j'y
suis !**
Get lost!

y compris
including



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AMÉLIOREZ votre ANGLAIS



1 S is for Simple!

Find the definitions for the following words which all begin with the letter S.

- | | | | |
|-------------|----|---|------------------------------------|
| sang | 1 | a | Land going up or down |
| sigh | 2 | b | Opening into which a plug fits |
| shuttlecock | 3 | c | Jump/roll forward or backward |
| slug | 4 | d | Past tense of sing |
| shrug | 5 | e | Doesn't taste sweet |
| slope | 6 | f | Light object for playing badminton |
| straw | 7 | g | Thin tube for drinking through |
| somersault | 8 | h | Snail without a house |
| sour | 9 | i | Deep breath |
| socket | 10 | j | Raise your shoulders |

See Page 86 for answers

OOOOOOPS !

On vous a donné les mauvaises réponses à cet exercice dans le dernier P-O LIFE – exprès bien sur ! :-)
Sorrnnrrrry.
Let's have another try.

2 Some Very British Idioms!

Can you find their equivalent in French?

- | | | | |
|------------------------------------|----|---|---------------------------------------|
| I need to spend a penny | 1 | a | T'affole pas! |
| I was gobsmacked | 2 | b | C'est nul |
| it's a knees up | 3 | c | Il cherche à draguer |
| That's pants | 4 | d | Je dois faire pipi |
| It's all gone pear-shaped | 5 | e | J'étais époustoufflé |
| It's sod's law | 6 | f | Tout est tombé à l'eau |
| I'm knackered | 7 | g | Il est un peu bébéte |
| He's on the pull | 8 | h | C'est une fête |
| He's a picnic short of a sandwich | 9 | i | Je suis crevé |
| Don't get your knickers in a twist | 10 | j | C'est la loi de l'emmerdement maximum |

DAFT JOKE

Why do the French like to eat snails?

Because they don't enjoy fast food.



Another DAFT JOKE

(where does she find them?)

Two clairvoyants meet. One says to the other: **You are fine, and how am I?**
(clairvoyant - voyant)



Tongue twister (virelangue)

Répétez trois fois
A proper copper coffee pot

Language tip

'...ish' – à peu près

Rajoutez '...ish' pour donner une indication vague de l'heure, l'âge etc

*I arrive home at sixish, depending on traffic.
She is smallish.*

3 Just say the word

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|---|---|------------------------------------|
| Goes without saying | 1 | a | Sans blague! |
| You don't say! | 2 | b | Si je peux me permettre de le dire |
| When all's said and done | 3 | c | En fin de compte |
| Say your piece | 4 | d | Souriez |
| Just say the word | 5 | e | Dites ce que vous avez à dire |
| If I may say so | 6 | f | Dès que vous voulez |
| Say cheese | 7 | g | Il va de soi |

4 You know it makes sense!

Match up these idiomatic expressions which all have something to do with the senses.

- | | | | |
|----------------------------------|----|---|------------------------------|
| It's tasteless | 1 | a | Restons en contact |
| He's a sound friend | 2 | b | C'est un bon ami |
| I smell a rat | 3 | c | Aimer les bonbons |
| He touched me for a fiver | 4 | d | Loin des yeux, loin du cœur |
| Love at first sight | 5 | e | A chacun ses goûts |
| To have a sweet tooth | 6 | f | Je soupçonne quelque chose |
| It's touch and go | 7 | g | Un coup de foudre |
| Out of sight, out of mind | 8 | h | C'est fade |
| There's no accounting for tastes | 9 | i | Il m'a taxé 5 livres |
| Let's stay in touch | 10 | j | C'est une situation critique |

Ouch, that English humour !

A man was hit hard in the head by a can of coca cola... but he's alright, it was a soft drink.

(soft drink – boisson non-alcoolisée)

IN EACH P-O LIFE, WE GIVE YOU A MISSION.

Votre Mission.... si toutefois vous l'acceptez, est de glisser tout doucement cette phrase dans votre conversation au moins une fois par jour pendant une semaine!

Chiche !

....Eeeee, I'd love a nice cup of tea





State Aid for Electric Bikes

It's cycling season but **oh, those hills!!** Have you thought about buying an electric bike or VAE (vélo à assistance électrique)? Well, **to encourage you to go green, the state is offering to pay up to 20%!**

To benefit from this assistance, (20% of the cost of the bicycle (TTC) but can not exceed 200€) apply for your refund via the vendor when you purchase your bike.

The bicycle must....

-be new
-have electrical assistance that does not use a lead-acid battery;
-be equipped with an electric motor with a maximum continuous rated power of 0.25 kilowatts.

Once purchased, you can not sell your electric bike within one year of purchase.

Happy biking!



Down with Speed Limits

Don't forget the reduction in the speed limit **from 90km/h to 80km/h from 1st July 2018** on two way roads (Le Boulou to Argelès road, parts of the Perpignan to Prades road....) This does not apply to dual carriageways where there is a division between the two directions. The initiative follows a rise in road deaths to almost 3,500 during 2016, with 55 per cent of the fatalities occurring on two-lane routes with no separation between traffic.



Speed Limits

Motorway	130 kph (110 kph in wet weather)
Dual Carriageway (Major Roads)	110 kph (100 kph in wet weather)
Two-lane roads outside built-up areas	80 kph (70 kph in wet weather)
Built up areas (towns and villages)	50 kph

Expect an on-the-spot fine of €68 to €750, and that goes for not French residents too.



Booking Your Flights

Did you know that, according to a recent fare comparison site study, air fare prices from France are cheaper if you book online on Mondays or Tuesdays? **Saturdays and Sundays are the most expensive days to book flights.**

Where actual travel is concerned, **Friday is apparently the cheapest day to fly from France, Sunday the most expensive**

The study also showed that buying tickets 22-24 weeks in advance can cut your fare price by 17%.

Take a Deep Breath....

If you have a second home in France, prepare for a shock next time you open your Taxe d'habitation bill. Already in effect in Paris, and several other large towns, councils are now legally allowed to raise the tax by up to a whopping 60%! If your main home is in

France, you won't be affected by this rise, but Brits who live in England and own a holiday home in France should take a deep breath before opening your next bill – **unless you live here in the P-O which doesn't qualify for the rise! You can breathe out now!**



DID YOU KNOW?

Tarlà of the Ramblas

The legendary Tarlà hangs from a pole on the Ramblas throughout springtime in Girona.

Originally made out of sawdust, with a wooden head, today dressed as a jester, the tradition of this puppet dates back to the middle ages.

When the Black Death swept through the unsanitary, narrow streets, the authorities quarantined the rue de l'Argenteria to prevent further spreading of the plague.

Bored, unhappy residents, stuck for weeks or months in their homes, were entertained by a young acrobat known as 'Tarlà' with displays of acrobatics on poles erected between the narrow buildings.

Five hundred years later, the puppet is hung every year at either end of the street, symbolising festivity and solidarity.



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APRIL SHOWERS

Watch out for, 'une giboulée', quick and often heavy shower which can suddenly change a fine spring day back into winter.

ANSWERS



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



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

La Fête du Muguet - 1st May



According to French tradition, give those you love a little bouquet of Lily-of-the-Valley (Muguet), to wish them happiness and good luck in celebration of the arrival of spring. (Muguet is also a useful word to know if you go to the chemist with an itch you just can't scratch as it also describes the medical condition, thrush!!)

P-O SMALL ADS

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P-O Life



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SAMU (medical emergency) 15

POLICE emergency 17

Fire service emergency 18

European emergency line 112

SOS Doctor 24/24	08 20 20 41 42
Emergency vet	04 68 83 35 85
Anti-poison centre	04 91 75 25 25
Perpignan Hospital	04 68 61 66 33
CPAM (English spk serv)	0811 36 36 46
Cancer Support France	04 68 69 01 37

Directory enquiries	118 008
International directory enquiries	118 700
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Local weather forecast	08 36 68 02 66
GDF (gas problems)	08 10 43 30 66
EDF (electricity problems)	05 56 17 40 70

You can use the **European emergency number 112** in any EU country from any telephone. You do not need a card or money to ring this number from a pay phone. 112 may also be used from a mobile to connect you with all emergency services.

Useful Vocabulary

Help > Au secours!

**It's an emergency >
C'est un cas d'urgence**

**I need an ambulance >
J'ai besoin d'une ambulance**

**I've had an accident >
J'ai eu un accident**

**The house/car is on fire >
La maison/voiture a pris feu**

**My husband has had a heart attack/stroke >
Mon mari fait une crise cardiaque/a souffert un AVC
(accident vasculaire cérébral – pronounced ai vai cai)**

**My child is choking >
Mon enfant s'étouffe.**

**I'm bleeding >
Je saigne (beaucoup).**

**I'm diabetic, I need insulin >
Je suis diabétique, j'ai besoin d'insuline.**

**My wife is having the baby, her water has broken >
Ma femme accouche, le bébé arrive, la poche des eaux a percé.**

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