

spring 2019

P-O Life

Life in the Pyrénées-Orientales

N° 63
FREE / GRATUIT



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THE DAY**
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in Perpignan

**FOOD &
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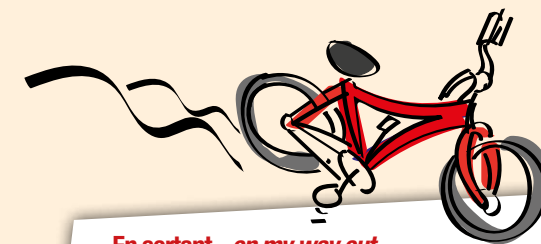
Coucou les amis

Despite Brexit doom, gloom and confusion, **spring has arrived in the P-O in its usual flurry of wild and fragrant colour** - and bought out the silly in me! The serious business of writing an editorial has been replaced by a bit of fun to help french learners **start off the new season with a giggle!**

Kate

RISKY WHISKY!

“La semaine dernière, je suis partie à vélo pour acheter une bouteille de whisky. En sortant du magasin, je me suis dit que, si je tombais du vélo avec une bouteille dans mon sac à dos, je risquais de casser la bouteille et de me faire mal avec le verre donc j'ai bu toute la bouteille avant de rentrer. En fin de compte, j'ai bien fait car je suis tombée 5 fois de mon vélo avant d'arriver à la maison mais je ne me suis pas coupée une seule fois avec le verre! Malin hein? ”



**En sortant - on my way out
je me suis dit - I said to myself
si je tombais - if I was to fall
En fin de compte - in the end
j'ai bien fait - I did the right thing
je ne me suis pas coupé - I didn't cut myself
Malin hein? - Clever eh?**

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CERET: BUNGALOW – modern, 3-bedroom bungalow with approx 82m² living space. Garden, terrace and parking area. Lounge/living room/kitchen area looks out directly onto terrace and garden.

PRICE: 227 000 € • REF: 6577 Dpe N/A



ARLES-SUR-TECH: CATALAN MAS - on approx 7,4 hectares of woodland. Kitchen, lounge/living room, 4 bedrooms, 2 shower rooms, covered terrace, courtyard approx 75m², garage approx 46m². Superb mountain views. Peaceful, natural setting.

PRICE: 257 000 € • REF: 6600 Dpe N/A



CERET: BUNGALOW – end of terrace, semi-detached bungalow on approx 333m² plot. 2 bedrooms, separate kitchen and a garage. Situated in a quiet area close to the shops and clinic.

PRICE: 215.000 € • REF: 2649 Dpe C



LE BOULOU: SEMI-DETACHED HOUSE on approx 330m² plot with pool. Ground floor: Entrance hall /lounge/living area, part open-plan kitchen, WC. 1st floor: 3 bedrooms, shower room and covered terrace.

PRICE: 235 000 € • REF: 6626 Dpe C



AMÉLIE-LES-BAINS: 1-BED APARTMENT consisting of lounge, open fitted kitchen, large bedroom leading out onto a terrace. FULLY FURNISHED. Ideal investment property – very good rental returns.

PRICE: 65 000 € • REF: 6637 Dpe E



AMÉLIE-LES-BAINS: FURNISHED STUDIO on 4th and top floor of an apartment block with lift. Fully-fitted, open-plan kitchen leading into living area approx 23m². New shower room. Ideal investment property or second home.

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Inland and coast CIRCULAR from PORT VENDRES

Chemin Muletier, Paulilles, Coastal path with Cap Béar option

A circular walk with good paths, some moderate ascent/descent along the coast and short stretches of road. Walking boots recommended. Do not walk this route after heavy rain as there are several water courses to cross. Allow 2 hours for short version and 3 ½ hours for longer version.

Access:

map IGN 1:25000 Banyuls,
Col de Perthus, Côte
Vermeille 25490T



GETTING THERE

Take **D914** to end of dual carriageway at Port Vendres. Continue on single main road direction Banyuls, ignoring left turns into town and Port. Pass lay-by with 'dégustation' and after 50 metres turn left into 'military' road on bend. There are 2 areas of parking above the vineyards of Les Clos de Paulilles before area of no entry.



> start on chemin muletier

THE WALK

Rejoin main road and cross with care to walk ½ kilometre up the narrow road opposite. Pass communication mast on bend and at next bend turn left to follow double track which soon becomes single. Note interesting cairns on the wall.

The path is an old chemin muletier (mule trail). It soon crosses a road (15 mins to here) and continues down into a valley past a colourful building.



> Paulilles distribution map of dynamite

Cross road, follow double track for 60 metres and enter single track with a low wall on your right down to yet another river bed. **Cross and turn left to railway bridge.**

Take steps on the left to enter the Paulilles car park and on into the grounds of this historic site, **Nobel's dynamite factory opened in 1870 and closed in 1984.** A number of accidents contributed to its closure but local tunnels, as well as some in the Alps, were created using dynamite made here, and shipped all over the world. (30 mins to here)



Erosion from the November 2014 rains has taken away some of the path by the stream so **after 10 mins you may find yourself on the stream bed before path turns right to cross to other side.** Soon cross a footbridge and keep left alongside the vines to cross another stream bed. Path rises to emerge in another field. Soon arrive at a double track uphill to road.

> Part of old railway

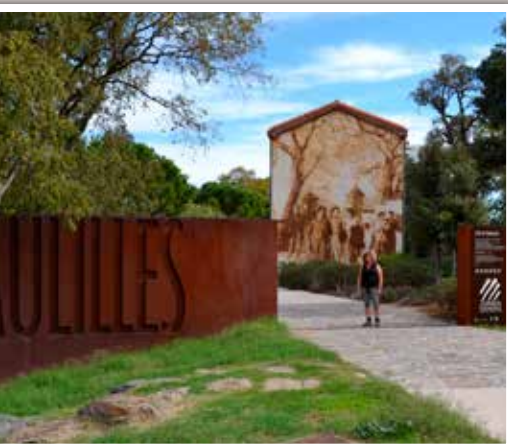


inland and coast CIRCULAR from PORT VENDRES

Chemin Muletier, Paulilles, Coastal path with Cap Béar option



Today, the dilapidated buildings and grounds of the 80-acre site have been renovated, and a free industrial heritage museum set within landscaped gardens explains its fascinating history. Picnic spots provide vast views over Med and mountain and large sepia murals on several of the restored buildings are a fitting memorial to the explosion victims and dynamite makers of Paulilles. A restoration workshop for traditional wooden 'barques catalanes' can also be found on site.



(Museum open every day apart from 1st November, 25th December. An on site café is open from May to October.)

Head for the beach and follow the broad path in front of the tower. Cross a bridge to join the coastal path past German buildings from World War 2 to Plage de Port Vendres/ Bernadi. Cross the beach and continue on coastal path.



Pass a number of small creeks. The views are wonderful and the coastline dramatic.



> Cliffs on coast path between Bernadi and Cap Béar



real name out loud, was responsible for at least 30 explosions, leaving more than 50 dead over a century of production.

Many others were victims of anti-freeze agent, 'glycol', cheap substitute for

glycerine, and found many years later to dilate arteries and damage the heart.

With a strong trade union, strikes were inevitable. One strike started as a result of workers being suspended for playing rugby with several sticks of dynamite tied together!

When the factory closed down in 1984, it remained derelict for some time.

Developers and entrepreneurs eyed it greedily for its prime position, dreaming dreams of luxury hotel complexes and marinas.

In 1998 however, the conservationists won the day and it was bought by the Conservatoire du littoral (Coastal Conservation), and restored over several years.

The Paulilles dynamite factory was one of the first of its kind to employ women in non-clerical positions, as well as large numbers of foreign workers.

Spanish refugees of the Retirada, and Vietnamese after France's withdrawal from Indochina found a job and a home at Paulilles. A self-sufficient community with its own church and school, employees described the site as 'le Pérou' (El Dorado), and 'un petit coin de rêve'.

Factory directors planted gardens with local and exotic flowers and shrubs and the site became an attractive and pleasant place to live.

Workers were well paid and well looked after. And so they should have been.

The 'dynamiterie', nicknamed 'La Montagne' by superstitious workers who preferred not to say the

Arrive at 2 small beaches with a few holiday properties. Cross first beach and drop down to second, another lovely spot for a picnic. Climb up from beach, level off then climb again. At highest point a narrow path goes off left (not way marked) to join a double track.

THE SHORTER WALK NOW TURNS RIGHT (UPWARDS) TO FOLLOW TRACK AND CONTOUR ABOVE VINES BACK TO THE PARKING AREA.

...

Sheltered by both the Béar and Ullestrell headlands, and protected by Port Vendres fort, the dynamite site was chosen for its unpopulated position, which would not endanger lives in case of explosion.

Equally important was its facility for building solid jetties for safe sea transport, and the fact that it was 'as far away as possible from German borders' where the Franco-Prussian War raged. The sand and pebble beaches are perfect for grabbing both summer and winter sunshine, sheltered as they are by historic anti tank walls built by the Germans in 1943 to limit the possibility of an allied landing.



inland and coast from PORT VENDRES

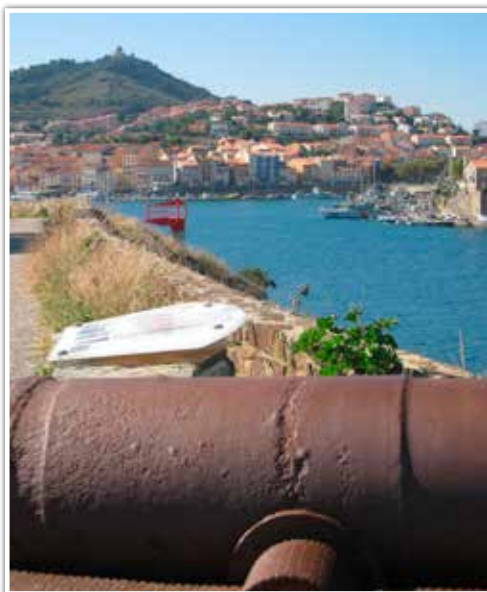
Chemin Muletier, Paulilles, Coastal path with Cap Béar option

FOR A LONGER WALK continue along coastal path to Cap Béar, passing the pretty hamlet of St Catherine's Bay with its white holiday homes huddled above the creek below the lighthouse. Follow way marked path behind semaphore or coast-guard centre, cross the road and continue along path opposite, contouring the hills above the road (turn right at crossroad of paths after 5 mins) then meeting it to continue below the road and emerging at the jetty and beach at the entrance to the harbour.

Follow way marked coast path back to the port area at Les Tamarins.



> semaphore and fort from lighthouse



> View of Port Vendres from canon on coast path

Follow road and walk uphill away from port, over railway and soon take double track sharp left before roundabout to rejoin parking ●

Swedish chemist Alfred Nobel, inventor of dynamite and other deadly materials, was actually a pacifist at heart. He believed that his inventions would end all war through their deterrent effect. Shocked at being described by a newspaper as a 'merchant of death', this paradox of a man, manufacturer of explosives, staunch supporter of the struggle for peace and disarmament, remade his will. He left much of his wealth to the establishment of the Nobel Prize for achievements in physics, chemistry, medicine, literature..... and peace. He made no provision, however, for maths. Rumour had it that his mistress of the moment had an affair with a renowned mathematician. Nobel withheld the prize for maths for fear that his rival might win it!

WHERE TO EAT
IN Port Vendres
See page 35

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PRICE: 389 000 € • REF: 1215m

Dpe N/A



LAROCHE-DES-ALBÈRES: In the heart of the village, fantastic 4-bedroom character village house tastefully renovated. 219m² on 4 levels, 1077m² plot with woodland and room for a pool!

PRICE: 599 000 € • REF: 1328m

Dpe: 123 (C)
GES: 4 (A)



VILLELONGUE-DELS-MONTS: Fantastic 222m² 4-bedroom detached villa on a 1520m² flat and fenced plot with pool. Fantastic 73m² living room. Quality fittings and very quiet location!

PRICE: 399 000 € • REF: 1315m

Dpe N/A



LAROCHE-DES-ALBÈRES: Very pleasant 94m² 3-bedroom villa on a 900m² plot with pool and view over the mountains. Bright, south-facing property in very good condition!

PRICE: 328 000 € • REF: 1246m

Dpe N/A



BANYULS-SUR-MER: Very quiet location for this 3-bedroom semi-detached villa with pool. Plot 375m². Garage, south-facing terrace with BBQ - and fantastic sea and mountain views!

PRICE: 399 000 € • REF: 1271m

Dpe N/A



BANYULS-SUR-MER: Ideally located 4-bedroom village house with terrace and sea view! Self-contained 1-bed apartment. The perfect place to enjoy life in Banyuls!

PRICE: 223 000 € • REF: 361A

Dpe N/A



BANYULS-SUR-MER: 109m². 3-bedroom apartment with terrace and sea view! 2 parking spaces, very quiet location. Rarely seen on the market!

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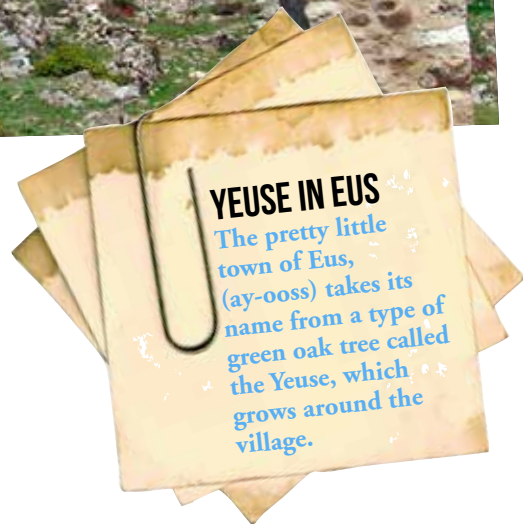
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to the abandoned VILLAGE of COMES



The commune of Eus also encompasses another village, that of Comes. It's an hour-long trek up the mountainside from Eus to the ruins of this abandoned village, 2 hours for the more physically challenged. Take a picnic and plenty to drink.



As long ago as the **18th century Comes was a thriving village community.** Today, all that remains, are the now lifeless shells.

Some of the graffiti on the ancient church tell us of these Comes people and their ancestors; the rest are chronicled meticulously in the parish records of Eus.

Wonderful christian names abound in the records such as Bonaventure or Elysee, suggesting fun and delight.

However, it would seem that there was precious little to smile about in olden-times Comes. **Children walked four kilometres down the mountain to go to school** come rain, hail or shine, and wended their weary

way upwards at the end of the day. Life was tough, a constant battle against summer wind and winter cold and perpetual drought.

It was the last of these three which finally saw the end of the village. Seven successive years of rainless sècheresse in the 1920's finally saw the last of these hardy people retreat down the mountain to Eus and Prades, and their families are now dotted around the lower valley, the lonely cemetery left to bear silent witness to hundreds of souls taken unwillingly before their time.

The Église Saint-Étienne de Comes is the only building now still standing with a roof.

Its romanesque shape and its dry-stone walls betray its date of **construction around the 10th century** and there is a sad beauty in the simplicity of its lines. Inside, it is equally sparse and bare, though not severe, since traces of deep blues and rich reds dating back many hundreds of years can be seen on its crumbling plaster walls.

Some of this sparseness is due to the devastation caused by passing bounty-hunters, who have stolen just about everything that could be moved, including the altar and some of the ornate grave stones in the cemetery. **The altar rail though is still in place, standing guard over the raised stone platform of the chancel.** *The views are stunning •*



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We can't all be snail lovers - **but did you know that slugs and snails are mollusks, the same family as oysters and mussels?** If you love seafood, maybe it's time to give snails a try? Want to find out more? **Team Cargols** is a Perpignan-based association created to promote snail cuisine and the 'Cargolada', collective snail fest of fun, socialising and celebration! **Join them in Perpignan, 25th April at the Parc des Expositions** (as part of the MEDFEL Salon), **in Barcelona, 18th May** to watch the **Catalan Dragons v Wigan** and in **Toulouges, first weekend of July** for the **Festival de l'Escargot**.

Find out more: **Facebook:** www.facebook.com/teamcargols

Website: www.teamcargols.com

Read their article on www.anglophone-direct.com – search Snail Fest.



HAVE YOU HEARD OF FELDENKRAIS DANCE THERAPY?

Perpignan-based dancer and choreographer, **English-speaking Michel Casanovas**, offers these **gentle movement classes in Collioure** to **improve movement and enhance human potential**. Well-known and widely used for **pain reduction**, as well as the **rehabilitation of orthopaedic and neurological problems**, this method is also used to encourage well-being.

Want to learn more?

Contact Michael on 06 23 93 23 33 / casanovas.michel@yahoo.fr.

See his ad in the Magazine Directory (Health & Well-being), **Read their article on** www.anglophone-direct.com – search Snail Fest



THE BELLS

How about trying something a bit different? Did you know that **English bellringing** is coming to the P-O? Interested? **Contact St George's Vernet-les-Bains** to find out more....and look out for the **Wakefield Morris Dancers** and **Festival of Bells** at the end of September too.

<https://stgeorgesvernet-les-bainsfrance.weebly.com/bells.html>



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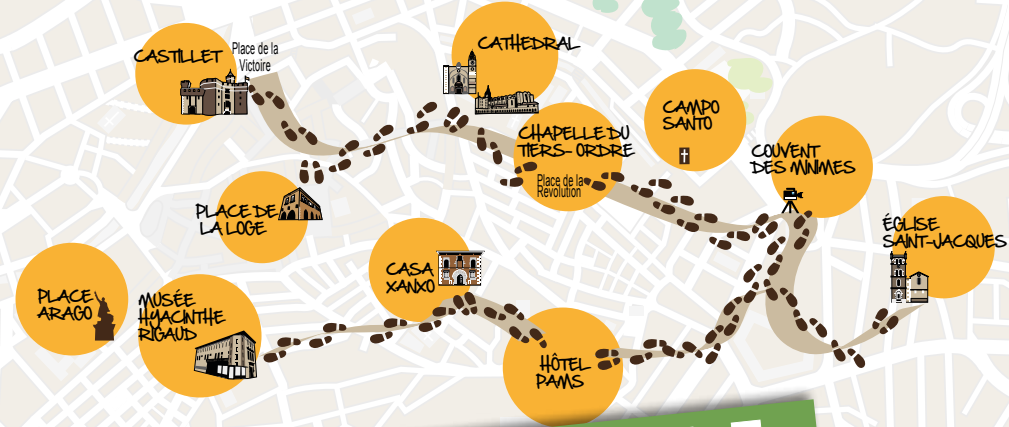
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OUT ON THE TOWN

..IN PERPIGNAN

Capitale de la Sardane and Ville Européenne du Vin

Panorama. Place de la république

Between festivals, concerts, dancing, theatre, wine, food and ancient tradition, there's always something going on in Perpignan. Check out the Tourist Office for more info.

Today however, we're out on the town for a wander around a few of the delights of historic Perpignan with its colourful mix of old and new, chic and shabby, trendy boutiques, narrow, cobbled streets and small intimate bistros.

A **thirty minute drive from the Spanish border**, this cultural capital of Catalonia North owes much of its heritage and cultural development to the kings of Majorca, **whose palace still dominates the town**. With beautiful chapel, some rather austere royal apartments and a grand courtyard, the palace is very slightly off our city centre circuit today but a must-see another time, if only for the superb view from the impressive red brick ramparts across the city roofs to Canigo and Queribus.

The city walls built by Vauban are long gone, but the **XIV century Castillet, our starting point today remains**. Gateway, fortress, prison, and today a museum of Catalan History, **climb the spiral staircase of La Casa Pairal** (entrance: 2€) to the terrace, added to support cannons. The views across the city, the plain of Roussillon, and the sacred Mount Canigo are spectacular.

Castillet>>



MARKETS

As well as the colourful daily market in Place Cassanyes and the small morning market in the place de la République, there is a flea market every Sunday near the Palais des Expositions and a Bric a Brac market each Saturday under the Plane Trees in front of the Palais de Congrès



From the **Castillet**, head along the **rue des Marchands** towards the **place de la Loge**, formerly called the '**Place des Hommes Riches**', and paved with marble. On the corner, the **newly located tourist office has replaced the 1397 Loge de Mer**, once the Stock exchange and HQ for maritime affairs.



La Méditerranéenne by Maillol

Next door, the XVI century Town Hall has three hands sprouting from the wall, **representing each of the main 3 social classes**, and their right to vote. Step through the attractive arched entrance into a pleasant courtyard where "**La Méditerranéenne**" (also known as '**La Pensée**'), bronze statue by Maillol, sits in a pretty pool. To the left, take a wander around the cool and plush '**Salle des Mariages**' with magnificently ornate ceiling, **restored in 2008 but originally designed for a visit from Napoleon 1.**



salle des mariages

Next door, the **Palais de la Deputation**, once the seat of the Roussillon Parliament, was the setting for many a grisly execution.

From **Place de la Loge**, take the narrow **Rue Saint Jean** opposite the tourist office towards the **Gothic Cathédrale Saint-Jean-Baptiste** in the pretty and peaceful **Place Gambetta**. The vast, rather sombre interior



houses some spectacular religious art, an impressive XIV century organ and a large pre-roman white marble baptismal font. The original old Romanesque **St Jean le Vieux is joined to the cathedral** by huge buttresses but is unvisitable. It houses some very secular electricity equipment as well as **the tomb of Sanch I.**



Just a few minutes walk away is the **Campo Santo**, one of only two **cloister cemeteries in France**, whose graceful arcades contained the tombs owned by wealthy burghers in the Middle Ages. **Today it is an idyllic outdoor setting for open-air concerts, theatre...**

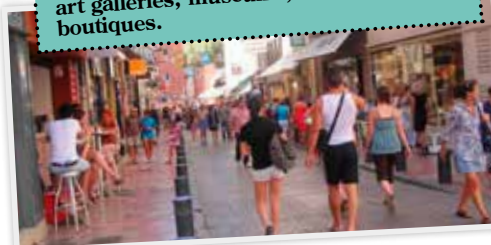
In fact, most religions were represented in Perpignan during the Middle Ages and many ancient chapels and monasteries are now used for exhibitions and concerts.

Only a little way off our city circuit, **the rambling 15th century Couvent des Minimes is now the International Centre for Photojournalism**. Entry is free and fascinating to these all-year-round, **diverse exhibitions of photojournalism**. Closed for the foreseeable future, but worth bearing in mind for a future visit, **the Chapelle du Tiers-Ordre de Saint-Dominique in the Place de la Révolution française took almost a century to complete**. A small courtyard joins it to the **Chapelle des Dominicains**, until recently, the base of the French Foreign Legion, where the "Trabucayres", (bands of highwaymen) who terrorised the roads of the Albères in the mid 19th century were tried and condemned to death or hard labour.

Also worth a visit is the **recently restored church of St Jacques in the inner-city quarter St Jacques**, a colourful part of the town with mix of native French, North Africans and Gitanes, an area with fascinating ambience, despite its crumbling, impoverished appearance. **This relatively unknown church dates back to the 14th Century, and the interior is as impressive as Perpignan's cathedral.**



Time for a cold beer or a frothy coffee? You'll be spoilt for choice as you stroll through shady and ancient cobbled streets past inviting inner courtyards, havens of calm but also surprises, shady terraces and sunny squares, private art galleries, museums, and quirky boutiques.



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THERE'S A PLACE FOR US

On now to an **art deco gem, the Hotel Pams in the Rue Emile Zola**, one of several beautiful old 'hotels particuliers', elegant private mansions of the Perpignan Bourgeoisie. Pierre Bardou of JOB cigarette paper fame bought it along with several surrounding houses in the 1850s. **It has enormous Art Deco Pre-Raphaelite paintings on the walls**, a stunning entrance hall with an amazing light well, and a delightful hidden garden. Adjoining the house is the old cigarette factory where many people were employed. Entrance is free and it's a perfect spot to sit a while.



< The hôtel Pams

A short distance away from the Hotel Pams is **the Gothic Casa Xanxo**, house of Art and History, **another example of the XVI century wealth of the Perpignan merchants**. Undergoing long term renovation, admission is nevertheless free to the courtyard and decorative sculpted architecture of the ground floor arched entrance.

Our final visit today is the **Museum of Beaux Arts Hyacinthe Rigaud**, newly-renovated and boasting an impressive array of both permanent and temporary exhibitions. A creative melting pot of Hispanic, Italian, Flemish... and of course, local greats such as the **museum's namesake, Hyacinthe Rigaud, and the revolutionary Aristide Maillol**.

How about doing a bit of 'place hopping' around some of the lovely squares in the centre of Perpignan?

Here are just a few, worth mentioning for their name, for their history...or just a sunny place to sit on a beautiful spring day.

Place Bir Hakeim is a peaceful park just 5 minutes walk from the centre ville. Children's playground, water features, (look out for the 'magic fountain' in front of the Palais des Congrès) and benches make it a perfect place for a bit of time out from the relentless shopping, sightseeing and partying! It was named after a WW2 battle in which the French troops were defeated, although the conflict seriously delayed advancing Italian and German armoured divisions and enabled British troops to win the next important battle, that of El Alamein.



Place Arago is named after local lad François Arago (1786-1853), physicist, astronomer, charismatic adventurer, politician, responsible for the abolition of slavery in the French colonies in 1853. He has also had craters on Mars and the Moon, and a ring of Neptune named after him! A pretty line of fountains that you can run through if you're so inclined, and restaurants for all tastes.



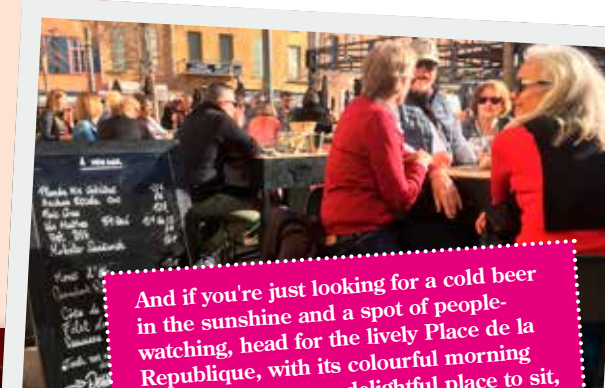
Place Cassanyes is named after Canet born Joseph Cassanyes (1758-1843), mainly remembered as a member of the National Convention, (the new administration during the French revolution) who voted to lop off the head of Louis XVI in 1793...but also for his part in the defence of the Roussillon against Spain. Here you will find the colour, sounds and smells of North Africa on your very own doorstep at the daily market.



Place de Catalogne in front of the FNAC as you enter Perpignan from the south has pretty fountains and benches to sit on. Not really a place to picnic but worth a visit to 'Dali en Levitation' to see Dali sitting on a high red chair welcoming visitors to the Catalan capital.

Place de la Loge, mentioned in detail earlier in this article, bustles with busy shoppers wandering up and down the Rue des Marchands. A couple of well placed bars and restaurants are perfect for people watching. During WW2, this was the meeting place for refugees and escapees looking for 'passeurs' to take them over the mountains to the relative safety of Spain. While you're there, don't forget to pop into the newly located Tourist Office on the corner for town plans, leaflets, post-cards, info...and a warm welcome.

Other 'places' include the **small Place de la Révolution** with its ancient well and bronze lizard, the Place Rigaud with old labour exchange and statue of Hyacinthe Rigaud, the tiny Place des Poilus, named after the soldiers returning from the First World War leading on to the fabulous Rue Paratilla, (named after French pilot René Paratilla, lost in WW1) with colourful morning fish market and every herb and spice you could wish for.



And if you're just looking for a cold beer in the sunshine and a spot of people-watching, head for the lively Place de la République, with its colourful morning market in season; a delightful place to sit, eat, drink, shop and relax.



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Restaurant

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In praise of Perpignan's Little independents

....BY HENRY SHAFTOE

Do we really need more “grandes surfaces” (out of town shopping malls) in the P.O? I ask as I watch the construction of yet another “shopping experience” by the side of the Route Nationale at Pollestres. An unfortunate but inevitable by-product of the growth of these “grandes surfaces”, is the reduction of trade for retailers in Perpignan.

Many independent retailers have rolled down their shutters for the last time, but others have bucked the trend and remain open. I find these “little independents” a joy to behold – they add colour and vitality to the street scene as well as offering a more personal retail service.

Want a pair of slippers? Go to M. Pantoufle.
A hat? Try Mme Chapellerie, both on rue Maillly.



Love; fresh roasted coffee beans? Visit M. le Torrefacteur on Rue des Augustins.



And the jewel in the crown must be, with a name almost as long as the tiny street itself: **rue Adjudant Pilote Paratilla**. This short pedestrianised thoroughfare, off Place des Poilus, has a selection of wonderful open fronted 'epiceries' and 'poissoneries'.



And it's not just for whimsical nostalgic reasons that I believe we should support these little local shops – there is a strong economic argument too because the owners tend to live locally, so their profits are more likely to be spent locally, helping to support other local retailers and services. I don't know how long these little independents will survive – I guess it will depend on how much support and custom you and I offer them...



Lest we forget

Michel Torrent (code name Milor René Jules) fled Saint Malo under German occupation and found refuge for himself and his family with his grandparents in Perpignan. He joined local resistance group “Gallia” where he became an ‘agent de renseignement’ and ‘passeur’, helping escapees over the Pyrenees. Betrayed, he was picked up by the Gestapo in 1944 at his workplace in the ‘Dames de France’, tortured and imprisoned in the Citadelle in Perpignan, and deported to Buchenwald and Flossenburg where he died.

His daughter, Josette Forgues-Torrent, possibly the youngest member of the Maquis in France at just 12 years old, helped her Dad in the Resistance by carrying messages between members of the group and accompanying him to Las lillas where he guided the long climb over the border.

After his betrayal and arrest, she rushed home from school, burnt all incriminating evidence, and warned other members of the group, allowing them to flee.

After the war, she wrote “Je ne regrette rien, au contraire, je suis fière d'avoir été du “bon côté”..... Toutefois, il restera en moi une plaie qui jamais ne se cicatrisera. J'ai perdu mon père, mon complice, mon guide. Il avait 36 ans et moi 14”.

fière - proud // Toutefois- However // une plaie - a wound //
qui jamais ne se cicatrisera - which will never heal



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My Life in The P-O



FROM INFANCY TO ADULTERY

From a glimmer of an inkling over a glass of wine too many to a bit of an experiment with a piece of A4 paper folded in half... to the 96 page magazine that it is today, you are once again invited to follow the convoluted ramblings and scribblings of My Life in the P-O as the baby P-O Life slowly starts to crawl.



APRIL 2006

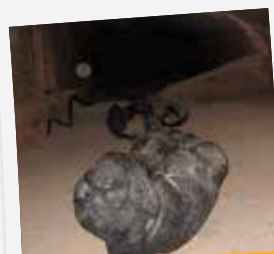
You may remember from the winter edition of P-O Life that March ended in a flurry of bottom licking (the dog, not me) after days of torrential rain. April hasn't really been much better behaved! As the French would say demurely....il pleut comme vache qui pisse!



My **FactFile** (Not sure about that name any more. Need something a bit more Pyrénées-Orientales) and website continue to occupy much of my day in the nicest possible way. Several of the main Tourist Offices have accepted to stock it now (muted, slightly hysterical 'whoop whoop') so I've actually had quite a few calls (well, 2) ☺ from people who would like me to write about them. How exciting is that? **One was an invitation to a soirée 'Apéritifs dînatoires' at the Palais des Congrès** to present the Perpignan Summer Music Programme. **Posh or wot!** These finger food buffets have become very fashionable in France – tiny sweet and savoury dishes, generally eaten with fingers or mini sforks (foons?), and verrines, small glasses filled with layers of hot scallops, salmon, prawns, avocado...



Then last week I was invited to the **Chateau de Salses** for a fascinating guided tour of the chateau, around the non-public areas. Some of the modern avant-garde sculptures weren't really my taste but of course I pretended to love them **cos I'm British**.



The modern avant-garde sculptures



P-O Life

My Life in The P-O



My 3€ bottle of wine

MAY 2006

I try SO hard to be refined and intellectual in this region of culture and tradition, but nothing will reprogram my toilet sense of humour. I KNOW we're supposed to take wine seriously here but honestly – how can anybody open a bottle of Arse without just a slight twitch of the lips? Skipping around Carrefour this morning there was. Obviously had to buy. Not a grand vin, but perfectly nice for 3 euros. Bottoms up!

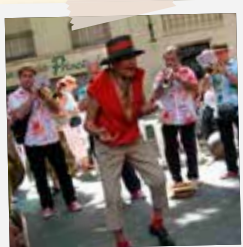
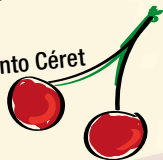
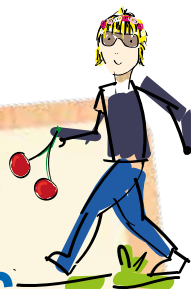
Took the **Factfile**

this market morning and left it around some of the shops and cafés. I still get a few suspicious and surly 'C'est quoi ça's but mainly people are happy to put it on their counter or stall. If you haven't been to Céret Saturday market, put it on your 'things to do' list! Just a market, but with a very special atmosphere..... a busker playing sax or guitar, the shade of the plane trees, a people-watchers paradise.

It's **CherryFest weekend** with cherry stalls in every nook and cranny as Céret prepares for a weekend of all things cherry. How far can you spit a cherry stone? Have you ever measured? This weekend, there are competitions, bandas, special cherry menus and lots of cherry fun. Soon be getting cherry-bound with an excess of cherry pie, cherry tart, cherries in liqueur, cherry pasty, cherry rissoles, coq aux cherries, cherry fritters, barbecued cherries, curried cherries, cherries with spam.....

It's now a year since we bought our house and Olivier still keeps insisting that a pool is not a priority compared to the walls that need building and the holes that need filling. I did buy him a spade when we first moved in but still no pool!

My logical thoughts



Your teeth don't need glasses!



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P-O Life

My Life in The P-O

JUNE 2006

It's June.... and winter's back! Rain, wind, thunder with a few sunny periods. Never mind, a huff and a puff from the Tramontane to blow away the rain clouds and we'll soon be complaining that it's too bloody hot!!

Her Royal Hairiness is still defying the vet's gloomy prophesy. She has slowed down, sleeps a great deal, smells like a wet sheep which has eaten some rotten fish, has an occasional leak, and is as blind as a bat, **but we love her to bits.**

I fell off my bike again yesterday – two mating butterflies were clearly too involved in the birds and the bees stuff, and flew into my face. They seem to have survived 'tho I bet they felt the earth move! As for me, I bent my little piggie back on itself, but a great excuse for avoiding housework or making a cuppa –

just hold up your little finger, pout and the husband will provide. The latest **FactFile** is hot off the press and I'll be spending the next week hotfooting around the region, dropping it off at tourist offices, supermarkets, shops...anywhere that will take it. I'd love to go up to 8 pages but I am totally useless at selling advertising so it looks like I'll have to keep on paying for the printing myself 'til some rich sugar daddy comes along and rescues me. **The thing is, I don't want to stop.** I just love every letter and am so shamefully proud of myself....

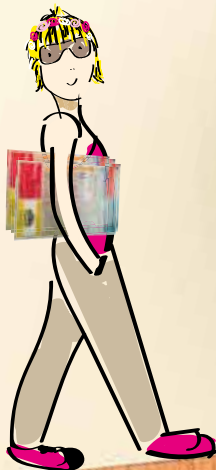
and I think I have a name!
How does P-O Life sound?

P-O Life

sounds good!!



Rain, clouds and wind in June



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Agency fees included paid by the seller. DPE: D



JOCH €114,500
Ref: 89300 1 bed lock up and leave village house with garage and a terrace with views. 39kms to Perpignan.
Agency fees included. 0% paid by the buyer. DPE: E



ESCARO €235,000
Ref: 76825 Charming 2 bed property situated in a valley and 5kms from the village of Sahorre with all amenities.
Agency fees included paid by the seller. DPE: E



PY €152,500
Ref: 89000 2 bed stone property in the hillside village of Py. Located in a nature reserve and walkers paradise.
Agency fees included paid by the seller. DPE: F



ARGELES SUR MER €1,207,500
Ref: 90489 A private and beautifully renovated villa just 8kms from the coast and 17km from Perpignan.
Agency fees included paid by the seller. DPE: C



RODES €350,000
Ref: 74482 Spacious house with pool and apartment, situated in the village of Rodes with mountain views.
Agency fees included paid by the seller. DPE: C



ANSIGNAN €99,000
Ref: 71367 Large building plot currently an olive grove, on the edge of an historic village and close to amenities.
Agency fees included paid by the seller. DPE: N/A



QUEST DE PERPIGNAN €450,000
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Restaurant REVIEWS



We love publishing your reviews. They're honest (we hope!) objective, (surely?) 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.

The old...

LA VIEILLE CAVE

Banyuls-sur-Mer....with Fiona

Tucked away in a tranquil side street, not far from the front, this friendly family affair offers tempting pizzas, an array of pasta dishes, plus meat and fish – as homemade as they come – and served piping hot. Delicious!



12 Rue Marius Douzans, Banyuls-sur-Mer
Tel: 04 68 88 39 86

Once again, we start by going back over past reviews and picking out a few choice phrases. We've checked they are still open. Over to you now to see if the review still fits the restaurant.

L'AMPHYTRION

Collioure....with Lynn

One of our favourites, with its great situation by the beach and the beautiful view. The 3-course menu is great value at 16€, changes weekly and main dishes come with potatoes (meat) or rice (fish), plus an interesting mix of various vegetables. As dusk falls, diners have an uninterrupted view of the lights of Collioure twinkling across the bay.



17 Rue Jean Bart, Collioure
Tel : 04 68 82 36 00

LE LIBANAIS

Perpignan....with Suzanne

Now moved to new premises, this spotlessly clean, modern and relaxed restaurant has something for everyone including vegan and vegetarian. Fish caviar, lentil salad, Couscous (vegetarian, boulettes, poulet or merguez), marinated fish or a chawarma.....and all very reasonably priced. I recommend without hesitation.



41 av. Général Leclerc, Perpignan
Tel: 07 69 28 26 10

LES ARESTOCHATS

Perpignan....with Maria

Cat Café. Great fun surrounded by cats.... and good food too. The best macarons ever in this salon de thé with little boutique corner with 'catty' items. The cats are free to do as they please and of course no harassment is allowed.



8 bis rue Gustave Flaubert
Tel : 04 68 92 75 37

CAN PLA

Collioure....With Katie

Ideally located at the foot of the emblematic Château Royal in the Faubourg quarter of Collioure, tables are placed spaciouly, lighting, music, & décor is modern and tasteful, and service discreet. A carefully-crafted menu built on seasonal, local produce and freshly-caught fish includes tapas options, seafood and shellfish and Catalan specialities. The café gourmand was the perfect end to a very good dining experience. PS Unlike so many restos in Collioure, it has a well-lit, clean, spacious, modern loo on the ground floor.



7 Rue Voltaire, Collioure
Tel: 04 68 82 10 00



Restaurant REVIEWS

BELLA COSA

Thuir.... **with Gill & Jacques**

Cosy Italian restaurant. Father & son duo, Rocco and Mathieu craft dishes with Italian passion and flair, combining homemade, organic pasta with the finest local, seasonal produce.

An intimate affair so bookings essential!



Place du Général De Gaulle, Thuir
Tel: 04 30 82 53 50

And the new...
(to us)

LES 9 CAVES

BANYULS SUR MER.... **with Sarah**

Fantastic small restaurant, run by a delightful Dutch team with an informal and friendly vibe.

The short menu is inventive, sometimes unusual, always delicious, using local seasonal produce. They have an interesting wine list, with an emphasis on natural/bio wines. The building also houses a wine co-operative and delicatessen. We love it, just wish it was closer to Reynès, although **any excuse to go to B/M is a good one!**



56 Avenue Gén de Gaulle,
Banyuls-sur-Mer
Tel : 04 68 36 22 37

EL SUQUET

Montner.... **with Fiona**

New resto in a stunning location as you come into Montner, overlooking the Catalan Corbières. **Great welcome from Romain and his family, including English wife Ellie.** Spacious seating area with postcard views and interesting à la carte, including a caviar menu! Paella and risotto feature amongst their specialities. However, I fancied the **menu du jour** at **16,90€** and was not disappointed – **tasty frittata with a green salad, tender lamb chops complete with mint sauce!**

I couldn't resist the light and airy, home-made tiramisu to follow. Fabulous and attentive service from Luke and Ellie. Popular with the locals, it's a good idea to book ahead.



7 rue Montnègre, Montner
Tel: 04 68 07 40 61

BAR DE LA MARINE

Collioure... **with Angela And Ian**

Situated just over the little bridge leading to the entrance of the Chateau. Imaginative menu, mainly fresh seafood and savoury galettes. **Lovely fresh salads and the best moules and frites we have had anywhere.** Not a massive dessert menu, but a delicious selection of glaces and sweet galettes. Good selection of local wines. Very friendly staff, **English spoken.**



1 Quai de l'Amirauté, 66190 Collioure
Tel: 04 68 82 06 39

AUBERGE DU VAL D'AMONT

Boule-d'Amont... **with Samantha and John**

Located in the tiny village of Boule-d'Amont, up in the hills behind Ille-sur-Têt. **Creative little dishes of delicious food,** at reasonable prices. We just love the cosy ambiance. They even have three double rooms for hikes in the romantic hills.



Boule-d'Amont
Tel: 04 68 59 23 70

CAFE DE LA PLACETTE

Maury... **With Ann**

Road side restaurant bar, open all year round for lunch and evening meals and snacks and **run by Diane and Christophe who are always very welcoming.** Fixed menu. Charcuterie sourced from a speciality butchers in Llivia. The pluma (Iberico black pig) is excellent as is the mar i munt (sea and mountain), **There is a daily plat de jour often including local Catalan dishes, all freshly prepared with good quality ingredients and attractively presented.**



1 Place de la Révolution, Maury
Tel: 04 34 12 35 50

Do you know a restaurant you would like to recommend?
We'd love to hear from you.
(Connaissez-vous un restaurant que vous voudriez recommander?
On serait ravi de vous entendre)
send your comments to us at info@anglophone-direct.com.
(no restaurant owners please!! :-)



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Can't you just smell it?
The restaurants are setting
out their 'trottoirs' and
terraces, brushing up their
barbecues and planchas,
sprucing up their parasols...
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L'Améthyste 04 68 81 07 49
Local and fresh fish <http://restaurantlamethyste.com>
La Table du Coin 04 68 55 46 54
Open mid-February to mid-December f: La Table Du Coin

...ARLES-SUR-TECH

Els Simiots 04 68 36 45 24 / 07 86 60 66 82
Bistro/Resto/Wine Bar f: Els-Simiots

...BANYULS-SUR-MER

La Vieille Cave 04 68 88 39 86
Restaurant-Pizzeria www.restaurant-vieille-cave.com
Le Fanal, Banyuls-sur-Mer 04 68 98 65 88
..... www.pascal-borrelli.secretbox.fr

...CANET

Les Halles, Le Haut et Le Bas 06 70 61 51 33
www.julietetlacreaterie.com f: leshallescanet

...CÉRET

Bella Pizza 04 68 87 70 26
Open every day except Sunday lunch-time and Thursdays
Le Jardin 04 11 64 41 12
www.lejardin-restaurant-ceret.fr f: Le-Jardin-Restaurant
Quattrocento, 04 68 87 15 60
www.lequattrocento.net Open 7/7 all year round

...COLLIOURE

Can Pla, 04-68-82-10-00
Open Feb to Mid-Nov www.restaurant-can-pla-collioire.com
Grand Hôtel du Golfe, route de Collioure 04 68 81 14 73
www.grandhoteldugolfe.com f: grandhoteldugolfe

...ELNE

Le Carasol Hôtel & Restaurant, 04 68 22 10 42
info@hotelcarasol.com www.hotelcarasol.com
Au Remp'Arts 04 68 22 31 95
Open all year www.remparts.fr

...LAROQUE-DES-ALBÈRES

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Café des Artistes 04 68 89 76 53
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Les Enfants Terribles, 04 68 89 40 51
..... f: lesenfantsterriblesdesalberes

...MAUREILLAS

Auberge du Chêne 04 68 55 26 23 / 06 70 70 95 58
..... Closed Mondays and Tuesdays

...MONT LOUIS

Le Dagobert 04 68 04 14 32
Bookings recommended f: Restaurant-Le-Dagobert-A-Mont-Louis

...MONTNER

El Suquet 04 68 07 40 61
Bookings recommended www.el-suquet.com

...PALAU-DEL-VIDRE

Resto du Camping Le Haras 04 68 22 14 50
Bar, Tapas, etc www.camping-le-haras.com

...PERPIGNAN (See Perpignan article)

Frankette 04 68 29 60 76
Homemade food to take away/eat in ... f: franketteperpignan66
Frida's 06 16 97 10 29
Vegan Cuisine Bookings recommended
Le Libanais 07 69 28 26 10
Lebanese Buffet. Take away/Eat in f: Lelibanais66
Lou Grilladou 04 68 34 86 81
..... Closed Sat lunch-time, all day Sun and Mon eves
New Delhi 04 68 34 89 38
..... f: new.delhi.perpignan
Les Arestochats 04 68 92 75 37
..... Restaurant & Tea Room with Cats for Company!
El Patio de la Loge 04 68 35 11 49
..... f: El-Patio-De-La-Loge
Crêperie du Théâtre 04 68 34 29 06
Gluten-free and Vegetarian food f: CreperieDuTheatre

...PORT- VENDRES

Les Poissonneries de la Côte Catalane 04 68 98 46 00
Indoor Fish Market & Oyster Bar . f: facebook.com/cotecatalane
L'Archipel 04 68 82 23 26
Fresh local fish www.restaurant-l-archipel-port-vendres.fr

...SAINT CYPRIEN

Kim Long 04 68 55 15 89/06 25 89 14 93
Open all year www.restaurant-vietnamien-stcyprien.fr
Le Portofino 09 51 58 89 55
Open all year www.leportofino-restaurant.fr
Jardin Catalan 04 68 21 36 64
Zone Technique du Port Open all year
Ulo Pizza, near Lidl 04 68 95 45 62
Take away/eat in, TV rugby & football f: ulopizza.stcyp

...SAINT GENIS-DES-FONTAINES

L'Auberge des Albères 04 68 89 88 38
Open all year www.restaurant-auberge-alberes.fr

...THUIR

Bella Cosa 04 30 82 53 50
Opposite Caves Byrrh f: bellacosa.thuir

...VILLELONGUE-DELS-MONTS

Bar Cordoba 04 68 88 57 37
..... f: Cordoba café
L'Axurit 04 68 89 89 28
Home-made stir fries, pizzas etc. Take away/Eat in f: L'Axurit
Le Soixante Six 06 58 84 67 60
Bodega, Resto, Tapas, Take-away .. <https://bodegale66.eatbu.com>

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www.cafedesartistes66.com

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www.restaurant-l-archipel-port-vendres.fr



L'Aurrit

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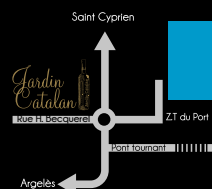
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f restaurant-Kim-Long
<http://www.restaurant-vietnamien-stecyprien.fr>



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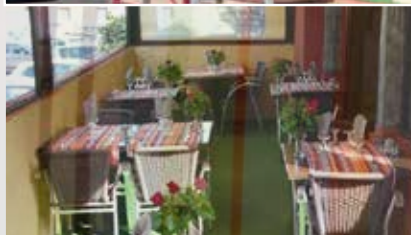


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le jardin
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f: Le-Jardin-Restaurant



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Music and Theme Nights
All year round

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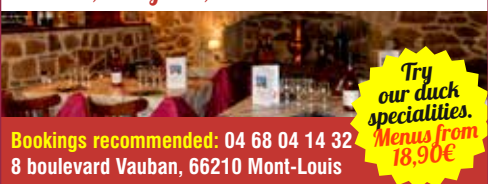
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cooked à la planxa**

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Local and fresh
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<http://restaurantlamethyste.com/>

DON'T MISS
our Signature dish –
Moules de Bouchot
+ frites
(from 13,50€)



04 68 81 07 49
Quai Jacques Cartier
66700 PORT-ARGELES

Open
February to
mid-November
DAILY FROM
APRIL ONWARDS

Sails moving gently in the breeze, totally pedestrian, (tho' you may have to hop out of the way of a stray bicycle), the magical Argelès port is a people-watcher's paradise, perfect for a stroll, a linger, a cold beer, a port side lunch, a cocktail or pre-dinner apéro as the sun sinks into the sea – a refreshing change to the manic pace of life.



**But with so many restaurants
sitting side by side,**

WHERE TO DINE?

How about L'Améthyste?



If you're a fan of moules frites, you won't find a wider choice of mussels, from moules marinières and aioli to moules à la crème, au curry, au roquefort, à la provençale, chorizo, catalanes with Banyuls....Moule paradise!

Plenty of fresh fish dishes, great steaks too, tapas, salads....

It's not gourmet or fine cuisine, and it doesn't try to be; it's unpretentious, **reasonably priced food, with plenty of taste.** Service by owner Marie-Laure and her young team is always friendly, dogs are welcome, so are kids! What's not to like?



LES HALLES
— Canet Port —
OPEN ALL YEAR
TO BOOK, TELEPHONE 06 70 61 51 33
www.julieetlacreterie.com
LOCATED ON THE SEAWALL (JETTY) WITH PANORAMIC SEA VIEWS

DID YOU KNOW



CHATEAU DISTILLERY

Did you know that **there is a new start up distillery between Céret and Le Boulou, using locally sourced pressings to create unique digestifs and vinegars?**

Based in the old winery in the grounds of the **Chateau Aubiry**, at the moment production is modest, just three products at the time of visiting, including a very satisfactory grappa type after dinner digestive using Grenache Noir pressings.

However, given the volume of grapes grown and crushed in the area the future is bright.

LE PETIT BUS

Pleasant as it is to wander around Perpignan on foot, sometimes it is rather nice to be able to hop on a bus..... especially when it's free. Le Petit bus is a free bus service running on two different circuits, one departing every 15 mins place de la Catalunya, and taking in the station, Place Arago, Castillet, and the other running around the city centre, place Cassanyes and the heart of the town every half hour. Both circuits pass in front of the main carparks on the edges of the centre, to retain their original purpose to encourage parking outside the city centre.

Pop into the tourist office for a plan of the exact routes and stops.



Grand Hôtel Du Golfe***



NEED TO RECHARGE YOUR BATTERIES?

This charming hotel, restaurant and spa between Argelès and Collioure is a family affair, with Mum, Marie and daughter, Caroline at the helm of a dynamic team of young, enthusiastic staff. With sweeping, panoramic sea views from restaurant, spa and all rooms, clifftop walks into both resorts and small rocky creeks just 5 mins away, the hotel is a must-visit just to sip your apéro and watch the sun sink down into a shimmering Med.

THE SPA

When did you last have some 'me-time'?

How about a glass of champagne or a G&T in a panoramic jacuzzi overlooking a heated pool and a sparkling Mediterranean? Or a cup of tea! From just 15€ for 45 minutes between jacuzzi and steam room, what better way to cleanse body and soul? The lovely Audrey and team offer a full range of treatments including.... - body hair removal - fabulous facials - hand and feet beauty treatments - tanning - slimming - semi-permanent gel nails So go on - spoil yourself.

Open all year round

THE RESTAURANT

Headed up by award-winning chef Gérald Desmullier, the cuisine is predominantly Mediterranean, with a lunchtime 'Ardoise' menu of 19€ for two courses and 24€ for three courses (not Sundays). There is also an interesting and uncomplicated 'à la carte' with dishes such as 'Blanquette de Lotte au citron vert et coques, légumes fondants' or 'Praline aux Abricots du Roussillon, sauce cacao'... Hmmmmmmmm, nice!

Open from 29th March until 2nd November 2019

Sunday 7th April 2019 Your Well-being Day

- Vitality Detox Breakfast
- Unlimited access to Hammam (Steam Room) & Jacuzzi (with panoramic sea views)
- Individual Naturopathy and Iridology Consultations
- Personalized Body Treatment using mineral salts and precious stones
- Unlimited access to our 19m long Pool, heated to 28°C

95€ pp
Bookings necessary
04 68 81 57 37

Grand Hôtel du Golfe

www.grandhoteldugolfe.com
contact@grandhoteldugolfe.com
Tel: 04 68 81 14 73
f: grandhoteldugolfe
Route de Collioure, 66700 Argelès-sur-Mer

BANK HOLIDAYS

The many bank holidays in April and May are a joy to schoolchildren - and teachers! Often extended into a long weekend if the holiday falls on a Tuesday or a Thursday, many businesses will 'faire le pont' and take the Monday or the Friday off as well. (Major chains unlikely to do this)

21st April:
Easter Monday (Pâques).
1st May:
May Day (Fête du Travail)
8th May:
WW2 Victory Day (Fête de la Victoire 1945)
30th May:
Ascension (L'Ascension)
9th June:
Whit Sunday (Pentecôte)

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS FOR OUR REGION

Half term –
20th April - 6th May (Zone C)

DON'T FORGET.....
Sunday 26th May
Mother's Day



Procession de la Sanch Friday 19th April (Good Friday) Perpignan

Some walk bare-foot, others are on their knees! Impressive, atmospheric, just a little frightening, the long black and red hooded and robed figures of the Procession de la Sanch march slowly through the streets of Perpignan to the solemn beat of black veiled tambourines. The brotherhood of "La Sanch" (the blood) was founded in 1416 by Vincent Ferrier at the church of St Jacques in Perpignan, its origin to assist and accompany the condemned to their execution. The death penalty has long since been abolished, but the Sanch lives on in Perpignan. Night processions also take place in Collioure and Arles-sur-Tech (21h 00)



Les Reginas Sunday April 21st (Easter Sunday) Ille-sur-Têt

A moving spectacle for believers and non believers alike

Ille sur Têt announces life and the beginnings of spring with this age old Illois custom, the solemn meeting of statues, and a 130 strong choir, accompanied by 40 musicians.

The Festival of Sant Jordi On or around April 23rd

"A rose for love and a book forever."

A day to read, honour and offer books and roses to friends and loved ones.



Fete du Muguet et du Travail May 1st

Happy Springtime!

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 also describes the medical condition, thrush!!)

This date is also the Fête du Travail, or Labour Day, historically a day of parades, protests and parties for workers to demonstrate or celebrate battles and causes fought and won in years gone by.

Fête de la Musique Friday 21st June

If Music be the Food of Love...

This annual festival celebrates music in all forms and is open to anyone, professional and amateur, and all music genres. If you are in France on this day it will be hard to avoid the vibrant sounds of salsa, string quartets and steel bands playing on street corners, jazz, rock, roll, and blues, garage folk, heavy metal, accordionists wandering among the crowds.....



Fête de la Saint Jean Monday 24th June

Celebrating love and friendship between all Catalans

Important annual event in the Catalan calendar, and the longest day of the year, this date is linked with ancient practices and white magic. On this eve, Catalonia is set alight as relay runners bring burning torches down from the Canigou to light fires that have been prepared in towns and villages all over the region.



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PERPIGNAN / CÉRET

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

by Canet
en Roussillon

It's all happening in Canet once again this Spring. Fabulous walking, riding and cycling for every level through the surrounding nature reserve - carefully preserved fishermen's reed huts, an arboretum and bird-watching, plus windsurfing, a long and gloriously sandy beach, plenty of shops, cafes, bars and restaurants and a varied events' programme. **IT'S FUN, IT'S FREE, (unless indicated) – IT'S SPRINGTIME IN CANET!**

13th April LES SOIRÉES ROUGES: DISCO SPECIAL!

Voiles Rouges

Child of the '70s and '80s? They're playing your song! Don't miss this cracking evening with music and dancing from the Orchestre Lorca Party 80. (15€ including drink and pâtisserie). Book ahead at the tourist office or pay on the night



13th - 14th 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?



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



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

Easter School Holidays FESTI'KIDS

Espace Méditerranée (14h30 - 18h)

FREE ACTIVITIES FOR THE KIDS EVERY AFTERNOON

Painting, craft and circus workshops, bike rides, sandcastle competition, climbing wall, tennis, beach tournaments, kite flying....

Choccy Easter Egg hunt at the beach on 21st April at 10h



11th - 12th May FETE DE LA LIBERATION

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, open air cinema, period dance with live music from the era.....



18th - 19th May FISE XPÉRIENCE

Théâtre de la Mer

International Extreme Sports Festival.

Want to try something new? Why not try 'le Flat'? (acrobatic biking). 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.

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



1st - 2nd June FESTIVAL L'EFFET MER

Théâtre de la Mer

Beach and Street Art Festival.

Magnificent sand sculptures, graffiti on specially constructed units, urban art, initiation workshops, body painting, art and photography.....

Check out the full programme at the tourist office



9th June BOUTEILLES À LA MER (not free)

Air du Mas

Meet the vignerons from 8 different domaines on a morning stroll around the Canet vineyards, with music, nibbles 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 wine-ies!)

Book at the Tourist Office



it's all going on in THE VALLESPİR this spring

Wine 'n' vines, cherries and almonds ... dance and music, art and culture, history and heritage... the villages of the Vallespir combine to bring you quaint, cobbled streets, pretty squares, lively shops, restaurants and bars, renowned art and music museums, festivities and fun!

Here's just a glimpse!

(Pop into the Tourist Offices for more details of festivals, exhibitions, events....)

APRIL

Sant Jordi (23rd) - Saint Jean Pla de Corts, Maureillas-las Illas and Céret

Love and culture based around the book and the rose.



MAY

Fête de la Cerise & Céret de Bandas (25th/26th) Céret

Cherry, music, market and fun!

Ballade du Trentenaire des Saltirells de San Joan de Pages (Check dates at the Tourist Office)

Saint-Jean-Pla-de-Corts
Traditional dancing, a glass or two of wine, a communal meal....



JUNE

Fête des Paniers (2nd) - Reynès

Reynès Basket-making Festival with demos, expos, photos...

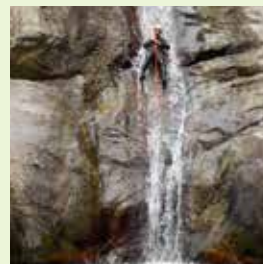
Les Querencias (28th/29th) - Céret
Flamenco Festival

EAT, DRINK AND BE MERRY OF COURSE....

...but the Vallespir isn't just about sitting on a café trottoir watching the world go by. The many outdoor activities available leave you no excuse not to work off those calories!

THE CANYONS....

Did you know that there are some superb canyoning opportunities in the Vallespir? Discover spectacular views and a taste of nature at its finest with some excellent guides to show you the ropes.



Canyon des Terres Catalanes:

06 08 68 95 58 / 04 68 87 31 51

Adventure Tout Terrain:

06 87 59 92 23 / 06 84 45 71 41 / 04 68 87 26 90

Canyoning Côte Sud: 06 07 43 41 42

In Extremis Aventura:

06 29 56 40 36 / 09 80 85 05 65

Aquacanyon: 07 70 06 19 40

ALL OPENING THE SECOND WEEKEND IN APRIL

LAKESIDE AT SAINT-JEAN-PLA-DE-CORTS...

No sunny springtime in the Vallespir is the same without a visit to the **Plan d'Eau** off the main road from **Le Boulou** to **Saint Jean Pla**. Perfect picnics, summer swims, lakeside walks, immaculately landscaped terrain...and plenty of action for all the family.

NOTE THAT THE FOLLOWING OPENING HOURS WILL CHANGE FROM JULY ONWARDS FOR THE SUMMER SEASON

AQUAJUMP

Swim, bounce, glide, dive ... inflatable fun on the lake from 6 years' old upwards.

Open every day from 22nd June 10h-19h.

Contact: 06 71 36 93 98



FUN NAUTIQUE

Pedalos, paddles and kayaks

Open May & June from 14h to 18h Weds, Sat, Sun and Bank hols and every day in summer.

Contact: 06 30 94 06 92

LES AVENTURIERS DE SAINT JEAN

Adventures for all ages and abilities with 9 treetop runs for anyone over the age of 3! Try the Tyrolienne Splash, a 170m zip line across the lake!

Open every day during Easter hols from 14h to 19h, weekends and Bank hols throughout May and June and every day in summer.

Contact: 06 71 60 37 44

TÉLÉSKI (Second Lake)

Thrills and spills at this 'téléski', the most southern in France, to try out, practice or perfect your water-ski and boarding skills. Lessons from 7 years' old upwards.

Open from 13th April, Weds to Sunday from 11h to 19h and every day in summer.

Contact: 06 67 83 56 62



And don't forget to check out the many well-marked walks, the varied cycling itineraries, from completely flat to as steep as you like, and the many equestrian possibilities...!



Office de Tourisme
Intercommunal du Vallespir

04 68 87 00 53

<http://www.vallespir-tourisme.fr>



THE VALLESPİR IS...
CÉRET, LE BOULOU,
LE PERTHUS
MAUREILLAS-LAS-ILLAS, REYNÈS,
SAINT-JEAN-PLA-DE-CORTS,
TAILLET, VIVÈS, L'ALBÈRE,
LES CLUSES



EVERYBODY LOVES A MARKET!

CÉRET: Saturday morning and also Night Market every **TUESDAY** in July and August

LE BOULOU: Thursday and Sunday morning

SAINT-JEAN-PLA-DE-CORTS: Tuesday morning

MAUREILLAS-LAS ILLAS: Thursday morning

LE PERTHUS: Thursday morning

A DAY AT THE BEACH

striking ^a BALANCE In FRANCE

We all know the **french word 'grève'** - We hear it often enough - but **did you know that grève also means sandbank** or pebbly beach and actually comes from Place de Grève, a flat and sandy area on the banks of the River Seine in Paris (now Place de l'Hôtel de Ville)? Out of work Parisiens would gather there every morning to **'faire grève'** in front of the town hall, in the hope of being offered work, maybe loading or unloading boats transporting goods up and down the river.

Today, **'faire grève'** refers to stopping work to make a point to the boss and strikes, demos, and protests are part of the French way of life. **Here's a bit of vocab to make it a little easier to understand in the news.**

A crowd - **une foule**
A striker - **un(e) gréviste**
A demonstrator - **un(e) manifestant/e**
A sympathiser/supporter - **un(e) sympathisant**
A state representative - **un(e) représentant de l'état**
A tax payer - **un(e) contribuable**
A pensioner - **un(e) retraité**
A union member - **un(e) syndicaliste**
The police - **les forces de l'ordre, la police**
A lorry driver - **un camionneur**

THE PEOPLE

WHEN TEMPERS FRAY...

To use violence - **avoir recours à la violence**
A riot - **une émeute**
A rioter - **un émeutier/casseur**
An activist - **un militant**
Riot police - **la police anti émeute (les CRS)**
To chant - **scander**
Tear gas - **le gaz lacrymogène**
A petrol bomb - **un cocktail molotov**
A water cannon - **un canon à eau**
To ransack - **saccager**
To provoke - **provoquer**
Angry - **en colère**
To throw projectiles - **lancer des projectiles**

GENERAL

To go on strike - **se mettre en/faire grève**
A general strike - **une grève générale**
A (hunger) strike - **une grève (de la faim)**
A (peaceful) demo - **une manifestation (pacifiste)**
A go-slow (when vehicles block roads by driving very slowly) - **une opération escargot**
Strike notice - **Un préavis de grève**
(unions must give 5 days notice before calling a strike)
A march/parade - **un défilé**
A banner - **un étendard/une banderole**
A placard - **une pancarte**
A meeting/gathering - **un rassemblement**
A demand/claim - **une revendication**
To demand that - **exiger que (+ subjunctive)**
To change things - **faire bouger les choses**
To support... - **apporter son soutien à...**
A day of action - **une journée d'action**
A blackleg - **un jaune**
A leaflet - **un tract**
Union - **un syndicat**
Picket line - **un piquet de grève**
(A feeling of) unease - **(Un sentiment de) malaise**
Social unrest - **les troubles sociaux**
To solve a conflict - **résoudre un conflit**
To express one's concern about... - **Exprimer son inquiétude concernant...**





APRIL - JUNE 2019



SPRING/SUMMER 2019 FRANCE

AVIGNON

A bit too far north for P-O readers perhaps, this small airport offers brief summer only programme.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
BIRMINGHAM	1	FLYBE
	from 25 May to 31 Aug.	
SOUTHAMPTON	1	FLYBE
	from 25 May to 7 Sept.	

BEZIERS

Like Carcassonne, Ryanair has a free run at this small airport

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
BRISTOL	3	RYANAIR
EDINBURGH	2	RYANAIR
LUTON	3	RYANAIR
MANCHESTER	2	RYANAIR
STANSTED	3	RYANAIR



Very few changes here since the schedules published in the last P-O Life. British Airways will start a four times weekly (Mon/Thu/Fri/Sat) Heathrow - Montpellier service on July 11th, but only for seven weeks. Also just for your info, Flybe has just been taken over by a consortium comprising Virgin Atlantic and Stobart Air, but as far as I am aware, still plan to operate their planned flights, possibly under the name Vfly or Connect Air.

As usual, due to airline scheduling, as soon as these figures are published they could be out of date, so should be used for guidance only.
Bon Voyage

CARCASSONNE



Ryanair remains the sole operator here. Glasgow flights no longer operate as Ryanair has closed its base there to operate more flights from Edinburgh.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
EAST MIDLANDS	2	RYANAIR
EDINBURGH	2	RYANAIR
MANCHESTER	2	RYANAIR
STANSTED	7	RYANAIR
CORK	2	RYANAIR from 3 June
DUBLIN	3	RYANAIR

MONTPELLIER

FROM NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS AIRLINE



DUBLIN	2	AER LINGUS from 17 May
GATWICK	11	EASYJET
LUTON	4	EASYJET
	from 25 June	
BRISTOL	4	EASYJET (NEW)

NIMES

Ryanair is the sole operator for P-O readers.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
LUTON	3	RYANAIR
STANSTED	4	RYANAIR

PERPIGNAN

As can be seen in the table below, Perpignan comes to life in the spring. Aer Lingus starts their Dublin flights on 17 May with an increase to five flights a week, note though that the weekend flights leave Dublin at 0600.

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.

If you find the fares to P.O. are very high at certain times, look at the rugby fixture list. Often changing just a few days can reduce the fare. Early in May there are two French holidays in the same week, so car hire prices increase. Also fares are generally cheaper midweek, especially in the summer months – or ridiculously expensive in school mid-term.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
BIRMINGHAM	2	RYANAIR
DUBLIN	5	AER LINGUS
SOUTHAMPTON	1	FLYBE
	from 25 May to 7 Sep.	
STANSTED	5	RYANAIR

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. The Birmingham service has been suspended for 2018.



FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
BRISTOL	7	EASYJET
EDINBURGH	2	RYANAIR
GATWICK	18	EASYJET
HEATHROW	21	BRITISH AIRWAYS
LUTON	6	EASYJET
MANCHESTER	1	FLYBE
STANSTED	14	RYANAIR
DUBLIN	2-7	AER LINGUS

Starts with 2 a week, increasing to seven a week by 16 May.

SPAIN

BARCELONA / EL PRAT

As always 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 Barcelona ring-road, one wrong turn could be very time consuming. As you can see there is no shortage of flights to Barcelona.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
BELFAST	5	EASYJET
BIRMINGHAM	9	RYANAIR
	7	VUELING
BRISTOL	14	EASYJET
CARDIFF	2	RYANAIR
EAST MIDLANDS	7	RYANAIR
EDINBURGH	7	RYANAIR
GATWICK	42	EASYJET
	9	NORWEGIAN
	42	VUELING
GLASGOW PRESTWICK	6	RYANAIR
HEATHROW	55	BRITISH AIRWAYS
LIVERPOOL	12	EASYJET
	7	RYANAIR
LUTON	21	EASYJET
	7	RYANAIR
MANCHESTER	3	EASYJET
	6	JET2
	14	RYANAIR
	10	VUELING
NEWCASTLE	6	EASYJET
SOUTHEND	4	EASYJET
STANSTED	28	RYANAIR
CORK	4	AER LINGUS
DUBLIN	14	AER LINGUS
	18	RYANAIR

GIRONA

There has been a big increase in flights to Girona and it seems as though Leeds based Jet2 have suddenly found the airport, and since summer 2017 have introduced a whole raft of flights. In 2019 these flights start on 29th April. There are a few TUI flights, which do seem to be rather expensive.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
BELFAST	2	JET2
	2	RYANAIR
BIRMINGHAM	2	JET2
	3	RYANAIR
BOURNEMOUTH	4	RYANAIR
BRISTOL	5	RYANAIR
EAST MIDLANDS	2	JET2
	2	RYANAIR
EDINBURGH	2	JET2
	2	RYANAIR
GATWICK	1-2	TUI from 4 May
GLASGOW INT'L	2	JET2
GLASGOW PRESTWICK	2	RYANAIR
LEEDS BRADFORD	2-3	JET2
	2	RYANAIR
LIVERPOOL	2	RYANAIR
LUTON	3	RYANAIR
MANCHESTER	2-4	JET2
	3	RYANAIR
	1-2	TUI from 4 May
NEWCASTLE	2	JET2
	2	RYANAIR
STANSTED	2-3	JET2
	5	RYANAIR
CORK	2	RYANAIR
DUBLIN	2	RYANAIR
KNOCK	2	RYANAIR

Please note that these are the average number of flights per week, and will be variable in the shoulder and peak seasons. If you think I have missed any, please contact us at P-O.
Bonne recherche!

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PERPIGNAN / CÉRET

Art in CÉRET



In 1911, Picasso and Braques arrived in Céret and began experimenting with Cubism, a painting style that was to revolutionise art.

Other artists were drawn to the town, discussions held in the Grand Café were animated, and Céret became a popular meeting place for artists from far and wide.

Juan Gris went on to create **The Musée d'Art Moderne de Céret in 1950**, a permanent collection of both internationally famous and local artists, including **78 pieces by Picasso** – 57 of which were gifts from the artist. Each spring and summer, it stages an impressive exhibition, often the work of famous 20th century artists who were influenced by a sojourn there. Not only **Picasso** and **Braques** but **Matisse, Gris, Max Jacob, Marquet, Maillol, Manolo, Chagall, Dufy, Miro and Dali** have all fallen under the charm of this gentle Catalan town.



even more fabulous, **reopening for the public in March** after the first phase, with final building works expected to be completed for summer 2020.



> Project_Musée d'Art Moderne Céret



© Agence Faloci



© Agence Faloci

**WHERE TO EAT
IN CÉRET**
See page 34

don't miss the spring and summer exhibitions!

SPRING EXHIBITION:

Marc Chagall "La couleur tombée du ciel"
Tuesday 2nd April – Sunday 26th May

The museum proudly **presents a collection of lithographs** created by Jewish Russian-French artist, **Marc Chagall**, on loan from the Marc Chagall National Museum in Nice.

An early modernist, Chagall mastered many techniques and styles, including **drawing, painting, engraving, ceramics and stained glass**. The circus inspired him from an early age and featured often in his works.

Memories of his Russian homeland blend with the sights and skies of Paris.



© Adapt. Paris 2019

> **André Masson**
Le Couvent des Capucins à Céret, 1919

SUMMER EXHIBITION:

André Masson "La mythologie de la nature et de l'être"
Saturday 22nd June – Sunday 27th October

Masson's artistic education was brutally interrupted by World War I and in 1919, at just 21 years of age, he was seriously injured.

Wounded and broken in both body and spirit, **he arrived in Céret with Maurice Loutreuil, where he met Chaïm Soutine and Odette Cabalé, his first wife.**

In Céret, Masson painted landscapes **inspired by Cézanne's cubism**, as he slowly put himself back together. These landscapes are one of the major themes of this exhibition.



© Adapt. Paris 2019

> **Marc Chagall**, **Les gens du voyage, 1968**,
oil on linen canvas

A ^{pain} into SPAIN

A9 ROADWORKS

If you're heading into Spain, give yourself a little extra time to negotiate the long-running major roadworks to widen the A9 motorway.

Costing a mere half a billion euros, the project is the largest undertaken in Catalonia since the turn of the century and **covers a total of 40 km between Perpignan Nord and Le Perthus.**

The 17km stretch between Perpignan Nord and Perpignan Sud was finished in 2013, the 15 km between Perpignan Sud and Le Boulou in 2016, **and the last stage, 8km from Le Boulou to Le Perthus, is expected to be finished in 2020!**

With lane closures and temporary traffic lights on the Nationale between Maureillas-las-Illas and Les Cluses as work continues on strengthening the motorway bridge supports, **this last stretch is undoubtedly the most technically challenging, involving the widening of the Calcine, Rome and Pox viaducts.**

The improvements are a response to the huge increase in traffic seen over the last decade, with up to 40,000 vehicles travelling along this stretch of road each day.



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THE WORLD IS HOT ENOUGH

WITH LESLEY MCLAREN

The PO temperature is rising, and records are being smashed. Good news for sun worshippers perhaps, but what may be in store for its landscape, plants and animals?



Too hot for comfort?

Globally, **the last four years have been the hottest since 1850**, but for over 50 years the whole Pyrenees mountain range has been warming up faster than the world average. According to the OPCC*, while the rest of the planet has shown a worrying rise of 0.85, the temperature in our mountains has increased by +1.2°C. No surprise, then, that **2018 was the hottest year ever recorded in the PO, averaging 17°C**.

Some say the PO is the sunniest spot in mainland France, but in fact we're usually around 11th place. There's no data yet for 2018, but in 2017 Perpignan recorded 2,691 hours of sunshine compared with over 3,000 in the top-ranking Alpes Maritimes.

PO RECORD BREAKER

Perpignan 03/08/2018
Nighttime temperature never got below 30.3°C!

PO RECORD BREAKER

Average annual temp
2018: 17.0°C
2017: 16.8°C
2016: 16.6°C

MAX TEMP RECORDED IN ROUSSILLON

July 1982: 40.2°C
August 1933: 38.7°C
2018 max: 38.5°C

Wet Wet Wet?

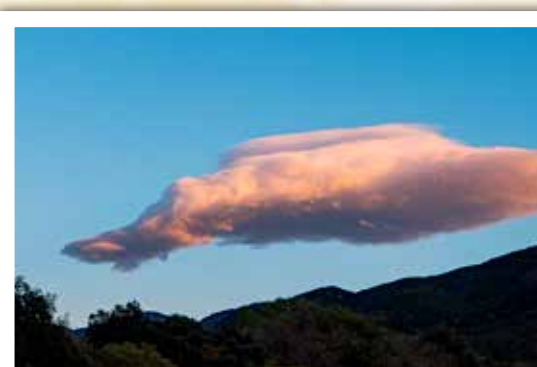
Not so much. Unsurprisingly, **Perpignan is one of the driest towns in France**, but the PO has its moments. Our most recent freak deluge came on 25/11/2011, when eight hours of intense rain on the Albères turned the River Tassio into a destructive torrent through the Vallée Heureuse, Sorède. Nevertheless, the OPCC says that rainfall across the Pyrenees, while very variable, has lessened (especially in winter and summer) by an average of 2.5% per decade (1949-2010).



> Debris on the Tech after a flash flood

When the wind blows

We often complain about the prevailing north-westerly tramontane which, they say, blows for 3, 6 or 9 days. It generates spectacular clouds but can be perishing. **One January a few years ago it made daytime temperatures feel like -12°C**, and just-ripened lemons froze on the trees and turned black. What's surprising is that the tram isn't our fiercest wind any more. **Southerlies are worse.**



> A dramatic storm approaches

BREAKING NEWS

Le vent du Sud is now stronger than la tramontane. Scientists say, "Southerlies never used to be as violent as those of the last seven years"

LA TRAMONTANE LA "RÈGLE DES 3, 6, 9"

HURRICANE KLAUS 24/01/2009

STRONGEST GUST: 191KM/H, CAP BÉAR

ROUSSILLON NAMES FOR OUR WINDS

North-west	La tramuntana/La tramontane. Strong, dry & clears the sky.
North	Le vent de dalt
North-east	Le Gréal/Narbonés
East	Le Llevant/Le vent d'avall
South-east	Le vent d'autan/Le Xaloc/La marinade. Often gale-force & with heavy rain
South/S-east	Le Sirocco/Le mitjorn. Usually rare, short-lived, hot, dry & full of Saharan sand
South/S-west	Le vent d'Espagne/vent de Bosc (blows from wooded mountains). Violent & often wet
West	Le Canigonenc (blows from Canigou)



Let it snow (Please!)

Winters do seem to be warming up and, this year, spring seemed to start in February. While that may be a blip, **the OPCC reports that between 1984 and 2016, more than half of the Pyrenean glaciers disappeared**, and that the mass of those left continues to shrink, just as the snowline rises. Over recent decades the number of skiable days (min 30 cm depth snow) has steadily dropped, and the start of the season (with real snow) has slowly been pushed back.

What's in store?

The OPCC estimates that, depending on how much we reduce emissions etc., the temperature of the whole Pyrenees massif could increase by a further 2 to 7°C between now and 2100.

At that rate, snow depth could halve in the Mid Pyrenees by as early as 2050. Of course, for skiers we can always create artificial snow. Or can we? To make it, we need water, which may get scarcer. Crop irrigation might get priority.

Tourism could also be adversely affected due to increased dangers of forest fires as well as sudden floods and landslips from intense rain. On a brighter note, progressively **warm autumns and mild springs could result in a longer season in the mountains and at the coast**, as fewer people tolerate the heat elsewhere.

More importantly, however, less snowmelt and less precipitation, combined with more frequent extreme weather events – from torrential rain to heatwaves – would gradually alter the Pyrenean landscape. Glaciers, lakes and peat bogs, for example, would diminish further. **The chemical composition of surface and subterranean water would alter.** And all of this would impact mountain flora and fauna.



DESYNCHRONISATION

Cuckoos (coucous) are migrating later than their host species, on whom they depend. If hosts' eggs have hatched by the time the cuckoos arrive, it's too late!

Time for change

The timing of hibernation, reproduction, egg laying and migration is already changing. **Some migrating birds now arrive 10 days earlier than they used to.** Amphibians are the most vulnerable vertebrates, and **the Pyrenean Newt (Calotriton des Pyrénées) is already in decline.**

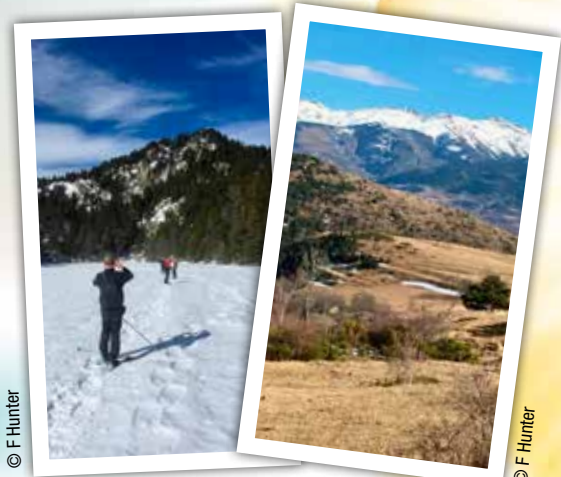
A number of butterfly species are flying earlier than normal. For alpine plants, paradoxically, less snow cover reduces winter insulation and puts them at risk from extreme temperatures. **Some species will adapt but others may disappear entirely.** For those dependent on one another for survival – like plants and insect pollinators, predators and prey – if these interactions change, it could have a fundamental impact on mountain eco-systems.

Governments – and each one of us – must take more remedial action now, not only for future human generations but for all living things with which we share this planet.



Lower rainfall and lighter wind speeds could reduce productivity of hydroelectric and wind turbine projects. **But more sunshine could result in more solar energy projects like "eLLO" in the Cerdagne.**

Sources: *OPCC (l'Observatoire des Pyrénées du Changement Climatique), BOSS (Banyuls Observation Sea Service), Infoclimat.fr, l'Internaute, Metéo France, L'Indépendant.



17/02/2018 02/03/2019

Near Font Romeu

PO RECORD BREAKER
Hottest December since 1953

2018: average 11°C
Problem for ski stations!

PO RECORD BREAKER
Fiery February 2019

Average temp: 23°C
= 10° higher than normal
27/02/2019: 27.7°C in Eus.
Last hottest 05/02/1933:
26.5°C



Last deep snow in Albères villages: 08/03/2010



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

Monday 10th June Lundi de Pentecôte (Whit Monday)

Work without pay!

The last of four public holidays in May/June, this 'movable feast' takes place 50 days after Easter, and celebrates the descent of the Holy Spirit amongst Jesus's Apostles. After the deaths of an estimated 13,000 elderly people during the heat wave of 2003, President Chirac cancelled this bank holiday to raise funds to support the elderly.

'Solidarity Day' (Journée de Solidarité), asked workers to work this day with no pay! Oh là là. After demonstrations and protests, with the majority of the French work force resolutely remaining at home, Lundi de Pentecôte was reinstated as a public holiday in 2008.

Incidentally, 'Whit Monday' comes from the white robes worn on Pentecost by those who have been newly baptised?



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P-O. But sometimes we just need to take the weight off, curl up in front of a good film, our fave series or soap, a weepie or a creepy, and make the world go away.

SO WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH ENGLISH SPEAKING TV SERVICES HERE IN YOUR REGION?

TWO WAYS TO WATCH

VIA SATELLITE

If you have the room for a very large dish, (1.5 – 2m in diameter – that's big!), you can watch telly by satellite, but some channels might still not function due to seasonal and weather conditions – and the dish 'aint too pretty.

VIA INTERNET

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Lots of folk use a VPN to connect to the on-line services of UK broadcasters. VPN stands for Virtual Private Network and makes your computer look like it's in the UK. But the broadcasters seem to be getting much better at closing those connections down – most irritating!

Don't despair there is a very good alternative to VPN that does the same thing. Call me to find out more.



For most of us, turning on the telly means sticking the kettle on, putting our feet up, pressing a button...et Robert est ton oncle! And that's where we come in – no, we don't provide the cuppa – but do have television entertainment down to a T!

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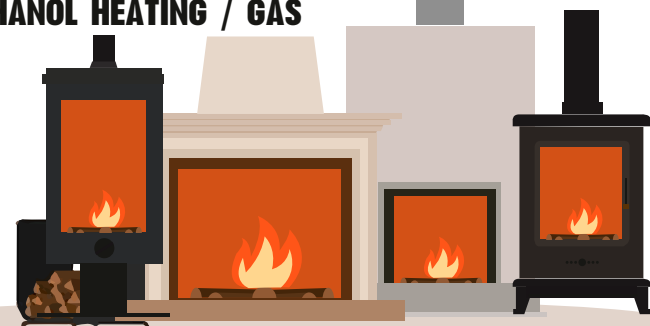
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Repeat quickly three times!
Un plein plat de pâtes plates.

Test your FRENCH

See Page 87 for answers

1 R pour Rat

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

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

- | | | | |
|------------|----|---|-------------------------------|
| récipient | 1 | a | rue très étroite |
| ruisseau | 2 | b | qui ne pardonne pas |
| rouspéter | 3 | c | fil de métal en spiral |
| reculer | 4 | d | petits morceaux très fins |
| requin | 5 | e | un panier, un seau, un bol... |
| ruelle | 6 | f | grand poisson vorace |
| récompense | 7 | g | aller vers l'arrière |
| rancunier | 8 | h | contraire de punition |
| râpé | 9 | i | râler |
| ressort | 10 | j | petit cours d'eau |

Language tip

Il y a + time phrase = ago

Je suis arrivé en France il y a 3 jours

Blague Bête

Quel est le point commun entre un robot et des spaghettis à la bolognaise?

Ils sont tous les deux automates (aux tomates)!

Words that sound alike but are completely different.

un mur — a wall
mûr(e) — ripe
une mûre — a blackberry

2

Test your idiomatic French

1. Poser un lapin describes...

- a) going hunting
- b) standing somebody up
- c) vegetarian stew

2. Je fais la tête means I'm...

- a) sulking
- b) ill
- c) playing football badly

3. Manger sur le pouce means eating...

- a) with your fingers
- b) quickly
- c) very little

4. Filez à l'anglaise means...

- a) going on a singles holiday
- b) chasing the girls
- c) leaving without permission

5. If you have a 'poil dans la main' you are....

- a) hairy
- b) lazy
- c) a werewolf

6. Devenir chèvre means describes someone who is ...

- a) angry
- b) vegetarian
- c) unshaven

Useful to know
I love you – **je t'aime**
I like you – **je t'aime bien,**
je t'aime beaucoup,
je t'apprécie

Language tip

C'est terrible -> That's brilliant !!
C'est pas terrible -> It's not great !

3

Use the vocab below to fill in the blanks of this amusing little story

Un vieux dans une 1 prend l'autoroute pour rentrer chez 2 quand sa femme l'3 sur son portable. "Chéri," dit-elle d'une voix 4. "S'il te plaît, fais très 5. Je viens d' 6 les actualités et il y a un fou qui 7 dans le mauvais sens sur l'8. Oh, c'est 9 que ça", répond-il, "il y 10 a des centaines!"

a appelle b attention c roule d pire e volvo f en g autoroute h écouter i lui j inquiète."

4

Savoir or Connaitre? Choose the right one!

1 Je ne pas ce restaurant

a) connais b) sais

2 Lucien que c'est mauvais pour la santé

a) connaît b) sait

3 Je ne pas faire du vélo

a) connais b) sais

4 Je ne pas faire du ski

a) sais b) connais

5 Vous Argelès?

a) savez b) connaissez

6 Voici mon mari Olivier. Ah, tu le déjà

a) connais b) sais

Test your FRENCH

5 THERE'S GOOD AND BAD EVERYWHERE!

Can you find the French equivalent of these idiomatic phrases that all use bien or mal?

Bien sûr que non	1	a	Quite the opposite
Bien dans sa peau	2	b	We'll see!
Le mal de mer	3	c	Off to a bad start
C'est mal barré	4	d	Hangover
Un mal de cheveux	5	e	Whether you like it or not
On verra bien	6	f	Sea sickness
Bien au contraire	7	g	Of course, obviously
Dire du mal (de ..)	8	h	Of course not
Bon gré, mal gré	9	i	Talk behind someone's back
Bien entendu	10	j	Comfortable with oneself

Useful Expression
Tant pis (ton pee)
 never mind/too bad
Tant mieux (ton muh-yeuh)
 all the better/good for you

Useful Expression
 Si ce n'est pas indiscret
 If you don't mind me saying...

Blaque mignonne
 Qu'est ce qui fait toin toin ?
 Un tanard
 (coin coin – quack quack)



Blaque très bête
 Comment faire aboyer un chat ?
 Donne-lui de l'eau et il la boit



(Check this one out with a french friend or neighbour!)

Language tip

Temps, heure or fois?

All three of these words mean time, but have very specific usage.

TEMPS can mean either 'time' or 'weather' (in which case it is usually accompanied by the verb faire).
Je ne sais pas si j'ai le temps de jouer au tennis.
Quel temps fait-il ?

HEURE refers to clock time.
Quelle heure est-il ? Il est cinq heures!

FOIS is used to refer to something which occurs once or several times.
Je suis allé deux fois à Perpignan.

Citation amusante

Mon père était fonctionnaire et ma mère ne faisait rien non plus.

Colluche

(fonctionnaire – civil servant non plus – either)



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Améliorez votre ANGLAIS

**Tongue twister
(virelangue)**

Répétez trois fois
Three thousand free thinkers

See Page 87 for answers

1 B is for Bar!

Trouvez la définition des mots suivants qui commencent tous avec la lettre B

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------------------|
| bubble 1 | a without hair |
| barber 2 | b duck's beak |
| blind 3 | c bottom |
| blotto 4 | d items of small value |
| bling 5 | e jewellery |
| bric-a-brac 6 | f thin ball of liquid |
| backside 7 | g men's hairdresser |
| bossy 8 | h very drunk |
| bald 9 | i telling others what to do |
| bill 10 | j unable to see |

2 What a hoot!

Trouvez les mots qui manquent

A 1 bird watcher heard an owl hoot in his garden, so he tried hooting 2. To his 3 the bird answered. The same happened the next night and throughout summer, the man and his 4 friend hooted back and forth, surely a breakthrough in inter species 5. Chatting with her next door 6 one day, his wife commented; "My 7 spends his nights calling to 8". "That's odd," the neighbour replied. "So does mine."

a back b neighbour c communication d keen e owls f feathered g husband h delight

STRANGE SOUNDS

Tut, tut - exprimer gentilement sa désapprobation (tss tss, faire pfff)
eg' Tut tut' she said when she heard about Brexit
He tutted loudly to show he disagreed.

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!

"The rain in Spain stays mainly on the plain" (My Fair Lady)

3 DO OR MAKE?

Beaucoup d'expressions utilisant 'do' ou 'make' ne se traduisent pas nécessairement par 'faire' en français - ce sont des structures idiomatiques
Eg: *He didn't make his flight* - il a raté son avion
It has nothing to do with you. - Cela ne vous regarde pas

M pour 'make' ou F pour 'faire' ?

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 1..... me a favour | 6..... homework |
| 2..... a complaint | 7..... a fuss |
| 3..... enquiries | 8..... a mistake |
| 4..... housework | 9..... your best |
| 5..... fun of someone | 10..... your duty |

Language Tip

WAIT est toujours suivi de FOR devant un complément.
I'm waiting for the train.
We're waiting for the sun to come out

4 Get on with it !

Match up the expressions with 'get'.

- | | | |
|-----------------|---|-------------------------------|
| Get lost! | 1 | a Reprends-toi !, |
| Get a life! | 2 | b T'as rien de mieux à faire? |
| Get a grip! | 3 | c Dépêche-toi! |
| Get a move on | 4 | d Continue |
| Get on with it! | 5 | e Va-t'en |

Some really bad jokes !

Why are false teeth like stars?
They come out at night!

What do you call a dog magician?
A labracadabrador.

What did one volcano say to the other?
I lava you!

VARY YOUR LANGUAGE

Ne dites pas que quelqu'un est 'crazy'.
Dites qu'il est....

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| nuts | bonkers |
| cuckoo | dippy |
| potty | mad as a hatter |
| dotty | nutty as fruitcake |
| barmy | out to lunch |
| (has) bats in the belfry | round the bend |
| batty | (has a) screw loose |

Tried and TASTED

LE VIN DOUX NATUREL

Talented amateur wine taster **Tony Goodman** continues his tour of regional producers, chatting to the vigneron and recommending wines that have inspired him. In this edition, he explores local fortified wines. As usual, a bit of poetic licence will allow you to enjoy his fun observations.

Vin Doux Naturel, (VDN) are ever evolving. Produced since the 13th century they are lightly fortified regional specialties defined and reflective of our hot summers, crisp cool mountain air and soft sea. There is no single style, the VDN is a rolling seascape of slightly salty honey, floral spring jasmine, crisp light citrus, orange blossoms, aromatic coriander.... It is deep red raspberries, summer fresh strawberries..... It is hints of flint and steel. There is something for all occasions, tastes and seasons.



CHATEAU PLANERES MUSCAT DE RIVESALTES

From a new found friend located mid way between Perpignan and the frontier. Light and lively with a nice hint of user friendly citrus. A year round treat, festive enough to be enjoyed with a marron glacé with the neighbours at Xmas or mid summer tapas. 8.50E. Happy to be lightly chilled.

Your visit: Authentic old school architecture, ask for peek inside the cellar. .

ARNAUD DE VILLENEUVE MUSCAT DE RIVESALTES

Sleek and slinky. Pale gold, flashes of emerald green. Floral with plenty of pear aroma. Slightest hint of the nearby sea. A bright and refreshing apero. 9.50E. Serve with or without plenty of ice.

Your visit: Take a few minutes to peruse the art work in the tasting hall.

LEFAGE MIRAFLORS ROSE

An elegant pale of palest pink. After an initial floral burst a faint hint of flint comes forward with Greta Garbo coyness. Light enough to be tumbled, more than once into a tall glass packed with ice at the end of a hot day. Tapas, sushi or small sweet pan fried sole. 10E. Happy to be served quite chilled.

Your visit: Fantastic brand new visitor centre.

LA TOUR VIEILLE MEDITATION

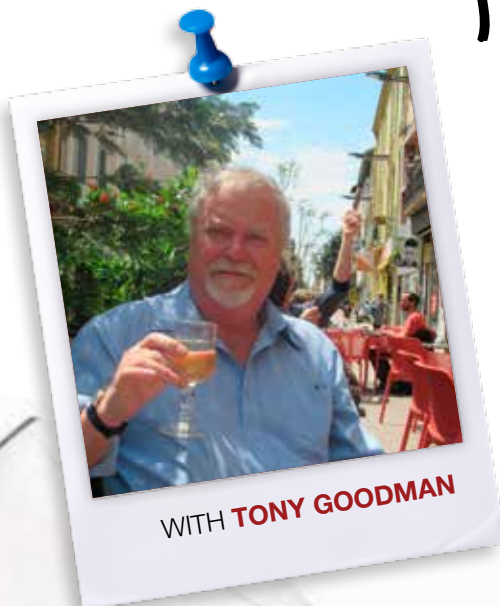
Perched high up above Collioure Vincent Cantie has been extracting world class wines from his steep slopes for many years including this magnificent after dinner treat. Gorgeous purple almost black colour. Plenty of prune and pears, coffee and chocolate, hints of mountain thyme and oranges. 50E Around 12C You may need to visit to secure a bottle but that's a good thing.

Your visit: On a clear day you can see Narbonne from the office window, take a camera.

ABBE ROUSSE BANYULS GRAND CRU "JOSEPH NADAL"

AOC Banyuls classic. Quite dry, produced using ancient Grenache Noir vines. A fawny, tawny tan version of BB King's bitter sweet opening riff of Guess Who. Works well with local hard cheeses. Enjoy on the terrace with a smooth Cuban. 31.70E. Serve Cool but not chilled

Your visit: Perched high above Banyuls, nuff said.



All the CLOUDS

BY MICHAEL BARNES SELVIN

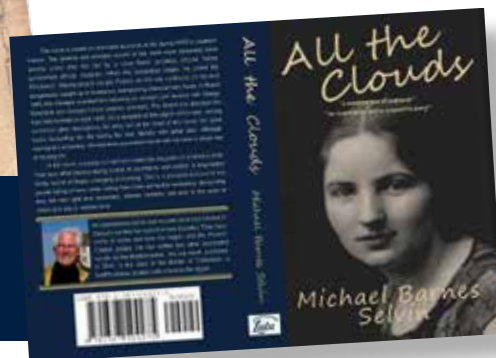
All the Clouds is set in and around Perpignan in southern France during World War II. This is the story of Paul, a singer, and Gabrielle, a dancer, who meet and fall in love while rehearsing for a musical production. Their love affair blossoms as the occupation becomes increasingly more draconian and dangerous.



> Transit camp in Vernet in the Ariège

As a result, Gabrielle discovers a family secret that changes everything, and they both become deeply involved in the Résistance. Based on real accounts of life during this time, the novel tells a gripping, yet unsentimental, story, evoking daily life during the occupation: popular music, the local art scene, and the difficulties of daily survival. The young couple becomes caught in the treacherous whirlpool of resistance against the Vichy government and the German occupiers.

This exciting and startling novel will be of special interest to those who are familiar with French Catalonia or who are curious about life during the occupation.



A FEW WORDS FROM THE AUTHOR.

When I was eighteen a friend and I rode a Vespa from Barcelona to Paris. We took the coastal route and passed through Banyuls-sur-Mer and Perpignan. Little did I think that in the future we would come to live there. I began to learn about WW2 and the occupation in the area. Seen through the eyes of two idealistic young lovers, this was a terrible time without an imaginable future, when friends could never be trusted. Not a time for lovers.

The soft back book is available on Amazon.com, Amazon.fr, Lulu.com, and other book sellers. An electronic version will be available soon.

For more information, contact Michael on msevin@comcast.net

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DID YOU KNOW

BEWARE THE SAINTS DE GLACE

Named after the frosty trio of saints, St Mamert, St Pancrace, and St Servais, whose Saint days are respectively May 11th - 13th this year, the expression Saints de Glace describes a sudden return of freezing weather in late spring, just as you're planting your hanging baskets and bedding plants!



Saint Mamert

Saint Pancrace

Saint Servais

DID YOU KNOW

CARTE DE SÉJOUR APPOINTMENT SCAMS

Some people will always find a way to cheat others no matter what the subject.

In this case, **the scam is**, once again, directed at foreigners, and **involves the paid booking of appointments for Cartes de Séjour**.

The scammer creates a web site, and claims, for a fee, to be able **to book appointments and help you to queue jump a busy list**, not just for carte de séjours but also for requests for naturalisation, changing driving licences etc.

Whilst not actually illegal, this is a scam and the sites, which **may often look quite official**, **only intend to cheat you out of your money**, or gather your contact info for a variety of unhealthy reasons.

This is not to say that there are no honest services offering to help with applications – but **do be careful to whom you hand over your credit card details**, particularly if they are promising **rapid appointments which don't seem to be available to all**.



DID YOU KNOW

ARSE BOATS

Le Boulou, or El Voló, takes its name from the **Catalan for cliff**, situated as it is **between rivers Tech and Valmanya** with sheer ravines overlooking the town.

In the early 18th century, 150 years before the present suspension bridge was built to allow passage into Spain, **the Tech River regularly flooded the valley**.

The wooden bridges rarely won the watery war with the angry river and at times of high rainfall, it was impossible to cross.

A group of young men built up a nice little business by forming a human chain and transporting travellers across the river on their naked backs. **Known as 'Les Barques de Cul' (arse boats) due to their bottoms sticking out of the water to form a bridge**, they provided a sight for sore eyes for the ladies of Le Boulou on a rainy day!



Grotte de Fontrabieuse

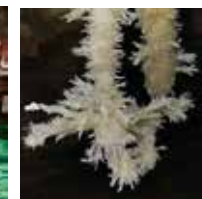
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Things You Might NEED To KNOW



TARGETING FOREIGN CARS, LADY DRIVERS...

Several people have reported driving along in the region and hearing something (probably a stone thrown) hit the car. They have then been flashed, flagged down and stopped by another driver with a broken wing mirror, claiming to have been hit by the victim's car. When the other driver has demanded payment to cover the damage and avoid an insurance claim and loss of no claims bonus, **they have felt intimidated, and handed over up to 200€ for the broken item. THIS IS A SCAM OUR COURSE**

If this happens to you...

-Take a photo of the other driver AND his licence plate if you have a photo phone
-Ring 17 and talk to the Gendarmes - he will usually be gone by the time you take your phone out.



TURN OUT YOUR POCKETS

Copper coins piling up in your jam jars and men's bedside tables?

Several 'Intermarchés' now have a machine that converts small change to a voucher that can be used in the shop. No commission charged but beware; it does have a time limit.

PETS ABROAD

The PETS Passport scheme in 2012 introduced a new freedom for pet owners, allowing you to easily take your dog, cat, or ferret abroad with a pet passport. Are we heading back to pre-2012?

The fate of Britain in Europe is yet to be decided but the conditions for taking your pet to any EU country could well change dramatically if the UK leaves the EU with no deal and is treated as an unlisted country. Visit government site <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pet-travel-to-europe-after-brex-it> for full details.



GOING STRIMMING

According to the 'code forestier' and 'arrêté préfectoral' of 2004, if you are the owner of land which is less than 200 metres from woodland, brush land or moors, it is your legal responsibility to limit fire risk by clearing and cutting back all undergrowth within 50 metres of your property, whether it belongs to you or not. This should be completed by mid April, after which the ONF (Forestry Commission) can fine everyone who has not cleaned and strimmed around their properties.



EYES, EARS TEETH.....

From January 2020, certain glasses, dentures and hearing aids will be eligible for a full refund as part of new "100% health" reform, with costs fully covered by state healthcare and the 'mutuelle' insurance policy.

The progressive introduction of this new law (called 'zéro reste à charge') will start with opticians who must offer a range of no-cost lenses and frames, followed by dental prosthetics in 2020 and hearing aids in 2021. If you can wait for either of those, it might be well worth your while.



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Not got your senior rail card yet. At 60€ per year the 'Carte Senior' offers more than 25 – 40% discount on the trains, as well as the TGV, car hire, hotels etc, and loyalty points to go towards the purchase of your next card.

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36	= 95
38	= 100
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42	= 110
44	= 115

CUP SIZES ARE MOSTLY THE SAME APART FROM DD = E AND E = F



Emergency number for the deaf or hard of hearing

114

This free 24/7 number is available by fax or text message. The line is manned by a specially trained team, who will assess the emergency and contact the service required, police, fire brigade,...

Check out www.solidarite.gouv.fr for more details.



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SAMU (medical emergency) 15

POLICE emergency 17

Fire service emergency 18

European emergency line 112

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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
International Mastercard	08 00 90 13 87
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 (a lot) > *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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- 1b 2a 3b 4c 5b 6a
- 1e 2i 3a 4j 5b 6h 7c 8g 9d 10f
- 1a 2b 3b 4a 5b 6a
- 1h 2j 3f 4c 5d 6b 7a 8i 9e 10g



AMÉLIOREZ your ANGLAIS

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

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