

Winter 2019/20

P-O Life

Life in the Pyrénées-Orientales

N° 66
FREE / GRATUIT



Collection Privée, Jean Louis Germain



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High Pyrenees

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Edito ☺

Coucou les amis



Where does the time go? **We're 15 years old and still going strong!** And I still get giddy as a kipper each time a new edition rolls off the press.

So it's time once again to say thank you.

Thank you.....

.... **to the writers**, both the volunteers and the press-ganged, who so generously give of their time and words. They receive nothing in return but my eternal gratitude!

.... **to our advertisers**. In these digital days, paper printing happens less and less and becomes more and more expensive. **Thanks to you, we continue to publish on paper.** We do hope that you get back as much as you give.

..... **to you**, the reader. Thank you for supporting our advertisers, for your tips and emails with recommendations for walks and days out.... and for putting up with my bad jokes!

WITHOUT YOU, P-O LIFE WOULD QUITE SIMPLY NOT EXIST!

As usual, there's loads of stuff inside to read on those chilly winter eves. In fact, despite a nip in the air, mimosa and almond blossom are already splashing colour around and it's beginning to feel a lot like springtime! **Don't forget to grab your daily dose of P-O winter sunshine** whenever you can. It keeps the smile on your face, lifts the spirits, and chases away the blues.

The P-O Life team wish you good health and happiness for 2020! **May your hopes and dreams take flight.**

Kate

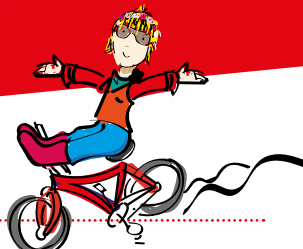
PS Why did the French chef jump off the pont du Diable in Céret?

Cos he lost the huile d'olive!!



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CENTURY 21

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LAST MINUTE: Typical 1900s house, formerly belonging to the gatekeeper, designed by the Danish, Modernist architect, Viggo Dorph-Petersen (who also designed the Château d'Aubiry for the Bardou-Job family). Approx 260m² living space with 8 rooms. **A MUST-SEE!**

PRICE: 299.000 € • REF: 7111 Dpe N/A



REYNÈS: Situated between Céret and Amélie-les-Bains, stunning, riverside Catalan house with incredible views over the Tech Valley. Approx 322 m² living space and 4,077m² of land. Independent, 2-bed apartment and separate studio. Ideal B&B. Rare on the market. **A MUST-SEE!**

PRICE: 472.000 € • REF: 7176 Dpe E



MAUREILLAS: Cosy villa on one level, approx 102m² living space. Tastefully decorated. 3 bedrooms, swimming pool, several sunny terraces, garage. Living room with AC. Quiet, residential district, close to shops and Spain. **READY TO MOVE INTO!**

PRICE: 293.000 € • REF: 7194 Dpe D



MONTESQUIEU DES ALBÈRES: Set in woodlands approx 4,206m², this magnificent, 3-bed Mediterranean villa offers panoramic views over Les Albères. Summer kitchen, swimming pool and aviary. Independent, 2-bed apartment for rental. **CALL US TO VIEW.**

PRICE: 480.000 € • REF: 7107 Dpe D



CERET: Recent 3-bed villa, approx 110m² living space, including spacious living room approx 42,40m² with fully furnished, open-plan kitchen. Terrace and garden overlook the mountains. Excellent insulation. South-facing. In a peaceful area. **CLOSE TO COMMODITIES.**

PRICE: 230 000 € • REF: 7039 Dpe C



CERET: Attractive, modern semi-detached villa on one level, in pleasant area close to centre. Approx 83m² living space. 2 bedrooms, including master bedroom with walk-in wardrobe. Garage approx 15m². Sold furnished. **NO WORK TO DO.**

PRICE: 275.000 € • REF: 7201 Dpe A

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LEUCATE


Plateau, cliffs and Coast

A circular, 4 hour, 12 km walk at low level with just 120m of ascent. Rocky paths with some sections of tarmac on country tracks. Good walking shoes/boots advisable. **Sun protection essential IN WARM WEATHER** as there is very little tree cover on most of the route. Really pleasant walk with great coastal sections. Can be ridden by mountain bike (VTT)

[NOTE: Can be shortened to 2 1/2 hours/8km by missing the Etang section. Alternatively, can be done as 2 walks on different days, separating the Plateau and Etang sections.]

Access:
map IGN 1:25000 Durban Corbieres 25470T

START

 Large car park in Leucate village (north end) next to the Office de Tourisme (closed at this time of year) and Cave à vins. Roundabout with fountains near the entrance. No toilets. For strollers and flat level walkers it is possible to take a car from the D327 (Access via right turn off the first roundabout after exit to Leucate village from D 627) then **follow sign to Le Phare**. Park near the lighthouse. Stroll along the coastal path.



> Fountains
at car park
entrance



THE WALK

 Turn right out of car park, walk in direction of village. Turn left up rue du Cercle – **handy café/bar for drink and toilet!** Continue up and soon enter plateau.



> old windmill

 Pass old windmill, arrive at cross roads.

Turn left. After 50 metres turn right down lane. After approximately 400m the track divides – Look out for mural in wall with motif on it.



> Plaque where road divides

Take left fork and continue for about 750m. At left hand bend take track on right between 2 stone walls. **Arrive at crossroads and turn right.**



Continue to notice the **white markers**, characteristic of the route.

Turn right and follow the coast path to the Semaphore (military establishment). **Continue to hug the coast and emerge near the Lighthouse and Le Grand Cap – a huge restaurant.**

Follow this track **past an old Bergerie** – remnant of an age when sheep were grazed on the plateau.



The path narrows. On reaching wider track, turn right. After 50 metres take left fork and head for the cliffs, emerging at **Cap des Trois Freres**.



Continue to notice the **white markers**, characteristic of the route.

Turn right and follow the coast path to the Semaphore (military establishment). **Continue to hug the coast and emerge near the Lighthouse and Le Grand Cap – a huge restaurant.**



< Cap des Trois Freres



> Light house Cap Leucate

Pass car park, walk into road with “no through road” sign. Turn right between a house and a high wire fence. **Keep high on footpath next to fence and take in lovely views of Leucate Plage and beyond.**

After about 400m, go down series of steps edged with wood, cross road, continue to quickly find second series of steps. Bend left at bottom of steps onto concrete. Reach side road.

Turn right and then right again along the main residential street. At end of street cross road to pick up cycle track and follow it across main road junction to reach roundabout at entrance to Leucate village. You will have had D627 and Etang on left and D327 on your right, while you are away from all the traffic.

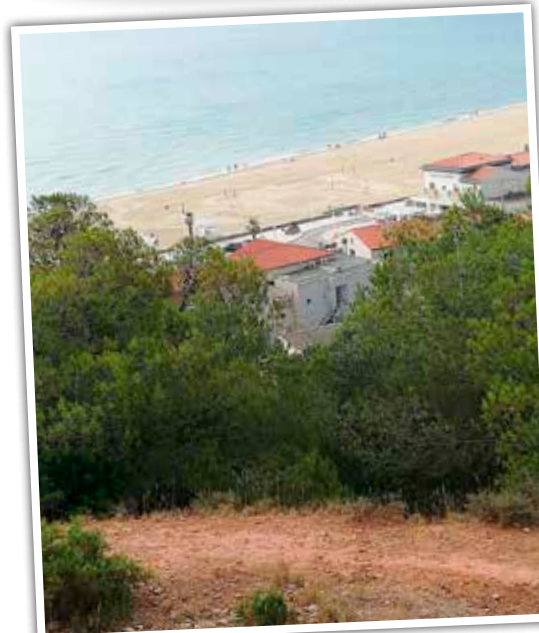
OPTION HERE OF SHORTENING THE WALK BY FOLLOWING THE ROAD SIGNED TO LEUCATE VILLAGE AND BACK TO CAR PARK.

To continue **beside the Etang** cross the D 627 just before the roundabout and turn left on a track, following the edge of the Etang. At a house, it is possible to make a slight detour to **la grotte des Fées**.

CONCHYLICULTURE; THE WORLD IS YOUR OYSTER!

French poet Leon-Paul Fargue described eating oysters as like ‘kissing the sea on the lips’.

Exotic, erotic by reputation....and not everybody's tasse de thé, the salty, nutty, aromatic and erotic **Leucate oyster has been farmed since 1963 on the narrow strip of beach which separates the Med from the freshwater lake**, creating a mix of fresh and sea water, perfect conditions for quality oysters. With nearly 80% of its massive 600 to 800 ton production sold directly in Leucate, you can be pretty sure your oysters are fresh. Enjoy with a glass of Leucate wine in one of several rustic oyster shacks, most of which are open much of the year. Often served with lemon, chopped shallot and red wine vinegar dressing.

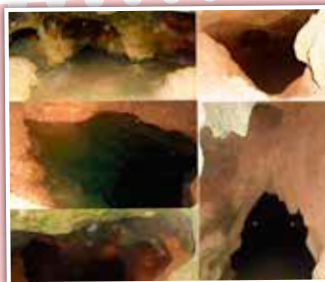


> view to Leucate plage

LA GROTTE DE FÉES

This Chalcolithic (2000-1800BC) and later Roman occupied site of 5 caves was discovered in 1909. Skulls, large blades and flint knives, axe polisher, ornate pottery and jewellery were found, as well as clay figures, believed to be ex-votos, offered up to the Gods by locals of Leucate for favours granted. Several entrances lead to submerged galleries.

It was classified as a Historical Monument in 1924 but is not open to the public.



The main track passes a creek and then gradually becomes narrower, with red markers. Later reach a wider track and continue past a campsite, **ignoring all tracks off the main one, to reach a tarmac lane.**

Go up the lane and under the D627 and head upwards between 2 dry stone walls. At a pine grove, turn left on a track, follow the red markers and head up to the ruined **chateau de Leucate**. Great viewpoint.

LE CHATEAU DE LEUCATE

The site of the chateau was of some strategic importance, forming the **frontier between France and Aragon**. The **Treaty of the Pyrenees in 1659** moved the borders and Louis XIV ordered its demolition, due to the cost of its upkeep to the crown. Parts of its original design were quite avant garde for its time, **designed by Italian architects, one of whom was Léonardo de Vinci**. Today, the ancient ruins look out over stunning views of the salt lake, the sparking Med, Canigou and the Albères mountain range.



The route down leads to the **Place de la République**, with the statue of **Francoise de Cezelly**, who **saved Leucate when it was attacked by Spain in 1590**.



FRANÇOISE DE CEZELLY

"La ville est au roi et mon honneur est à Dieu. Je dois les conserver jusqu'à mon dernier soupir".

This French war heroine led the successful defence of Leucate when it was besieged by Spanish forces in 1590. Her husband, the governor, was captured and imprisoned, his life offered in return for the surrender of the town. She refused. He was executed but the town was saved. In 1899 a bronze statue was erected in her honour in the **Place de la République in Leucate**. Designed by Toulouse sculptor Paul Duguin, she held the keys to the town. **In 1942, the statue was melted down** by the collaborating **Vichy government** and shipped to Germany. As it was being moved, the hand holding the keys broke off. A Leucate resident managed to grab the broken hand and take it to the mairie. Once again, Francoise Cézelly had not surrendered the keys to the enemy! **You can still see the hand today in the Town Hall. An exact replica of the statue replaced the original in 1975.**



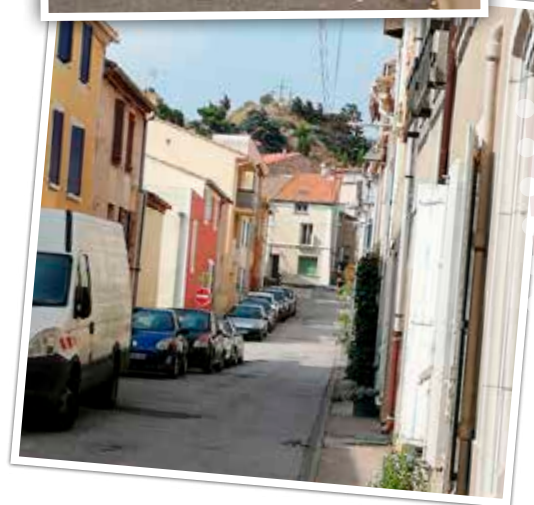
Make time to explore the attractive village centre and take some refreshment before making your way back to the car park.



LEUCATE

Long, sandy beaches, (one where it's rude not to be nude), salt lake with stunning Canigou backdrop and fascinating flora and fauna, oysters straight from the sea onto your plate, plenty of wind for water-sports, Leucate is not just a beach resort.

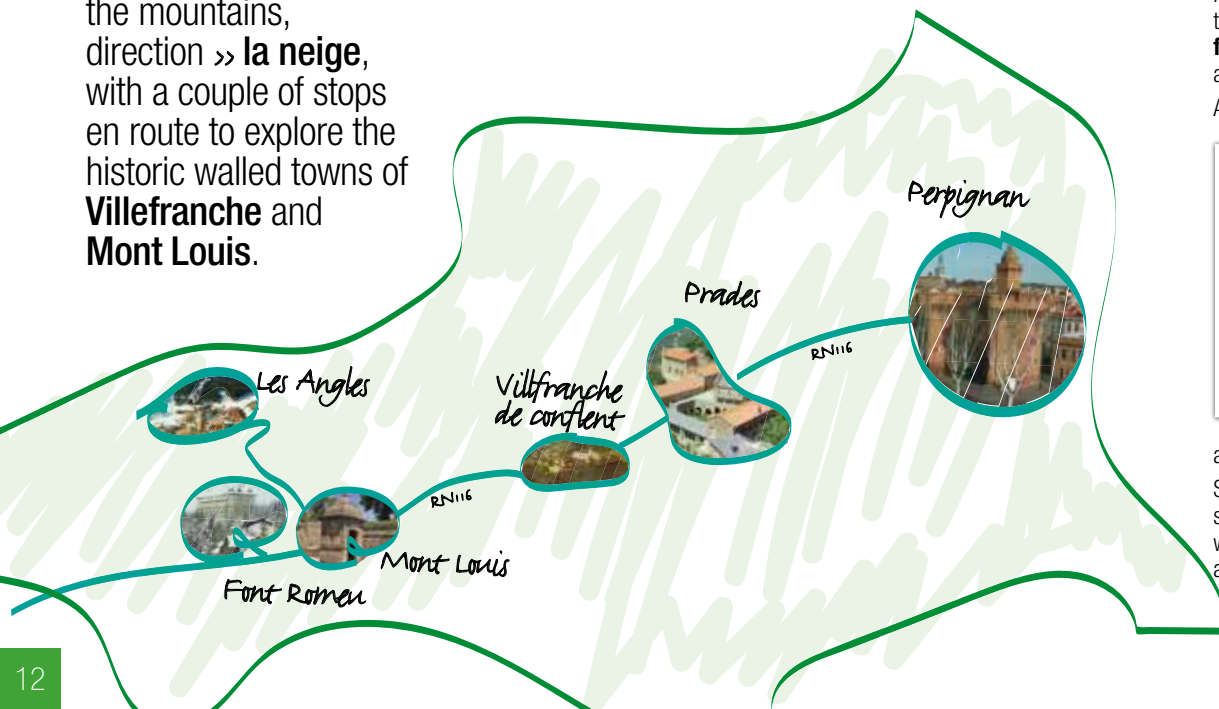
Wander around the pretty village, or listen to the sails singing at **Port-Leucate one of Europe's largest Mediterranean marinas**. La Franqui beach, 8 km long, situated at the other end from Port Barcarès, claims to be the oldest seaside resort on the Languedoc Roussillon coast. **Shabby chic, a little retro, wild, natural and beautiful.**



OUT ^{for} THE DAY

VILLEFRANCHE DE CONFLENT MONT LOUIS LES ANGLES FONT ROMEU....

This month we're heading up into the mountains, direction >> **la neige**, with a couple of stops en route to explore the historic walled towns of **Villefranche** and **Mont Louis**.



>>>> VILLEFRANCHE
DE CONFLENT

As you head up the N116 towards the high Pyrenees after **Prades**, the Têt Valley narrows and the **fortified medieval town of Villefranche de Conflent** whisks you back thousands of years in time.

Classified among the most beautiful villages of France, the streets are cobbled and the houses are tall and narrow, with an **enchanted glow from the famous pink-coloured marble**, mined in the area and used in much of the town's construction.

Art galleries, souvenir shops and local craft shops



about although many close over the winter season. Several sell handcrafted witch dolls, 'poupées sorcières', as befits the legends of magic and witchcraft surrounding this region, steeped in history and superstition.

As you wander the streets, look up at the fascinating shop signs, forged from local iron. >>>



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> Fort Liberia

Walk around the ramparts or head up 'Les milles marches' to Fort Liberia with its horrible history of alleged female murderers. Perched above the town, and dominated by Canigou, it was built in the same impenetrable pink marble as much of the town.

LA GROTTES DES CANALETTES

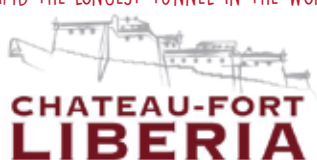
Just 300m from Villefranche, this network of spectacular caves leads visitors deep into the heart of Canigou, along specially adapted bridges and walkways, hewn passages, sculpted walls and vast chambers. Wonderful stalagmites and coloured pillars of mineral rock.

Absolutely fascinating and beautiful – but not for the claustrophobic although the trail is wide and high! Open for the school holiday in February, then open for the season from April onwards.

(Alternatively, you can walk the steep open pathway, with its stunning views over mountain and valley, or take a shuttle bus from inside the town walls.)



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MONT LOUIS



On next to Mont Louis, the highest fortified town in France and home to the 'Centre national d'entraînement commando', which trains elite troops in commando techniques. If you want to go commando, why not tag along on a short run to Collioure in full battle gear? **They can be regularly seen on manoeuvres, so don't panic if you're approached by masked men when out walking in the area!**

Walk the walls of this pretty cobbled town. The views are stunning.

Ready for a bite to eat? Housed in the original tea room of what was once the town's Spanish troop hospital, why not visit **Le Dagobert restaurant**, named after General Dagobert who kept those same Spanish soldiers at bay. Traditional mountain cuisine with French and Basque influences and a warm welcome await.



Equally worth a visit is **the first solar furnace in the world, built in 1949 with 1420 mirrors**. A programme of experiments and demonstrations are part of a guided visit, and pottery and bronzes manufactured on site are on sale.

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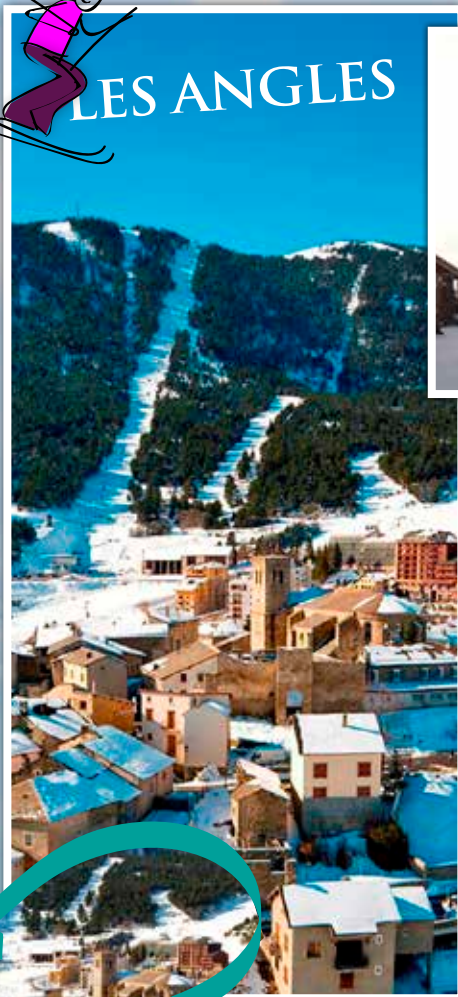
OUT for THE DAY

VILLEFRANCHE
DE CONFLENT
MONT LOUIS
LES ANGES
FONT ROMEU....



A BIG, BIG THANK YOU TO
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TOURIST OFFICES FOR SUPPORTING
P-O LIFE THROUGH ANOTHER
SPARKLING WINTER ADVENTURE
DESPITE THE ECONOMIC CLIMATE.

From **Mont Louis**, head up the mountain to the next roundabout, turn right....and follow signs for **Font Romeu and Les Angles!**



> new télécabine

Ringed by mountains, **Lake Matemale** glistening in front of the village, **Les Angles offers 45 downhill pistes catering for all levels, (14 green, 9 blue, 14 red, 8 black)** and an impressive snow park. From the top of the brand new télécabine, (14 places, solar panels, and new gondola station....) the ski slopes descend through the pine forests into the old village itself.

There are two restaurants on the slopes, warm and welcoming, and a 'Salle de Grillade' at the top of the télécabine where you can leave your own barbecue meat at the start of your skiing day and arrive to have it grilled and served for you at lunch-time!

Huddled around the **church of St Michel**, and the remains of the XIII century chateau, this pretty alpine village combines attractive old houses, gites, and restaurants with the modern buildings and equipment of an exciting ski centre.



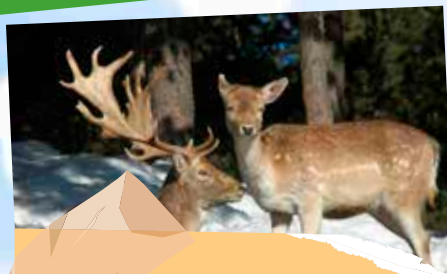
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Les Angles

EMBARQUEMENT
IMMÉDIAT

OUT ^{for} THE DAY



THE PARC ANIMALIER

Boar, wolf, bison, bear, reindeer, marmotte and izard in very large enclosures. Follow one of two walking circuits, the longer taking around one and a half to two hour, amidst local animals in their natural surroundings - a delight for all ages. Picnic spots (no food and drink on site so take your own) and beautiful views through to the lake and mountains. Take boots!

VILLEFRANCHE
DE CONFLENT
MONT LOUIS
LES ANGES
FONT ROMEU....

All skied out? Iron out those aching muscles at the new **ANGLEO, Balnéo & Spa in the heart of the village**, no car needed. Swim, Steam, Sauna, Salt, Solarium, Skin care...Sssssseriously ssssublime 'me time'. Find out more:

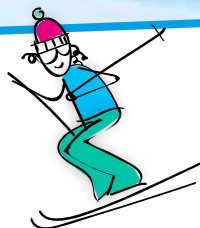
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Les Angles

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OUT for THE DAY



VILLEFRANCHE
DE CONEFLANT
MONT LOUIS
LES ANGES
>>>> FONT ROMEU....

LET IT SNOW, LET IT SNOW, LET IT SNOW...
BUT JUST IN CASE IT DOESN'T,
A BATTERY OF MORE THAN 370 SNOW
CANONS IN LES ANGES AND 500 IN FONT
ROMEU WILL BE WORKING OVERTIME TO
ENSURE GOOD SKIING CONDITIONS. THE
SNOW MUST GO ON! (OUCH!)

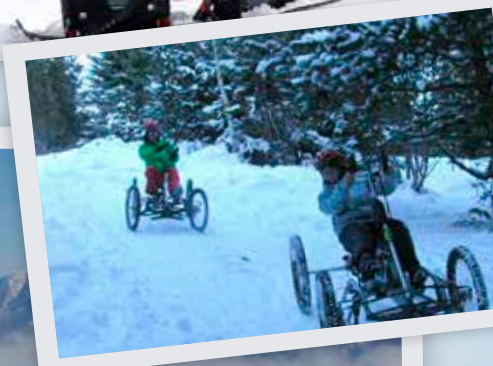
A modern resort with an ancient history, **Font Romeu is the second-oldest ski resort in France**, after Mont-Revard in the Alpes. Its development as a ski resort and tourist destination started more than 100 years ago, when the **Petit Train Jaune**, highest railway track in France, highest SNCF station and stunning views along the way, was built to connect the plain with the mountains.



When **Le Grand Hotel** was built in 1911, **Font Romeu** became **THE place** to be seen in high society on both sides of the nearby Spanish border, welcoming the Spanish royal family, **Pablo Picasso** and **Salvador Dali** amongst its many guests. Overlooking the town, with 200 rooms, apartments, elevators, electric lighting, an American bar, a casino, a garage and a shuttle bus service to the railway station, **the elegant hotel was closed down in 1975** and split into apartments.

Today **Font Romeu is a busy ski resort**, offering **41 downhill pistes of all levels, served by 23 lifts, and 103 kilometres of cross-country ski trails**. Or try paragliding, boarding, night skiing, snow shoe walking, husky sledge riding, quad VTTs, snowtubing (like sledging but on a giant tyre!), Escape Game Outdoor (physical and mental obstacle course), snake run.....

It also **attracts Olympic teams** and great athletes for its biathlon facilities at its Centre National d'Entraînement en Altitude (CNEA) ("National centre for sports training at altitude") **so you never know who you might bump into on the piste!**



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PILGRIM'S FOUNTAIN

Font Romeu means 'pilgrim's fountain', named after the Ermitage de Font-Romeu, built in the 17th and 18th centuries, on the site of a 1035 oratory. According to legend, a cowherd noticed his bull scratching at some water and bellowing loudly. There in the ground, he found a statue of the Virgin. More than enough to attract the pilgrims on the Camino de Santiago (St. James's Way), en route to Santiago de Compostela in north-western Spain. Once the news of this miracle was out, many travellers stopped at the holy fountain, putting Font Romeu firmly on the map of Medieval Europe.

To this day, the meticulously preserved Hermitage at Font Romeu is still a stop on the Camino for pilgrims, who bathe in the interior basin and visit the magnificent Sunyer altar.



THE WORLD'S LARGEST SOLAR FURNACE

The abundant sunshine that triggered the evolution of Font Romeu as a resort also led to the building of the world's largest solar furnace. The immense parabolic mirror, tall as the Arc de Triomphe in Paris, reflects the countryside and sky, giving an ever-changing patchwork view of the surrounding countryside that is beautiful and fascinating to watch.



SPECIAL OFFER

LA SEMAINE BLANCHE

Saturday 18th – Saturday 25th January

40% reduction on six day lift pass!

(121,80€ instead of 203€ for adults and 103,50€ instead of 172,50€ for children.

Same reduction applies to ski school, ski rental and several shops and restaurants in the resort. (List at Font Romeu tourist office) and students).



FONT-ROMEU
changez d'altitude!

Font-Romeu Info

Office de Tourisme
82 Avenue Emmanuel Brousse
Tel. : 04 68 30 68 30 -
E-mail : office@font-romeu.fr
www.font-romeu.fr

LE MUSEE SANS MURS

Nature and art collide in this museum without walls. Wander around sculptures and statues, the highest art gallery in Europe, starting in the centre of Font-Romeu opposite the tennis courts. museesansmurs.fr



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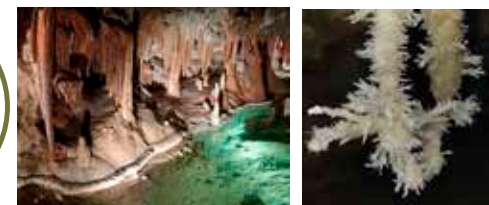
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A night in new OrLéans.
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Les Angles



21 FEBRUARY
Kévin et Tom
(Comedy)



28 FEBRUARY
Sellig
(Comedy)



10 JANUARY
FESTIVAL GARGOSNOW
Party on the piste at this winter music festival. Reggae, pop, hip hop....

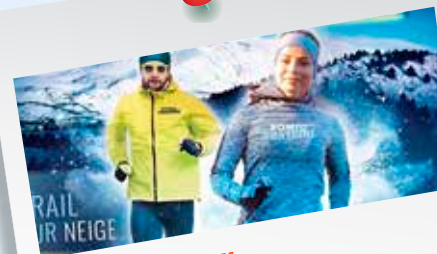


11 APRIL
SNOW RUGBY PYRENEES
Rugby tournament in the snow open to all... Sounds like an (oval) ball!

GREAT SKI, GREAT APRES-SKI

FONT-ROMEU

changez d'ALTITUDE !



18 - 19 JANUARY
TRAIL LA ROMEUFONTAINE
Evening snow trail.
Chose between 5, 10, 20 or 30 kms.



13 - 16 FEBRUARY
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SNOWSHOEING

in the Pyrénées-Orientales

2020



The snow has fallen and the pistes are open for the winter season.

But not everybody loves to ski and walking around a small ski station while the rest of the family is on the piste can quickly lose its charm.

So what other options are there?

There are several hot pools in the Cerdagne and Capcir but the only one in the actual centre of a ski station is the new Angleo hot pool in Les Angles, a fabulous "apres" ski or snowshoe session.

Or why not go for a walk in the snow?

Fortunately, in the **Capcir/Cerdagne** there are several Snowshoe guides who have joined together to offer days out in the snow for non skiers or skiers looking to do something different.

Snowshoeing is really popular and involves walking in the snow with glorified plastic tennis racquets on your feet! These "racquets" enable you to walk through deep snow in the forests and mountains in areas where it would be impossible to walk with just walking boots.



How fit do you need to be?

If you are an active person who enjoys rambles in summer, you will be able to join our snowshoe walks. **We tend to average just 2kms per hour with perhaps two hours walking before and after lunch**, not because the terrain is difficult but because in winter there is just so much to see.

In the lower mountain areas, we have to stick to the paths as the vegetation is too dense to go "off piste" but in winter the shrubs and bushes are covered so that **we can go anywhere, stepping right into the heart of the wildlife**. Tracks and animal signs make you aware of the animals that inhabit our wonderful region and following and identifying these tracks is a key part of our days out. It is especially magic after a fresh fall of snow when your guide will make a **good track for you through the snow**.

Snowshoeing **does not require you to have any special gear** as we provide the snowshoes and poles and you will only need your normal walking clothes and boots.



Waterproof/windproof jacket and pants, hat, gloves and sun glasses are the basics as well as a rucksack to carry it all in. A packed lunch, snacks and drinks will complete your bag. **Most days we will come equipped with mulled wine and special treats to enhance your day out.**

Where do we go?

We are **Mike Rhodes from Les Angles, Ian Pendry from St Pierre dels Forcats** and **Steve Wilson from Formiguères**, experienced Snowshoe guides, and we delight in taking you to untracked areas ranging from **Puyvalador** to the **North to the Spanish borders** to the south. We have also been exploring farther afield on the borders of Andorra. **Normally, we meet up in Mont Louis between 9 & 10 am** at the **Edelweiss** café and then transfer to the start of our walks.

This year, we plan to go out every Thursday. We'd love you to join us. If Thursday is not good and you have a few friends who would like to try snowshoeing another day, please do contact us as we are out most days of the week and would be pleased to see you any day.

The cost of a **guided day out is €30 and snowshoes/poles will be provided.**

If you are looking for something more adventurous, we are running a week long snowshoeing trek culminating with a three countries tour starting in Spain, passing into Andorra over a 2700m pass and ending up back in France. **Last years trip was a major success so come and try it out.**

Interested?

Contact us on
Mike Rhodes (mike.rhodes@free.fr)
 portable 0679105453
Ian PENDRY (ian.pendry@orange.fr)
 Portable 0678238130

OUT ^{for} THE DAY

Back in (snow) Business: PUYVALADOR



The last ski resort of the Capcir, before heading down into Aude, **with 7 pistes, 4 button lifts and a luge area**, why not lend your support to the newly-reopened Puyvalador this season?



Great excitement for residents of Puyvalador and for skiers everywhere. This small family-friendly resort was forced to close in 2017 due to financial difficulties. However, thanks to former mayor Julien Sabarthès and a bucketload of passionate local volunteers, **this charming mountain village will be welcoming skiers again this winter.**

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a property
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EXCLUSIVE



PRADES €174,500
Ref: 103428 Charming 3 bedroom villa with garden and garage situated in the market town of Prades.
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CASTELNOU €790,000
Ref: 92437 Superb 4 bedroom villa with garden, swimming pool, pool house and spectacular mountain views.
Agency fees to be paid by the seller. DPE C



PY €152,500
Ref: 89000 Charming 2 bedroomed renovated village house with mountain views and garden.
Agency fees to be paid by the seller. DPE F



PRADES €349,000
Ref: 51498 Beautiful five bedroomed stone mas with swimming pool, mountain views and large garden.
Agency fees to be paid by the seller. DPE C



CABESTANY €572,000
Ref: 101408 Beautiful 4 bedroom villa in contemporary style with swimming pool, large garden and garage.
Agency fees to be paid by the seller. DPE C



PRADES €295,000
Ref: 102902 Spacious 5 bedroom town house with mountain view, garden, terraces and garage.
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CATLLAR €264,500
Ref: 68409 Modern two bedroom house with mezzanine, swimming pool, mountain views, garden and garage.
Agency fees to be paid by the seller. DPE D



CAMELÀS €212,000
Ref: 102008 Beautiful stone house with three bedrooms, terraces, courtyard and garden.
Agency fees to be paid by the seller. DPE N/A



CÈRBÈRE €575,000
Ref: 103244 Modern 3 bedroom villa with large terrace, garage and spectacular sea views.
Agency fees to be paid by the seller. DPE C



Spring into action! How to earn a living in France

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www.leggettfrance.com info@leggett.fr +33 (0)5 53 60 84 88

Leggett Immobilier, 42 rue de Ribérac, 24340 La Rochebeaucourt, France

APRÈS LA BATAILLE...

BY VICTOR HUGO



Mon père, ce héros au sourire si doux,
Suivi d'un seul housard qu'il aimait entre tous
Pour sa grande bravoure et pour sa haute taille,
Parcourait à cheval, le soir d'une bataille,

Les champs couverts de morts sur qui tombait la nuit.
Il lui sembla dans l'ombre entendre un faible bruit,
C'était un espagnol de l'armée en déroute
Qui se traînait sanglant sur le bord de la route,

Râlant, brisé, livide et mort plus qu'à moitié,
Et qui disait : A boire, à boire par pitié!
Mon père ému, tendit à son housard fidèle
Une gourde de rhum qui pendait à sa selle,

Et dit : Tiens donne à boire à ce pauvre blessé
Tout à coup, au moment où le housard baissa
Se penchait vers lui, l'homme une espèce de Maure,
Saisit un pistolet qu'il étreignait encore,

Et vise au front mon père en criant "Caramba" !
Le coup passa si près que le chapeau tomba
Et que le cheval fit un écart en arrière,
- Donne-lui quand même à boire, dit mon père.

USEFUL VOCAB

sourire - smile

doux - gentle

Suivi - followed

housard - cavalry man

Parcourait à cheval - was travelling on horseback

Il lui sembla - he seemed to

l'ombre - the shadow

en déroute - defeated

sanglant - bloody, bleeding

Râlant - groaning, moaning

brisé - broken

ému - moved

tendit - held out

qui pendait - hanging

sa selle - his saddle

blessé - wounded man

Tout à coup - suddenly

Saisit - grabbed

il étreignait - he was clutching

vise - aims

front - forehead

Le coup - the shot

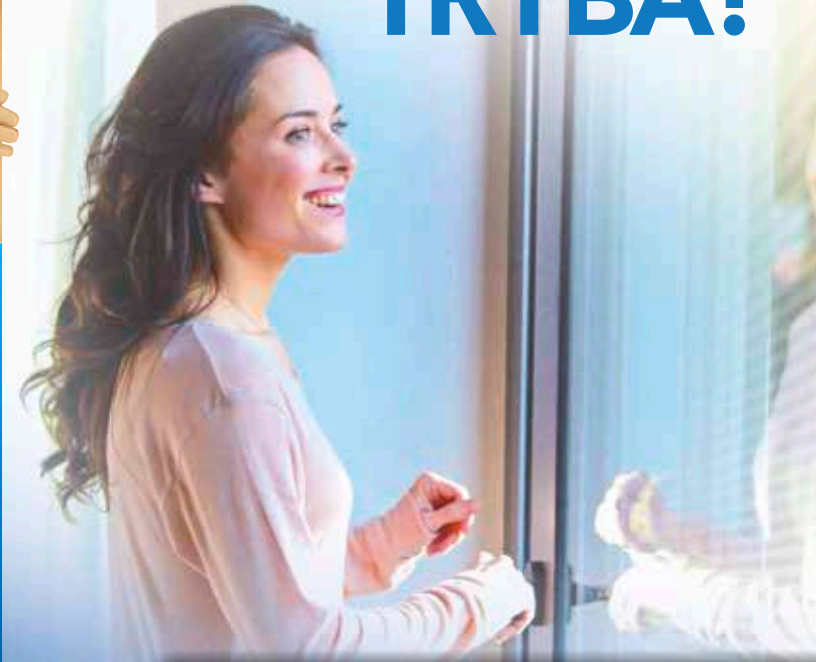
un écart en arrière - jumped back

quand même - anyway



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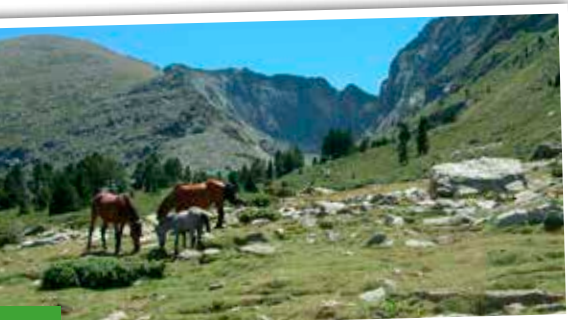
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A CANIGOU

for all seasons



Classed as one of the 'Grands Site de France' any visit to the Pyrénées-Orientales is dominated by the mystic and sacred Catalan Canigou, Walk it, climb it run it, paint it, stroll up it with a donkey friend.....or just sit down here on the plain on a sunny day and worship it from afar!

A MAGICIAN AMONG MOUNTAINS

I came here in search of nothing more than a little sunshine.

But I found Canigou, whom I discovered to be a magician among mountains, and I submitted myself to his power...

I watch him with wonder and delight.

Nothing that he could do or give birth to would now surprise me, whether I met Don Quixote himself riding in from the Spanish side, or all the chivalry of ancient France watering their horses at his streams, or saw (which each twilight seems quite possible) gnomes and kobbolds swarming out of the mines and tunnels of his flanks.

Rudyard Kipling



> Canigou from Marseilles
© Alain Origné

AS THE CROW FLIES.... MARSEILLES TO CANIGOU...

In early February and towards end of October on a clear evening, **you may be able see the peak of Canigou, standing at 9,137 feet above sea level - from Marseilles!** Yes, really! Although approximately 165 miles (253 km) away from the French port town, certain atmospheric conditions allow far away objects that normally can't be seen because of distance, to come into clear view for a short time.

This is not to say that you should go rushing over to Marseilles with a pair of binoculars because **the viewing is very weather dependant**, working by refraction of light. Much of the distance between Marseille and the P-O is over the Mediterranean Sea which probably helps too.

A Canigou Walk

by NORMAN LONGWORTH



I walked up the Canigou last Saturday
Not for the first time I venture to say
Each time it gets harder to complete the way
Up to the top

I walked up the Canigou last Saturday
I drive to the refuge in a rusty old jeep
It means I can get just a little more sleep
It's enough to make a true mountaineer weep
To get to the top

I have to confess it's a bit of a slog
And sometimes I think I need a guide dog
Fit folk would run at a moderate jog
Up to the top

I walked up the Canigou last Saturday
My grandson, aged six, soon set to the chase
My son in his forties walked at fast pace
I crawled like a snail halfway from first base
Up to the top

I walked up the Canigou last Saturday
But when I get there the rewards are intense
Time to let self-adulation commence
The views from the summit are truly immense
Up at the top

Las Illas, La Vajol and the Chemin de l'Exil

In the steps of the **Retirada**



In early 1939, the Second Spanish Republic collapsed. As General Francisco Franco, aided by Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, declared a fascist government, nearly half a million desperate Spanish refugees, civilians and soldiers, arrived at the French Spanish border seeking asylum. This was the biggest single influx of refugees ever known in France. **This was the Retirada.**

The young, the elderly, the infirm, the broken. On foot, over snow covered mountains, along coast and cliff, they headed for sanctuary just as persecuted Jews and fallen airmen toiled in the other direction to escape the evil of Hitler and the Nazi occupation of France.

Despite initial French efforts to keep them out, **hundreds of thousands crossed the French border via the frontier towns of Las Illas, Cerbère, Le Perthus, Coustouges, Puigcerda, Prats-de-Mollo.** They crossed in the depths of winter, one of the coldest on record, suffering incredible hardship, hunger and deprivation on the way.

With a population of around 250,000 inhabitants, the Pyrenees-Orientales was unprepared. Women and children were initially sent to accommodation centres, **men ended up behind barbed wire on the beaches at Argelès-sur-Mer, St Cyprien and Le Barcarès.** With no protection from freezing temperatures and biting winds, supervised by 'Gardes Mobiles' (a special branch of the gendarmerie) and brutal **Senegalese troops**, they faced unspeakable squalour, food and water shortage, dysentery, rat-



Today, more than a third of the Languedoc-Roussillon's population are descendants of these Spanish refugees.

Eighty years later, our day out follows in the footsteps of many of those same refugees. We are free - to walk these same beaches, wander these same mountain tracks - but not, I hope, without taking a quiet moment to reflect on man's inhumanity to man and our own good fortune.

Lest we forget.

You may well have heard of **Laurie Lee's famous «Cider with Rosie»**, a well known A Level lit study in the 60s and 70s, but did you know that it is **one of a semi-autobiographical trilogy?**

In 'A Moment of War,' the final book of the trilogy, (Cider With Rosie (1959) and As I Walked Out One Midsummer Morning (1969), Lee describes how he set out for Spain in December 1937, to fight for the Republican cause.

Unable to find a 'passeur' to help him to cross the Pyrenees, he eventually crossed alone in a snowstorm, 'carrying just a violin and a saucepan' to rejoin the Spanish Civil War, passing through Céret, Las Illas, Banyuls and Port Bou.



> Maureillas

Our day begins in Las Illas, **a great starting point for some fantastic and panoramic mountain walks,** in the tracks of the Trabucaires.

Head first for **Maureillas**, pretty Catalan village off the **D9 Le Boulou – Le Perthus road**, and follow **signs for Las**

Be particularly nice to your driver – he or she will be too busy concentrating on the narrow winding road to enjoy the fabulous views! And if you're in the back....well, hang on to your lunch. It's not far now!



In the 19th century, Don Carlos wanted to take over the throne from regent Marie-Christine. He called for the reintroduction of ancient salic law, excluding women from inheritance to thrones and titles. War broke out between his supporters, the **Carlists**, and supporters of the Regent, the **Christinos**. The Carlist army terrorised the Vallespir, and from this army were born the **Trabucayres**, smugglers, bandits and highwaymen armed with trabucs (muskets). Based in and around **Las Illas**, for its easy-to-hide caves, and mountain tracks, and its great smuggling opportunities, they were finally arrested at Corsavy and executed in Cérét and Perpignan in 1846.

Las Illas, La Vajol and the **Chemin de l'Exil** In the steps of the **Retirada**



From **Las Illas**, turn left at the road next to the memorial signed **La Vajol**. Follow the sign around a hair pin bend to the right (three point turn skills could be required here), then another sharp left hander and continue up the track to



> Temple de la Paix

the **Col de Manrell**, a wide open space with an interesting if rather incongruous pyramid monument, **Temple de la Paix**, dedicated to Luis Companys, president of Catalonia from 1934.

When Franco came to power, Companys fled to occupied France where he was arrested by the Gestapo and sent back to Spain. On Franco's orders, he was tortured, beaten and executed for treason.



The road widens and improves as you cross into Spain. Wooden viewing platforms allow you to gaze over more breathtaking mountain scenery towards **La Jonquera**, although it's not too easy to find an off-road parking place if you just want a quick photo.

Carry on to the large car park of the hotel Manrella on the right and park, (maybe a drink, if not lunch, to justify using their car park.) and **retrace your steps 100 yards to follow signs on the left to the Coll de Lli, the original 'Chemin de l'Exil'**. After a gentle 30 minute climb, turn right after the stone Mas and step through a gate and back into France!



> Coll de Lli

Here, you find another monument, this time a rather unexciting stone plaque on land grazed by wide eyed, peaceful cows. These gentle ladies watch over this indelible route, trudged by thousands of exhausted and frozen refugees in the winter of 39, as well as three fleeing presidents; **Lluís Companys, Manuel Azaña of Spain, and José Aguirre of the Basques**.

Arriving at the entrance to **Las Illas**, you can take a break – public loos and even a public shower are available at the village entrance. Have a wander around the sleepy hamlet, or **lunch at the aptly named restaurant, Hostal dels Trabucayres**, historical shelter for Spanish Republicans fleeing Franco's Spain, and escapees from Nazi occupied France heading in the opposite direction. Stay for lunch, dinner, the night, a walking weekend.....



> Hostal dels Trabucayres

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hostaldestrabucayres66@gmail.com
Village de Las Illas. 66480 MAUREILLAS LAS ILLAS

Las Illas, La Vajol and the **Chemin de l'Exil** In the steps of the **Retirada**

Returning to the stone Mas, you can turn right and continue up the trail for a further 30 minutes until you arrive at a rocky peak on your left, perfect for a panoramic winter picnic, or head back to the car for the **short drive to La Vajol**.

Just before the pretty village, park in the carpark on your left and take the track above, leading quickly to an amazing bronze sculpture raised up on rocks, in a strangely scruffy clearing.



The **Gracias family** crossed the border with thousands of other refugees, fleeing Franco's forces. Dutch photographer **Roger Violet**, took a photo of

father Mariano Gracia, supporting his 6 year old, one legged daughter **Alicia** along the gruelling route over into France. The couple were later immortalised in bronze.

Back to the car park and left into the village, look out for the interesting mining sculpture on the right. **The villagers of La Vajol mined talcum powder for many years.**



Today the mines are closed but during the Spanish Civil War, they were used to hide and store the treasures of the fallen Spanish Republic, priceless artwork from the Prado museum and around 500 million dollars in gold lingots.



According to legend, in 1939, seven lorries carrying gold bars left La Vajol, heading for the nearest port. Only six arrived. Eyewitnesses stated seeing the lorry around Argelès where it was suggested that the drivers had buried it in the sand, awaiting better times. Always take a bucket and spade to the beach!



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Opposite the mining sculpture, climb the ancient steps towards the plaça. We ate a very good lunch at the **Casa Comaulis** on the right. They also provide basic accommodation.



Wander along to the **Romanesque church of Sant Martí de La Vajol** with its steep exterior steps, a fascinating feature, and turn right after the church to arrive back onto the main through road and down the hill to the car.

From here you can continue to explore nearby Spanish villages such as pretty **Maçanet de Cabrenys**, make the long looping journey back into France via **Coustouges**, **drive back** on the main road **via La Jonquera and Le Perthus**, or **retrace your steps back to Maureillas**.



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.

LE PUB A LA FRANÇAISE

Saint Cyprien Village.....**with Kate**

My birthday treat at this fabulous new pub/ tapas/oyster bar in the village. Great atmosphere, heated parasols outside in the pedestrian 'place', tapas platters, oysters, music, some really interesting wines, exciting local beers, friendly service..... Try it. **Absolutely recommend!**

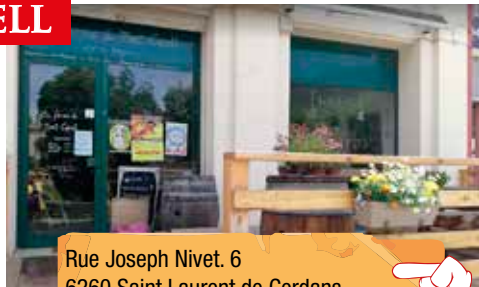


37 avenue du Roussillon
Saint-Cyprien Tel: 07 86 68 60 33

LA FERME DU MONT CAPELL

Saint Laurent de Cerdans.....**with Lynn**

We loved this restaurant. Excellent rustic gourmet with **fabulous organic meat and wine**. No good for vegetarians but total emphasis on local/ P.O. produce with named suppliers. They also sell a good range of their own patés and charcuterie. **12.50€ for plat de jour**. Definitely a winner.



Rue Joseph Nivet. 6
6260 Saint Laurent de Cerdans.
Tel: 07 83 03 66 99.

LAMPARO

Le Barcarès...**with Mary**

Good home cooking, fish a speciality, this beach front restaurant is open most of the year. Seafood platter with great oysters and firm tasty prawns **was delicious and reasonably priced** Friendly staff.



Résidence la Sardane, Le Barcarès,
Tel: 04 68 86 10 44

LE TEMPS DES CERISES

Prats de Mollo....**with Geraldine**

Fabulous food, interesting combinations of flavours and beautifully presented. I chose the **fantastic value €22 menu** (chèvre chaud on apple with very tasty accompaniments, veal, then fig sable, We had a plate of tiny nibbles of mountain cheese with our aperitif and bites of bread with home made tapenade after the starter. **The pork that husband had on his €26 menu was melt in the mouth.** Prats is really worth a visit, lots to look around, very picturesque and **if you go on a Friday there's a nice little market.** Phone ahead to reserve.



1-17 Carrer de la, Carrer de la Porta de France,
Prats-de-Mollo-la-Preste
Tel: 04 68 95 40 10

CHEZ FRANÇOIS

Corsavy....**with Susanne**

Discovered this wonderful place in Corsavy. They serve a set menu of 5 courses plus lovely wine for 33,50, best we've had in ages. **Everything is homemade, even ice cream.** We had charcuterie - paté aux truffes, jambon and saucisson sec, followed by trout, then an omelette aux cèpes. Main course was pintade with salad and carrots, plus dessert - flan or ice cream. **A real feast.** We couldn't possibly finish it all so the lovely lady put what was left in a bag to take home. **Out of season they only do lunch.**



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



AND from Norman

Our old neighbour (sadly deceased) **used to work as a waiter at Chez Françoise around 1943.** He took us there for lunch and said then that **the menu had never changed.** Why would it? **It was superb.**

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!! :-)



Summer may be over, but the winter sun is still shining, the sky is blue – it's a perfect day for a stroll along the prom, prom, prom (tiddly-pom-pom-pom) followed by lunch on the port or sea front, or a wander around the market, a visit to the museum or theatre and a cosy meal in an inviting, town bistro.... **but wait! Oh là là!** Everything's closed! **'Fermeture annuelle'**, or **'Congés d'hiver'** on the doors of two out of three of the eateries in the P-O, leave us to shuffle home with heavy heart and empty tum. Mais ne vous inquiétez pas. All the restaurants advertising in this winter edition of P-O Life remain open most of the season (though it's always worth giving them a ring in advance just to be on the safe side).

Bon app.

ideas for EATING OUT

...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

Cave Le Carignan,04 68 56 83 01
Cosy Wine Bar... Belgian beers, wine at winegrowers' prices
Café des Artistes,04 68 89 76 53
GAA and rugby coverage, WIFI www.cafedesartistes66.com
Le Comptoir Rocatin,04 68 53 82 28
NEW Tapas Bar f: lecomptoirrocatin

...LAS ILLAS (Maureillas-las-Illas)

Hostal dels Trabucayres,04 68 53 07 56
Resto-Hôtel-Gîte https://hostaldelstrabucayres.fr

...MAS GUERIDO (Cabestany)

Le Bistrot,04 68 51 83 90
Lunches, music and Karaoke nights f: lebistrot mas guérido

...MONT LOUIS

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

...PERPIGNAN

Lou Grilladou,04 68 34 86 81
.....Closed Sat lunch-time, all day Sun and Mon eves

...PRADES

Le Galie,04 68 05 53 76
Elegant, Creative cuisine www.restaurantlegalie.com

...PORT- VENDRES

Les Poissonneries de la Côte Catalane,04 68 98 46 00
Indoor Fish Market & Oyster Bar . f: facebook.com/cotecatalane

SAINT CYPRIEN

Le Portofino, Port,09 51 58 89 55/ 06 09 60 42 58
Open all year www.leportofino-restaurant.fr
Le Pub à la française, Village,07 86 68 60 33
Tapas, breakfast, music nights, etc f: lepubalafrancaise/
Jardin Catalan,04 68 21 36 64
Wine tasting Open all year
Ulo Pizza, near Lidl,04 68 95 45 62
Take away/eat in, TV rugby & football f: ulopizza.stcyp

...TWEEN ARGELES AND COLLIOURE

Le Bistrot à la Mer (Hôtel du Golfe),04 68 81 14 73
Route de Collioure www.grandhoteldugolfe.com

...BANYULS-SUR-MER

La Vieille Cave,04 68 88 39 86
Restaurant-Pizzeria www.restaurant-vieille-cave.com
Le Fanal,04 68 98 65 88
..... www.pascal-borrell.com

...CANET

Nu, Cuisine bio, bar & Jardin04 68 98 85 67
Open all year round www.nu-restaurant.fr

...CÉRET

Bella Pizza,04 68 87 70 26
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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

La Cave à Fédé,04 68 37 80 66
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Crêperie Chez la Bretonne,04 68 86 25 45
www.creperie-chezlabretonne.fr f: Chez-la-Bretonne

...THUIR

Bella Cosa,04 30 82 53 50
Opposite Caves Byrrh f: bellacosa.thuir
Arbequina,04 68 34 46 64
www.arbequina-restaurant.com f: ArbequinaRestaurant

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Anse Gerbal - La Criée, 66660 Port-Vendres

MINESTRONE SOUP

Although February in the Vallespir isn't as cold as some parts of the world, a comforting soup is always welcome on a winter's day. A visit to Amelie Farmer's Market, its organic vegetable stall stacked with seasonal produce, and I'm ready to go with this hearty Minestrone Soup

INGREDIENTS

- 100g Dry haricot beans soaked and simmered til soft....or a 400g tin
- 2 Onions or 6 spring onions trimmed and finely sliced
- 1 stick celery, finely diced
- 4 Green Garlic, trimmed and finely sliced (or 3 cloves garlic, finely sliced)
- 50g Everyday extra virgin olive oil
- 400g Tin of chopped tomatoes
- 2 Slow cooked leeks, drained of extra oil
- 2 litres Chicken or Vegetable Stock
- 100g Soup Pasta (eg any tiny pasta)
- Parsley, roughly chopped
- 100g Young spinach leaves, roughly chopped

- > Sweat the onions, celery, garlic, oil, about 50mls of water and a generous pinch of salt in a large pan, covered, over a low heat until completely soft and sweet smelling (include the leeks if you haven't pre-cooked them). After 30-45 minutes, remove the cover and continue cooking until any excess water has evaporated.
- > Pour in the tomatoes including any juice, bring back to simmer and continue cooking uncovered until the juice from the tomatoes has started to evaporate and the tomatoes have started to turn a slightly deeper red, around 15-20 mins.
- > Add the drained cooked beans, the slow cooked leeks and the chicken stock, bring to a simmer, tip in the pasta and bring back to simmer, then cook until the pasta is tender.
- > Grind in lots of black pepper and just before serving, stir in the parsley and the spinach.

Visit Hilary's blog <http://hilarycacchio.com> for a slightly more modern take on Catalan recipes, or order her book, **Sourdough Suppers'**

(Amazon.fr or by email to hilaryjj@btinternet.com)



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FOOD and DRINK

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DEL: One of my most favourite meals
is Duck à l'Orange, but I don't know
how to say that in French.

RODNEY: It's canard.

DEL: You can say that again bruv!

A WINTER PICNIC



The col d'Ouillat and Pic Neoulous (turn left
just before Le Perthus) make a wonderful,
panoramic winter sun picnic and BBQ spot,
but once upon a time, this area was a popular
hideout for smugglers and highwaymen. Look
out for 'La Reyne de las Founs' - man made
rock formation surrounding a source coming
out of the mountain, forming a pretty waterfall
and stream. Inscribed with 'les douaniers ici
trouvent souvent ce qu'ils cherchent' it was
used by smugglers to indicate, via cleverly coded
pebble formations, where the customs officials
were and how many were about!

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Named after the lake on which it stands, this purpose-built theatre has plenty of parking space, access for the disabled and offers high quality music, dance, theatre, comedy and culture - **from just 5€ per person!** Get there early and take a flat and easy stroll around the lake before the show.

Great
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2020 HIGHLIGHTS

Visit their website at
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for a full and varied programme

OPERA

LA FLÛTE ENCHANTÉE

Friday 7th February at 20h30

The Magic Flute, Mozart's story of love and intrigue. Will Tamino rescue Pamina? Will Papageno find Papagena? Find out with a night at the opera!



MUSICAL

SUR UN BANC DE PARIS

Saturday 7th March at 20h30

Need a pick-me-up? All the ingredients of a Broadway musical with a melange of song, dance and theatre. An upbeat tonic to chase away the winter blues.

MUSIC

MONSIEUR JACQUES

Saturday 28th March at 19h

Apéro-Concert. Songs of life...IN FRANÇAIS!
With a dégustation of local wines - à consommer
avec modération bien sûr! **ADMISSION 5€**



MUSIC

ETAT SOEUR

Saturday 25th April at 19h

Perpignan rock band take us back to the
60s/70s with The Doors, Téléphone, ZZ Top, Led
Zep, Trust, Elvis, Rose Tattoo, Rage Against The
Machine, ACDC...and dégustation of local wines.
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romantic drama

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FESTIVALS Events and Traditions

SPRING IS (NEARLY) HERE!



**DON'T FORGET
TO TURN YOUR
CLOCKS FORWARD
DURING THE NIGHT
OF SATURDAY 28TH/
SUNDAY 29TH MARCH.**

CARNIVAL

It's carnival time again in the P-O! Street parades, fireworks, singing and dancing ... along with the symbolic burning of evil spirits. Carnival actually dates back to an ancient festival in honour of Dionysus, the god of wine. It was a massive binge – a celebration of excess, a last chance to eat, drink and be excessively merry before Lent, the 40 day period of fasting, abstinence, and purging of sins. **So pull out your masks, costumes and confetti and go have fun!**



PANCAKE DAY

> 2ND FEBRUARY

You don't need to wait for Shrove Tuesday to toss your first pancake of the year. The **'Fête de la Chandeleur' (Candlemas)**, also known as the **'jour des crêpes'**, dates back to Roman times and is celebrated 40 days after Christmas, on the 2nd February.

Originally a religious festival, the name chandeleur actually comes from the word chandelle (candle), probably because this Christian occasion involved much lighting and blessing of candles.



BEAR NECESSITIES

Everyone should go to at least one bear festival in their lives - **and here in the P-O we have THREE every year!** Taking place in **Arles sur Tech (2nd Feb)**, **Prats de Mollo (9th Feb)** and **St Laurent de Cerdans (16th Feb)**, this quirky and ancient event sees **men and women running through the streets dressed as bears and hunters**, some wearing sheepskins, their faces and hands blackened with a mixture of suie (soot) and huile (oil), others covered in flour and dressed in white lace bonnets....and many more fascinating and fun traditions. **Intrigued? Visit our website or the local tourist office to find out more.**



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Have you tried any of the off-the-wall recipes in the Dali cookbook yet, 136 recipes over 12 chapters, specially illustrated by Dali?

Published in 1973, and recently reprinted, 'Les Dîners de Gala' is "... uniquely devoted to the pleasures of Taste. Don't look for dietetic formulas here".

Even if you never make the extravagant and sometimes impossible recipes, **it's worth buying for the artwork and photos!** Treat yourself to Conger Eel of the Rising Sun, Frog Pasties, Veal Cutlets Stuffed With Snails, Thousand Year Old Eggs, or try one of his many aphrodisiac recipes. Sounds surreally delicious!!



TEST YOUR FRENCH AND HAVE A BIT OF A GIGGLE AT THE SAME TIME



USEFUL VOCAB

Le pape - **the pope**
une bagnole - **car, set of wheels**
le volant - **steering wheel**
se met à l'arrière - **gets in the back.**
se dirige - **heads for**
la voie rapide - **dual carriageway**
Tout d'un coup - **suddenly**
La vitre teintée - **tinted window**
se baisse - **opens, winds down**
aperçoit - **spots, notices**
bouche bée - **gawping, speechless**
excès de vitesse - **speeding**
Enfin - **well, come on...**

Le pape arrive à l'aéroport de Perpignan, et une belle limousine est mise à sa disposition. Grand fan de **bagnoles**, il demande à prendre **le volant**. Après une longue hésitation, le chauffeur finit par accepter et se **met à l'arrière**. Le pape prend le volant et **se dirige** vers **la voie rapide**, direction Perpignan centre. **Tout d'un coup**, il est flashé et une moto de la gendarmerie le fait arrêter. **La vitre teintée se baisse**, et le gendarme **aperçoit** le pape.

Le gendarme, **bouche bée**, prend son talkie-walkie:

– Allo Mon capitaine?

– Oui je vous écoute.

– Je viens d'arrêter quelqu'un de très important pour **excès de vitesse**.

– Ah bon? C'est qui? Le maire?

– Non monsieur. Plus important.

– La présidente du conseil général des Pyrénées-Orientales?

– Non monsieur. Plus important.

– Le préfet?

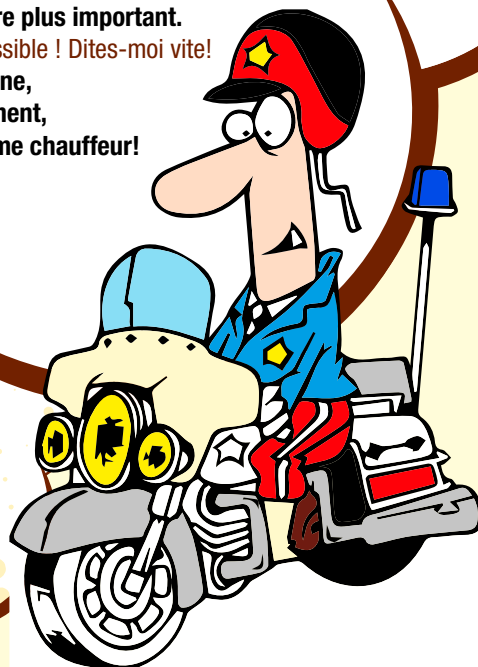
Non monsieur. Plus important.

– **Enfin...** Le président de la république?

– Non Monsieur. Encore plus important.

– Enfin ce n'est pas possible ! Dites-moi vite!

– Écoutez mon capitaine, je ne sais pas exactement, mais il a le pape comme chauffeur!



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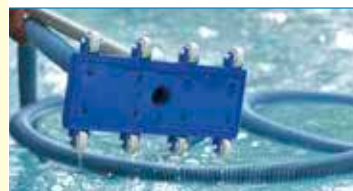
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The Pyrénées-Orientales

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> Björn, Magdalena and Keyla

L'abri la Vall is situated in the small village of La Vall (French Lavail) above Sorède.

in the heart of the Gorges de la Vall. The long and winding road up follows the track of the Massane River which flows down from its source high in the forests above.



As you reach the edge of the village, you see the **Eglise St Martin de Lavall**, the Romanesque church where King Philip the Bold stopped to pray on his way through the Gorges to lay siege to Girona.

There are about 15 houses in this small hamlet. One of them belongs to Björn and Magdalena Hedström.

Their lovely home is a place of peace and tranquillity. Hidden. A secret place. Look up and you see the Tour Massane, massive granite rocks and thick forests. Listen and you hear babbling brooks, birdsong and perhaps the rustle of leaves. **It is their home but they have opened it up to those who are looking for more than just a B & B.**



Lovingly restored, **once part of a convent, the house was built in the 10th Century.** Björn and Magdalena bought the house in 2014 and have really only just finished **renovating** it, totally in **keeping with its 17th century origins.**

Five guest suites, simple furniture, clean white walls, a couple with spectacular views. In the large dining-room, a huge rectangular table made from wooden

boards comes from an old jetty just outside Gothenburg where they used to live.

Björn and Magdalena welcome you into their home, join you around the dinner table - but maintain a huge respect for your privacy and need to be alone with your thoughts. Indeed, that is the whole ethos of L'abri la Vall - **shelter, protection, refuge, retreat.**

www.labrilavall.com

For anyone who wants to spend a few days at Lent seeking God in stillness and in fellowship with others

- Tasty meals
- Morning and evening prayers
- Exploring together the mystery of Easter
- Time to enjoy the nature surrounding Lavail

Ann & Kit Hum
Magdalena & Björn Hedström

Approaching EASTER

Christian retreat
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at L'abri la Vall

More information and reservations at
www.labrilavall.com

Places are limited to 10
Early booking is recommended

APRIL 2020 – OCTOBER 2020

Starting off with some good news for once, it seems that Ryanair WILL be flying from Girona this year, after announcing the closure of its Girona base in autumn 2019.



Do be careful if taking hand baggage only on EasyJet as it is now limited. Although they assured passengers that their cases could go in the cabin if below a certain size, they now appear to have reneged on that promise. We flew back from Montpellier with a small bag which always fits comfortably under the seat. At the boarding gate however, they insisted (very abruptly) that it went into the hold, despite being below the guaranteed limit.

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.** A significant increase on the number of Vueling flights to Gatwick. In 2020 Ryanair will introduce flights from Cardiff, and there are plenty of the airline's flights from Dublin and Stansted. Vueling have ceased their Cardiff service, whilst Jet2 have added flights from Birmingham, Glasgow and Leeds Bradford. Aer Lingus have also just announced a thrice weekly Shannon service.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
BELFAST	5	EASYJET 29/03-30/08
BIRMINGHAM	2	JET2
	9	RYANAIR 31/03-24/10
BRISTOL	12-14	EASYJET 29/03-30/08
CARDIFF	2	RYANAIR 31/03-24/10
EAST MIDLANDS	7	RYANAIR 29/03-24/10
EDINBURGH	2	NORWEGIAN 24/06-13/08
	7	RYANAIR 29/03-24/10
GATWICK	40-42	EASYJET 29/03-30/08
	14	NORWEGIAN 01/04-17/09
	49	VUELING 29/03-24/10
GLASGOW INT'L	2	JET2 29/03-24/10
GLASGOW PRESTWICK	6	RYANAIR 29/03-29/10
HEATHROW	35-48	BRITISH AIRWAYS
LEEDS BRADFORD	2-4	JET2 29/03-30/10
LIVERPOOL	10-11	EASYJET 29/03-30/08
	6	RYANAIR 29/03-24/10
LUTON	21	EASYJET 29/03-30/08
MANCHESTER	24	JET2
	2	NORWEGIAN 30/03-16/10
	7	RYANAIR 29/03-24/10
NEWCASTLE	4-6	EASYJET 29/03-30/08
SOUTHEND	4	EASYJET 29/03-30/08
STANSTED	28	RYANAIR 29/03-24/10
CORK	4-5	AER LINGUS 30/04-15/09
DUBLIN	12	AER LINGUS 29/03-15/09
	18	RYANAIR 01/04-24/10
SHANNON	3	AER LINGUS 02/05-26/09

GIRONA



In a surprise move last Autumn, Ryanair announced the closure of its Girona base. However, **in December, the budget airline made a U turn and will now reopen several routes out of Girona.** Good news for the P-O.

It seems as though Leeds based Jet2 who suddenly found the airport two years ago once again have a whole raft of flights, though most do not start until early May.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
BELFAST	1	JET2 21/05-17/09
	2	RYANAIR 03/07-23/10
BIRMINGHAM	2	JET2 30/04-29/10
BOURNEMOUTH	4	RYANAIR 30/03-24/10
BRISTOL	2-7	RYANAIR 29/03-24/10
EAST MIDLANDS	2	JET2 22/05-26/10
EDINBURGH	2	JET2 22/05-19/10
	2	RYANAIR 02/07-22/10
GATWICK	2	TUI 02/05-26/09
GLASGOW INT'L	2	JET2 03/05-21/10
LEEDS BRADFORD	3	JET2 30/04-01/11
LIVERPOOL	2	RYANAIR 01/07-21/10
MANCHESTER	2-4	JET2 01/05-31/10
NEWCASTLE	2	JET2 30/04-01/11
SOUTHEND	2	RYANAIR 01/04-24/10
STANSTED	2-3	JET2 01/05-30/10
	5/6	RYANAIR 29-03-24/10



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	VIRGIN CONNECT 04/07-22/08
SOUTHAMPTON	1	VIRGIN CONNECT 04/07-29/08

CARCASSONNE



Ryanair remains the sole operator here, with the Edinburgh service being added in 2019, but Glasgow has now been dropped this year.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
EAST MIDLANDS	2	RYANAIR 31/03-24/10
EDINBURGH	2	RYANAIR 31/03-24/10
MANCHESTER	2	RYANAIR 30/03-23/10
STANSTED	7	RYANAIR 31/03-24/10
CORK	2	RYANAIR 01/06-31/08
DUBLIN	3	RYANAIR 31/03-24/10

BEZIERS

Like Carcassonne, Ryanair has a free run at this



small airport

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
BRISTOL	3	RYANAIR 30/03-23/10
EDINBURGH	2	RYANAIR 29/03-21/10
LUTON	3	RYANAIR 30/03-23/10
MANCHESTER	2	RYANAIR 31/03-24/10
STANSTED	3	RYANAIR 29/03-23/10



MONTPELLIER

The airport we use as **easyJet** has **daily flights from Gatwick in the summer**. In the winter months some of the flights were operated by 186 seat Airbus A320s instead of the smaller 162 seat Airbus A319s. So overall there is an increase in capacity. They also operate to **Montpellier from Luton**, but only for a short period. The British Airways flight from Heathrow which operated only in 2018 appears not to be operating again this year.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
DUBLIN	3	AER LINGUS 20/05-15/09
GATWICK	11-14	EASYJET 29/03-30/08
LUTON	3	EASYJET 23/07-29/08

NIMES

Ryanair is the sole operator for P-O readers.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
LUTON	3	RYANAIR 31/03-24/10
STANSTED	4	RYANAIR 29/03-23/10

PERPIGNAN

After yet another winter with no direct UK flights things are coming alive again. **Aer Lingus** have once again increased their weekly flights **from Dublin** up to six a week in the summer. The bad news – there are still some 0600 departures from Dublin, but most are now 0550 departures!

If you are looking at the websites and finding the fares to P-O. very high, look at the rugby fixture list which could explain it. Often changing just a few days can reduce the fare, and car hire prices.

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

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
BIRMINGHAM	2	RYANAIR 31/03-20/10
DUBLIN	6	AER LINGUS 19/05-12/09
SOUTHAMPTON	1	VIRGIN CONNECT 06/06-29/08
STANSTED	5	RYANAIR 29/03-24/10

TOULOUSE / BLAGNAC



There tend to be more flights to **Toulouse from UK regional airport** in the winter due to skiing opportunities, with Andorra not too far away. **Ryanair are introducing a Dublin service** in competition with **Aer Lingus**. However they have ceased service to **Edinburgh** and **EasyJet have ceased their Luton service**. Virgin Connect (formerly Flybe) have dropped their Birmingham and Manchester flights for the summer.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
BRISTOL	4-7	EASYJET 29/03-30/08
GATWICK	16-18	EASYJET 29/03-30/08
HEATHROW	28	BRITISH AIRWAYS
STANSTED	14	RYANAIR 01/04-24/10
DUBLIN	3-6	AER LINGUS 29/03-15/09
	7	RYANAIR – 01/04-24/10

As already stated, **Ryanair's Girona base will now remain open**, despite previous claims that falling profits and delays in new plane delivery were forcing them to withdraw airport in 2020. **Staff have been asked to sign contracts accepting reduced salaries and reduced hours to keep the base open**, effectively working and being paid for just 9 months of the year.....so be particularly nice to the Ryanair crew next time you fly from Girona!

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PERPIGNAN / CÉRET

When was the last time you treated yourself (or a friend) to some 'me time'?

The lovely Gilly has opened her skin and beauty salon in the centre of Céret.

With over 20 years' experience in the beauty industry, this skilled, expert esthetician brings you all the latest treatments and innovations to ensure that you look and feel like a million euros! Whether it's nails, make-up, facial, specialized skin treatment, bridal package, waxing away the hairy bits or just a damn good pamper and tonic, lie back, relax and let Gilly work her magic.



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WITH **TONY GOODMAN**

Tried and TASTED

DOMAINE LAURIGA

Traverse de Ponteilla RD 37, 66300 Thuir
www.lauriga.com



Peaceful now but from early 1793 to July 1795 the Roussillon plain was a blood-soaked battlefield, Spanish forces pushed north as far as Peyrestortes though were never able to conquer Perpignan with its impregnable walls nor Collioure. Despite or perhaps because of the fact that unsuccessful French commanders were sent to the guillotine, the French forces, aided by local guides such as Joseph Cassanyes, eventually won the day.

The kings of France and Spanish Aragon struck a deal. The plain was allowed to settle down to do what it does best, produce superb wines.



Kings and conquerors have owned, admired and coveted the Roussillon plain's rich shattered limestone, clay and alluvial soils for thousands of years. Battles have been fought, flags raised and lowered. Romans battled Visigoths, French battled Spanish, Aragon battled Merovingian France. The terroir is rich, productive, capable of fuelling empires. Worth fighting for.

Situated near Thuir, 15 minutes from Perpignan, on 60 hectares, **Domaine Lauriga's John Paul Mas** has kept this flame alive, using deep local wisdom and the latest science to produce great value wines; **superb reds and whites, intriguing rosés, and luscious, generous vins doux...**and all this under the stern gaze of old man Canigou.



LE CADET

Syrah, Carignan, Grenache

Love this great fun, good value BBQ red, Garland's Strike up the Band big number in your glass. Plenty of pepper, red fruit and tannins. Grilled red or white meat, soft cheeses. **Serve 14- 16C 7-8€**

SOLEIL BLANC 2018

Grenache Gris, Macabeu blanc

Pale gold with green tints. The initial tsunami of peach and pear resolves to allow liquorice and spice to follow through. Structured enough to carry a spicy entrée, a hard grilled sea bass or a goat cheese salad. Plenty of structure so not too chilled, **14C will be fine. 12.90€**

RIVESALTES AMBRÉ HORS D'ÂGE

Grenache Blanc, Macabeu, Muscat petit grain.

Soft and powerful, Rich prunes, sweet dates, wild orange blossom. Spice. Foie Gras, desserts or as a digestive. Around 11€.

YOUR VISIT

Park right outside the cellar door. Stylish comfortable tasting room. Christelle's excellent english will steer you through the dégustation.



CHÂTEAU LAURIGA "AWARD-WINNING WINES"

Located Near Thuir in the Aspres, amidst 60 hectares of vines, Château Lauriga was bought by Jean-Claude Mas in 2016. This ancient terroir has survived throughout the centuries and continues to produce great wine today - AOP Côtes du Roussillon (red and rosé), IGP Côtes Catalanes and IGP Pays d'Oc, as well as fortified wines.



Discover too their superb range of award-winning wines, many of which appear in the most prestigious wine guides (Hachette, Parker, Bettanne & Desseauve ...) with prices from 6€ to 50€.

Open all year round, Château Lauriga caters for both groups and individuals:

- Event Management
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- Wine-tasting Classes
- Gift Ideas

Please contact us to find out more!

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WINE CLUB

Dominique and Solenn Génot are perhaps the wisest winemakers you'll meet.

After 10 years of managing a Biodynamic vineyard in Tuscany they chose a patch of ancient vines high above Vinca, 700 meters above sea level and one of the highest vineyards in France, as their home.

The name Mas Llossanes means "Lieu-Saint" and it is said that, when plague spread across the country, this one spot was spared, an oasis of good health.

Immune to many of the challenges faced by the plains below, **their goal is a simple one. Produce 100% Biodynamic vines** able to out perform the world's grand crus. They are well on their way.



MAS LLOSSANES

Route d'Arboussols, Tarerach
www.masllossanes.fr



The terroir is a blend of granite, schist, quartz. It smells of damp sweet minerals. For almost eighty years the vines were allowed to grow as they wish. Surrounded by garrigue of mountain herbs, ancient twisted oaks and pines their roots have forced their way down to a deep water table.

AU DOLMEN VIN ROUGE

Carignan, Syrah and Chenanson

Hand picked, aged separately then blended. Deep king crimson. Nice cling. Chenanson adds an interesting floral pepper which works well with my beloved Syrah. Ready now or put it aside for 12 months. **Serve 16C** 12 – 18 €

DOTRERA, VIN ROUGE

Carignan, Syrah, Grenache and Chenanson

Festive red almost purple. Red fruit, Blackcurrant. Lovely soft southern french tannins. Ready now but structured enough to be put aside for a few years. **Serve 16C** 12 – 18 €

YOUR VISIT

It's a good time to visit, walk the vines and taste the wines and Dominique and Solenn speak excellent english. Take D13 from Vinca then the D35C will get you there. Pack a jacket, take a camera. Ring in advance (07 83 01 95 15) and let them know you're popping in.

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Test your *nature* KNOWLEDGE



with Lesley McLaren

This winter we're taking another quizzical look over the year's articles – with one or two extra questions thrown in!



Lesley McLaren is one of "The Warblers" – a group of natural history enthusiasts in the PO.

www.mediterraneanpyrenees.com
Twitter @66warblers



MAKE YOUR CHOICE

- What is the Roussillon name for the wind that blows from the West?
a) La tramuntana
b) Le Canigonenc
c) La marinade
d) Le vent de dalt
- What length can a Megarian Banded Centipede grow to?
a) 10cm
b) 15cm
c) 20cm
d) 25cm
- What's the average life expectancy of a butterfly?
a) several weeks
b) several years
c) 1 day
d) 3 months
- The average P-O temperature in February 2019 was:
a) 9°C
b) 14°C
c) 19°C
d) 23°C



TRUE OR FALSE

- Insects cannot hear
- Only male cuckoos call "Cook-oo".
- Between now and 2100 the temperature of the Pyrenees massif could increase by another 1 to 2°C.
- Genets have spread across the PO after escaping from zoos.
- The eyes of poisonous snakes have vertical pupils.
- At night, tawny owls sometimes catch small birds that are roosting in trees.

T	F
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DON'T YOU JUST KNOW IT?

- Which is the hottest year ever recorded in the PO?
- How does the Asian hornet differ most in appearance from the European hornet?
- What is the French name for the Moon jellyfish?
- What species of squirrel does the PO have?
- What's the average weight of a bee-eater?
a) 23g
b) 57g
c) 65g
d) 72g
- Why do most octopuses only live for a year or two?
a) They have too many natural predators
b) They are prone to disease
c) Their ideal habitats are disappearing
d) They die after breeding
- How many Pyrenean glaciers have disappeared between 1984 and 2016?
a) None
b) Less than 50%
c) More than 50%
d) 100%



ANSWERS



MAKE YOUR CHOICE

1. **b.** Le Canigonec (blows from Mt. Canigou)
2. **c.** 20 cm
3. **a.** Several weeks
4. **d.** 23°C
5. **b.** 57g
6. **d.** Both sexes usually die within a few weeks or months of breeding
7. **c.** More than 50%



TRUE OR FALSE

1. **False** (Many can hear, but their hearing mechanisms may not be on their heads)
2. **True** (Females make a sound like bathwater gurgling down the plughole!)
3. **False** (Depending on emission reduction it could increase by another 2 to 7°C!)
4. **False** (They were introduced by the Moors in the Middle Ages)
5. **True** (Eyes of non-venomous snakes, like the Ladder snake, have round pupils)
6. **True**



DON'T YOU JUST KNOW IT?

1. 2018 (Average 17°C)
2. Asian hornet has orange face and legs
3. La Méduse
4. Just the red squirrel (the shade of red varies, with some appearing almost black)



CHENILLES PROCESSIONNAIRES

If you have pine trees with **Pine Processionary Caterpillar** nests on your property, you probably already know that the caterpillars have fine hairs on their back containing a protein which causes severe irritation and dermatitis, and in some cases an allergic reaction to both humans and animals.

You can now buy (or make) an environmentally-friendly trap which apparently works very well. Fix a bag containing earth to the trunk of the tree with some kind of collar to channel the caterpillars into the bag. When they leave their nests, follow-my-leader style, to pupate in the ground, (usually Feb/Mar here in the P-O), they will drop into the trap. Check every day and burn the bag once they're in.



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YORKSHIRE DANCERS IN BANYULS

Banyuls-sur-Mer is the birthplace of Aristide Maillol, his curvy sculpture 'Jeune Fille Allongée' relaxes on the seafront, with more of his work on view in the small museum just outside the town. But not all statues in Banyuls are by Maillol.

Also on the seafront stands Les Danseurs de la Sardane by Leeds-born lass Pat Rowland, in complete contrast to Maillol's voluptuous sculpture. Check out her webpage at <http://patrowland.fr>



GIRONA OR GERONA

Did you know that Girona is spelt 'Gerona' in Castilian Spanish and 'Girona' in Catalan.

La Pharmacie:

MORE THAN JUST A CHEMIST

New rules allow French pharmacies to dispense certain prescription-strength drugs without prescription and give flu injections (depending on the circumstances) and in the future may well allow them to hand out certain antibiotics. In fact, 'Pharmacie' staff in France are highly trained, (six or seven years of university studies are required) and therefore, whilst they are not allowed to diagnose, they are generally very competent in providing advice and over the counter treatment for many common ailments. Whilst certainly not a substitute for a doctor, they can be a good place to start if you're off colour. Do not be afraid to ask advice, describe your symptoms etc.

We checked in with our local pharmacie in Maureillas to find out more about the many services offered by chemists in France.



BEST HEALTHCARE SYSTEM IN THE WORLD

According to the WHO (World Health Organisation, not the rock band!), France has the best healthcare system in the world and **more people visit the doctor here than in any other country** – and of course, doctors write prescriptions.



WHEEL CHAIR RENTAL?

Most pharmacies will carry out first aid, take your blood pressure, lend blood pressure gauges (and show you how to use them), advise on the edibility of mushrooms picked, **sell or rent out and deliver materials such as crutches, wheelchairs, beds for the disabled....** Village



pharmacies will often work closely with district nurses and doctors to ensure that patients receive the right medical care.

OPEN ALL HOURS

Pharmacies open shop hours and are closed Sunday and Bank holidays. However, **there will always be at least one 'service de garde' in each area providing out-of-hours service in case of emergency. Look for a notice in the window of any pharmacy, or ring 3237 for details of the 'pharmacie de garde' nearest you.**



NON PRESCRIPTION MEDICINE

Only pharmacies are allowed to sell over-the-counter, non-prescription drugs, so you will not find paracetamol or haemorrhoid cream at your local corner shop or supermarket. **There is no state reimbursement for over the counter drugs, unless they have been prescribed by a doctor.**

HOMEOPATHIC REMEDIES

Many French chemists have a wide range of homeopathic remedies and pharmacists often recommend them. Bear in mind that the homeopathic option **MAY BE considerably less efficient and should not be considered if you are amongst the 'at risk' groups.**



NAME DROPPING

You will often be given **'generic'** drugs with different names, cheaper equivalent of the 'branded' drug you may be used to. You can ask specifically for branded drugs **but you will only receive reimbursement at the rate for the equivalent generic drug.**

LEFTOVER DRUGS

Medicine in France is dispensed by the pack, so you will often end up with much more than you need. For example, if you are prescribed a twelve-day course of antibiotics and these come in packs of ten, you will receive two packs, nearly half of





which you will not use. Take your surplus drugs into your local pharmacie and they will see that they are disposed of safely. They are no longer able to recycle.

CHECK YOUR 'COMPLÉMENTAIRE SANTÉ'

The high standard of French healthcare and low price of prescription drugs is changing, as state contributions towards medicines are substantially reduced.

This reduction will also affect the amount of reimbursement from your 'complémentaire santé', so this is a good time to check the conditions of your top up health policy.

AND FINALLY.....

....we can't possibly end without mentioning **the good old suppository!** Used in France to cure sore throats, fevers, inflammations, and a whole range of ailments, whether they be bottom related or not, this is one French treatment that still makes the Brits go 'oh là là' !



SOME USEFUL VOCABULARY FOR VISITING THE CHEMIST IN FRANCE

Where is the nearest emergency chemist?

Où est la pharmacie de garde la plus proche?

I've got a bunged up nose
J'ai le nez bouché.

I feel dizzy.
La tête me tourne

I feel sick
J'ai mal au cœur

I have been sick.
Je viens de vomir

I'm not sleeping well
Je ne dors pas bien

I have sunburn.

J'ai pris un coup de soleil

Is there a 'cheaper alternative'?
Est-ce qu'il y a un générique?

Do you have anything for a cold/flu?

Avez-vous quelque chose contre un rhume/la grippe?

I've been stung by a bee/wasp
J'ai été piqué(e) par une abeille/guêpe.

Can you recommend an insect repellent?

Pouvez-vous me conseiller une crème anti-insecte?

I would like some plasters, please.

Je voudrais du sparadrap, s'il vous plaît.

I am allergic to...
j'ai une allergie contre...

It is not serious.
Ce n'est pas grave.

I have stomach ache.
J'ai mal au ventre.

I have a headache.
J'ai mal à la tête.

Can you give me something for the pain?

Pouvez-vous me donner un analgésique?

Should I see a doctor?
Est-ce que je devrais voir un médecin?

I feel unwell.
Je ne me sens pas bien.

I have a temperature.
J'ai de la fièvre.

Ouch!
Aieeeee!

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LOVE A CAR BOOT SALE?

Did you know that 'vide-grenier' literally translates as 'empty your attic', whilst a 'braderie', similar to a vide grenier, comes from the word "brader" meaning to sell off at low prices.



'Lauragais':

STEEPED IN HISTORY,
SOAKED IN BLOOD'> Puylaurens - a Protestant stronghold
(in the Wars of Religion)

Synopsis

Situated in the heart of Occitanie, the Lauragais is largely ignored by the millions who visit its neighbours each year – Toulouse and Carcassonne. But in times gone by, it rarely escaped the attentions of the great and the good, or the ambitious and the avaricious. Simon de Montfort, the Black Prince, Thomas Jefferson and the Duke of Wellington all left their mark, and in a more literal sense so too did Pierre-Paul Riquet with his Canal du Midi, and the rich pastel merchants with their magnificent hôtels particuliers.

Author **Colin Duncan Taylor** has lived in the area for twenty years, and among his friends are people whose roots in the Lauragais are much deeper than his own. **Some of them come from families that have lived in the same home or village for hundreds of years**, and with their help, he brings the past back to life in a book that tells the story of a land where, if you scratch below the surface, the soil is steeped in history and soaked in blood.



> Author at Château de Montgey

'History in this part of the world is not locked away inside a glass cabinet in the bowels of a dead museum. It is alive through the people and their homes, and my hostess Marie-Christine is the seventeenth generation of the same family to reside in the Château de Garrevaques. Her grandchildren are running around somewhere too.'

Reader reviews

‘A brilliant book that captures the history of an area of France that I’m sure most of us would never have considered being so significant in shaping modern day life. The book is thoroughly detailed yet never overwhelmingly technical and is written in a unique and refreshing style that makes it hard to put down. Anyone with an interest in history, France or simply a good, well-written book must read Lauragais.’

James Owens, 1 September 2019

> The Resistance memorial (and mausoleum)
at Fontbrun

'If you want to discover the future all you have to do is wait, but if you want to rediscover the past you need perseverance, dedication, imagination, instinct, an obsession with detail and preferably a large dose of luck. I know plenty of people like that in the Lauragais.'

‘Having just (July 2019) traveled through Lauragais and visited a number of key historical sites, I was delighted to find a book that tied these separate experiences together over time and space. Colin’s book brought the area to life in a comfortable way, providing both personal color and depth of detail around specific events as well as creating the link with the current inhabitants. As an experienced traveler with intense interest in history, I found Colin’s book a marvelous addition to my holiday.’

Jeffrey Brown, 2 August 2019



> Lastours

Where to buy

'Lauragais' is available in print or ebook format from the main online retailers worldwide. It is also on sale locally in the Lauragais. Find out more on the author's website:
www.colinduncantaylor.com.



Répétez trois fois

Séchons ces seize chaussures sales sous sa cheminée.

Test your FRENCH

See Page 89 for answers

1 V pour Va!

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

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

- | | | | |
|-------------|----|---|--------------------------------------|
| voilier | 1 | a | fermer à clé |
| verrouiller | 2 | b | qui habite à côté |
| volant | 3 | c | là où la route tourne |
| volonté | 4 | d | un signe de ponctuation |
| virage | 5 | e | un instrument de musique |
| voisin | 6 | f | bateau |
| ver | 7 | g | qui contient du poison |
| violoncelle | 8 | h | faire de gros efforts pour réussir |
| véneux | 9 | i | pour diriger un véhicule |
| virgule | 10 | j | petit animal long et mou sans pattes |

Blague bête

J'ai aperçu ta copine l'autre jour, mais elle ne m'a pas vu !
Je sais, elle me l'a dit.

(J'ai aperçu - I spotted)

Language Tip

Il y a - there is/there are
Il y a 2 bouteilles de vin sur la table

BUT

Il y a + time phrase = ago
Je suis arrivé en France il y a 3 jours

Useful Expression

Mettre en porte à faux - to put someone in an awkward position

eg Vous me mettez en porte à faux
Je ne veux pas vous mettre en porte à faux

2

As Easy as Pie

More well known French similes to match up to their English equivalent.

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|----|---|----------------------|
| Bavard comme ... (Chatty as a magpie) | 1 | a | un cachet d'aspirine |
| Muet comme ... (Quiet as a mouse) | 2 | b | un ver |
| Blanc comme ... (White as ghost) | 3 | c | vache qui pisse |
| Dormir comme ... (Sleep like a log) | 4 | d | un paon |
| Simple comme ... (Easy as pie) | 5 | e | un pinson |
| Laid comme ... (Ugly as sin) | 6 | f | une pie |
| Pleuvoir comme ... (Pour down) | 7 | g | un loir |
| Nu comme ... (Naked as a baby) | 8 | h | un pou |
| Gai comme ... (Happy as a lark) | 9 | i | une carpe |
| Fier comme ... (Proud as a peacock) | 10 | j | bonjour |



LE BIBI

Be my Baby

As with all languages, French has its fair share of 'baby talk' Test some of these out on your partner if you can't find a baby nearby!

- Le bibi - bottle
- Le lolo - milk
- Les lolo - boobs
- Un doudou - favourite teddy/blanket
- Un toutou - doggy
- Un minou - kitty
- Un dada - horsey
- Un joujou - toy
- Faire caca - to have a poo
- Le popo - a potty
- Faire pipi - to have a wee
- Le cucu - bottom
- Un bobo - a wound, a poorly bit
- La nounou - nanny
- Faire dodo - go to sleep
- Le zizi/kiki - willy
- miam miam - yummy

3

Parts of a whole!

Here are the parts - find the whole
(possibilities at end of exercise)

Eg le toit, les fenêtres, les portes, les murs

Answer: une maison.

1. Un écran, une télécommande, une antenne.
2. Une selle, des pédales, des roues
3. Des robinets, un bouchon, un siphon
4. Une paume, des doigts, des ongles
5. L'accueil, le rayon, la caisse

- a une main b un supermarché c un évier
d une télévision e un vélo



Test your FRENCH

Hold it!

Tenir (*je tiens, nous tenons*) translates mainly as 'to hold' or 'to keep' but takes on different meanings depending on usage. Here are a few.

- tenir...
 ... **une classe** - to control a class (eg of kids)
 ... **un magasin** - to run a shop
 ... **à quelqu'un/quelque chose** - to depend on s.o/s.thing
 ... **de quelqu'un** - to take after someone

Say something nice 😊

Je t'aime un peu, beaucoup, passionnément, à la folie

4

CAN YOU FIND THE ENGLISH FOR THESE FRENCH EXPRESSIONS WITH TENIR?

- Je pense qu'il tient à moi 1
 Nous tenons le coup 2
 Il se tient à peine debout 3
 Tiens-toi droit 4
 Tiens-moi ça 5
 Tenir hors de portée 6
 Je te tiendrai au courant 7
 Elle tient à son argent 8
 J'y tiens 9
 Tiens-toi bien! 10

- a Keep out of reach
 b Behave yourself
 c Sit/stand up straight
 d We're hanging in there
 e I'll keep in touch
 f I think he likes me
 g Hold this for me
 h I insist
 i She's a bit mean
 j He can hardly stand up

Qui suis-je?

Je suis dans l'étang et au fond du jardin.
 Je commence la nuit et finis le matin.
 J'apparais deux fois dans l'année.
 Qui suis-je?

La Lettre N

Speech Fillers

Every language needs conversation fillers — non-sensical little words to plug a gap during an awkward silence, or when you can't find the right word. Here are a few with some very rough English equivalents.

alors... - so, then...
 bon - ok, right.
 mais bon... - anyway
 bon ben - right, well.
 eh bien - well...
 enfin... - well...

c'est-à-dire... - what I mean is...
 euh... - er...
 à la limite - I suppose, I mean.
 donc - sooooo
 hein? - eh?



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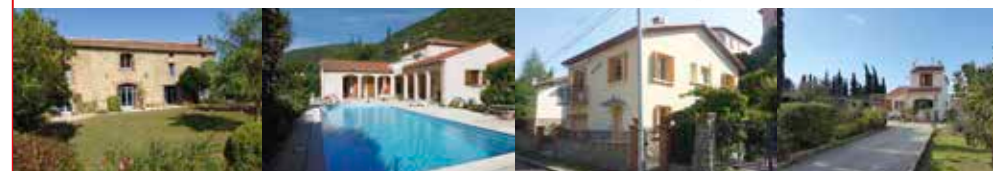
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Améliorez votre ANGLAIS

See Page 89 for answers

**Tongue twister
(virelangue)**

**Red leather,
yellow leather...**

X3

**INTERESTING
WORD**

Serendipity

Finding something good
without looking for it.

1 D is for Day!

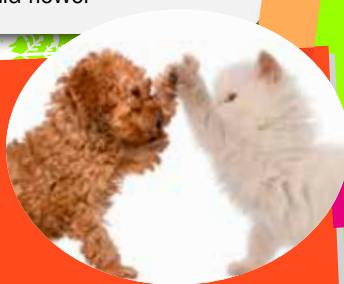
Trouvez la définition des mots suivants qui
commencent tous avec les lettres DA ou DE

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| daddylonglegs 1 | a holds water back |
| damp 2 | b put off until later |
| delight 3 | c large wild animal |
| deaf 4 | d large fly with long legs |
| dam 5 | e small pointed arrow |
| deer 6 | f bright yellow spring flower |
| daisy 7 | g unable to hear well |
| dart 8 | h not properly dry |
| delay 9 | i great pleasure |
| daffodil 10 | j small wild flower |

2 Cats and Dogs

Trouvez la bonne définition pour
ces phrases 'chien et chat'.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Dog-eared 1 | a Exceptionnel! |
| Curiosity killed the cat! 2 | b La curiosité est un vilain défaut |
| Raining cats and dogs 3 | c Pleuvoir très fort |
| Let sleeping dogs lie 4 | d Etre mis dans le coin |
| It's the cat's whiskers 5 | e Un trouillard |
| Hair of the dog 6 | f Pas assez de place |
| To be in the doghouse 7 | g Ne réveillez pas le chat qui dort |
| A scaredy-cat 8 | h Il a vendu la mèche |
| He let the cat out of the bag 9 | i Pour chasser la gueule de bois |
| Not enough room to swing a cat 10 | j Ecorné |



Language Tip

DO OR MAKE?

DO - quand on parle d'une activité sans la préciser ou pour parler d'un travail
MAKE - exprime souvent une idée de création, ou de construction

Attention : 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

3 M pour 'make' ou D pour 'do' ?

- To ___ a favour (rendre service)
- To ___ a complaint (se plaindre)
- To ___ the housework (faire le ménage)
- To ___ fun of someone (se moquer de quelqu'un)
- To ___ a mistake (faire une erreur)
- To ___ a fuss (faire un cinéma)
- To ___ your best (faire de son mieux)
- To ___ your duty (faire son devoir)
- I can't ___ it today (Je ne peux pas venir...)
- How do you ___? (Comment allez vous?)



**Winner of the
Edinburgh Fringe
Festival Best Joke**

*I keep randomly shouting out
'Broccoli' and 'Cauliflower'
I think I might have florets".*

(Florets - fleurons)

OUCH ! THAT ENGLISH HUMOUR

Some really bad jokes !

Where do pencils go on
holiday?

Pencil-vania.

A chicken pie in Jamaica costs £2
A chicken pie in Trinidad costs £2.50
A chicken pie in Saint Kitts costs £2.75
**THESE ARE THE PIE RATES
OF THE CARIBBEAN !!!**



4 Choisissez un mot ci-dessous pour compléter les comparaisons

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| 1 As brave as a ___ | a cucumber |
| 2 As clean as a ___ | b bone |
| 3 As strong as an ___ | c kitten |
| 4 As cool as a ___ | d lion |
| 5 As nutty as a ___ | e ocean |
| 6 As different as ___ | f whistle |
| 7 As thin as a ___ | g night and day |
| 8 As deep as the ___ | h fruitcake |
| 9 As dry as a ___ | i ox |
| 10 As cute as a ___ | j rake |



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www.csf-suddefrance.webs.com | www.csf-forum.org



A warm welcome awaits you at our informal groups in **Céret** and **Ille**

Céret, Pablo's Bar - Place Picasso
10h30 to 12 noon, First Wednesday of the month



Ille-sur-Têt, Route de Prades
Lizzie's Kitchen, 10h to 12 noon,
Third Wednesday of the month

and at our Book Exchange at

Laroque-des-Albères, Café des Artistes
10h30 to 12 noon,
Third Monday of the month

LE PETIT BUS, PERPIGNAN

Pleasant as it is to wander around Perpignan on foot, sometimes it is rather nice to be able to jump on a bus..... especially when it's free. The Petit bus runs on two different circuits, every day apart from Sunday and Bank holidays, passing in front of the main carparks on the edges of the centre, and landmark sites such as the Place Arago, Castillet, the Théâtre de l'Archipel and Plaça Catalunya. Pop into the tourist office for a plan of the exact routes and stops.



GONE WITH THE WIND



Did you know that the game of billiards became popular in France in the time of Louis XIV when the king's physicians advised him to take stretching exercise to relieve him of chronic wind!



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Things You might NEED To KNOW

CARTE DE SEJOUR IS NOT A PASSPORT

Brexit doom and gloom has pushed many British residents in France to apply for a carte de séjour but did you know that you must still have a valid passport (or ID card) to travel to any European country other than France?

Here in the P-O, many people head into Spain quite regularly to take advantage of cheaper petrol, alcohol, restaurants etc. Although you do not need a passport to cross the border, a carte de séjour will NOT be accepted as proof of identity if you are stopped or questioned by police. Nor will a driving licence.

If your passport is out of date, lost or stolen, you can apply for an emergency travel document by visiting <https://www.gov.uk/emergency-travel-document/how-to-apply>. This will cost you a non refundable 100 euro which you can pay online as part of your application.

It will normally be ready in 2 working days.

IMPORTANT In the case of a no-deal Brexit, your British passport must be valid for more than six months for you to travel around Europe.



GOOD TO BE GREEN



Not sure what to do with old fridges, washing machines, electrical or electronic devices?

Visit www.eco-systemes.fr, click on 'PARTICULIERS' and the site will present you with different solutions in your area for sale, repair, exchange, or recycling.

A FREE APP FOR YOUR SHOP LOYALTY CARDS

Intermarché, Carrefour, Auchan, Leclerc, Leroy Merlin.....? A last minute scramble at the tills to pull out the right loyalty card? Download Stocard at stocardapp.com, and simply present your phone at the cash register to collect points and discounts straight away.



ALL CHANGE AT Auchan

Too much small change in your pocket or your gherkin jar? Did you know that there is a machine in Auchan where you can bung in the lot, and receive a credit note to spend in the supermarket – and there's no commission charged so you get the full amount. It's quite regularly 'en panne' but catch it on a good day and you can get rid of all those 'pièces jaunes' hanging about the house. Most banks now offer this service too, with the total going straight into your bank account.

LOOKING FOR A MEDICAL SPECIALIST?

You will usually need a referral letter from your GP or the consultation will be more expensive. However, you don't need a referral letter for a gynaecologist, paediatrician or ophthalmologist. If you have a carte vitale and a top up insurance policy, most or all of the fee will be covered depending on the specialist. Watch out for 'dépassements honoraires', the amount many specialists charge over and above the rate reimbursed by the state. This should be posted up in their premises. Some top up insurances will pay part of the extra charges, some won't!

NOT SURE HOW TO READ OUT YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS?

@ = arobas (arrowbass)

dot = point (pwan)

LANGUAGE EXERCISES ANSWERS

TEST your FRENCH

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

AMÉLIOREZ votre ANGLAIS

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



SEX, DRUGS AND ROCK'N ROLL

Well, no sex or rock'n roll involved actually, but it got your attention didn't it? You may have noticed on recent visits to the chemist, that more and more prescription medicines are no longer 'pris en charge' (covered) by the French health system.

Visit www.medicaments.gouv.fr and click on 'Soins et remboursements' to find out what is and what isn't covered, as well as info on online prescription drugs, 'generic' drugs, (cheaper equivalent of the 'branded' drug) and everything else you may wish to know about 'les médicaments'.



HAVE HEAVY RAIN OR STRONG WINDS CAUSED DAMAGE TO YOUR HOME?

If so, you have just 10 days after the event to make a claim. Get on to your insurance company as soon as possible so that they can send an 'expert' to check out the damage, take plenty of photos, both during the bad weather, and after, and contact your local mairie with details of the damage.

Emergency numbers



SAMU (medical emergency) 15

POLICE emergency 17

Fire service emergency 18

European emergency line 112

SOS Doctor 24/24 08 20 20 41 42

Emergency vet 04 68 83 35 85

Anti-poison centre 04 91 75 25 25

Perpignan Hospital 04 68 61 66 33

CPAM (English spk serv) 0811 36 36 46

Cancer Support France 04 68 69 01 37

Directory enquiries 118 008

International directory enquiries 118 700

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.

ÊTES-VOUS PRÊT À DEVENIR LE PROCHAIN MILLIONNAIRE LOTO?

Here's some useful vocab to help you.
(and don't forget P-O Life if you win!)



Cochez (la case)... **tick (the box)...**

Chaque/prochain tirage....

each/next draw

Jour/résultats de tirage....

draw results/day

Gagnant...**winner**

Bulletin...**playslip**

Grille Classique...**classic game**

Système Flash... **lucky dip**

Les gains...**winnings**

Jouer en ligne...**play on line**

Jeux de grattage...**scratch cards**

Mise...**stake**



DID YOU KNOW



LA PLACE DES NEUF JETS

In the quaint and cobbled centre of old Céret, a lion watches over the pretty fountain at the centre of La Place des Neuf Jets.

From its body cascade the water jets that give the square its name, the ninth being from the lion's mouth.

It's said that when Céret and Roussillon belonged to the Kings of Aragon and Majorca in medieval days, the lion's head faced Spain. When it became French in the 17th century, the head was turned towards France. At a later date a fight broke out between some visitors from Barcelona and some locals, which resulted in the lion being decapitated, later to be reconstructed.



DID YOU KNOW

GETTING DOWN AND DIRTY



Look out for 'calçots' (pronounced cal-show), a variety of long, thick green onion (rather like skinny leeks) that have their peak season in January, February, and March. Or even better, watch the events news for a 'calçotada' in a village near you. These delicious onions are normally cooked on a barbecue, turned until entirely blackened outside and soft and sweet inside, dipped into sauce, and held above the head before being lowered into the mouth. A delightful mess-fest.



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