

Summer 2021

P-O Life

Life in the Pyrénées-Orientales

N° 70
FREE / GRATUIT



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OUT *for*
THE DAY

In the tracks of the
Tour de France

FOOD
and **DRINK**

Restaurant Reviews

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Edito ☺

Phew! We made it! Summer's here!

Many of us are still feeling a bit shaky about stepping out...but **how lucky are we here in the P-O to have so much outdoor space and fabulous weather to enjoy it.** Between mountains, lakes, beaches, terraces and trottoirs, it's pretty easy to avoid the crowds.

As usual, **PO Life brings you walks, airport news, French and English language exercises, very silly jokes, days out.** We also follow the route of the **Le Tour de France**, and suggest bike rides to burn off those extra confinement calories..... and a **great selection of restaurants to put them back on again!**

A big thank you to the talented guest writers who make P-O Life special!

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Stay safe, stay well.

We hope your P-O summer is magical.

What do you call
a French man
wearing sandals?
Philippe Floppe!

What do you call
a Spanish
streaker?
Señor Willy.

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Around the river LAMANÈRE

Hot under the collar in the summer heat? Why not head for the cooler air of the Tech Valley and the tiny village of Serralongue nestled in a hollow of mountains, just ten minutes before France's southernmost point? Much of this enjoyable 2 ½ - 3 hour walk is in forest, so perfect for hot days.

6km with 170 metres of ascent. Terrain is forest path, wider piste and a short section of road. Yellow waymarks on most of route. (Note for cheese fans – the extra time allows for a dégustation and/or purchases at the fromagerie de Mouly Benc)

Access:
map IGN 1:25000 Massif du Canigou 2349ET



> Massif de Canigou from car park at Serralongue

Serralongue village itself was built in the 10th century to provide lodgings for the serfs of the Castle of Cabrenç. Imagine the walk to work and back every day! Cobble roads, old stone houses, and a large and ancient 'laverie' await you in this tranquil village.



START

Village of Serralongue. Take the D115 from Perpignan via Amélie les Bains and Arles sur Tech. Continue in the direction of Prats de Mollo. Turn left, signed Serralongue, on D44. Use car park at entrance to the village. On a clear day the view of the Massif de Canigou is stunning.

THE WALK:

When you can take your eyes away from the wonderful mountain views, make your way up the approach road into Serralongue itself. Behind the village the 3 Towers can be seen on the horizon.



> View of 3 Towers from Serralongue

Les Tours de Cabrenç (Cabrens)
The three towers of Cabrenç are easily visible, perched on a nearby mountaintop. The first is the remains of the 10th century castle, the second the keep of the castle added in the 12th century and the third the signal tower built in the 14th century.

Before turning left into the main street by the school and Mairie, take a peek at the old washing area (laverie) on the corner and imagine the ladies meeting up for a wash session and a gossip. There is a toilet available behind the laverie which is not quite so ancient!



> The old laverie

Continue up the main street, noticing the dates on which some of the old stone houses were built. The bar/café/restaurant is a local meeting place and good stop for refreshments either now or later.

Towards end of street bear left up steep narrow street to the 11th century fortified church with Roman origins. Pass the local 'musée médiéval' on right (opening hours info from the Mairie on 04.68.39.61.34). The wonderful ironwork on the solid oak doors is of particular note at the church.



> Church of Serralonga



Around the river LAMANÈRE

The Conjurador

Built to appease the elements and chase away evil spirits, famine, drought, floods and war, each wall has an opening that faces one of the cardinal points. Centuries ago, when bad weather threatened, the Priest would perform the ceremony as inhabitants held hands, prostrated in a circle..



Beside the church take a paved path uphill to visit the Conjurador. Also find a table d'orientation telling you that you are 112 km from Barcelona, 40 km from Collioure and Canigou is all around you!



LAMANÈRE

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

Another walk for another day, the walk up to the tours of Cabrenc is much more strenuous, and more fitted to goats than humans. In fact, did you know that the word 'cab' (as in taxicab) actually comes from the Spanish for goat (cabra) as the first carriages for hire were so bumpy that they reminded people of goats bouncing around in the hills! Cabrenc, meaning goat in ancient Catalan, seems an apt title for a path that could well have been designed by these tough little animals!

Go back down a few steps and **turn left across church car park**. Follow road and halfway along the cypress trees **pick up a small signed footpath on right** (opposite a tap in stone on left). Join wider track, turn left 50 metres then pick up another footpath on right.

Reach the D44 and cross it to pick up **delightful forest path down to Galdarès**. Ignore path on right at early junction.

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Around the river **LAMANÈRE**



🍷 **Arrive at Galdarès**, turn left to cross the bridge over the **Lamanère**. The locals told us later that a short distance upriver on left is a waterfall. **Take care walking up the narrow road for about 500 metres**. Soon after big bend find turning signed **Mouly Benc** on left.

🍷 Follow this narrow road, which soon becomes an earth piste, **for about 1 ½ kms**, following **signs to Mouly Benc at junctions**. River Lamanère is below and gradually Serralongue comes into view on left across the valley. **Arrive at the fromagerie**.

Mouly Benc

Say cheese – and **Kévin and Machteld Astrou** will be pleased offer you a dégustation of the delightful choice of cheeses and yoghurts on offer in their fromagerie. **Make an appointment in advance on 06 72 17 59 26** or find them and their cheeses at markets in **Amélie on Thursdays, Prats de Mollo on Fridays, Ceret on Saturdays and Serralongue on Sundays** from mid June to the end of September.



🍷 After your visit, **cross field below house to the bridge over the Lamanère** rebuilt by the proprietors following floods. Fence has removable wires to reach bridge. Wonderful deep pools of clear water look potentially delightful for swimming!

🍷 Follow short steep path to left, arrive on level area and go straight up broad slope ahead. At top is a junction. Turn right onto narrow footpath and follow it uphill to **Serralongue**. After series of zigzags, cross broad track to continue upwards. **Emerge near some houses to find D44**. Turn left to car park – unless, of course you choose to spend more time in this delightful village!

Do you know your P-O Rivers?

The Agly: starts in the Corbières and runs through Saint-Paul-de-Fenouillet, Estagel, Rivesaltes and Saint-Laurent-de-la-Salanque before arriving at the Med near Le Barcarès.

The Têt: flows from Lac de Bouillouse, Pic de Carlit in the High Pyrenees and winds through the centre of Perpignan. Longest river in the P-O

The Tech: starts over the border in Spain, flows through 25 different towns including passing under the Pont du Diable in Céret, and ends in the sea between Saint-Cyprien and Argelès-sur-Mer.

👉 **Have you already spotted** the watchtowers dotted around the high mountain tops? This clever network of **signal towers** (tours à signaux) was originally **set up in the 13th century by the Rois de Majorque** as a defence system to protect the Roussillon from invaders. Information was passed quickly around the region, using smoke during the day and bursts of fire at night. **Signals were black or white, discontinuous or continuous according to the danger**. For example, one cloud of smoke might indicate 500 men on foot.

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IN THE TRACKS OF THE

Le de TOUR France

(La Grande Boucle)

LE TOUR - TOUR
LA TOUR - TOWER

Hands up if the thought of exercise brings you out in a rash, and the most calories you have burnt recently came from lifting that ice cold bottle of beer to parched lips!

OK. Put your hands down and use them to grab hold of the bull by the horns...or the bike by the handlebars. It's definitely time to dust off that old push bike (or treat yourself to a shiny new one) and get back into cycling mood cos cyclists and non cyclists alike are dancing a jig here in the P-O this summer! Why? Because the much loved Tour de France is coming back, fast and furious, for stage 15, **starting chez nous in Cérét and finishing in Andorra.**



CÉRET

COLLI DE LLAURO

CAMEILLES

COLLI FOURTOU

BOULETERNÈRE

PRADES

VILFRANCHE-DE-CONFLIENT

OLETTE

MONT-LOUIS

ENVEÏG

COL DE PUYMORENS

PAS DE LA CASE

PORT D'ENVALIRA

ENCAMP

COLLI DE BEIXALIS

ANYOS

ANDORRE-LA-VIEILLE

So you won't be surprised to hear that **our day out in this edition follows the same route that those intrepid heroes will be cycling this July.** Why not follow the route in stages before, after or even during the race, with plenty of hotels, restaurants and campsites on the way to rest your aching bottom?

Our tour begins in Cérét, cherry capital of the Vallespir, with its quaint, cobbled streets, ancient ramparts, pretty squares, lively shops, restaurants, and bars, and art and music museums. Picasso loved it; so will you!



The **weekly market, held every Saturday morning** beneath the hundred-year-old plane trees that line the streets of the town centre, is **one of the best in the area.** Locals and tourists alike are drawn by the



very 'Frenchness' of it, the strains of accordion or jazz mingle in the warm southern air with artisan made goat's cheese and paella 'à emporter', and the café trottoirs overflow with people watchers.

Find out everything you need to know at the Tourist Office in the Rue Ferreol, with seating for visitors, tablets to surf and a cellphone charging station where you can plug in your phone, head off to lunch, and return later to retrieve it fully charged.

From **Cérét**, a not-so-strenuous uphill climb of 15 km for our valiant cyclists should see some fierce battles to take the lead as they head **towards Oms**, then onwards and upwards along oak lined roads with fantastic glimpses through the trees of panoramic views. **Pass Calmeilles**, tiny, immaculate pedestrian village, with interesting Romanesque church, first mentioned in 959.



IN THE TRACKS OF THE *Le Tour de France*

Many of these villages have **mining origins**. The Romans were the first to extract the iron, building roads for easy access to Perpignan, crafting iron wheels for carts, used to transport and make armaments for their vast empire. The Romans left, but the industry continued and prospered. **Small settlements grew up in the Vallespir, the Conflent and the valley of the Lentilla**, to house the families of miners, muleteers, blacksmiths, and transporters. From 1950 onwards, the mines could no longer compete with the rest of the world, and closed down. Today, many of the ancient villages have been saved from ruin by second home and gite owners, immaculately restored remnants of the mining age.

Continue climbing until you arrive at the **Col du Fortou** crossroads (655m), with signs indicating straight on for **Ille sur Têt** or left towards **Amélie**. We will be going straight on, **direction Ille towards Bouletenerre**, but you may wish to take a little detour to the right, down a narrow road, to the tiny hamlet of **Prunet**. Blink and you will miss it. Clustered around a **minuscule 10th century church** beneath a couple of two hundred year old oak trees in whose branches peacocks roost, the graveyard has some fine examples of traditional wrought iron crosses.

From **Bouletenerre** (198m), we head for Prades, passing Vinca, and its impressive 'plan d'eau' on the right and a pleasant lake and beach where you can swim, hire pedalos, trampoline, jump up and down on the bouncy castle.....



On past pretty **Eus** with its narrow, be-flowered, cobbled streets joined by ancient vaulted passageways, the imposing **18th Century church of St Vincent**, perched on a rocky peak. Walk the old rampart with panoramic views of the Conflent Valley.



Prades (340m) next, **capital of the Conflent**, land of cooler air and contrast, rich in culture and history, from its snowy peaks, its wild and mountainous terrain, its stunning lakes to its many pretty and peaceful villages. **This bustling and lively market town is clustered around the large church of St Pierre**, with its dramatic Sunyer altar pieces, and a starting point for all levels of exciting sporty adventures!



On we pedal! Tour de France cyclists probably won't be thinking of sight seeing but delightful **Villefranche de Conflent (433 m)**, a perfectly preserved fortified medieval town with ancient ramparts, is well worth the stop. Just two main pedestrian-only streets with **art galleries, souvenir shops and local craft shops**, you can also buy handcrafted lucky witch dolls, 'poupées sorcières', as befits the legends of magic and witchcraft surrounding this region, steeped in history and superstition.

Getting hot and bothered between the excitement of the competition and the Conflent sunshine? **Just across the road from Villefranche, 'Les Grottes des Canalettes'**, are an exciting network of spectacular caves to cool you down, following a qualified guide along specially adapted bridges and walkways, **deep into the heart of the Massif du Canigou.**





Vernet les Bains is also well worth the detour off to the left of the main tour route, passing through **Corneilla de Conflent**, once home to **Guillem Ramon, Count of Cerdagne**. Only a tower remains of his palace but the rather splendid looking church has some fine examples of Catalan Romanesque art and the whole village has an olde worlde charm.



Vernet itself was a highly fashionable 'station thermale' at the start of the XX century. Today, it is a pretty Catalan village and spa, **recommended for respiratory and rheumatic disorders, with bars, restaurants and casino**, its steep, narrow, flower decked streets, leading to the **XII century church of Saint Saturnin attached to the castle**.



Back to the main route and riders come up against the **first real climb (8.4 km at 5.7%) as they approach Mont Louis (1560m)**, the highest fortified town in France. Renamed Fort Libre during the French Revolution, the ramparts and fortifications are intact, and a stroll around the walls makes a pleasant walk with stunning views.

You can also **visit the Puits des Forçats (Convicts' Well)**, with its enormous wheel that supplied water to the site, the first solar furnace in the world, and the church dedicated to St Louis, with its series of Roussillon baroque altarpieces dating from the 17th and 18th centuries. Fancy going commando? **Mont Louis is also home to the 'Centre national d'entraînement commando'**, training elite troops in commando techniques and endurance of physical and mental stress in combat situations.



NOT LOVING THE IDEA OF EXCESSIVE UPHILL CYCLING? How about **following the route on an E bike?** Still great E-xercise but easier on the thighs (and all the other bits!) when the ups and downs of this fabulous region become a little too challenging. **E-conomical, E-ecological and E-accessible** to all fitness levels, you can put in as much, or as little, effort as you wish – what better way to be sure of earning your maillot jaune?

And if you decide not to ride up to **Mont Louis** on your bike (Go on. You know you want to!) **you can make your day by taking the little yellow train there from Villefranche de Conflent**, and pampering yourself at the nearby natural hot springs of **Saint Thomas**, lunching at the Dagobert within the historic walls after a gentle stroll around the ramparts.



Back on your bikes (or climb back into the car), direction **Font Romeu at 1783 metres**. **Modern and lively winter resort, but equally lovely in the summer, with its casino/cinema/disco, plenty of hotels, bars, and restaurants, and pure relaxation at the natural hot baths at nearby Llo, Dorres or St Thomas**, particularly welcome if you've just cycled up from Perpignan! Nature and art collide in the museum without walls, the highest outdoor art gallery in Europe.

LES ANGES

Ski resort in winter, starting point for delightful walks and sporty adventures in summer, the old village is centred around the church of St Michel, several fountains and the remains of the XIII century tower of the chateau. Attractive old houses have been turned into gites, restaurants and hotels, with a new Balnéo Well Being Centre, if you're in need of a pamper, sauna, jacuzzi!....



IN THE TRACKS OF THE *le* TOUR de France



Bottom sore yet? Nearly there.

Head now towards the **Col de Puymorens**. High mountains form the frontier with Andorra, huge granite boulders and small waterfalls provide a stunning backdrop as the road winds its way up to the **1900 metre Col**, before plunging down towards **Andorran Pas de la Casa**, once nothing but a single shepherd's hut overlooking the pass. You might find it changed a little! Bypass this busy tax free haven and purpose built border town (unless you're desperate for cheap booze and other duty free delights), and **take the Port d'Envalira, the highest road in the Pyrenees, 2408m above sea level**. If you still have the energy, head down towards **Soldeu, Canillo and Encamp along the Collada de Beixalis mountain pass (1,790 m)**, and down through **Anyós towards Escaldes-Engordany, before arriving on Sunday 11 July at the finish line in Andorra la Vella**, capital of the Principality of Andorra and highest capital city in Europe. **Phew! We made it. Are you still with me?**



DID YOU KNOW

- **in 1904** competitor **Hippolyte Aucouturier** tied a piece of cork to a long piece of string, tied the other end to the back of a car, and bit down on the cork as he followed the car. He was disqualified for cheating of course.
- **the route of the Tour de France changes every year**, takes place over 23 days covers over 2,000 miles and always ends on the Champs-Élysées.
- **each rider consumes an average of 123,900 calories** over the course of the three weeks, equivalent to 495 croissants, 152 full English breakfasts or 200 bottles of champagne!
- **in 1904**, several competitors including the 1903 winner were disqualified after allegations that they used trains during the race.
- **in the 1920s competitors smoked cigarettes**, sharing them amongst themselves as they rode, as it was believed that it helped them to 'open up' the lungs before a hard climb.
- **competitors used to drink alcohol to ease pain during the race**, later banned when it was classed as a stimulant.
- **the first Tour de France race was held in 1903** and entry cost 10 francs
- **the youngest rider** to win the Tour de France was **Henri Comet** in 2004 at just 19. **The oldest** was **Firmin Lambot**, at the age of 36, in 1922.

Whether you follow the Tour on your bike, car, train, bus or just on the telly, you will be constantly surrounded by the stunning scenery of the beautiful Pyrenees-Orientales. Enjoy.

Nearby **Latour de Carol** is the last station stop of the Yellow Train, if you've come up the easy way from **Villefranche-de-Conflent**.



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VOCAB

People

une équipe: *team*
 la tête de course: *leader*
 un poursuivant: *chaser*
 un peloton: *pack, bunch*
 un coureur: *rider, cyclist*
 un échappé: *breakaway rider*
 un grimpeur: *climber*

Equipment

un maillot (jaune): *(yellow) jersey*
 un dossard: *bib or t shirt with competitor number*
 une crevaillon: *puncture*
 un bidon: *water bottle*
 un casque: *helmet*



The Race

rouler: *to ride*
 dépasser: *to overtake*
 une course: *race*
 prendre la tête: *to take the lead*
 une montée: *upward slope*
 une descente: *downward*

slope

une côte: *hill, slope*
 un col: *mountain pass*
 une étape: *stage, leg*
 une chute: *fall, crash*
 la danseuse: *standing up on pedals*

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Tips for Watching the de TOUR France

Today's television coverage of the Tour is excellent but nothing beats being there, on the ground.

- The caravane will usually be around two hours ahead of the riders, so expect the roads to be closed 3 hours before the race comes through. (Check out full timetable on www.letour.fr/en/)
- A good early warning of the race approaching is when you see the TV helicopters
- If you want to spectate on the route between the Tech and Tet valleys, bear in mind this is a country road with few opportunities to avoid crowds and find an alternative route back home. This means you could be in the same spot for at least four hours so take food, drink and a pee-wee!
- Take a box or steps to stand on for a better view - particularly if you are a titch!
- Don't park on the roadside or your vehicle is likely to be removed.

- Ideal spots to watch would be at road junctions where you can take an alternative route back home.
- From Perpignan to Mont Louis, the Montée de Mont Louis is the first major climb of the stage and will be a great place to watch. Bear in mind that you probably won't be the only one to have had this great idea. Many are even likely to camp overnight on the sweeping bends up to Mont Louis. You will get a great view of the Train Jaune which could even be an option for getting up there - but expect it to be very busy.
- Don't be surprised if your favourite rider doesn't throw you an empty water bottle as a gift (as they used to). The UCI has recently classed this as littering and it's a punishable offence!



The publicity caravane leaves Céret at 10.20. The race starts at 12.20. The peloton will reach Andorra la Vella between 17.30 and 18.00 at an average speed of around 36 kph over their 191km stage.



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OUT *for*
THE DAY

Walk it,
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SAINT ANDRE TO SAINT GENIS DES FONTAINES CIRCUIT.
TOTAL LENGTH 19KM. DIFFICULTY – EASY.

WITH LEIGH AND MERRY FOSTER

Whether you're in training for the Tour de France, the London Marathon or just trying to lose a few extra kilos, this 'piste cyclable' has something for everyone. If you mess around with Google maps you can find a variety of loops to make this longer or shorter depending on how energetic you're feeling.



Veer off at any time for a cooling drink at one of the pretty Albères villages **along the route:** Saint André, Palau-del-Vidre, Sorède, Laroque-des-Albères, Saint-Genis-des-Fontaines, Villelongue and Montesquieu.

Coming from **Argelès to Le Boulou** on the 'voie rapide', turn right at the Saint André roundabout and park in the newly created car park. **Mount your steeds, climb on to your scooters or roller skates, put your running head on....and off we go!**



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PRICE: 97 000 €



CERBERE: 1st and last floor of village house, near beach and shops! Living room with French balcony, separate kitchen, 2 bedrooms. Double glazing and reversible air conditioning. **NO MONTHLY CHARGES.**

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LAROQUE-DES-ALBÈRES: Village centre. Charming 3 bedroomed village house with loads of character. Large garage, rare in Laroque centre. Superb south facing terrace with view over the Albères! **DELIGHTFUL.**

PRICE: 399 000 €



SORÈDE: Superb detached house with jacuzzi and breathtaking panoramic view over the Albères mountains! 4 bedrooms, 3 bath/shower rooms, 2 large garages, completely private. **A MUST VISIT.**

PRICE: 669 500 €



LAROQUE-DES-ALBÈRES: Large MODERN single storey villa, with flat, fenced land and pool possibility. 3 bedrooms, 1 en suite, study area, spacious garage with automatic door and a wine cellar. **TOP QUALITY FITTINGS**

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1 rue Saint Pierre, BANYULS-SUR-MER
www.laroca-immobilier.com



+33 (0)4 68 39 20 94
laroca@live.fr



Take the roundabout exit towards St Andre, following this road about 400 metres and turning left at the sign towards 'El Rancho'. Don't be put off by the builders yards, very soon you're out in the peaceful countryside enjoying scenic views and Canigou, forever in the distance as a fantasy target to achieve.

After about 900 metres, turn right onto the EuroVelo 8 (EV8) cycle route, an ambitious project being built to connect Athens to Cadiz in Spain! This threads through the countryside towards Vinya Vell on the outskirts of St Andre where you cross another narrow road, Chemin de la Pavc, and after 400 metres, criss-cross over the small stream 'El Milossa' on a series of new bridges and passages à gué (pronounced 'gay').



Turn left here and follow the road markings through the new houses, then turn right towards the ford across the river Sorède. Stop here and listen to the frog chorus. Continue past the Sorede sports hall until you reach the D11 road from Sorède to Palau del Vidre. Why not include lunch in your itinerary and stop off at the Salamandre in Sorède? Under new ownership this season, this small restaurant is open 7 days a week and comes highly recommended.



On the far side of the stream, pass a few more isolated villas, before meandering west again for about 1 km to



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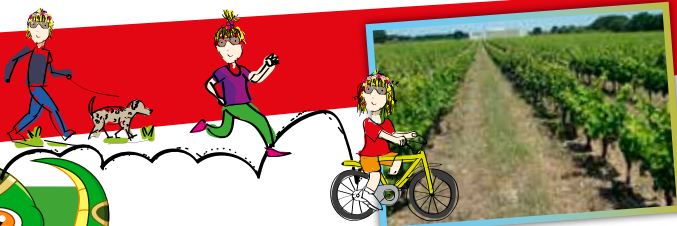
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DID YOU KNOW

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!

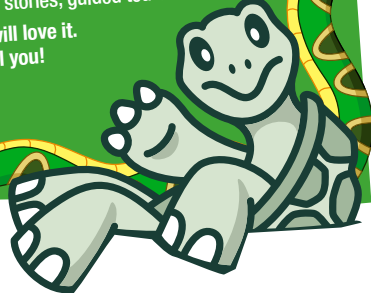
P-O Life



If you're on your bike, a shortish detour to the Vallée des Tortues, delightful and original tortoise sanctuary, will surely make your day. With guided visits by knowledgeable and charming guides, forest area with cooling moisture mist, snack bar, picnic and play area, Bouffi, the 250kg gentle giant from the Seychelles has to be the star of the show!

And don't be fooled by the name - there are also meerkats, armadillos, marmosets (monkeys to you and me!), snakes and lizards to enjoy as well as free daily activities including feeding time, animal stories, guided tours and more!

Kids will love it.
So will you!



Cross the road and wind westwards across vineyards, turning left towards Sorede village centre, right after about 200 metres, by the farmer's water pump onto Riba d'Ases. After the passage à gué, cross the D50 Avenue des Balears and continue to follow the EV8 signs stream, and vineyards towards Saint Genis des Fontaines.



Signs direct you to the village centre, across the main road (D2), and past the Gendarmerie on the **Allee des Moines**. Go under the bridge at the 'voie rapide' and turn right, (unless you want to add on a visit to **Le Boulou** which is left) and sail past vineyards, cherry, peach and nectarine orchards, family allotments, stables and the gloriously majestic **Chateau Villeclare**, the family seat of famous French equestrian, **Jonqueres d'Oriola**, and source of some wonderful wines.



There are a few stretches where local traffic is permitted, but mostly your only companions will be other walkers and cyclists. **Wild meadows, Mimosa and blossom in Spring, Broome in early summer and teams of multi-coloured Laurier rose, oleanders provide a fitting backdrop for butterflies and birds of all varieties.**

Back at the car, look out for the sign to **Mas Cristine**, a further five minute walk, to end a perfect afternoon with a 'dégustation' of their excellent wine. Covid permitting of course. **Santé - and happy cycling!**



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Summer's sizzling

Votre mission, si toutefois vous l'acceptez...

After confinement and restrictions over the past year, where better to let your hair down outdoors (with care) than the Vallespir? **This year we have the added bonus of the Tour de France** - and some exciting competitions with clues, special missions and great prizes.



in THE



VALLES'GAME

Look out for photo clues published Thursday, Friday and Saturday at 10am on the Facebook page. They will gradually reveal a place in the Vallespir. Take a photo of yourself in front of the site and the first to post the photo wins a prize each week. Cameras, hampers vouchers for local businesses....



BALUDIK

Put together balader (to stroll) and ludique (fun) and what do you get? The very first digital bike trail in the footsteps of the ancestors of Galipan, the Vallespir mascot.

Explore the history of Céret, solve clues, accept missions.....Most definitely for all the family. Uh oh! Forgotten your bike, accidentally or on purpose? No excuses! **You can hire bikes from the Office de Tourisme. Just ask!**

Start: Céret Tourist Office
Finish: Lake at Saint Jean Pla de Corts



HOW IT WORKS.

Download the app, (available for Apple and Android) scan the QR code
Soon available in English

GUIDED VISITS

Whether you're a certified Céretan or a know-nothing newbie, the guided tours in English are a great way to (re)discover the magic of the town.

Find out more here or request the detailed programme from the reception of the Office Office de Tourisme.

(Visits take place in strict compliance with health regulations.)

Friday 30th July at 11am
Friday 27th August at 11am
Adult 5€ / Reduced 3€ / FREE - 12 ans

COVID 19

DON'T WORRY...BE HAPPY

Your visit is important to us – so is your safety. All activities, restaurants, galleries, museums, shops and tradespeople will look after you with the strictest respect for the sanitary measures put in place against the spread of the corona virus.

Fancy watching a few videos before your visit to remind you why everyone loves the Vallespir? Check out our OTI Vallespir Youtube channel.



DETAILED PROGRAMME AVAILABLE AT THE TOURIST OFFICE

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OUT *for*
THE DAY

Cool CAVES

Sometimes, in the height of summer, we just need a little cool. And where better to find it than underground?

Just across the road from the medieval fortress town of **Villefranche-de-Conflent**, the network of **spectacular caves of La Grotte des Canalettes** leads visitors deep into the heart of the Massif du Canigou Mountain Range, following a qualified guide along specially adapted bridges and walkways amidst **stalagmites, stalactites, coloured pillars of mineral rock**. In **July and August, don't miss the spellbinding sound and light display**, highlighting the colours of the minerals, to the accompaniment of **Strauss, Bach, Casals and Pavarotti**.

Head a little further up into the mountains to the **tiny town of Fontrabieuse, near Formiguères**, impressive caves **discovered in 1958** during the exploitation of the marble quarry that dominates the village. **The Grotte de Fontrabieuse** is set on two levels, a fascinating and perfectly preserved underground world with the instructive guided tour.

Underground lake, hundreds of stalagmites and stalactites in a spectacular array of colours - and perfect conditions for maturing wine, so you can even taste as you visit!



Grotte de Fontrabieuse

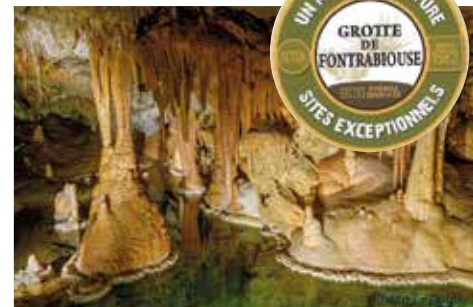
Travel back in time and discover the breathtaking, natural beauty underground.

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EASY Escalivada

WITH SUZANNE DUNAWAY

This famous staple in Catalan menus is **traditionally cooked on a barbecue** to achieve the smoky flavour that is the essence of the dish. **This simple alternative is equally delicious.**



The word escalivada comes from the Catalan word *escalivar*, meaning "to char", as the vegetables were traditionally cooked over embers.

Ingredients

- > 1 medium aubergine, sliced thin and cut again into thin strips
- > 2 sweet medium red peppers, sliced into thin strips (roasted and peeled, optional)
- > 3 large sweet onions, cut in half and sliced thin
- > 4 cloves garlic, chopped coarse
- > 3 large tomatoes, sliced thin
- > 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
- > 1 large lemon and its peel, grated
- > 2 courgettes, sliced as are the other vegetables (optional)
- > 1 fennel bulb, sliced into thin strips (optional, but interesting)
- > Salt and pinch of espelette, if you have any Grated lemon peel

Method:

Heat the oven to 400°F/200°C

Throw all ingredients into large, non-stick baking pan brushed with a little of the olive oil.

Pour over rest of olive oil, salt well, and add juice of lemon and its peel, grated. Toss everything around in oil and bake about **30-40 minutes until vegetables almost caramelized, very soft, and you are dying to taste it.**

Serve as a side dish or with toasted bread, or pulse it a few times in the top of a food processor and serve over pasta.

TIP: Adding the **grated lemon peel** gives a zing to an otherwise tasty but fairly mundane dish, as it does to so many dishes. Having a large Amalfi lemon tree in the garden helps, but my sister in law grows Meyer lemons in a pot very successfully



AFTER YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN HER OWN KITCHEN, COOKING SCHOOLS AND PRIVATE CLASSES ALL OVER THE WORLD, TALENTED ARTIST, COLUMNIST, AND COOKBOOK AUTHOR SUZANNE DUNAWAY SHARES HER P-O-INSPIRED CREATIONS.

ADD AN -ADA

This Catalan suffix slots on the end of a word in Catalan, to describe a group of things, (eg *vacada* – a herd of cows). Add an "-ada" to the end of many food related words and you have a collective festival-style meal, generally based around a single ingredient such as snails, fish, chocolate.... Look out for *bullinada*, (fish stew) *cargolada*, (grilled snails)

ollada, (a winter stew) *escalivada*, (grilled veggies) *calçotada*, (char grilled onions)



Restaurant REVIEWS

SUMMER 2021

We love publishing your reviews. They're honest (of course) objective, (we hope) 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 and what to expect.

Of course, this year there hasn't been a whole lot open to review but **they're slowly dripping in as restaurants open**, and diners step out with more confidence. **Several of our reviews in this issue are therefore pre-Covid. We've checked they are still open.** Over to you now to see if the review still fits the restaurant.



ON THE TOUR DE FRANCE ROUTE....

QUATTROCENTO

Céret...with Julie

What a great setting in this atmospheric square with pretty fountain and brightly coloured parasols and tablecloths scattered all around. People watchers beware. You will want to stay all day. **Fast, friendly, and very good value for this rather pricey town.** It's not 'fine dining' but **it's good food**, freshly cooked, in a lovely location, **served with a smile.** Good local wine, more than decent pizza, and fish and meat dishes if you're not feeling pizza and pasta today. **What's not to like?**



3 Place des Neuf Jets, Céret
Tel: 04 68 87 15 60

BELLA PIZZA

Céret...with Steven and Denise

Looks like your typical street-corner take away pizza joint but **it's so much more.** Long and imaginative list of **superb pizzas, fabulous salads, steaks, desserts and even sweet pizzas** for the seriously sweet-toothed. Our steaks were seasoned to perfection, tender and delicious, with a healthy portion or crispy, fluffy fries and dressed greens - delicious.

Chocolate fondant was gooey and gorgeous, the patisserie of the day was a light and crisp fruit roulade and the **Catalan favourite Cap D'Ona is on tap!** Only little so reserve in advance.



13 Avenue Michel Aribaud,
66400 Céret.
Tel: 04 68 87 70 26

LE JARDIN

Céret...with Caitlin and Jimmy



This tardis of a restaurant looks ordinary from the outside but **step inside and you will love the spacious walled secret garden**, perfect for outside dining, and unusual for central Céret. **Service is friendly, décor is contemporary and original, and food is fresh, tasty and thoughtfully presented** with plenty of choice for all tastes. The **menu du jour** is good value for money at **€15,90 for 2 courses** and the 3 course evening menu is very reasonable. **Tasty and original dishes** based on **French classics.** Will definitely be going back.

7 Rue de la République,
66400 Céret
Tel: 04 11 64 41 12

LE DAGOBERT

Mont-Louis...with Robert and Romaine

We went up on the **Little Yellow Train** and together with a delicious and reasonably priced meal here within the historic walls, followed by a gentle stroll around the ramparts, **we had a truly memorable day.** Housed in the original tea room of what was once the town's Spanish troop hospital, **the rustic Dagobert serves traditional mountain cuisine with French and Basque influences.** **Duck specialities, hearty salads, grilled fish, cassoulet, foie gras.** A lovely day out.

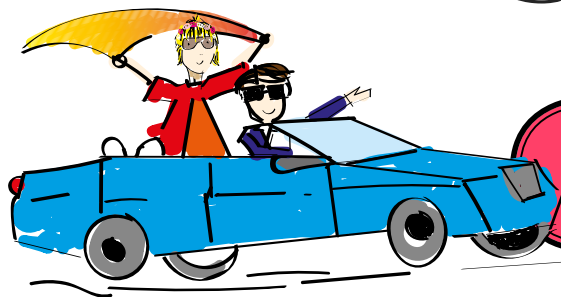


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Tel: 04 68 04 14 32



Restaurant REVIEWS

SPRING 2021



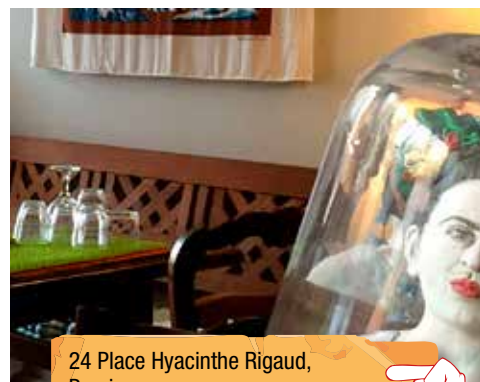
...AND OFF THE TOUR DE FRANCE ROUTE

FRIDA'S



Perpignan....with Laura

Quirky vegan restaurant on the popular place Rigaud inspired by the revolutionary Mexican artist, **Frida Khalo**. We shared a selection of starters, including **humus, shalima** and **maghreb cigars** (like Asian spring rolls, but stuffed with a mouthwatering concoction of veg and North African spices). I then moved onto a **colourful vegetable patras** (Indian curry), while my partner devoured a seaweed and vegetable lasagne. For **dessert**, we tested the **buzza**, coconut milk and dried fruits, and the devilishly-good **chocolate truffles!** Everything is organic (where possible), **fresh and homemade with love by Jean-Claude and Ignacio**. As a vegetarian, you may well think I'm biased, so don't take my word for it, take my partner's! He's as French and as carnivore as they come!



24 Place Hyacinthe Rigaud,
Perpignan
Tel: 06 16 97 10 29

AUBERGE DES ALBERES

Saint-Génis-des-Fontaines...
with Sue and Paul



A pleasant, light restaurant with easy parking and good space between the tables, so important these days. Something for everyone **from Magret de Canard, succulent duck breast fillet wrapped in bacon, accompanied by Banyuls sauce, to entrecôte, grilled** exactly to requirement and very lean, duo of **sea-bass and gambas in a langoustine sauce, moules-frites, paëlla royale, zarzuela.....** We'll definitely be going back.

78 Avenue Maréchal Joffre
Saint-Génis-des-Fontaines
Tel: 04 68 89 88 38

LA SALAMANDRE

Sorède....with Merry and Leigh



Now open 7 days a week, meet delightful new owners **Bénédicte and Benoit** who have moved here to follow their dream of having their own restaurant. What a pleasure sitting in the village square for such a delicious meal. We had the 33€ for 3 courses. **Very tasty with some great touches of originality.** You can find the menu on their Facebook page with a **veggie option** so there is something for everyone. We will definitely be returning to try some more exciting sounding dishes.

3 Route de Laroque des Albères,
Sorède
Tel: 04 68 89 26 67

LES ATELIERS

Perpignan....with Matthew and Anays

Found tucked away amongst the car garages **around le chemin de la fauceille in Perpignan is this fabulous family-run restaurant.** The owners **Yassin and Louisa** are delightful and their food is impeccable. The decor is modern and classic with a bit of rustic charm and a wine list to match. We stopped off for lunch on a sunny Friday afternoon and were greeted with a smile and a short yet perfectly formed menu, with 'du jour' options as well. **Great tapas platter for 25€ for 2 including wine** is also on offer. We had a **delicious steak** with a goats' cheese salad and both were perfectly seasoned and sourced locally. The dessert was sublime - **fondant au chocolat** - I almost took two!



Chemin de la Fauceille,
Perpignan
Tel: 04 68 55 04 67

CHEZ FLEUR, L'HOSTAL DE CABRENÇ

Serralongue...with Vicky and Chris

A special celebration requires a venue to match and 'Chez Fleur' certainly provides that. We visited as a family group and were not disappointed. Recently relocated to new premises which offer stunning open views over the mountains, **the food and service did the view justice!** All our food was freshly prepared (we chose from the 'Menu de Jour') and every dish excellent. **Fleur, the owner and chef** certainly knows how to prepare and present delicious food. **Fresh, expertly put together, well presented** and most importantly tasted superb, the portion sizes ample. **We will definitely return and highly recommend a visit to this little gem in your diary.**



1 rue Abdon Poggi, Serralongue
Tel: 09 66 83 59 74



Ideas for EATING OUT

IN...

It's been another difficult year for our local restaurants but summer is here at last – and we have loads of suggestions for you from a quick snack to the Full Monty (but you can keep your hat on). Eat in, eat out, go pieds-dans-l'eau or under the stars, Catalan, Italian, traditional French, vegetarian, vegan..... Be cautious of course, but please support our P-O restaurants this year. Allez! Au restaurant, et bon appétit!

...BANYULS-SUR-MER

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Restaurant-Pizzeria www.restaurant-vieille-cave.com

...CERET

Bella Pizza04 68 87 70 26
Open daily (except Sunday lunch-time and Thursdays)

Le Jardin04 11 64 41 12
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www.lequattrocento.net..... Open 7/7 all year round

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...MONT LOUIS

Le Dagobert04 68 04 14 32
Bookings recommended f: Restaurant-Le-Dagobert-À-Mont-Louis

...PERPIGNAN

Frida's06 16 97 10 29
Vegan Cuisine..... Bookings recommended

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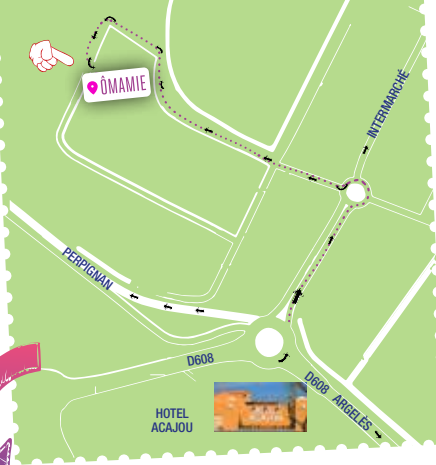
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And according to Dumas, our dashing hero was also a bit of a wine connoisseur as the book describes how the musketeers 'were engaged in enjoying a demi-john of Collioure wine'.



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... in British painters COLLIOURE

BY JAMES TROLLOPE

Charles Rennie

Mackintosh's stay in Port Vendres nearly a century ago is well known but the story of his two artist friends who settled in Collioure a little earlier has yet to be told.



St-Paul-de-Fenouillet, 1926

Rudolph Ihlee (1883-1968) and **Edgar Hereford** (1886-1953) arrived in the P-O in 1922 and encouraged the Scottish architect and his wife Margaret to become neighbours in exile.

A series of letters from Mackintosh reveals a close bond with the two British painters. When Mackintosh became ill with cancer it was Ihlee who accompanied him back to London in 1927.

Ihlee lived in Collioure until 1940 producing more than 200 paintings of the town and its surroundings. An image of the Chateau Royal in 1924, *L'heure de la soupe*, shows Senegalese soldiers (tirailleurs) on a meal break.



L'heure de la soupe, 1924

Another, **The Red Arch**, dated 1926, shows a woman returning with a load of brushwood under the Pont du Douy opposite the town's tannery.



The Red Arch, 1926

Hereford, although less prolific than Ihlee, stayed even longer in the P-O. Both men, who had been students together at the Slade, met their wives in France.

In preparation for a book, **Rudolph Ihlee: The Road to Collioure**, I am still trying to identify the location of some of the pair's landscapes and wonder if anyone can help.

Landscape with Cat, which Ihlee painted in 1926, may be an imagined scene but perhaps someone can recognise an actual place.



Landscape with Cat, 1926

Saint-Paul-de-Fenouillet, 1926, by Hereford is even more of a puzzle. Although the title would seem to be self-explanatory, it didn't ring a bell with anyone at the local Mairie.

The art publishers **Lund Humphries** plan to produce the book next year when it's possible some of Ihlee's paintings will be exhibited at the **Musée in Collioure**. If anyone has any information please contact me on troll@fastnet.co.uk



Le Grand Cafe, Collioure 1924

The café has since transformed into the **Hotel Frégate**.

James Trollope is a writer who has had a house in Les Aspres since 1994

ART DECO

in Cerbère



Whether you visit Cerbère by road or by sea, **you can't fail to notice the Art Deco hotel** wedged into a tiny plot between the railway and the sea, built by architect, **Léon Baille**, to resemble a ship.



Le Belvédère du Rayon Vert opened in 1932 to cater to wealthy travellers bound for Spain and obliged to wait, often for several days, while their visas were being processed.

With a chambermaid for each of **thirty guest suites**, (though toilets and showers were shared!) **movie theatre** (a poster for *Le Masque de Fu-Manchu* starring Boris Karloff and Myrna Loy remains), **rooftop tennis court** and even a dormitory for travelling domestics, **the hotel was set to be a grand success.**

But four years later the Spanish Civil War brought an end to the Spanish tourist industry for another couple of decades, by which time travellers' demands had much changed.

From 1942 et 1944, the German occupying forces requisitioned the hotel.



In **1949, José de Zamora**, painter, illustrator, designer and Spanish writer painted murals on the walls to pay his hotel rental when he fell in love with a lady from Cerebere.

The hotel struggled on, finally closing its doors in 1983. Listed as a '**monument historique**' it has **recently been given a new lease of life by Jean Charles Sin**, great-grandson of **Jean Baptiste Deleon** who originally commissioned the building.

For a unique glimpse of Art Deco history, or to find out more about apartment rentals, (eight holiday apartments, all with sea views) guided tours, organisation of private events, exhibitions and entertainment, call the hotel on 04 68 88 41 54 or follow them on Facebook.



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JOCH - REF. VH1025 - PRICE: 270,000€ *

Charming, character village house boasting breathtaking mountain views and offering 175m² of living space with 5 bedrooms (4 ensuite), bathroom, dining room, kitchen and 2 sitting rooms (one with wood burner). Small garden and 20m² terrace. Great B&B potential!

* Agency fees to be paid by the vendor—DPE: C



ESTAGEL - REF. VH1013 - PRICE: 349,000€ *

Authentic Maison de Maître offering 250m² habitable space, plus an attic to convert (163m²), terrace, garden and garage (51m²). Some updating needed. Village with amenities and set amid vineyards in a popular wine region at only a 20-minute drive to Perpignan!

* Agency fees to be paid by the vendor—DPE: Vièrge



CERET - REF. VH1015 - PRICE: 995,000€ *

Impressive Maison de Maître townhouse of 330m², totally renovated but with all the character and original features retained, with private patio, artist's gallery and parking for 2 cars. In a sought-after location, this ideal family home can be partly rented out for holiday lets.

* Agency fees to be paid by the vendor—DPE: D



TORREILLES - REF. DH982—PRICE: 635,000€ *

Ideally situated on the way to the sandy beaches and close to the lively village of Clairà, superb 3-bed bungalow of 211m² with a self-contained 1-bed apartment (36m²) and set in 2350m² of park with South-facing 130m² terrace and summer kitchen. Pool possible.

* Agency fees to be paid by the vendor—DPE: C



PERPIGNAN - REF. SP432 - PRICE: 1,150,000€ *

On the edge of Perpignan and less than 10 minutes to the beach, authentic character stone farmhouse entirely and tastefully restored with a tasteful mix of old and new. Ideal family home of more than 300m², set on a park of 5000m² with pool, pool house and a 50m² studio with terrace.

* Agency fees to be paid by the vendor—DPE: B



ILLE SUR TÊT - REF. CP284 - PRICE: 630,000€ *

Superb property consisting of two stone buildings dating back to the 1800's, entirely renovated with quality materials and currently run as a successful B&B property. Set on over 11 acres of grounds with pool in an exceptional environment with breathtaking mountain views. Simply superb!

* Agency fees to be paid by the vendor—DPE: In process

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NOIRE CÔTE VERMEILLE...GILDAS GIRODEAU

This detective intrigue brings together the first 2 novels in a series of 5 featuring the character of Paul Feder, a dropout living on a boat in Port Vendres. Gildas Girodeau's books, set in his native Catalonia, are sympathetically written in a style that will appeal to intermediate French learners.

BLACKBIRDS BAKED IN A PIE...EUGENE BARTER

At the age of sixty, **Eugene Barter** buys a rambling house with uninterrupted views of Mount Canigou, and turns it into an auberge called Rozinante, after Don Quixote's mule. **Obstacles a-plenty:** an eccentric water pump, a drainpipe-climbing guest, forest fires licking up the slopes towards Rozinante, language challenges.....A cheeky, spirited and entertaining account of rural life in the P.O.

ALBUM OF EXILE.... THÉRÈSE CAU

Thérèse Cau, daughter of Spanish Republicans and native of Port Vendres, recounts the tumultuous history of her family, from their origins in Catalonia to their lives in France today. **It is the story of family divided**, the experiences of her father and uncles on the frontline of the Spanish Civil War, in the internment camps in France, **the struggle to reconstruct their lives in a new land where they did not speak the language.**

LE LYCAN BLANC.....PHIL BECKER

Test your French in this heroic-fantasy that takes place in Catalonia, following an albino werewolf, Corcinos, in a alternative XII century. All the fantasy archetypes are present: wizards, chivalry, fantastic creatures such as werewolves, minotaurs and titans... **but the beauty of this fantasy is that it takes place around the Canigo, Perpignan, and Collioure!**

Raised on the Mount Canigo, follow the werewolf on his journey to discover how he became a monster.

SHEPHERD'S PRAYER.....KATJA WILLEMSSEN

Having run from a marriage proposal in London to the history-steeped Pyrenees, **Raisin Radcliffe is visited by her estranged brother, Geoffrey.** Together, they explore the labyrinthine caves in the scenic hills behind Collioure, and the secrets of their traumatic childhood begin to unravel before them, with shocking consequences. Many of the locations are real and can be explored.

A WORLDLY TALE TOLD OF MOTHY CHAMBERS.... KATE BARNWELL

Of great interest to those who know and love Collioure, Mothy Chambers is a sixteen year old schoolboy in England in the sixties, who is packed off by his indifferent family to learn French in Collioure, where he meets Bette, a recently married, mesmeric young woman. Ten years later, he returns to Collioure.

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LOVE AND WAR IN THE PYRENEES..... ROSEMARY BAILEY

It was a tattered pair of roped soled espadrilles hanging in the St Laurent museum that initially sparked Rosemary's curiosity. They had belonged to one of the men who helped the refugees escaping Franco's forces at the end of the Spanish Civil War and now she felt an immediate need to know more of the recent history of her adopted second home. The resulting book uncovers love, brutality and conflicting loyalties of war. A brilliantly written record of a dark period in the history of the Pyrenees Orientales

DAUGHTER OF CATALONIA..... JANE MACKENZIE

In war-torn France, charismatic Spaniard Luis elopes with high-born Elise from Paris and takes her to live in a small village in Catalonia. Little do they know that war will rip them apart. Many years later their daughter Madeleine returns to France to seek out her roots and the truth of her parents' story. The town of Vermeilla is fictional but the central characters visit Collioure, Port Vendres, Amélie-les-Bains, the Vallespir and Céret. Well researched, a gripping summer read.

CÔTE VERMEILLE STORIES..... ELLEN TURNER HALL

Carefully crafted prose exploring characters who, like the author, have fallen under the spell of one or other of the four villages of the Côte Vermeille. Their stories, twist and turn, basking in and buffeted by the eccentric charms of Catalonia's rocky coast as Ellen guides the reader on a voyage of discovery along the Côte Vermeille.

COMINGS AND GOINGS IN CÉRET..... JULIE ROUSSEL CROS & LAETITIA ROUSSEL

Two sisters, having fallen under the charm of the Vallespir capital, transport the reader back to XVII century Céret. Follow Matthieu Barbet, a Parisian police officer brought to Céret to investigate poisoned bonnets. Discover the town as it was back in 1673. Those in the know will also enjoy recognising local references such as the magnificent Canigou, Perpignan, Le Boulou, the Fontaine des Neuf Jets, le pont du Diable, les bruixas and more. A fun and light-hearted way to (re)discover the history of the region.

LITTLE MONEY STREET..... FERNANDA EBERSTADT

An insight into gypsies and their music in Perpignan, centring around the gypsy band Tekameli. In 1998, **Fernanda Eberstadt**, her husband, and their two small children moved from New York to the Quartier Saint Jacques in Perpignan. Here she found a jealously guarded culture, a society made, in part, of lawlessness and defiance of non-Gypsy norms, and met **Moïse Espinas**, the lead singer of the Gypsy band, Tekameli.

SUMMER COCKTAILS



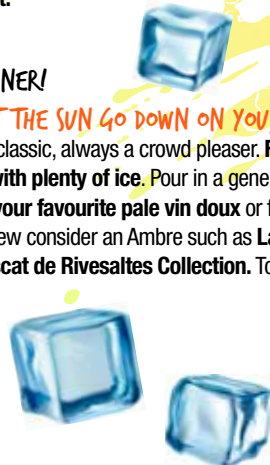
The sun is high in our Picasso blue sky. **Cocktails are back** or rather they never went away. As restrictions lift and you invite long missed friends over for a socially distanced apero, **why not demonstrate you've not wasted your time during lockdown.** Roll out the cocktail cart, give the shaker a shine, dust off the funny shaped glasses, paper parasols and bendy straws from the back of the cupboard and prepare to party! Ingredients are easily found with a visit to your local cave and your weekly open air market so pre-cocktail preparation is all part of the fun.

A FEW OLD CLASSICS, A FEW NEW ONES TO TRY OR (CREATE YOUR OWN)



(ATALAN MULE (I GET A KICK OUT OF YOU))
Perfect for when you're on the balcony and the day is done. In a heavy whisky tumbler pour equal proportions of well chilled Vial Magneres, Eau De Vie from Banyuls and Byrrh Grand Quinquina. Top with ginger ale. Ice is optional. Garnish with a slim sliver of fresh ginger and an orange twist.

PO SUNDOWNER!
(DON'T LET THE SUN GO DOWN ON YOU)
An absolute classic, always a crowd pleaser. **Fill a tall goblet with plenty of ice.** Pour in a generous measure of your favourite pale vin doux or for something new consider an Ambre such as **La Perdrix Muscat de Rivesaltes Collection.** Top up with Tonic.



SAINT YPRIEN (TRON (SITTING ON THE DOCK OF THE BAY))
Elegant and refined with a lovely hint of fresh lime. **Prepare a dry martini** to your usual proportions with chilled Noilly Prat's white vermouth and chilled crisp dry Tanqueray Gin. Add a few generous drops of lime juice and garnish with a slim lime twist.

MAUREILLAS MARY (FULL OF GRACE AND VODKA)
Clean and deseeded **one or two local tomatoes.** The dark skinned Crimean are perfect. Blitz them down, then add a dash of Worcester sauce and a few drop of Tabasco. Fill a tall glass half way with ice, add the mix and vodka to your preference. Not too generous as its all about the tang of the tomatoes. **Garnish with a sprig of wild mountain rosemary** you picked that morning on your ramble through the garrigue.

"I FEEL SORRY FOR PEOPLE WHO DON'T DRINK. WHEN THEY WAKE UP IN THE MORNING, THAT'S AS GOOD AS THEY'RE GOING TO FEEL ALL DAY"
FRANK SINATRA

(ANIGOU (OOLIE (AIN'T NO MOUNTAIN HIGH ENOUGH))
More a dessert treat than a cocktail. The **lemon sorbet and deep red Maury Grenat** looks as good as it tastes. **Pour some Maury Grenat** into a long stemmed liquor glass, almost to the top. If you're uncertain, **look for Les Vignerons De Maury Grenat Récolte** in its very distinctive bottle or the red fruit packed **Lafage Maury Grenat.** Cover the glass and place in the fridge until it's well chilled. Just before serving top with a scoop of lemon sorbet.



MAJORCAN KING'S RUIN (KING OF THE ROAD)
You don't really need to lose a kingdom to appreciate this one. **Mix half a bottle of your best red wine with half again of either rum or brandy and half again of sugar or maple syrup.** Chill the mix right down. To serve place a thin slice of sharp **green apple in the bottom** of a cocktail glass then add the mix. Add a few drops of Angostura Bitters.

PYRENEAN PEACH FIZZ (LET'S GET FIZZY-(AL))
De-stone, **peel a sun ripe peach and nectarine** then blitz. Add a squeeze of lime and chill the juice for thirty minutes. **Fill a tall champagne flute 1/4 full** with the juice and **add local sparkling wine such as Arnaud de Villeneuve Fine En Bulles Petillant**



"WHAT CONTEMPTIBLE SCOUNDREL STOLE THE CORK FROM MY LUNCH?"
W (FIELDS)





.....>>> **PERPIGNAN RUM (HASE)**
(YO HO HO AND A BOTTLE OF RUM)

This will remind you of ancient narrow streets and hot summer nights. **Martinique rhum has its own AOC and is produced using cane juice pressed on the day and Creole stills.** Each batch is unique. If unsure, look for Rhum Clement on the label. **For this one you'll need a good solid chopstick, fresh mint leaves and fresh juicy locally grown limes.** Put a few mint leaves in the bottom of a tall glass, pour in a good splash of rum and half as much sugar syrup. Mash the leaves with the chop stick while mixing the rum and sugar. **Add the juice of two or three limes.** Add a dash of **Angostura bitters**, ice and mix again. Check the flavour and add more rum if required. **Garnish with a lime slice and more ice.**



AND FINALLY....
HOW ABOUT WHIPPING UP A COCKTAIL (CREATED BY OFF-THE-WALL ARTIST SALVADOR DALI AND PUBLISHED IN HIS ECCENTRIC RECIPE BOOK, 'LES DINERS DE GALA'?)

CASANOVA COCKTAIL
The juice of 1 orange
1 tablespoon bitters (Campari)
1 teaspoon ginger
4 tablespoons brandy
2 tablespoons old brandy (Vielle Cure)
1 pinch Cayenne pepper

This is quite appropriate when circumstances such as exhaustion, **overwork or simply excess of sobriety** are calling for a **pick-me-up.**

Let us stress another advantage of this particular pep-up concoction is that one doesn't have to make the sour face that usually accompanies the absorption of a remedy. At the bottom of a glass, combine pepper and ginger. Pour the bitters on top, then brandy and "Vielle Cure." Refrigerate or even put in the freezer. Thirty minutes later, remove from the freezer and stir the juice of the orange into the chilled glass.



DRINK... AND WAIT FOR THE EFFECT. IT IS RATHER SPEEDY.

TIP: To get the best from a lime hard roll by hand for a few moments by hand on a chopping board before juicing.



COLLIURE (COCONUT COMMANDO)
(I'VE GOT A LOVELY BUNCH OF COCONUTS)
A refreshing easy to prepare cocktail. Can be prepared well beforehand. **Mix coconut milk or cream with fresh passionfruit juice**, seeds included to taste. Add a good squeeze of **Tahitian lime juice.** Fill a tall glass 1/2 full of the juice, add ice and top with chilled authentic artisanal lemonade such as Lorina's. Look for the classic swing top bottle. **Avoid industrial fizzy sugar water. Decorate with a slice of lime and lemon.**

SECOND HOME owner?

There are some exclusions including if the property value is under 150k euros and if you've owned it over 30 years.

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They guarantee the amount is correct and they are liable to pay for any tax or penalties in the event of an adjustment. **You can use either an accredited company or a French resident**, but bear in mind that the French resident will be liable to pay if there is any additional tax due - a heavy responsibility for an individual - **whereas an official tax representative is prepared for the liability of any miscalculations and their fees are deducted from the chargeable gain.**

There will also be additional checks on private individuals which could prolong the process so **using a certified company means a quicker and simpler outcome.** Notaires and Avocats are not allowed to be tax representatives.



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As you might expect during this second year of pandemic, airline schedules are in chaos. Timetables must constantly change as new health rules dictate changes to the requirements of each country. I am writing this in mid May, in the knowledge that much of it will be quickly out of date.



SUMMER 2021
by Robbie Shaw

FRANCE

BEZIERS

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

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
BRISTOL	2	RYANAIR 4 June-29 Oct
EDINBURGH	2	RYANAIR 16 June-27 Oct
LUTON	2	RYANAIR 18 June-29 Oct
MANCHESTER	2	RYANAIR 1 June-30 Oct
STANSTED	2-5	RYANAIR 4 June-30 Oct



As I write, travel overseas for holidays is not permitted by the UK government. I hope this situation will have changed by the time you read this, but bear in mind that it is an ever changing situation and my best suggestion is to constantly monitor the airline websites yourself. It certainly has been a year like no other!

CARCASSONNE



Ryanair remains the sole operator here.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
EAST MIDLANDS	2	RYANAIR 19 June-30 Oct
EDINBURGH	2	RYANAIR 19 June-30 Oct
MANCHESTER	2	RYANAIR 4 June-29 Sep
STANSTED	2-5	RYANAIR 4 June-31 Oct
DUBLIN	3	RYANAIR 9 June-31 Oct

MONTPELLIER

Easyjet operate from both Gatwick and Luton. The latter 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
Σ	2-12	EASYJET 4 June-30 Oct
LUTON	1-2	EASYJET 17 July-4 Sep

NIMES

Ryanair is the sole operator for P-O readers. **Luton** appears to have been dropped leaving only **Stansted**.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
STANSTED	2	RYANAIR 2



July-29 Oct

PERPIGNAN

Aer Lingus flights from **Dublin**, but still 0600 departures.

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

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
BIRMINGHAM	2	RYANAIR 16 June-27 Oct
DUBLIN	4	AER LINGUS 22 June-30 Sep.
STANSTED	2-4	RYANAIR 1 June-30 Oct



Un avion est sur le point de s'écraser.
Une femme se lève en folie, enlève tous ses vêtements et crie:
"Si je dois mourir, je veux mourir comme une vraie femme!
Y a-t-il un vrai homme ici qui peut me faire sentir comme une vraie femme?"
Un homme se lève, enlève sa chemise et la lui tend en disant: "Tiens, repasse-moi ça."

USEFUL VOCAB

être sur le point de - to be about to
en folie - crazy enlève - takes off
qui peut me faire sentir - who can make me feel
la lui tend - hands it to her
en disant - saying
repasser-moi ça - iron that for me



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. Quite a few changes. **Ryanair** will introduce flights from **Belfast City** and **Luton**. There are now four operators on the Manchester route. **easyJet** have dropped the **Newcastle** and **Southend** service but added **Manchester**. **Vueling** have added flights from **Belfast City**, **Birmingham**, **Dublin**, **Edinburgh** and **Newcastle**, but ceased **Cardiff**. **Norwegian** have **dropped their UK flights to Barcelona**. **Glasgow** has **lost the Jet2** service but gained **easyJet**.

FROM NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS AIRLINE

BELFAST CITY	3-5	RYANAIR 1 June-30 Oct
	2	VUELING 5 July-29 Oct
BELFAST INT'L	3	EASYJET 23 June-29 Oct
BIRMINGHAM	3-6	RYANAIR 2 June-30 Oct
	5-7	VUELING 7 June-30 Oct
BRISTOL	4-7	EASYJET 7 June-30 Oct
CARDIFF	2	RYANAIR 19 June-30 Oct
	2-7	RYANAIR 2 June-30 Oct
EAST MIDLANDS	2-7	RYANAIR 1 June-30 Oct
	2-4	VUELING 1 June-29 Oct
EDINBURGH	5-18	EASYJET 3 June-30 Oct
	3-7	VUELING 1 June-30 Oct
GLASGOW INT'L	2	EASYJET 24 June-28 Oct
	2	RYANAIR 9 June-30 Oct
GLASGOW PRESTWICK	7-42	BRITISH AWYS 1 June-30 Oct
	2	JET2 23 Sep-28 Oct
LIVERPOOL	2-5	EASYJET 2 July-30 Oct
	3-6	RYANAIR 2 June-30 Oct
LUTON	2-17	EASYJET 20 June-30 Oct
	3-5	RYANAIR 16 June-30 Oct
MANCHESTER	4	JET2 9 Sep-29 Oct
	3-5	EASYJET 7 June-30 Oct
NEWCASTLE	2-5	RYANAIR 1 June-30 Oct
	6-7	VUELING 5 June-30 Oct
STANSTED	2	VUELING 4 July-27 Oct
STANSTED	7-21	RYANAIR 1 June-30 Oct
	5-14	RYANAIR 3 June-30 Oct
DUBLIN	9	AER LINGUS TIII 30 Oct.
	3-7	VUELING 3 June-30 Oct

TOULOUSE / BLAGNAC

There tends to be more flights to **Toulouse** from UK regional airport in the winter due to skiing opportunities, with **Andorra** not too far away. **Ryanair** have re-introduced service to **Edinburgh** whilst **Manchester** will be introduced by **Jet2**. There are **no plans for British Airways Heathrow flights**.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
BRISTOL	4	EASYJET 2 June-29 Oct
		RYANAIR From 3 June-31 Oct
EDINBURGH	4-7	EASYJET 11 June-30 Oct
		BRITISH AWYS 3-7 1 June-30 Oct
GATWICK	2-9	JET2 From 1 May
		RYANAIR From 18 June-31 Oct
HEATHROW	3-7	AER LINGUS to 28 Sep.
		RYANAIR From 17 June-28 Oct



Winter schedules start on Sunday 31 October. During the summer, frequency of service increases as the months go by, as no doubt the airlines are hoping that more countries will open up as vaccinations increase.

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GIRONA

In the last couple of years there had been a big **increase** in flights to **Girona**. Subject to aircraft deliveries the number of flights listed could well change. **Ryanair** have added **Luton** and **Manchester** but dropped Southend.

Jet2 who suddenly found the airport two years ago once again have a whole raft of flights. However they have dropped both **Edinburgh** and **Glasgow** and **bad news for Belfast** is that both **Jet2** and **Ryanair** have no plans to operate the route this year. Likewise, **no plans for TUI flights from Gatwick**.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
BIRMINGHAM	2	JET2
		25 June-29 Oct
BOURNEMOUTH	2-4	RYANAIR
		4 June-30 Oct
BRISTOL	2	RYANAIR
		16 June-27 Oct
DUBLIN	3	RYANAIR
		16 June-29 Oct
EAST MIDLANDS	1	JET2
		26 June-30 Oct
	2	RYANAIR
		16 June-27 Oct
EDINBURGH	2	RYANAIR
		17 June-28 Oct
LEEDS BRADFORD	2	JET2
		From 24 June-30 Oct
LIVERPOOL	2	RYANAIR
		17 June-28 Oct
LUTON	2	RYANAIR
		16 June-27 Oct
MANCHESTER	2-3	JET2
		25 June-29 Oct
	3	RYANAIR
		19 June-30 Oct
NEWCASTLE	1	JET2
		27 June-24 Oct
STANSTED	2	JET2
		25 June-24 Sep
	2-5	RYANAIR
		2 June-30 Oct



DID YOU KNOW



CASTELNOU CASTLE RE OPENS TO THE PUBLIC

The medieval castle will welcome visitors again this summer 2021 after being closed to the public for renovations. **With over 50,000 visitors a year**, it was once the department's **third most popular paying tourist attraction**. It was handed over to the department for the symbolic sum of 1 euro because of the prohibitive cost of the renovation work required to meet public safety standards.

Look out for a summer programme of special events in the castle and grounds.

DALI IN CÉRET



In 1965, with great fanfare and pomp, Dalí descended on the sleepy, little town of Céret and announced his engagement to his artistic muse, Gala.

Traditional Catalan bands and dancing, alongside the most important municipal representatives, were given the surrealist makeover. Flourishes included a giant cardboard rhinoceros and a 2 metre skeleton, whose articulating arm offered flowers to the impressive (and impressed!) crowd.



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A Tale of WASPS AND SPIDERS



Just by walking around, we blunder constantly through the territory of many living things. Here are some of the more interesting – if less than cute – creatures whose paths I crossed last summer.

MIND YOUR STEP!

Some wasps, for example, don't use flight as their main method of travel. One big, intimidating species prefers to run, as it specialises in hunting wolf spiders.



IT GOES ONLY BY THE FORGETTABLE SCIENTIFIC NAME OF *CRYPTOHEILUS ALTERNATUS*

Their MO is to first sting the spider in its own burrow, paralyzing but not killing it, before dragging it to the wasp burrow. They cover the ground scarily fast, even laden down by this giant of the arachnid world.

Below: Near the River Tech, I spotted two wasps having a tug of war over a victim they must have paralysed earlier. The winner subsequently dragged its prize – backwards – for about 20m up a sandy bank, through scrub and down into the former fox den. For a short film of the (slowed down) action, see: <https://vimeo.com/441308722>



The spiders' destiny was to have a single egg laid inside each of them and to be gradually eaten alive by the emerging wasp larva. That's the food chain for you!

WATCH WHAT YOU (HOP WITH THE SECATEURS!

Last summer a female tent-web spider (*l'Épeire de l'Opuntia*) set up her tent in our garden. Black with raised white studs on their backs (and harmless to humans), these spiders aren't especially big but their "tents" can be huge. They're made with non-sticky silk, secured by long, strong "guy ropes" on vegetation, and do not need re-spinning each night. Some prey that land or fall into them – as an acrobat falls into a net from a tightrope – manage to walk out again but the unlucky ones are seized and trussed up in seconds. True to her species, our female also dispatched her mate after he'd done his duty, and dumped his corpse in a dustbin area beneath her tent. Sometime later, the first egg sac appeared, which she guarded closely.



Every few days a new sac appeared beneath the others...



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

www.mediterraneanpyrenees.com
Twitter @66warblers

... until, **by end September, a total of 9 hung**, like a broad bean pod, in the centre of her tent. By then, spiderlings were emerging from the oldest sacs.



The spiderlings stayed close to home and, at only a few days old, **began to spin their own mini tents within Mum's** – visible one dewy September morning:



5 EGG SACS; SPIDERLINGS AT THE TOP; MUM AT THE BOTTOM



The matriarchal edifice slowly deteriorated from lack of maintenance and was finally destroyed by a series of gales.



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LEST ^{we} FORGET

THE MAQUIS

French resistance during the Second World War was made up mainly of young men escaping compulsory labour service in Germany. Thousands fled to the countryside, living in camps in the mountains and garrigues that covered much of the area. They called themselves the **Maquis**, loosely translated as **thicket or scrubland**.



Operation Rosalind - Escape from Canet Plage WW2

For many escapees, evaders, and refugees, **Perpignan was one of the final stepping stones to freedom**. It was also often the start of a difficult journey, across treacherous, snow topped mountains, dodging German patrols. **Resistance groups and escape committees provided guides at great risk to themselves.**

Perpignan's position close to the coast also meant that British navy vessels could come in close to shore at **Argelès-sur-Mer, Canet, Banyuls-sur-Mer and Cerbère** and evaders had the chance of directly reaching Gibraltar by sea, avoiding the risk of being interned by the Spanish.

One such vessel, **H.M.S. Fidelity**, was assigned the landing of two agents at **Canet-Plage to set up a two-way escape line over the Pyrenees**. Their mission was also to **collect twelve escaping Polish Air Force officers at Collioure**.



In fact, **the Polish Air crew did not turn up at the rendezvous point, and the rescue crew, disguised as local fishermen, were challenged by a local customs officer and taken prisoner**. Their leader, **Fidelity's second-in-command, Patrick Albert O'Leary**, managed to escape and ended up staying on in France to help in the setting up of the successful escape and evasion route, **the Pat Line**.



One of the largest and most successful sea escapes organised by the Pat line '**Operation Rosalind**', took place in 1941 at **Canet Plage**, when **forty escapees** waded into the sea, to be picked up and taken to the safety of **Gibraltar**.

Yorkshireman, **Geoffrey Robinson** was one of the **escapees from Canet**. In 1964 TV show 'This is Your Life' honouring **Pat O'Leary**, Geoffrey described how the **40 escapees waited for a week with O'Leary**, wading into the sea every night in vain, until **O'Leary radioed London with the message "Pas plus de bateau que de beurre au cul!"** (There's no more a boat here than butter on my arse!)



The rather rude message produced results and they were picked up 2 nights later.

At the end of 1942 the Germans took over the unoccupied zone of France. Sea escapes had to stop and more evaders were obliged to escape across the Pyrenees.



Festivals and TRADITIONS

CATALONIA, LAND OF TRADITION



Catalonia is fiercely proud of its heritage, identity and language. Rich in art and history, take a look at some of the colourful traditions that have survived a tumultuous past.

BANK HOLIDAYS

14TH JULY

Fête de la Bastille

(Fête Nationale)

Symbol of the absolute power of the monarchy of Louis XVI, the day of the storming of the Bastille was declared a French national holiday in 1880, a celebration of the birth of the Republic.



15TH AUGUST

Assomption

Commemorating the departure of Mary from this life and the assumption of her body into heaven.

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

Return to school

Thursday 2nd September 2021



WHEN IT'S TOO HOT FOR A DAY MARKET.... WHY NOT VISIT A NIGHT MARKET?

(July & August, usually from around 19h midnight)



ARGELÈS

Tuesday and Friday (Port)
Every night - craft (Parking des Pins)

CANET

Every evening (sea front) and every Friday (port)

SAINT CYPRIEN

Every evening (port)

STE-MARIE-LA-MER

Monday, Wednesday and Friday (sea front)

TORREILLES

Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday (beach)

LE BARCARÈS

Tuesday Thurs (Argonautes Plage) (village)
Monday, Wednesday, Samedi (village)
Friday and Sunday (Coudalère)

CÉRET

Every Tuesday (art & artisan)



CASTELLS & CASTELLERS

Once upon a time, rival bands of young people released their pent up energy by competing against each other in feats of strength and agility. The many unemployed formed 'colles', groups of human towers, to show off their strength and potential for work.

Today, these 'castellers' (castle-makers) are a treasured Catalan tradition requiring skill, discipline and organisation. As a building needs firm supports, so a successful castell needs a maximum of people pushing up against the base or 'pinya'.

The castellers shimmy up to the top quickly, the strain on the pinya is tremendous.

The tower is only complete once the 'anxeneta', often the youngest and lightest child, climbs into place at the top and raises one hand with four fingers erect, in a gesture said to symbolise the stripes of the Catalan flag.



I SWEAR....

In the 12th century, Catalans already had a well developed sense of identity and pride. This ancient Catalan oath of allegiance was sworn by the leaders of the council to the monarch of Catalonia.

We... who are as good as you swear to you, who are no better than we, to accept you as our king and sovereign lord, provided you observe all our liberties and laws; but if not, not.

>...

Festivals and TRADITIONS

CATALONIA, LAND OF TRADITION

LA SARDANE

Circles within circles, **hands raised and joined together, small, precise steps**.....but don't be fooled. This 'hokey cokey' style dance may look like a sedate bit of hop, skip and jump but requires effort, muscle control and coordination. **Music for the sardane is played by a 'cobla'**, a band of 11 people, including 10 wind instruments and a bass.

Franco resented the Catalan national pride and desire for independence. **When he banned certain aspects of Catalan culture, the dance quickly became a powerful symbol of national unity.** Today the Sardane is danced in villages and towns throughout Catalonia, by Catalan and non Catalan alike, and is a **great way to make friends and take a little exercise at the same time.**



CORREFOCS

Meaning "**fire runs**" and originating from a form of medieval street theatre called '**Ball de Diables**', these spectacular shows of devils and fireworks **represent the fight of good against evil.** Dressed in red and black, wearing horns and masks, '**colles de diables**' (groups of 'devils') dance amongst the crowds accompanied by loud music, **waving sparklers, firecrackers, and roman candles, spitting fire into the crowd.**

Leave your health and safety training head at the entrance! Amongst other useful advice during a correfoc, **the Generalitat de Catalunya suggests the following.** "If by any chance your clothing catches fire, throw yourself on the ground and roll over to put out the flames. Above all, do not run, as this will spread the flames and make them burn more fiercely." **Sound advice indeed!**

GEGANTS

Featuring in most Catalan parades, **you will see giants (gegants) and big-heads (cap-grossos)**, enormous painted papier-maché figures, **sometimes 14 or 15 ft tall**, wearing traditional clothing and carried by a person inside. They usually appear in couples during **the patron saint holidays (Festa Major)**, carnivals and parades, often as king and queen, or some important person in the history of the town. They dance in the streets with comical little "big-heads" Some say that these giants represent the eternal fight between Christians and Arab knights during the Middle Ages, others talk of a biblical, 'David and Goliath' possibility, but no-one is absolutely sure of their origin.

Wherever they came from, they are always an important part of any Catalan Catalan Festival.



HAVANERAS

Named after the capital of Cuba, La Habana (Havana), Habaneras were originally sea shanties, **brought back from Cuba by sailors in the 19th Century,** telling of lost loves and exotic places. They were accompanied by guitar and accordion, spontaneous and mainly to be heard in the bars and taverns.

However, **more than just typical drinking songs, they were soon included in "zarzuelas"** popular Spanish music theatre of the 19th and 20th century, and appear in works from great composers such as Bizet and Ravel.

This back slapping music is usually be served up with the **traditional accompanying drink, ron cremat, a mixture of rum, sugar, lemon peel and coffee beans, with optional cinnamon stick,** served in an earthenware bowl and flambéed to burn off the alcohol.



'NOT SPECIFICALLY CATALAN BUT OFTEN TO BE SEEN AROUND THE PORTS...

WE'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

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

Contact us on info@anglophone-direct.com



MUSIC, DANCE and THEATRE

Summer ART and MUSIC

After a bleak time of too much telly and computer, 'deconfinement' is giving us a chance to get out and about this summer. Event-wise there have been some casualties.



WITH HENRY SHAFTOE



However, other entertainments are going ahead such as 'Live au Campo', from 19 to 31 July. If listening to legendary French crooners, such as **Veronique Sanson** or **Alain Souchon**, is your bag, head down to the **Campo Santo**, in the heart of Perpignan. For once it is worth sitting nearer the back, as the raked seating arrangement offers a wonderful backdrop of the cathedral.

Rumour has it that there will be also be a free programme of **music in the streets of Perpignan** this summer – **check with Perpignan tourist office for up-to-date details.**

Most of the beach resorts will be putting on '**animations**' this summer too. I know of one event for a fact because I will be **playing in the streets of St Cyprien 19 July and Banyuls 8 & 20 August.** For the rest, check out the resort tourist offices.



Free concerts of all styles will also be taking place in the stunning setting of the **Palais des rois de Majorque 9 to 24 July (leDepartment166.fr)** and **Flamenco Festival edition 13.2**, in Perpignan, organised by the irrepressible **Lorenzo Ruiz, 9 - 14 August (amorflamenco.fr)**

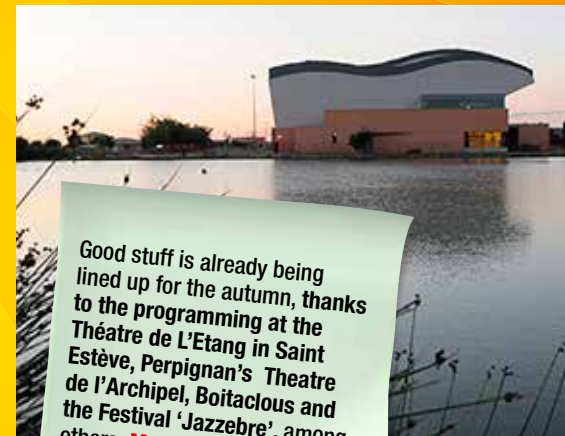


On the visual arts front there are **2 big exhibitions in Perpignan all summer.** The **musée Rigaud (21 rue Mably)** will be exhibiting a **bunch of old queens** (yes seriously – on loan from the Palace of Versailles).

The snappily entitled '**acentmetresducentredumonde**', (coincidentally for us anglophones, at 3 Avenue Grande Bretagne), is **exhibiting the works of 50 contemporary French artists.** The great thing about mixed exhibitions like this one, is that, if you don't like the work of one particular artist, there are always 49 others to check out!



The gallery (in a fabulous old factory) is **only open in the afternoons**, - admission is a very reasonable **5 Euros.** **Wondering why the gallery has such an unwieldy title?** – well the clue is in its distance from Perpignan railway station, which **Salvador Dali once surrealistically claimed was 'the centre of the world'.**



Good stuff is already being lined up for the autumn, thanks to the programming at the **Théâtre de L'Etang in Saint Estève, Perpignan's Theatre de l'Archipel, Boitaclous and the Festival 'Jazzebre', among others. More details in the next P.O. Life...**



For example, the big '**Deferlantes**' rock festival, due to **take place in the new venue of Chateau Aubiry** (near Ceret), was pulled last minute over fears of restrictions on numbers attending.

QUEL CHIEN FORMIDABLE!

Un chien arrive dans une boucherie, avec un porte-monnaie dans sa gueule...



“Alors mon chien. Tu veux de la viande?” demande le boucher

“OUAF!”

“Quel chien doué” dit le boucher à ses clients.

“Tu veux des côtes de porc et des saucisses?”

“OUAF!”

“Tu veux combien de saucisses?”

The chien aboie 6 fois.

“Et combien de côtes?”

“OUAF, OUAF”

“Deux? D'accord.

Quel chien intelligent!”

Le boucher prépare les 6 saucisses et les 2 côtes de porc. Ensuite, il prend le porte-monnaie, se paie, et rend le porte-monnaie au chien. Le chien prend tout (dans un sac en plastique) et quitte la boucherie. **QUEL CHIEN EXTRAORDINAIRE!**

Intrigué, le boucher décide de suivre le chien pour féliciter le propriétaire car c'est un chien vraiment bien dressé.

Le chien rentre dans un immeuble, monte au deuxième étage et frappe deux fois à la porte avec sa patte. Quel chien impressionnant!



Un type ouvre et commence à engueuler le chien.

“Mais monsieur, arrêtez! C'est le chien le plus intelligent que je n'ai jamais vu.” dit le boucher.

“LUI, INTELLIGENT? VOUS RIGOLEZ! CA FAIT 2 FOIS CETTE SEMAINE QU'IL A OUBLIÉ SES CLÉS!”



USEFUL VOCAB

porte-monnaie - *wallet*

gueule - *mouth (animal)*

doué - *clever*

se paie - *pays himself*

rend - *hand back*

prend tout - *takes everything*

suivre - *follow*

féliciter - *congratulate*

propriétaire - *owner*

bien dressé - *well trained*

immeuble - *block of flats*

patte - *paw*

type - *guy*

engueuler - *tell off*

que je n'ai jamais vu - *that I've ever seen*

Vous rigolez - *you must be joking*

DID YOU KNOW

FROM AXAT IN A HANDCART WITH LE TRAIN ROUGE

Well, more like a foot cart but how do you fancy seeing the P-O (or at least part of it) from a railroad track on a foot pumped handcart?

The vélorail is a 'cyclo-draisine' which two people can pedal at the front with up to 2 adults or 3 children enjoying the ride in the back seat.

Et ne vous inquiétez pas. You won't run the risk of bumping into a train, red or any other colour, as everything is carefully organised to avoid that. Phew!

And if the thought of working up a sweat pedalling along a railway track just isn't your tasse de thé, there are also four with electric assistance.



Tongue Twister

Répétez trois fois

Un plat plein de pâtes plates

Test your FRENCH

See Page 85 for answers

1

D pour Dame!

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

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

- | | | | |
|--------------|----|---|---|
| drapeau | 1 | a | sensation d'avoir mal |
| doué | 2 | b | qui ne fait pas attention |
| démangeaison | 3 | c | libre |
| distrain | 4 | d | fait les contrôles entre deux pays |
| dehors | 5 | e | à partir de maintenant |
| desormais | 6 | f | pâte pour nettoyer les dents |
| douleur | 7 | g | tissu qui porte les couleurs d'un pays |
| dentifrice | 8 | h | sensation qui donne envie de se gratter |
| disponible | 9 | i | qui a du talent |
| douanier | 10 | j | à l'extérieur |

One for the linguists

Si deux chats sont amoureux, est-ce qu'ils sont félines pour l'autre?

Really, really bad jokes

Quel superhero mange des croquettes?
Dober-Man!!
(croquettes – dry dog food)

Comment s'appelle le riz qu'on mange en voiture?
Le riz-auto

What's funny? Ask a French friend to explain!

Pourquoi il n'y a plus de mammoths?
Parce qu'il n'y a plus de papouths.

2

Match up these useful words and sayings

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|----|---|---------------------------------|
| Le strict nécessaire | 1 | a | Keep in touch |
| Bref | 2 | b | Are you coping OK? |
| Bouquiner | 3 | c | In short |
| Laisse tomber | 4 | d | It will all work out. |
| Ça te changera les idées | 5 | e | Forget it, never mind |
| Ca va s'arranger | 6 | f | It'll take your mind off things |
| C'est n'importe quoi! | 7 | g | The bare essentials |
| Tu l'as fait exprès? | 8 | h | Did you do it on purpose? |
| Tiens-moi au courant! | 9 | i | To read |
| Tu t'en sors ? | 10 | j | That's nonsense |

3

Take a Break

Find the English for these useful French expressions, which all use the verb 'casser' – to break.

- | | | | |
|---|----|---|---------------------------------------|
| A tout casser | 1 | a | Don't worry about it |
| Elle casse souvent du sucre sur le dos des gens | 2 | b | He's a real daredevil |
| Ils ont cassé les prix | 3 | c | Get lost! |
| Il me casse vraiment les couilles (vulg.) | 4 | d | She often talks behind people's backs |
| On casse la croûte? | 5 | e | Shall we eat? |
| Ne te casse pas la tête | 6 | f | They've slashed the prices |
| J'ai envie de lui casser la gueule (sl) | 7 | g | I'd like to smash his face in! |
| Casse-toi (sl) | 8 | h | At the very most... |
| Il est casse-bonbons | 9 | i | He's a pest |
| C'est un casse-cou | 10 | j | He really p-sses me off |

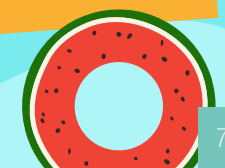
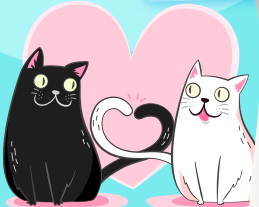
USEFUL EXPRESSION

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

Naughty, naughty!

A few choice expressions NOT to use with your grandmother!

- Je m'en fous (chuh mon foo) – I dont give a damn
- Ta gueule! (tagirl) – shut yer gob!
- Casse-toi! (kass-twah) – Get lost
- Putain – (putenn) – exclamation equivalent to "oh cr-p!"



LANGUAGE



Sounds the same, spells the same... doesn't mean the same!

Une pêche - peach

La pêche - fishing

Un péché - sin, transgression
(avoir la pêche - to be on form)

Test your FRENCH

4

Can you find the meanings for this pot pourri of useful words and expressions?

- | | | | |
|----------------------------|----|---|-----------------------|
| c'est du chichi | 1 | a | pet hate |
| À vos souhaits | 2 | b | A little bird told me |
| A la bonne franquette | 3 | c | We're even |
| nous sommes quittes! | 4 | d | It's simple |
| Remets-toi vite. | 5 | e | Beat about the bush |
| Canicule | 6 | f | Bless you |
| A poil | 7 | g | Broke (money) |
| Mon petit doigt me l'a dit | 8 | h | Heatwave |
| Tourner autour du pot | 9 | i | To be in hot water |
| Dégage! | 10 | j | Eat pot luck |
| Cul sec! | 11 | k | Fuss about nothing |
| C'est du gâteau! | 12 | l | Get well soon |
| Etre dans de beaux draps | 13 | m | Get out of the way! |
| Bête noire | 14 | n | In the nude |
| Fauché | 15 | o | Down in one! |



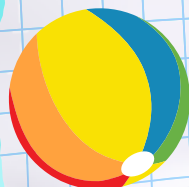
BON CONSEIL

La vie est courte. Souriez pendant que vous avez encore des dents!

(souriez - smile encore - still (in this sense))

**Don't say ...oui,
Say...**

- Bien sûr
- Tout à fait
- Volontiers
- D'accord
- Parfaitement
- Avec plaisir
- Absolument
- C'est clair
- Sans aucun doute
- Ouais (pron way)



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LANGUAGE



Tongue twister (virelangue)

Repeat quickly x 3

Willy really was weary



H is for Hat!

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

- | | |
|------------|-------------------------------------|
| handsome 1 | a Sheltered water for ships |
| hate 2 | b Small nocturnal animal with sharp |
| heel 3 | spikes |
| harvest 4 | c When crops are picked |
| hedgehog 5 | d Back part of foot |
| hare 6 | e Good looking |
| hive 7 | f Female chicken |
| honey 8 | g Where bees live |
| harbour 9 | h Strong dislike of somebody |
| hen 10 | i Animal like a rabbit |
| | j What bees produce |

See Page 85 for answers

Language Tip

Good or Well?

Good décrit une personne ou une chose

He is a good boy

Well décrit COMMENT on fait quelque chose

The good boy speaks French well

Doctor, Doctor I feel like a sheep.
Oh dear, that's
baaaaaaaaaaaaad!

Expression 'Tour de France'

On your bike!
Va-t'en



Pouvez vous trouver les équivalents en français de ces phrases utiles en anglais, qui utilisent toutes une couleur

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| The boys in blue 1 | a Rarement |
| To be caught red -handed 2 | b Etre à découvert |
| To be in the red 3 | c Etre ravi, très content |
| A red herring 4 | d Un petit mensonge |
| Once in a blue moon 5 | e Ambigu |
| A white lie 6 | f La paperasse |
| Red tape 7 | g Etre pris en flagrant délit |
| Grey area 8 | h La police |
| To be tickled pink 9 | i Le chantage |
| Black mail 10 | j Une fausse piste |

What do you call a dog who digs up ancient artefacts?
A bark-eologist!

Améliorez votre ANGLAIS



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Remplissez les blancs...

The Ugly Baby

A woman gets on a bus with her **1**. The driver says, "Ugh! That's the ugliest baby I've **2** seen." The **3** stalks off to the rear of the **4** and sits down. She turns to the man sitting **5** to her and says, "The **6** just insulted me!"

The man says, "You go and give him a telling off. I'll hold your monkey for you."

a driver b woman c bus d baby e ever f next

VARY YOUR LANGUAGE

Don't tell your partner/friend/boss he/she is fat, say he/she is...

- buxom pudgy
- plump tubby
- chunky roly-poly
- stout voluptuous
- curvaceous solid
- whalelike



Do you know how to make the perfect cup of British tea?

Put these instructions for making a perfect cup of tea into the right order

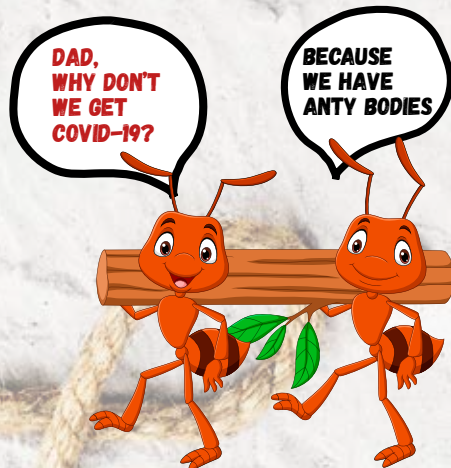
1. Add milk and sugar if required
2. Enjoy your cuppa
3. Pour the tea into the cup
4. Bring the kettle to the boil
5. Fill the kettle with fresh water
6. Put the tea/teabags in the teapot.
7. Leave the tea to brew for five minutes
8. Warm teapot with hot water and pour away
9. Pour the boiling water into the teapot

Be a Caterpillar

Eat a lot. Sleep a lot. Wake up beautiful.

Phrase utile

Weather permitting- Sous réserve de beau temps



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LANGUAGE EXERCISES ANSWERS

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

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



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10h15 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

Add to these factors a gaggle of splashing swimmers, and it is understandable that large water bills sash onto pool owner's doormats every summer.



EVAPORATION OR LEAKY POOL?

It can come as quite a surprise just how much water is lost from a swimming pool via evaporation, due to heat, humidity and wind. Even a gentle breeze can more than double the evaporation rate by removing the insulating layer of warm, moist air directly above the pool surface.

HOWEVER, NOT ALL WATER LOSS IS DOWN TO EVAPORATION. Even small leaks can significantly raise the cost of your water bill, and be very difficult to locate. **If you think you might have a leak**, it is worth having it checked out, not only to lighten your water bill, but because those expensive products might be literally going down the plughole!

The first thing a pool specialist will check out is the location of the leak - pool or filtration system. **Special test kits can detect leaks in liners**, although for concrete pools, the checks can only be carried out by visual inspection. **If the suspected leak is in the filtration system, checks on the pipe pressure can confirm or rule this out.**

Once confirmed, a **flexible inspection camera can snake its way around the inside of the piping**, pinpointing layout, and determining breakage, blockage etc. **The camera records the findings, and is checked on a screen afterwards, very similar to a colonoscopy but less unpleasant!**

Identifying and locating a leak can be a long and complicated process, but well worth it in the long run for economy and peace of mind.



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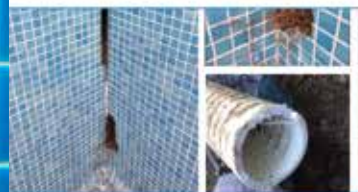
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Things You Might NEED TO KNOW

WHAT IS AN ATTESTATION D'ACCUEIL?

This is a 'Proof of Accommodation' document that your **UK visitors could soon be asked to produce when entering France**. It includes plenty of personal details, documents to produce, and also how long a visitor will be staying, exact dates, their relationship to you, the size of the property they'll be staying at, whether they love or hate marmite (not really for that last one).....

Pick up the form from your local mairie. The Attestation itself is free but you need "un timbre fiscal" (30€) that you can buy **in a tabac**, or online at <https://timbres.impots.gouv.fr>.

At time of writing, (June) the need for the attestation has not yet been confirmed.



DELIVERY SERVICES, MOBILES, INTERNET....COMPLAIN ONLINE

Fed up of waiting for parcels that just don't arrive, or interminable disputes with the provider about your mobile or internet connexion?

Did you know that you can complain online about problems with post and parcel delivery services, telephone, mobile and internet providers?

J'ALERTE L'ARCEP is run by by Communications authority Arcep to review complaints. and point visitors in the right direction to take their complaint further.



If you think you've caught one of those 'summer colds', you may actually be suffering from a nasty attack of hay fever!

The RNSA (Réseau National de Surveillance Aérobiologique) is the French aerobiology network in charge of the analysis of the content of the air in biological particles.

Last year, it put much of France on red alert or 'very high risk' for high pollen levels, explaining that conditions were particularly good (or bad!) for the production and dispersal of grass pollen. This year is looking even worse, adding olive tree and oak tree pollen into the mix here in the south of France!

Find out more about the pollen count in France at www.polleninfo.org



RED CROSS ON TRAFFIC LIGHTS

Have you ever wondered (or even noticed) why there is a red cross on certain traffic lights? It is quite simply to let you know what colour the lights are for the traffic coming towards you, so you know whether you can turn left safely. Clever eh?

KEEPING UP WITH THE JONESES

Want to know how much your new neighbours paid for the house next door?

French land registry records are open to the public, so you can access other people's property sale price on-line. The 'Demande de Valeur Foncière' app (<https://app.dvf.etalab.gouv.fr/>) or DVF, goes back five years and lists sale price, date of sale, size of property, number of bedrooms, land area and plot (cadastre) number for houses, apartments, land and any building that has changed hands. It doesn't name seller or buyer.

Go to the interactive map of France, click on the department, of your choice, and enter details in the column on the left. If there has been a sale over the past 5 years it will be coloured blue. In theory, the database is updated twice a year.



TIME TO 'THINK LOCAL' FOR YOUR FINANCIAL PLANNING?

Just as **UK citizens lost automatic EU freedom of movement when Brexit took effect on 1 January**, many UK financial businesses lost the right to provide banking and investment services within the EU. If you are resident in France but still use a UK bank account, or a UK-based financial adviser, **check they have the authority to continue supporting you as a French resident.**



BOOKING YOUR FLIGHTS

Did you know that, according to a recent fare comparison site study, **air fare prices from France are cheaper if you book online on Mondays or Tuesdays?**

Saturdays and Sundays are the most expensive days to book flights.

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

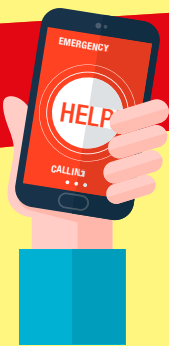
The study also showed that **buying tickets 22-24 weeks in advance can cut your fare price by 17%.**

DON'T SHARE YOUR COVID VACCINATION CERTIFICATE

So you've had your Covid vaccine and you're feeling relieved, and maybe even a little smug. Don't share it on the Internet!

The vaccination certificate has two QR Codes that make it fairly easy for clever hackers to scan and steal your personal data to forge their own health pass or steal some (limited) personal details. Enjoy your social media communications, but remember that there are sharks circling in those waters and think twice before you post anything personal, no matter how harmless it may seem.





P-O Life

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.

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