

Autumn 2021

# P-O Life

*Life in the Pyrénées-Orientales*

N° 71  
FREE / GRATUIT



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© photo: Dee Turner

Cave above Notre Dame de Vie, Villefranche de Conflent

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*and* **DRINK**  
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So here we are on the edge of **another golden autumn in the P-O**. The C word is still lingering, making us cautious, but we have sunshine, long empty beaches, superb uncrowded walking and bike tracks, **and autumn is one of the best seasons for outdoor eating and entertainment**. Love the vivid reds and oranges that replace the faded summer greens. Love the uplifting light that chases away the blues as summer wanes! **Reasons to be thankful? Loads!**

Don't forget that this paper version of P-O Life is just la cerise sur le gâteau! You can also download the full mag online from our website (where you can find all the stuff we couldn't fit in here) or find us in your App store.

As P-O Life slides comfortably into its 17th year, I would like to **thank the many amazing people who contribute to its creation**. Their names are scattered throughout the mag; they make it what it is – informative, enjoyable, useful and loads of fun to produce!

And **of course, not forgetting our advertisers without whom we would quite simply not exist**. If you use their services, please tell them where you found them.

Stay safe my friends, stay well, and **enjoy the crisp freshness and beauty of the P-O in autumn**.

*Kate*

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### EDITORIAL

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where you can chat, recommend, ask questions, buy and sell your bits and bobs....or follow us on Instagram at [polifemag66](https://www.instagram.com/polifemag66)



Dee and Howard Turner welcome you to **Les Chambres Chouettes**, characterful chambres d'hotes just outside the walls of lovely Villefranche de Conflent. Check them out at...

[www.chambreschouettes.fr](http://www.chambreschouettes.fr)

**COVER CREDIT: DEE AND HOWARD TURNER**

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# Les crêtes de GALAMUS

An excellent circular walk of approximately 4 1/2 hours with 550m of ascent. The walk offers wonderful views of the Corbières ridges, valleys and beyond. Walking boots essential on the rocky, sandy paths. Walking poles helpful. Route offers shade in some parts. Waymarking is red and white. One part of crest is very exposed and needs great care. Not recommended in high winds.

## GETTING THERE

Take the D117 direction Foix from near Perpignan airport. Follow this road via Estagel and Maury. At St Paul de Fenouillet, turn right following signs indicating **Les Gorges de Galamus**. Once out of the town, after several bends on the climb, look out for an emerging piste on the right - **tree marked with red and white GR symbol** and with **a yellow route board on opposite side of the road**. (Piste is point of return on GR 36) Turn round and **park on space at side of road just below the piste**. If you reach a second piste to right of a sharp left-hand bend you have gone too far and are near the start of the ascent. Any trouble parking, proceed to car park at the Gorges de Galamus and walk back down the road – but it will be quite a long way up the road at end of walk.

Access: map IGN 1:25,000 Tuchan;  
Massif des Corbières 2447 OT

> View from summit crest

Many walking and riding trails in the region have been marked out with different coloured paint strokes to represent varying difficulty or activities.

### WALKING

Yellow paint stroke: short walk (petite randonnée)

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

Red and white paint stroke: long walks (Grande randonnée)

### HORSE-RIDING

orange circle

### MOUNTAIN BIKING

Two yellow circles and a triangle

### DFCI TRACKS (défense contre l'incendie)

Reserved for fire engines and strictly forbidden for unauthorised motorised vehicles. Bikers and horses may use these tracks unless there is a fire warning, high winds etc...

## START



Walk up the D7 for 10 mins to find start of path on right, just round the left-hand bend.

Path climbs steadily upwards in direction **Gorges de Galamus**. Note blue markers indicating how many metres climbed.

Ignore path on left into woodland and continue upwards, **swinging north, to soon contour round a parallel gorge**. The **cliffs of Gorges de Galamus can be seen to left** and main car park can be seen at one part. Scenery is typically rugged, like much of the Corbières.



> Gorges de Galamus

At the top of the gorge and 1h 15 mins into walk turn right at a T junction of paths.

Enter shady woodland and continue gradual ascent, with more views unfolding across the Agly valley and over to the sea. **A few steeper sections up the pace of height gained to emerge at the crest (514metres). Approx 1h 50 mins to this point.**

Follow the path along the crest, drop a little then climb again to emerge finally at a dramatic rocky area with vertical cliffs on left. **Take great care crossing this section**. Look out for eagles and look down into the valley if you dare, without going near the edge!





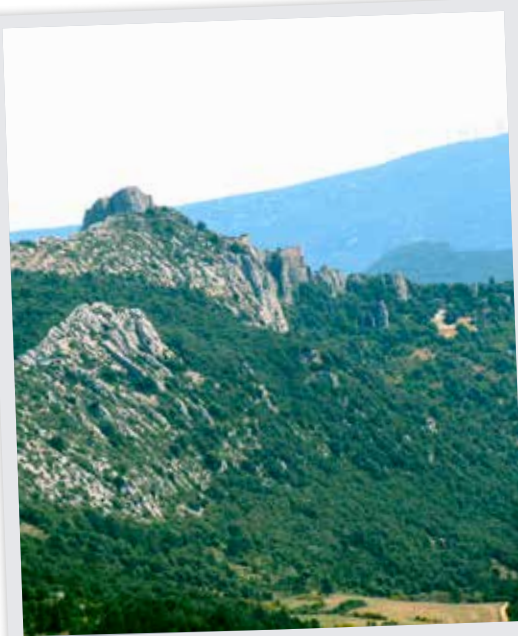


## ERMITAGE DE ST ANTOINE

Nature and the Agly River may have sculpted the **spectacular Gorges de Galamus** but it was **Franciscan monks who built the mystical Ermitage de St Antoine**. Carved into the almost vertical cliff overlooking the Galamus gorges, it was accessible only by donkey until intrepid abseilers armed with pick axes hacked out the road in 1880.

Following a typhus epidemic in 1782, the **cave behind the hermitage became a chapel**, which one could easily imagine as a place of magic, black or white, with its strange symbols and indecipherable words etched into stone and marble surfaces. **A visit to this spiritual oasis is free of charge** but there is a donation box and a pool for dropping in coins. **A little café sells postcards, snacks, drinks and ice creams and the shady courtyard is perfect to relax**, meditate, contemplate life and enjoy the rather special atmosphere in the shade of the **ancient plane tree, planted in 1782**.

Path starts downwards at end of the exposed area and goes behind the mountain. **Great care is needed**. It is steep and first passes over boulders and rock before dropping over smaller stones and soil paths to emerge at the end of the range of precipices! **Look right to see Chateau de Peyrepeteuse on the next range of mountains.**



> View of Chateau de Peyrepeteuse

Continue downwards to **emerge on a green valley**. Proceed a few hundred metres along the level path. Note a path ahead leading left to right across the grass. At a suitable place cross the grass to meet this path rather than continuing to the meeting point of the 2 paths.



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**Maureillas-las-Illas €599,000**  
Ref: A06101 - Spacious 5 bedroom house with mountain views, independent apartment, outbuildings and parking.

Agency fees to be paid by the seller.  
ENERGY CLASS: D CLIMATE CLASS: D



**Codalet €328,000**  
Ref: 116021 - Character 4 bedroom house with outbuildings, parking, garden and mountain views.

Agency fees to be paid by the seller.  
ENERGY CLASS: B CLIMATE CLASS: A



**Casteil €97,200**  
Ref: A04624 - Village house split into 2 apartments with 1 bedroom each, 2 terraces, parking and mountains views.

Agency fees to be paid by the seller.  
DPE : N/A



**Saint-Nazaire €1,155,000**  
Ref: 116721 - Beautiful 4 bedroom villa with garden, swimming pool, gîte, garage, outbuildings and terrace.

Agency fees to be paid by the seller.  
ENERGY CLASS: B CLIMATE CLASS: B



**Prades €294,000**  
Ref: A05682 - 3 Bedroom house with garden, swimming pool, terrace, garage and outbuildings.

Agency fees to be paid by the seller.  
DPE : N/A



**Vernet-les-Bains €183,600**  
Ref: 110205 - Semi-detached 2 bedroom house with garden, garage, parking and independent apartment.

Agency fees to be paid by the seller.  
ENERGY CLASS: E CLIMATE CLASS: E

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Maxime Ellis



Joppe Louwrier



Turn right on this path – the GR 36 – to enter woodland. Follow the GR all the way back to the D7 and your parking place - about 1 hr.

After woodland the path becomes more rocky, following the left hand side of a valley, working its way ever downwards to eventually emerge on a piste, 300 metres before the road. You will be serenaded by the sound of cicadas in summer!



Visit nearby Cucugnan, between the castles of Peyrepertuse and Queribus, to see the intriguing statue of a pregnant Virgin in the church of St Julien!

Refreshments are available in St Paul de Fenouillèdes and at the Gorges de Galamus (in season). If you have not visited the Gorges do take the opportunity to do so, or return on another day as they are a wonderful sight.

If you do return for a day drive, emerge at the other end of the Gorges take a right turn to enter a fertile valley and travel along past the **Chateau de Peyrepertuse**, **Cucugnan** (if you can bear to drive past without taking a look at the charming village) and **Chateau de Queribus**, to emerge at Maury on the D117.



> Cucugnan

## THE FIVE SONS OF CARCASSONNE

© Simon Lehnman / iStockphoto — Carcassonne



Perched high on their unbelievable mountainous rocky outcrops, the Cathar castles, known as the “Five Sons of Carcassonne”, Queribus, Peyrepertuse, Puilaurens, Termes, and Aguilar, dominate the beautiful rolling vineyards of Maury and Cucugnan. Veritable eagles nests, owned by noblemen sympathetic to the Cathar religion, they became the last resort for the Cathars as the Albigensian Crusade threatened to wipe them off the face of the earth. When the border between France and Spain changed, following the signing of the Treaty of the Pyrenees, they lost their strategic importance. It is possible to visit all in a very full day with an eye wateringly early start but they warrant considerably longer.

### 1. PEYREPERTUSE

Eight hundred metres high, occupied since Roman times, the castle of Peyrepertuse (pierced rock in Occitan) was first mentioned in 1020 when it was owned by the Catalan Counts of Besalu. In the times of the Cathars, a secret passage ending in a movable ladder afforded vital access and escape. It still exists today, a narrow path behind a rocky overhang but the secret passage is closed off.

By 1258 Peyrepertuse was one of the forefront royal fortresses of the border of Aragon. It lost its strategic importance in 1659 but remained in use till the French Revolution.

Perched on its dramatic 40 metre high cliff, it appears inaccessible from the ticket office but a ¼ hour narrow shady walk through scented box brings you to the entrance keep of St Jordi.



### 2. PUILAURENS

Perched high on Mont Ardu, the strategically situated Château Puilaurens surveys the picturesque village of the same name from its rocky crest, an imposing visual landmark in a remarkable landscape. Cathar refuge in 1245 - 46, one of the main border defences against the Spanish until 1659, the castle is easily accessible by a 20 minute shaded walk from the car-park. Fortified steps zigzagging upwards towards the ramparts were specifically designed for defence. Castle keep, dungeons, narrow, winding corridors and ‘secret’ passages to delight the kids. Legend has it that when mists surround the castle, the White Lady, Blanche de Bourbon, is wandering the walls in her misty veils.



### 3. QUERIBUS

This veritable eagle’s nest, believed to be the last stronghold of the Cathar defence, fell in 1255. A monument to the dramatic events that have marked the turbulent history of this border country, it lost its strategic importance in 1659, when the Treaty of the Pyrenees changed the frontier between France and Spain.

Easily accessible, it is possible to drive within a few hundred metres, with a short walk to the steep and narrow entrance. The many arrow slits covering the approach, and the three perimeter walls, rising in level suggest that visitors were not always so welcome here! In fact, so clever was the defence system that it took only fifteen or twenty soldiers to man the castle. Gothic hall, dungeons and amazing views!



### 4 AND 5. AGUILAR & TERMES

The remaining two sons of Carcassonne are mostly in ruins, but still fascinating to visit. A fifteen minute climb from the free car park, Aguilar (or eagle) was one of the main refuges for ‘faidits’, (Occitan for banished), Cathar knights and lords dispossessed of their own strongholds. More modest in size than its neighbours, you can still see the remains of the defensive walls, with semi-circular towers and the small underground chapel of Saint-Anne below the keep.

Access to Termes is via the Information Centre in the pretty little riverside village of the same name. Watch the informative introductory video (English subtitles!) about the Cathars and the Cathar crusades available at the visitor reception before a fairly steep climb takes you to the site itself.





OUT <sup>for</sup> THE DAY

Don't  
fancy  
a walk  
today?

Pas de problème, you're in  
côtes de roussillon villages  
country.

Drop the hikers off at the start of  
the walk and head off in search  
of a dégustation or two? (Of  
course, a non tasting driver is  
recommended.)

And what better time of year  
to taste these robust, spicy  
reds, reflecting the hot, sunny,  
windswept land from which they  
spring?

From the old Roman town of **Saint Paul de Fenouillet**, plan your wine circuit, **direction Ansignan**. Scenery is stunning and dramatic. Pass pools of clear water, running under ancient Roman stone bridge and eroded rock formations nicknamed '**les marmites de géants**' (the giants'cooking pots). There's magic in the air as legend tells that fairies came here to do their laundry.



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WITH TONY GOODMAN

Some regional recommendations from our P-O Life wine guru, TONY GOODMAN

THE VIGNERONS D'AGLY AND MAURY CAVES are always worth a visit. Their wines are good value and increasingly available in local supermarkets....although much more fun to visit the caves and try before you buy. Here are just a few.....

## MAS AMIEL

Why not pop in for a tasting to nearby Mas Amiel off the D117 from Estagel towards Maury?

Thousands of glass "bonbonnes" full of naturally sweet wine sit out in the sunshine in this unique and traditional method of ageing. Two centuries ago Raymond Etienne Amiel won the 80 hectare property from the then Bishop of Perpignan at a game of cards. Now its sunbaked, windswept terrain produces some of the best Roussillon wines of the Region.

## CHÂTEAU MONTNER

Premium Blanc

An autumn lunch specialist. Fresh, good balance and structure. Plenty of seashell tang without being too sharp. Grilled Daurade, Leucate oysters, autumnal cheese platter and new season stone fruit. Great value Serve chilled 8-10°C. 10€



## LE P'TIT CASOT

A fantastic value Syrah powered Rosé. Festive and fabulous in the glass. As fruity as a seaside postcard yet always acceptable in polite company. Not just for Rose lovers. Cheese platters, aperos or a paella. Serve around 8°C. 5€



## LATOUR DE FRANCE

Signature Rouge

Produced from vines perched high up on the valley walls where the soils are schist and shale. Deep crimson to purple in the glass. Perfect for a slow cooked Beef casserole or soft Camembert. Will never let you down. Great value. Ready to roll however could be put aside for one or two years. Serve 16-18°C Around 8€



## CHATEAU JAU

Sans sulphite Rouge

This is interesting, a big performing red without the controlling influence of sulphites. A tough ask yet this wine delivers. Hand picked, low temp vinification in a carefully controlled environment. An extraordinary bright red in the glass, plenty of fruit, herbs and tannins. It's tomorrow's wine available today. A midweek steak, a slow cooked mild tagine or platter of local cheeses. Love it, love the price. Serve 16-18°C 8.50-9€

## CLOS DE FEES

Un Faune avec son Ffre sous les oliviers As elegant as a long flowing Belle Époque ballgown, as debonair as Harry Belefonte in his tuxedo. Deep garnet red, ripe red fruit, background of pepper and salt. Steak of course, roast game fowl. Perfect now, perfect to cellar. Serve 17°C 35 €



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## VINS PRIMEURS & MUSCAT DE NOEL

On the third Thursday in October, the P-O celebrates the arrival of 'les vins primeurs', the PO equivalent to Beaujolais Nouveau, but out three weeks earlier, due to our sunnier climes. A month later, on the third Thursday of November, it's the turn of Muscat de Noël with events in local caves and a launch in Perpignan.

## LOOKING FOR AN EXCITING FAMILY DAY OUT OR ADRENALINE-JUNKY-STYLE CHALLENGE?

Just outside Saint Paul de Fenouillet, the Via Ferrata offers both. You can go it alone on this vertical climbing route with cable, ladders, bridges and narrow walkways - but only if you have all the right safety equipment. (helmets, harness, lanyard.....) Much safer to go with one of the many experienced guide/instructors.



OUT <sup>for</sup>  
THE DAY

# A STROLL ALONG THE ROYAL CANAL

One of the many irrigation canals that criss-cross the Pyrenees Orientales runs through the pretty village of Rodès. Imperative to daily life throughout the centuries, the crumbling remains of this ancient canal brought water to wheat fields, vineyards and olive groves in the 11th century, and decades later, powered wheat and textile mills, and filled the moats of the Palace of the Kings of Majorca.

Head up the **N116 towards Vinça** (direction Prades), turn off for **Rodès and park at the entrance before the bridge**. (vehicle access for residents only). Wander through the village, past a scattering of shops, following signs for '**Gorges de Guillerà**'. When you arrive at a bridge, backtrack a little and take the steps next to the small graffiti-covered building.



Follow a narrow path past rushing water with pretty rock pools below, and goats perched precariously above. **Take care to keep dogs and small children away from the canal edge: the current can be strong.**



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PRICE: 97 000 €



**CERBERE:** Located on the 1st floor of a village house, comfortable 53 sqm 2 bedrooms apartment, **only 300 meters from the beach and the shops of Cerbere !**

PRICE: 126 000 €



**BANYULS SUR MER:** Located on the 1st floor of a quiet residence, 3 minutes by car from the beach and the shops of Banyuls sur mer, **very pleasant 50 sqm 1 bedroom apartment with terrace!**

PRICE: 169 000 €



**BANYULS SUR MER:** Very pleasant fully renovated 50 sqm 2 bedrooms apartment with a 12 sqm terrace, located in a quiet area 10/15 minutes walk from the center and the beach. Reversible climate control. **Easy parking.**

PRICE: 188 000 €



**SOREDE:** Quiet area, only 500 meters from all shops of Sorede, charming stone made village house on two levels with private **garden!** Living room with fireplace, 3 bedrooms.

PRICE: 578 000 €



**MONTESIEU DES ALBÈRES:** Detached 137 sqm 3 bedrooms villa, with panoramic view on a 6000 sqm land! 58 sqm living room with brand new open plan fitted kitchen. Garage, laundry room, storage spaces and wine cellar! **QUALITY FITTINGS**

PRICE: 725 000 €



**LAROQUE-DES-ALBÈRES:** 210 sqm traditional detached house on a 5000 sqm flat with pool possibility and view over the Alberes! Spacious master bedroom en suite + 2 bedrooms en suite + study and guest room. Large car port, storage rooms and cave.

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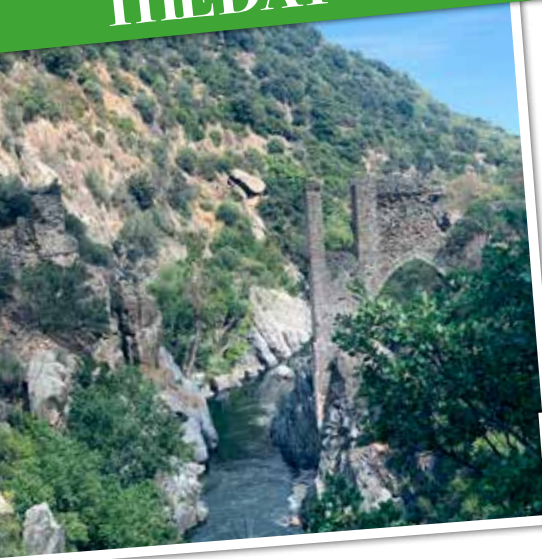
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## OUT for THE DAY



## A STROLL ALONG THE ROYAL CANAL

Soon after the aqueduct, a tall fence forces us to cross the canal and very quickly a right hand turn leads up to **Rodès castle**, where you can picnic amongst the ruins. It's a bit of a climb, 20 - 30 minutes, but not too challenging, and **views down the Têt valley to Ille sur Têt and the sea, or up to Canigou, Vinça, the barrage and lake, are breathtaking.**



**A footpath lined with wild lavender, prickly pears and olives leads back down into the steep, narrow streets of Rodès village and back your car, perhaps with a stop at the local café/shop, if it's open.**  
**Bonne promenade**



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# Art MEETS Architecture: Perpignan Station Trail....

WITH TONY GOODMAN

A hundred and sixty years ago the first train arrived in Perpignan linking the region's vines to a thirsty industrial north. As wine flowed north, profits flowed south and the market gardens in the immediate vicinity of the station were replaced by elegant streets, lined with the latest architectural styles. Money was no object as merchants competed to display their success. The best architects of the day were commissioned to design landmark homes.

The quarter has been recognised as possessing some of the finest examples of **Art Deco, Art Nouveau and expressive regional architectural styles in France**. The very active **neighbours' association has selected some of the best and created a discovery trail**. To follow the trail, download the map at [www.perpigare.fr](http://www.perpigare.fr), with audio guides in French, Catalan, Spanish, German and English available at each stop **via QR codes**.

**Start anywhere** on the trail as each site is self-contained. **The estimated time to complete the trail is around two hours**, allowing plenty of time to walk your chosen circuit. There is **ample parking at the station or down along River Basse** or you can hop onto the **P'tit Bus**, free navette ([www.sankeo.com](http://www.sankeo.com)) which covers part of the route.



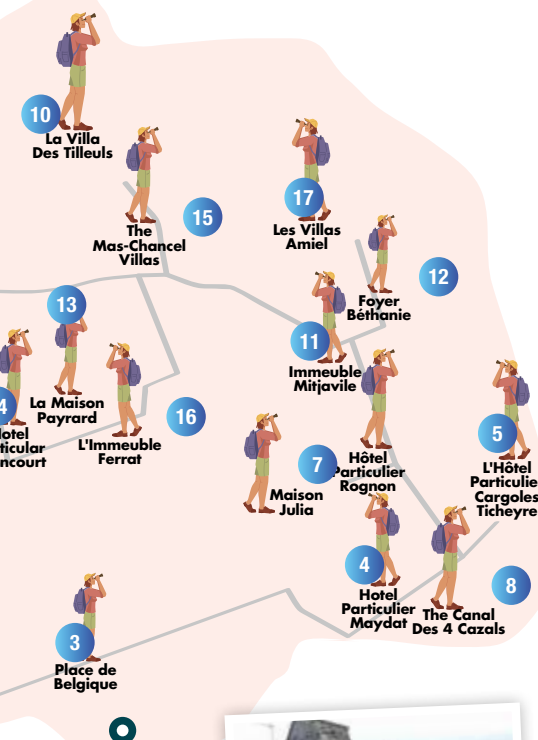
## GARE DE PERPIGNAN

The selection of the station's site and its construction was not an easy task but nevertheless the **first train eventually pulled into the station in 1858**.

As for the design, Dali had this to say when he visited in 1963: **"I had at the station of Perpignan a kind of cosmogonic ecstasy.....an exact vision of the constitution of the universe.....similar in its structure to the station of Perpignan"**. Maybe a good starting point if you're hoping for a bit of ecstasy during your day out.



1



EAT HERE  
Restaurant  
Lou Grilladou

2

## MAISON COMBES JACOMET

6 Rue Courteline

One of the quarter's most imposing homes. **Marie-Alphonsine Combes and her husband Joseph Hippolyte** commissioned Danish architect Viggo Dorph Petersen in 1891 to design their home.

**Petersen designed** many other landmark homes in the P-O such as **Chateau de Valmy and Chateau d'Aubiry**. Borrowing heavily from the very popular Parisian bourgeois style with its slate mansard roof and decorative brickwork, **Petersen added local Roussillon touches**.

**On February 7, 2020, the Maison Combes Jacomet was transferred for a symbolic one euro to the Joseph Sauvy association in exchange for its restoration.**





## PLACE DE BELGIQUE

Once known as **place de la Gendarmerie**, this is the only open public space in the quarter so quickly became a site for entertainment, a **vital source of water** and **weekly markets**, roles it still plays to this day. The excellent **Lou Grilladou** provides a perfect lunch or dinner stop, popular with locals for its fresh and reasonably priced cuisine.



PERPIGNAN has many beautiful old 'hotels particuliers', elegant private mansions of the Perpignan Bourgeoisie. **Check out the Hotel Pams**, a 20 minute walk from our station circuit, and now owned by the City of Perpignan, for a free and fascinating visit for lovers of the excesses of Belle Epoque kitsch.

L'Hôtel Particulier

**MAYDAT** 12 bis Quai Nobel.

Built in 1940 using local materials, it is a superb example of the way local architects and builders incorporated **Art Deco**, touches of the **Romanesque** and **Gothic** styles.



L'Hôtel Particulier

**CARGOLES TICHEYRE**

(1934) 7 Quai Nobel.

A modest private mansion **designed by Louis Trenet**, uncle of famous French singer, Charles, its arched upper story windows, detailed eaves and single oriel window are a classic design feature of the era.



Hôtel Particulier

**ROGNON** (1933) and **LA MAISON JULIA** (1928) Rue du 14 Juillet

Two superb examples from the 1920-1930's. Hôtel Particulier **Rognon** and **La Maison Julia** sit side by side. Both designed by **Louis Trenet**, the style has been described as **strong Modernism softened** by the use of colour and subtle traditional touches.



THE CANAL DES 4 CAZALS

Linking the Têt and Basse rivers the canal still flows unnoticed under the quarter. Mentioned in 1538 as powering a mill known as **Quatre Cazals (Four Houses)** it also provided irrigation for the quarter's market gardens. As the quarter became more residential it was incorporated into the drainage system. The outlet into the Basse can be quite spectacular during periods of heavy rain.



Les Villas **AMIEL** (1897) Rue de Villas Amiel

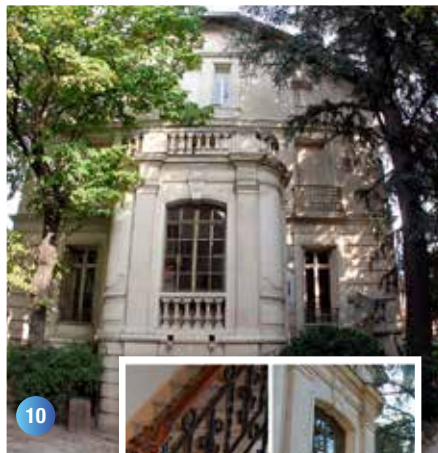
A row of four beautifully presented homes in one of the quarter's prettiest streets. **Built by Jean Amiel the owner of Foyer Béthanie** (see next page). The homes were built for his daughters; **each carries a daughter's name, Marie, Lucie, Henriette and Joséphine**. The small garden in front of each makes this possibly the prettiest stop of the trail.





## La Villa Des **TILLEULS** (1907) 42 Avenue de Grande Bretagne

An **Italianate style villa** with a few local influences **designed by Viggo Dorph-Petersen**. Now home to the **Museum of Coins and Medals Joseph Puig**, the villa shows the architect's precise attention to detail in the **way he incorporated the steps, the veranda and an "English" garden with a stream complete with a small Japanese bridge**. Inside, the main stairs have a classic wrought iron banister. The wood-panelled dining room and timber fireplace are a delight.



10



## L' Immeuble **MITJAVILE** (1916) 66 Avenue av. Général de Gaulle

A **faithfully restored and maintained example of Art Nouveau architecture** with strong regional influences using red brick, wrought iron, stone and tiling.

11

## FOYER **BÉTHANIE** (1881) 45 Avenue du Général de Gaulle

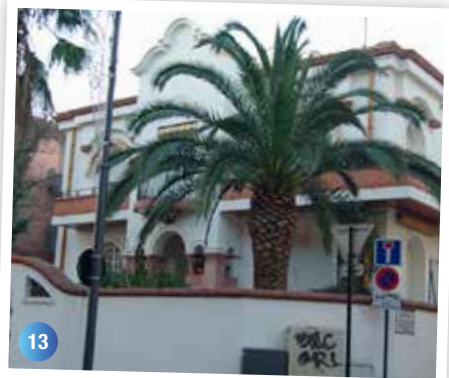
A bourgeois and opulent residence with a distinctive slate mansard roof. Built originally for a very successful carpenter, **it is known as Foyer Béthanie** as it was a shelter for young girls for many years.



12

## La Maison **PAYRARD** (1946) 23 Avenue du Général de Gaulle

Designed by **architect Pierre Sans**. A massive and imposing residence in a **mix of styles including Spanish, Catalan and Baroque**. The style, very typical of the Catalan regionalist movement, uses decorative brick, red stone for pilasters, columns or ornate corbels and wrought iron.



13



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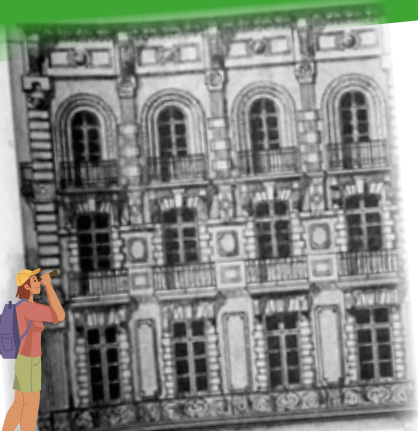
**Tel.: 04 68 87 12 96**



## Hotel Particular DRANCOURT

21 Avenue du Général de Gaulle

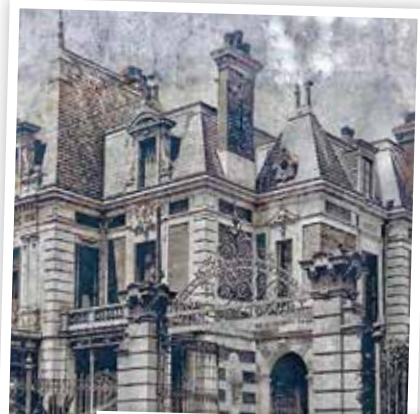
Built for Emile Drancourt a prosperous wine merchant, designed by **Viggo Dorph Petersen**, engaged to design a mini castle. Over time the property and its adjoining warehouse and grounds were subdivided. Take a moment to examine the fine detail and it's easy to imagine how it must have presented in its prime.



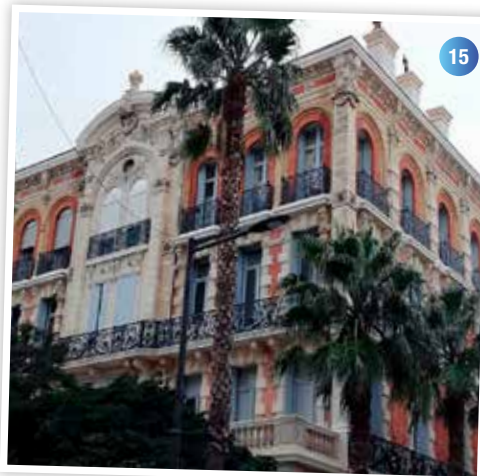
## DEMEURE BARDOU

14 of Avenue du Général de Gaulle

Built by the brothers León and Eugène Bardou, this imposing structure was at the heart of the Bardou family's '**Le Nil**' cigarette paper manufacturing enterprise. Adjoining it were production facilities including a large building which housed the electrical accumulators, early types of batteries which powered the machinery. Elegant and inspiring, it **was designed by Toulouse architect Frédéric Delor de Masbou**. Sadly its history has a dark side, events which saw the end of the Bardou family dynasty when Léon Bardou shot his 35 year old sister-in-law, Eugène, and turned the gun on himself.



14



15



16



## THE MAS-CHANCEL VILLAS

(1930-1931) Rue Gabriel Fauré

A superb example of Catalan Romanesque architecture. Designed by architect **Edouard Mas-Chancel** with borrowings from the Art Nouveau style he used local ingredients, red brick, wrought iron and river stones to great effect.



17



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## DID YOU KNOW

Did you know that Perpignan baker Jean Bardou and his sons invented the first ready-to-roll "hygienic" cigarette papers in France? Registered as "fancy paper manufacturer" they named their 'paperettes' 'Job' (Jean's initials JB, with the lozenge shaped symbol of Perpignan in the middle) and 'Nil'? (The Orient was all the rage at the time).

As business flourished, they built a new combined house and factory, the 'Hôtel de l'Industrie du Papier à Cigarette' in Perpignan, later to become the Hotel Pams.



This successful family dominated the economic life of Perpignan, and were responsible for commissioning many of the region's iconic buildings, (Valmy, Aubiry, Ducup, Maternité Suisse....) and their descendants were to influence the city's political life as well. Look out for colourful publicity posters of the time, featuring JOB and Nil with its laughing elephant logo.





MUSIC, DANCE  
and THEATRE

# ARTS and ENTERTAINMENT this Autumn and winter

WITH HENRY SHAFTOE

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.

In **Perpignan** the two main providers of live performance are the classy **Théâtre de l'Archipel** and the more mainstream 'Boitaclous' organisation. A couple of recommendations from the Boitaclous programme:

**I MUVRINI** at the **Palais des Congrès** on **10 Novembre** and **IRISH CELTIC** at the **Parc des**



**Expositions on 22 December.**

The latter is a direct descendant of the 'Riverdance' phenomenon with live Irish music and dancing galore.

No dancing for **I Muvrini**, but their music is an update of the extraordinary 'polyphonic' choir tradition of **Corsica**, with a bit of progressive rock added. Powerful stuff and very moving.

The **Théâtre de l'Archipel** has loads of live performances including: **wonderboy trumpeter IBRAHIM MAALOUF** (12 Dec), **FAMILY CIRCUS** (17 – 19 Dec) and African superstar **ANGELIQUE KIDJO** on **15 January**. I would also recommend a quirky « visual theatre » performance for all the family, from **18 to 20 October: 'LA DIGNITÉ DES GOUTELETES'** (whatever that means!)



Over in **St Estève** the **Théâtre de L'Etang** has a highly varied line-up for the next few months, including a trimmed version of the **NUTCRACKER BALLET** (27 November) and the mind-boggling (and I quote): **'ELECTION OF MISTER FRANCE ROUSSILLON'** on **30 October**! At the time of going to press I was unable to ascertain if the contestants have to appear in swimsuits and high heels.



The pandemic has resulted in a backlog of good films now being released. It is worth noting that the **Cinema Castillet** in **central Perpignan** (not to be confused with 'Mega-Castillet on the outskirts) always projects **British and American films in the 'version original' of English**, rather than the French voice-over dubbing that you sometimes get on the telly or in certain other cinemas.

On the visual arts front, by the time you read this, the renovated and expanded **MUSEUM OF MODERN ART IN CERET** may have re-opened. And also in **Ceret**, the **Gallery 'ART SAINT ROCH'** seems to have upped its game. In **October**, the gallery is hosting the ever-prolific and quirky **Tiffany Vailier** with (sic) « **UNE EXPOSITION TRÈS AGHIT'HÉ** »



Staying over that way, brighten up your autumn with a **collection of 10 superb concerts** local, national and international musicians **across the 10 communes of the Vallespir**. (SEE PAGE 30)

And don't forget to check out the programmes of: **Jazzebre** (jazz and world music concerts),



**Institut Jean Vigo** (cinemathèque) and **l'Anthropo** (alternative music and performance) – they all have regularly updated websites.



... So really no excuse for slumping in front of the TV or 'ordinateur' this autumn and winter (unless that really is your preferred cultural option!)



# MUSIC, DANCE and THEATRE



## Automne musical en Vallespir

2021 18th September - 7th November

During the festival, why not tie in the concert with a visit to the **Musée de MÚSIC** offering **FREE** entry on presentation of your concert ticket!  
And perhaps a meal in one of the restaurants across the Vallespir offering a discount on production of your ticket (see website for details).

Firmly established on the P-O musical calendar, the 12th edition of the renowned Automne musical en Vallespir (Amuvall) festival continues to promote and celebrate the best in regional, national and international music.

Organised by Musiques et Voix en Pays Catalans, brighten up your autumn with this collection of 10 superb concerts by professional musicians across the 10 communes that make up the Communauté de Commune du Vallespir.

### Friday 1st October at 8pm

**VIVÈS Salle Polyvalente**

**'Chapeau le Concert'.**

Draw pieces of music from a hat and build the programme with us to discover the magic of the trombone!



### Sunday 3rd October at 4pm

**REYNÈS Chapelle Saint-Paul**

Britten, Barber and Hindemith – 3 famous 20th century composers, 3 different styles.

### Sunday 10th October at 4pm

**LE BOULOU Eglise Sainte-Marie**

Opera with **'L'Accent Lyrique'**. Rossini, Mozart, Fauré, Bizet, Bellini, Tosti, Turina, Verdi with four soloists.



### Sunday 16th October at 4pm

**CÉRET Gym (tbc)**

**LIBER'TANGO.** When Tango meets Jazz. Tribute to Gary Burton.



### Sunday 17th October at 4pm

**CÉRET Eglise St Pierre**

**'Messa di Gloria' & 'Motet a San Paolino'** by Puccini.

### Sunday 31st October at 4pm

**ST JEAN PLA DE CORTS Salle Polyvalente**

**Carmina Burana** – Cantata by Carl Orff – Version for 2 pianos, percussions and choirs.



Full price admission: 17€  
Members: 12€  
Free for under 15s

### Sunday 7th November at 4pm

**MAUREILLAS Foyer Municipal**

**Lyrice-Cabaret & Vaudeville.**

Joyful lyrical, light, wacky and naturally crazy fantasy. Improbable situations, arias, duets and parodied ensembles of opera, operettas, musicals.... A joyous mess!



## OFF-SERIES

**Sunday 19th December**

**CÉRET Eglise St Pierre at 4pm**

Our traditional

**Christmas Concert.**

(Check our website for more details)

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- Select your seats for the concerts on line.
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squirmed when you  
caught the eye of a  
mentalists?

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space, and easy access for  
the disabled too. Why not  
get there early and take  
a stroll around the lake?  
Benches, picnic tables and  
a children's playground  
make this flat and easy  
lakeside stroll a pleasure.



### SOME HIGHLIGHTS

#### MARE NOSTRUM MUSICAE CLASSICAL MUSIC 5€

Thursday 14h October at 8.30pm

Boccherini, Schubert and Beethoven  
performed by a trio of internationally  
renowned musicians.  
Stéphanie Boutonnier de Malefette  
on violin, Fanny Kobus  
on viola and François Ragot  
on cello.

#### RÊVE DE VALSE OPERA

Sunday 14th November at 2.30pm

Oscar Straus' Viennese operetta, a  
sentimental story, full of nostalgia for  
old Vienna. In the imaginary state of  
Rurilsavenstein the heiress  
to the throne has disrupted court life  
by marrying a common Austrian  
guardsman.

#### CASSE-NOISETTE BALLET

Saturday 27th November at 8.30pm

Tchaikovsky's delightful **Nutcracker** is one  
of the most performed ballets in the world.  
The **National Ballet of Gdansk** have  
adapted it for a reduced number of dancers  
with minimalist sets whilst remaining  
true to the original theme of the journey  
of Clara and her **Nutcracker**  
to the Land of Sweets

#### THE MAGIC WORLD OF CHANTAL GOYA CHRISTMAS SHOW

Saturday 11th December at 8.30pm

French singer and actress,  
**Chantal Goya** brings together the whole  
family, pantomime style, with music and  
good humour. Puss-in-Boots, Snoopy,  
Pandi Panda and others **join this  
show full of good humour, song  
and surprises.**

#### VIKTOR VINCENT MENTAL CIRCUS

Friday 7th January at 8.30pm

Master of mystery, the unforgettable  
**Viktor Vincent**, mentalist, mind reader  
and illusionist works with the audience  
to create an intriguing show  
that flirts with the limits  
of the fantastic.  
Join in – or not!

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# Crêpes fruits de mer

WITH SUZANNE DUNAWAY

This creamy, saffron-laced delight is perfect for a snazzy dinner party or just to enjoy à deux. Substitute any shellfish or fish filling you prefer. I have even used smoked salmon, delicious, if incredibly rich.



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.

## Crêpes

- > 1 1/2 cups whole milk
- > 1 cup flour
- > 2 eggs
- > Pinch of salt
- > 1 teaspoon Cognac or Armagnac
- > 2 tablespoons melted butter
- > More butter for the crepe pan

Mix the milk, flour, eggs, salt, Cognac and melted butter until very smooth. **Allow to rest at least half an hour.**

Heat a small bit of butter in a hot crepe or non-stick pan and when it bubbles, pour in about 1/4 cup of batter, tilting the pan to spread the batter into a complete circle. Cook on one side, then flip.

## Filling

- > 4 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- > 1 small sweet onion, chopped fine
- > 1 pound scallops, chopped coarse
- > 1/2 pound small shrimp, peeled and chopped coarse
- > Dash of white wine
- > 1/2 cup heavy cream
- > Juice of half a lemon
- > Pinch of saffron threads or powdered saffron
- > Salt and pepper



**SCALLOPS** (Coquille St Jacques) around here are wonderful. Try Les Poissonneries de la Côte Catalane (La Criée), in Port Vendres, one of the largest fish markets in the western Mediterranean for fresh, fresh, fresh. If it's not convenient to go fresh, frozen food shop Picard have really good ones called Petoncles.

Melt a spoon of butter in a saucepan, add the **onion** and cook for a couple of minutes. Add the chopped **scallops** and shrimp and cook another minute until the shrimp are pink. Add the **wine** and **heavy cream**, lower the heat and reduce the sauce until it's the **consistency of pancake batter**. Add the **lemon**, **saffron**, **salt** and **pepper** and simmer for a few minutes on low heat. Let cool.

**Heat the oven to 375F/200C.**

Butter a rectangular casserole. Spoon a couple of tablespoons of the seafood mixture down the middle of each crepe. Fold up the crepe at the ends of the filling and then fold over the sides to enclose the filling. Lay each crepe side by side in the baking dish and dot with butter. **Bake 10 minutes or until the tops of the crepes are golden.**

"I do not usually use the 'tomalley' of the scallops, but it's really good in the crêpes".



## ZARZUELA (sar-soo-EH-lah)

You may already have heard of this Catalan seafood stew, traditionally served on Christmas Eve, originally to fortify people through the late night mass, but did you know that the word means operetta or variety show in Catalan?







# Restaurant REVIEWS

AUTUMN 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.



Autumn in the P-O is a fabulous season for dining out. Not too hot, not too cold....and local restaurants really really need your support after another strange year.

Several of our reviews in this issue were sent to us pre-Covid. We've checked they are still open. Over to you now to see if the review still fits the restaurant.

## MAISON DE TERROIR

Maury...with Ruth

After the recent refurbishment, we sat on the front terrace amidst mountains and vines. Good choice of aperitifs and local bio beer on barrel with many more to buy in the adjoining 'cave'. **We shared tapas style dishes ranging between 5€- 10€.** Decent portion sizes too. The **Plat du Jour (15€)** was chicken strips cooked in a creamy coconut sauce, (curry was mentioned but definitely none there) served with a healthy portion of home made chips. Good selection of meat, fish and salad dishes too, **all in the 12€ - 25€** mark. Dessert was home made panacotta with strawberry coulis, all deserts looked delicious.

2 Av. Jean Jaurès, Maury  
Tel: 04 68 68 92 54



Choose your wine from the extensive range in the cave with 10€ corkage to drink on site. **Staff were welcoming with all correct Covid sanitation measures.** I highly recommend it for leisurely lunch after a good walk in the vines or a visit to Chateau Queribus beforehand.

## LA DULCINE

Reynès....with Penny

I have a new favourite restaurant in the PO (closely followed by Cote Saisons in Laroque). **La Dulcine in Reynès** (previously Le Chat Qui Rit) serves a **highly creative menu of food** which combines French influences with those of Japan, South America and Asia. We had **3 courses for 34€** and each dish was truly stunning. The service was also really delightful. We sat out on the leafy terrace, but there's also lots of seating inside and outside. **The wine menu has lots of local favourites at reasonable prices.** It's obviously well known by the locals, it was quite busy on a Tuesday night, so worth booking in advance.



1 Route de Céret, Reynès  
Tel: 04 68 87 02 22



## RELAIS DE L'ORME

Oms....with Lynn



A life-saver during confinement with delicious takeaways, **this excellent village bistro, bar and epicerie is now the beating heart of Oms.** **Chef Romuald** is a creative cook, and makes full use of local produce. **Jean-Marc ensures a warm welcome front-of-house.** Everything is home-made - save room for a dessert!

**The plat de jour is great value at 10€**, with menus from 17,50€ - 25€. The A la carte changes with the seasons. Wine either by carafe or a choice of fine wines.

Dine inside or on the spacious terrace overlooking the village.

Check for daily specials on [www.Oms.fr](http://www.Oms.fr)

16 rue de l'Orme, Oms.  
Tel: 09 52 55 29 12



## RESTAURANT BELLAVISTA

Prats de Mollo...with Robyn

Had a delightful birthday celebration at this restaurant in Prats de Mollo. **Michelin listed, Bib Gourmand**, it has limited choice menu of beautifully presented local produce that changes with the seasons. Highly recommended. Catch the bus there for a day out in this pretty walled town and even book to stay overnight in the hotel.



Le Foiral, Prats-de-Mollo-la-Preste  
Tel: 04 68 39 72 48







# Restaurant REVIEWS

SPRING 2021

## L'OLIVIER

Catllar....with Jan

Had a lovely meal here on Sunday lunchtime. They have somewhat odd opening hours in the winter but it's worth making the effort to find out! **We had a 17€ menu** - starters were feuilleté aux épinards, beautifully cooked, served hot or herring and potato salad (made in house). Main was stuffed cabbage - very delicate - and a delicious sauce and rice. **OH had caramelised pork and that too was lovely.** I had a pud - chocolate mousse. We had a carafe of house rose. **Everything is cooked in-house.**



Pl. de la République, Catllar  
Tel: 04 30 45 60 42

## EL CELLER IBÈRIC

Saint-André...with Simon

### CHANGE OF MANAGEMENT

Doesn't really look like a restaurant from the outside, more like an industrial estate but once you get in, this wine/tapas bar and restaurant is not what you expect, **with cool and stylish design, pleasant terrace and tasty food reasonably priced.** Easy parking and a warm welcome from **friendly new owner Sofi** with husband Florent working in the kitchen - **a great team. Definitely worth a visit!**



5 parc d'activités, Saint-André  
Tel: 04 68 61 92 93

## LA BRASSERIE

Stade Gilbert Brutus...with Paul



Can highly recommend **"La brasserie"** at **Stade Gilbert Brutus**, home of the Catalans dragons. Managed by the ex dragons player, **Julien Touxegas** who previously had the excellent restaurant in Perpignan town centre, **Le patio de la loge, the food is as excellent as ever with the weekly menu at only 18€** and the wine prices very reasonable. Very nicely appointed restaurant and all set against an agreeable backdrop of an iconic stadium. **Can't recommend highly enough.**

Stade Gilbert Brutus, Perpignan  
Tel: +33 6 28 80 37 91

## POINT D'ART

Montbolo....with Alison

Last night we spent a really super evening here and thoroughly recommend a visit. **Under new management since 1st July**, we sat outside on their newly expanded terrace and **enjoyed a superb dinner, full of fresh local ingredients both delicious and beautifully presented.** The charming hostess (who happily chats away in **English if required**) even offered my daughter and me lightweight blankets in case we felt a chill. **A real hidden gem.**



8 rue de l'église, Montbolo  
Tel: 04 68 68 76 85

## OVER THE BORDER

## CAP BEA

Llança...with Kate and Olivier

You don't need to be an old sea dog to eat on the port at the Capitainerie in Spain. **The one in Llança is contemporary, bright and roomy, has panoramic views across the port from its wrap-round terrace,** and as you would expect from its position next to the fish market, **specialises in seafood and fish.** Olivier had Prawn Tartar which he raved about, I had a perfect moules frites and there are loads of other exciting sounding fishy dishes, all reasonably priced for what they are. **Not feeling fishy?** Hailing from Toulouse, their signature non-fishy-dish is Cassoulet. If not, a cote de boeuf should do the trick.

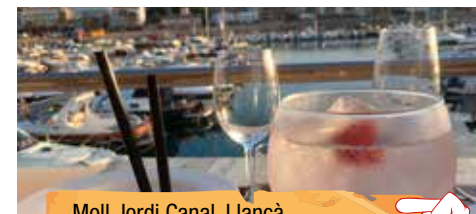
## LA TABLE DE MAI LY

Ille-Sur-Têt....with Lesley Anne



Hands down **the best Vietnamese food that we have ever eaten here and we visited for over 20 years before moving here.** Not a buffet, but a proper sit-and-enjoy-being-looked-after place. **Delicious food, freshly made, so expect to wait, especially if it's busy.** Nems au porc (best anywhere), rouleau aux printemps (again best we've eaten), the chicken curry with coconut milk and any of the rice dishes are all delicious. My top tip, before or after lunch, is to **drive out of Ille up the mountain road where you'll get a spectacular view of Les Orgues**, continue to the high point then **take the back way down to Lake Vinca. You won't be disappointed.**

129 Avenue Pasteur, Ille-sur-Têt  
Tel: 06 25 35 09 50



Moll Jordi Canal, Llança  
Tel: +34 972 380 517

**Vegetarians can try a Seasonal vegetable Wok** and fresh herbs and there might be other veggie options - I can't quite remember because the mojitos were excellent and rather strong....I recommend this restaurant, their lovely, friendly staff and Llança itself as a great day out.





# Ideas for EATING OUT IN...

It's been another difficult year for our local restaurants. Nobody is quite sure what autumn will bring, so enjoy them while you can! We have **suggestions here 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!**

## ...MONT LOUIS

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

## ...PERPIGNAN

**Frida's** .....06 16 97 10 29  
Vegan Cuisine.....Bookings recommended

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

**Les Ateliers** .....04 68 55 04 67  
chemin de la Fauceille.....Restaurant, bar and tapas

## ...PORT- VENDRES

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

## ...REGIONAL

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**El Celler Iberic**, Village .....04 68 61 92 93  
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## ...SAINT CYPRIEN

**Le Pub à la française**, Village.....07 86 68 60 33  
Tapas, breakfast, music nights, etc.....f: lepubalafrancaise/

**Kim Long**, Kim Long, St Cyprien Plage .....04 68 55 15 89  
Open all year .....f: restaurant-Kim-Long

## ...SAINT GENIS-DES-FONTAINES

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

## ...SOREDE

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## ...THUIR

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www.arbequina-restaurant.com ..... f: ArbequinaRestaurant

## ...BANYULS-SUR-MER

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

**Le Fanal**.....04 68 98 65 88  
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## ...CÉRET

**Bella Pizza**.....04 68 87 70 26  
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**Quattrocento**.....04 68 87 15 60  
www.lequattrocento.net.....Open 7/7 all year round

## ...COLLIOURE

**La Cave à Fédé**.....04 68 37 80 66  
Terrace bar, wine by the glass.....www.cave-fefe-collioure.com

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# Ideas for EATING OUT

## DID YOU KNOW

### HORS D'OEUVRES

Literally meaning "outside the works", hors d'oeuvres was originally an architectural term for an outbuilding which was not part of the architect's main design. The phrase was 'borrowed' by French chefs to describe appetizers served outside the main design of the meal.



## THE PHARAOHS - FUN GUYS?

If you're going mushroom gathering this autumn you might be interested to know that according to ancient hieroglyphics, the Ancient Egyptians believed mushrooms to be the plant of immortality. In fact, they were such a hit with the pharaohs that common people were banned from touching or eating them.

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# ideas for EATING OUT

25TH NOVEMBER

## LA SAINTE CATHERINE

Rarely observed today, but in the past, unmarried ladies over 25 known as 'Catherinettes', wore outrageous and eccentric hats all day, for all to see and wish them a speedy end to their single lives on this **Feast of Saint Catherine**, patron saint of young unmarried women. 'Capping Saint Catherine' (coiffer Sainte Catherine) became synonymous with still being single after this ripe old age. Before reaching 25, a girl would pray for a 'mari de bon lieu!' (a well-situated husband). After 25, she would pray for a husband who was 'supportable, ou qui, parmi le monde, au moins puisse passer!' (bearable, or who can at least pass as bearable), and approaching 30 would pray for 'Un tel qu'il te plaira Seigneur, je m'en contente!' (Send anyone Lord; I'll take it!). As women's status changed in society, so the tradition more or less died out, but parades of ladies wearing striking and outlandish hats can still be seen on 25th November. Not a public holiday, just a bit of fun!



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📍 Anse Gerbal - La Criée, 66660 Port-Vendres



OUT <sup>for</sup> THE DAY

# ... at SANT PERE DE RODES

Above the pretty white fishing town of Port de la Selva, less than an hour's drive from the French/Spanish border, stands the Benedictine monastery of Sant Pere de Rodes constructed into the side of the Verdera mountain.

The views from the monastery are superb, stretching over the bay of Llançà, to the Cap de Creus and Cerbère in France.

Make a circuit of it by **driving the coast road from the Côte Vermeille, via Banyuls, Cerbère Port Bou and Llança, to Port de la Selva, and returning to France via Figueres.**



Walkers can reach the monastery via the **GR10**, from the **campsite at Port de la Selva** (approx 2hrs there and back) but there is easy access by car on a good but winding road for the less energetic. **Out of season, the road is little used**, a pleasure for cyclists who want to give the calves a bit of a work out - or a fabulous, **fun climb on an electric bike...** but keep those hands on the brakes on the way down unless you're an adrenaline junky!



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Above the monastery, a further twenty minutes steep climb brings you to the **ruined castle of Saint Salvador de Verdera**, built to provide protection for the monastery. **The views over the Bay of Roses and the whole of the Cap Creus are breathtaking.**

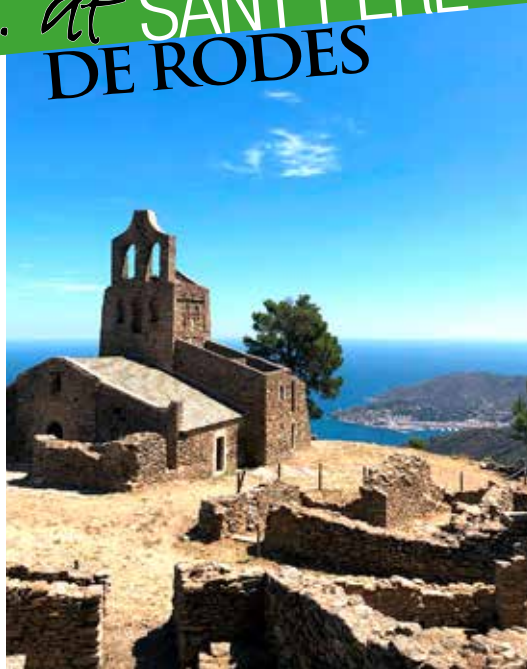
Constructed by the **Benedictines between 979 and 1022**, the monastery was sacked and abandoned in the eighteenth century. Its most important treasure, an illustrated bible, is now in the Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris.

The church with its soaring columns and intricate carving on the capitals is both grand and peaceful. **Visit the impressive bell tower, lookout tower and church all dating from the XII century remain.**

A pot pourri of legend surrounds its creation. Some say when **Rome was threatened by Barbarians**, **Pope Boniface IV** ordered the Church's most powerful relics – including the **head and right arm of St. Peter** – to be hidden in a cave in this remote Cape for safe-keeping. When the danger had passed the relics couldn't be found.

**A monastery was duly built on the site and dedicated to St Peter (Pere in Catalan).**

**Entry** however, will not cost you an arm and a head. **It's around 9 euros** with and **there is a café-restaurant if you wish to stay for lunch.**  
**Have a lovely day.**



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## SPOT THE CUSTOMS OFFICIAL

Don't forget that the col d'Ouillat and Pic Neoulous (turn left just before Le Perthus) make a wonderful panoramic autumn picnic and BBQ spot. While you're there, look out for 'La Reyne de las Founs' - man made rock formation surrounding a source coming out of the mountain, forming a pretty waterfall and stream. Inscribed with 'les douaniers ici trouvent souvent ce qu'ils cherchent' it was used by smugglers to indicate, via cleverly coded pebble formations, where the customs officials were and how many were about!



## LET'S TORK CORK: Diam Bouchage

Cork can provide insulation material, fishing floats, insoles for shoes, fishing rod grips, notice boards, flooring, gaskets and washers – and, of course, stoppers for wine and champagne bottles. An important industry in the Vallespir since the 1930's, cork production was in decline until Céret-based company Diam Bouchage developed a revolutionary patented process enabling them to manufacture a new style of cork

This year, Diam Bouchage will invest 3.5 million euros and increase its annual production to 900 million units - that's a lot of wine bottle stoppers!



## PALALDA AND ST ROSAIRE

Every October, Palalda's 'Chapelle du Rosaire' celebrates the Fête du Rosaire with a programme of songs, traditional dancing, prayers and concerts. In 1571 Christian troops provided by the Vatican overcame a Turkish armada in the entrance to the Corinth gulf. The Pope at the time, Grégoire XIII, attributed this victory to the daily processions of St Rosaire brotherhoods who promoted the rosary in the streets of Rome. He promptly changed his planned 'Victory Day' to 'St Rosaire day', to be celebrated on the 7th October. The celebration continues to this day, with special masses held in St Rosaire sanctuaries all over the world.





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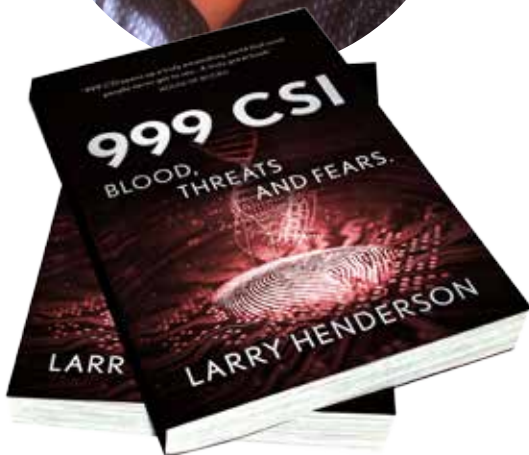


INSULATION



## 999 CSI: Blood, THREATS and FEARS

BY BY LARRY HENDERSON



I am an avid reader of P-O Life and have been associated with Argelès-sur-Mer since 1969, and a mobile homeowner since 1981. I retired some time ago from my career as a Scenes of Crime Officer, Specialist Operations, New Scotland Yard, with my final position being Head of the Met Police Flying Squads Forensic Team. I used our Argelès home as a retreat, and following retirement wrote the book "999 CSI", an account of my twenty-three years service.

**My life was very different in August 1969**, when I first set out for Argelès with my wife of 18 months, Jennifer and our neighbours in their Morris Minor Traveller on a holiday that would completely change our lives. Our destination: **a 2\* campsite in Argelès called Clos Joli, today residential flats.**

After a two-day drive in blistering heat, we arrived to **find reception closed for the day. It was Sunday!** Our fourteen-foot caravan comprised one tiny bedroom with pull-out double bed, the fridge was a polystyrene box filled daily with a block of ice, and we needed a franc every morning for a hot shower!

Many more trips followed with our children, until we finally bought a mobile home at **Camping L'Etoile d'Or in Argelès** for three thousand pounds.

The armed guard patrolling the site was somewhat intimidating, particularly when our two young sons insisted on pointing their pistols at him. Some years later I would be facing armed robbers, armed drugs dealers, and experience a colleague being shot during a covert operation.

Over the years, our social life on site increased and now we have many life-long friends.



Weapons and forged banknotes recovered during an operation

As a Scenes of Crime Officer, I worked long hours, weekends, on call 24/7. The sights I experienced to most would be disturbing and frightening so **our holidays in Argelès were a welcome break.**

**My career covered twenty-three years at New Scotland Yard**, and after a forced retirement through injury, **we spent extended time in Argelès. Time to reflect on experiences working in Belgravia in the 70's**, the Lord Lucan mystery, meeting Ava Gardener, Tony Curtis, Christine Keeler, visiting embassies and learning their protocols.



Christine Keeler & Mandy Rice-Davies [examined Mandie's flat in Knightsbridge]

The world was particularly interested in the Lucan murder and it still mystifies people today. **One of my tasks was to accompany the senior investigating officers, taking prints to eliminate fingerprints found at the murder scene.** Lucan's friends and inner circle were not very helpful!

Rotation to suburbia followed, discovering what went on behind closed doors – a housewife murdered following a domestic argument, rolled up in a carpet, a husband poisoned by cyanide, the pathologist disagreeing, and dirty tricks that cost me promotion.



Operation Emerge. Larry worked alongside the SAS to seize a 300-ton ship carrying £200million of cocaine. Thirty-year sentences were given to two of those involved.

Inner London saw my first drugs raid followed by many more, then riots we all remember, and back to Central London with my own team of **SOCO's to investigate an eclectic mix of crimes, including 'Threats to Kill' government ministers, and others of higher office.**

The height of my responsibility and the greatest challenge was being appointed Head of the famous Met Police Flying Squad, known as **"The Sweeney"** to many though the term was never used within the Squad.

Flying Squad Officers faced armed, dangerous, experienced villains, not a job for the faint hearted. My team and I were civilians supporting police colleagues at the height of the Squad's busiest period of all time, the early nineties. A one hundred hour plus working week was more the norm than the exception.

> ...



## 999 CSI: Blood, and THREATS FEARS



Before my injury, we worked with almost all the specialist squads at the Yard including the Tactical Firearms Unit, military, customs, security service, Regional Crime Squad, Drugs Squad, and Post Office Investigation.



My team also had a presence on Scotland Yard's Central Drugs Squad, and later the South East London Regional Crime Squad supporting their investigations of blackmail, kidnapping, counterfeit currency, and gun running. Armed confrontations, high profile drugs raids were a daily occurrence, and armed covert operations, almost as frequent. This was forensic and fingerprint examination at the sharp end of policing.

Personal experience pre-squad involved the investigation of murders, rapes and every type of crime imaginable, including the discovery of the possible remains of a missing woman – resulting in life threatening consequences for me, and a ghost that visited a bedroom and liked TV.

A lot to reflect on, I wrote about these experiences in the shade of the sprawling oak tree on our emplacement in Argelès, opposite our modern mobile home which is now akin to a bungalow. I relax with a glass of Sauvignon blanc reading P-O Life under that same oak tree until I am aware of a presence and the words, "C'mon Grandad play duckies with me," a game of fishing ducks out of a small paddling pool. **This is real pressure and a delightful change!**

To find out how to buy this book and many others reviewed by P-O Life readers, visit our website at [www.anglophone-direct.com/bookclub](http://www.anglophone-direct.com/bookclub)

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# CHRISTMAS

## Gift ideas



Oh là là! It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas! This year has been hard on everybody. Time to spread a little kindness and goodwill - and why not say it 'à la Catalane'? Please buy local if you can.

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# P-O Life Festivals and TRADITIONS

## BANK HOLIDAYS (Vours Fériés)

### 1st November

#### LA TOUSSAINT (ALL SAINTS DAY)

Created by the Catholic Church to honour saints and martyrs who had no holy day of their own, it was also believed to be an attempt by the church to detract attention from the Celtic, Pagan celebration of Samhain, (pronounced sow-in), born in the British Isles, later to become Halloween. Cemeteries are busy this weekend of remembrance and **chrysanthemums are on sale on every street corner**. Don't offer them to your hostess when invited out for dinner! They are for the dead!

#### CASTANYADA OR FÊTE DE LA CHÂTAIGNE

All Saints' Day and the evening before are also known as the **Castanyada or Day of the Chestnut**. Traditionally, 'castanyes' (roast chestnuts) are eaten along with 'moniatos' (roast sweet potatoes) and 'panellets' (small almond balls covered in pine nuts). **Most shops closed.**



## It aint over til the fat lady sings!

If you think the end of the summer season brings a curtain down on outdoor frolics in the P-O, you must be lost in France! **In fact, summer fun is fine, but autumn entertainment is awesome**, with fairs and festivals around the region, little and large, celebrating every imaginable 'produit de terroir', animal, vegetable and mineral. Potatoes, olives, wine (bien sûr) chocolate,



**DON'T FORGET TO TURN  
YOUR CLOCKS BACK.**

**Sunday October 31st 2021**  
(clocks go back one hour during the night of Saturday/Sunday morning)

### 11th November

#### ARMISTICE OF WW1 (1918).

The armistice of 11 November 1918 marked Germany's surrender and the end of the First World War. The date has become a day of remembrance to pay tribute to all soldiers. **Flowers are placed on the tomb of the 'soldat inconnu' (Unknown Soldier) beneath the Arc de Triomphe in Paris and other war memorials. Most shops closed.**

## TRICK OR TREAT!

#### TRICK OR TREAT?

'Des bonbons ou une farce' is one way to beg for sweets on Hallo' eve, 'friandises ou bêtises' is another, but as there is no literal translation, just about anything goes

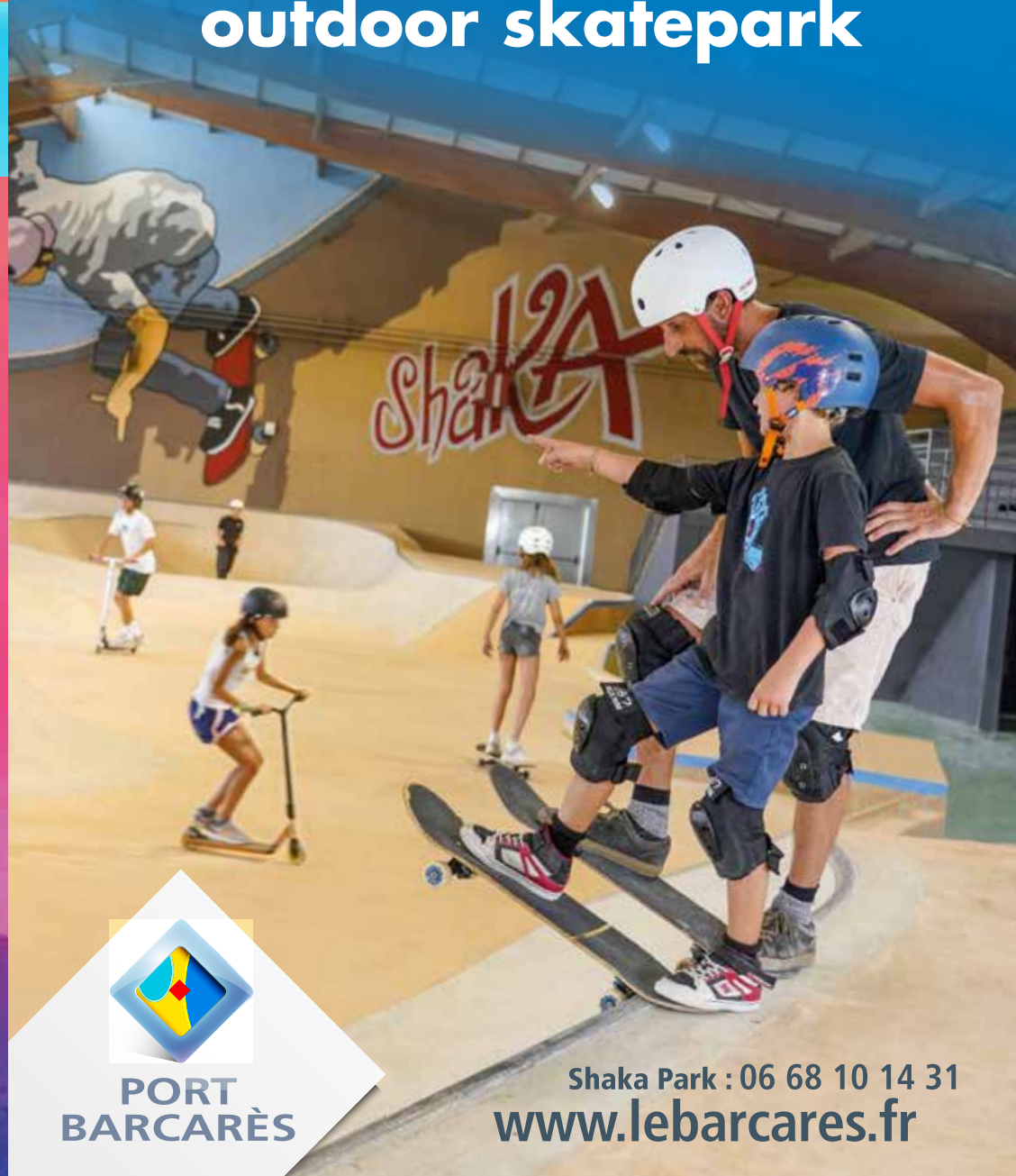
antiques, roast chestnuts, more wine, (bien sûr) witches, horses, foie gras, apples, encore du vin (bien sûr) .....

They might not all be a pulsing whirl of excitement - some are only small gatherings scantily attended - but it's a great way to support the local producers, many of whom are struggling in the present economic climate.

**Don't forget to check out your local tourist office (or visit [www.anglophone-direct.com](http://www.anglophone-direct.com)) for dates and locations.**

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**A WORD OF WARNING**  
If you are planning on booking flights, be cautious. If your destination country introduces quarantine but the flight is not cancelled, you may not get a refund, depending on the airline.



## AUTUMN/WINTER 2021-2022 by Robbie Shaw

Well what can I say, Covid-19 has wrecked so many travel plans this year – and I fear it's not over yet. Certainly it is no surprise that airline schedules are changing almost daily and many routes are being significantly reduced in frequency.

I am writing this in early September, but no doubt within a week there will be changes, so please continually check airline websites. **REMEMBER THIS FEATURE IS FOR GUIDANCE ONLY.**

The winter season starts on **Sunday 31st October till 27th March**, and as in previous years the Pyrenees-Orientales region is poorly served.

### FRANCE

#### BEZIERS

Like Carcassonne, **Ryanair** has a free run at this small airport. In the summer five routes were operated, but this has now been cut to just Luton for the winter months.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
LUTON	2	RYANAIR



#### CARCASSONNE

**Ryanair** remains the sole operator here, down from five routes in the summer to three in the winter.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
MANCHESTER	2	RYANAIR
STANSTED	2	RYANAIR
DUBLIN	2	RYANAIR

### MONTPELLIER

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
GATWICK	7	EASYJET



*En route à Perpignan, j'ai demandé à une hôtesse de l'air si je pouvais changer de siège à cause d'un bébé qui pleurait à côté de moi mais elle a dit non.  
Il s'avère que vous ne pouvez pas faire cela si le bébé est à vous.*

### PERPIGNAN

Sad news is that yet again we have a winter with no direct UK flights. Both the Birmingham and Stansted flights cease late October. I don't think Aer Lingus even managed to run their Dublin flights.



### TOULOUSE / BLAGNAC

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

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
BRISTOL	4	EASYJET
EDINBURGH	2	RYANAIR
GATWICK	11	EASYJET
HEATHROW	19	BRITISH AIRWAYS
STANSTED	7	RYANAIR
DUBLIN	3	RYANAIR







## SPAIN

### BARCELONA / EL PRAT



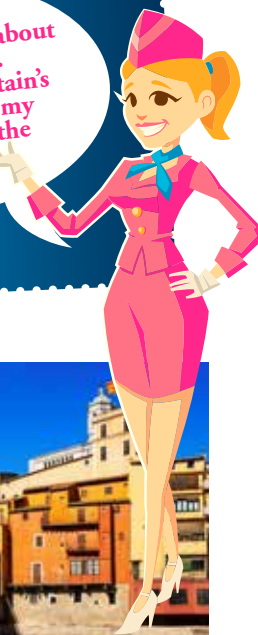
Interestingly **British Airways** have significantly **increased their London flights** here whilst **easyJet** have reduced their **Gatwick** flights. **Vueling** have increased flights from their **Barcelona** base to several other **UK airports** and **Dublin**. **easyJet** have **closed** their bases at **Newcastle, Southend and Stansted**, and therefore have dropped flights to Barcelona from those three points. There will now be on average over **200 flights per week from UK and Irish airports** – incredible – and 54 of these from Gatwick alone. .

#### FROM NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS AIRLINE

BIRMINGHAM	2	JET2 10 Feb-31 March
	5	RYANAIR
	4	VUELING
BRISTOL	10	EASYJET
EDINBURGH	6	RYANAIR
GATWICK	24	EASYJET
	30	VUELING
HEATHROW	46	BRITISH AIRWAYS
LEEDS-BRADFORD	2	JET2 Nov 4–28 & 2 Feb-31 Mar
LIVERPOOL	0-1	EASYJET
	2	RYANAIR
LUTON	6	EASYJET
	4	RYANAIR
MANCHESTER	1-3	EASYJET
	7	JET2
	5	RYANAIR
	5	VUELING
STANSTED	21	RYANAIR
DUBLIN	9	AER LINGUS
	14	RYANAIR
	4	VUELING

After a rough landing, the flight attendant comes over the speaker.

"Hi, folks! Sorry about that landing. It wasn't the captain's fault, it wasn't my fault...it was the asphalt."



## GIRONA

The winter of 2021/22 sees a big fat zero in the number of flights. **Jet2** are showing a **return to the airport from April 2022** from many UK airports.

**STOP PRESS:**  
**RYANAIR HAVE JUST ANNOUNCED**  
**FLIGHTS FROM GIRONA TO LONDON**  
**STANSTED AND DUBLIN FOR THE**  
**WINTER SEASON.**

# Estate planning in France.

## Will the right money go to the right hands at the right time?

Succession tax can be high in France and its forced heirship laws are restrictive. The European Certificate of Succession can be used to bypass French succession law (but not tax) but there are pitfalls, so explore the pros and cons. And now, France has ruled that this will not stop your children making a claim on your French assets, even if you intended otherwise.

There are other options which could achieve your wishes, but care must be taken. Contact Blevins Franks for a review of your estate planning and advice on how you can have control and certainty.

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# ALL CHANGE for Autumn

**Autumn:** Mountain and vineyard vistas turn yellow, orange, red. Rains refresh the parched land and refill our rivers. As many birds are heading south, other creatures may be reaching the end of their lives, or else preparing for leaner times, hibernation, or – in some cases – reproduction. Plant or animal, it's all change in the build-up or wind-down to winter.



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

[www.mediterraneanpyrenees.com](http://www.mediterraneanpyrenees.com)  
Twitter @66warblers



In the P-O we are usually blessed with fabulous autumns – for many people here it's their favourite season.



Canigou often gets its first dollop of snow in autumn.



Some fig trees bear next spring's fruit as this year's leaves are falling







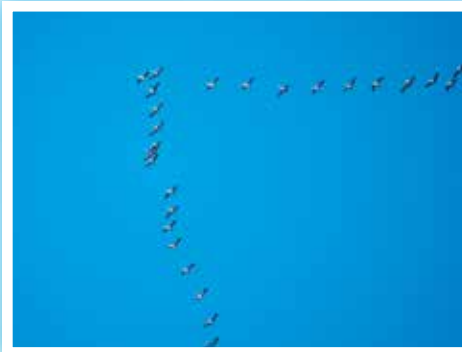
Wet spells bring out fungi, mushrooms ... and foragers.



By October, many migrant birds are already well south of the P-O. **Robins (les Rougegorges)** are among those that stay put all year. Their song is more noticeable now most other species are all but silent, and its sad, **understated notes seem to reflect the slowdown and decay of autumn.**



**Sangliers** have an easier time rooting for worms in soft autumn soil



**Cranes (les Grues)** are **late migrants, not passing through here until November.** Their unmistakable call (like a cross between a turkey and goose!) can usually be heard from some distance.

## Can't get to the P-O this year?

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## DID YOU KNOW

### A HEAVY 'BIRDEN' FOR PERPIGNAN

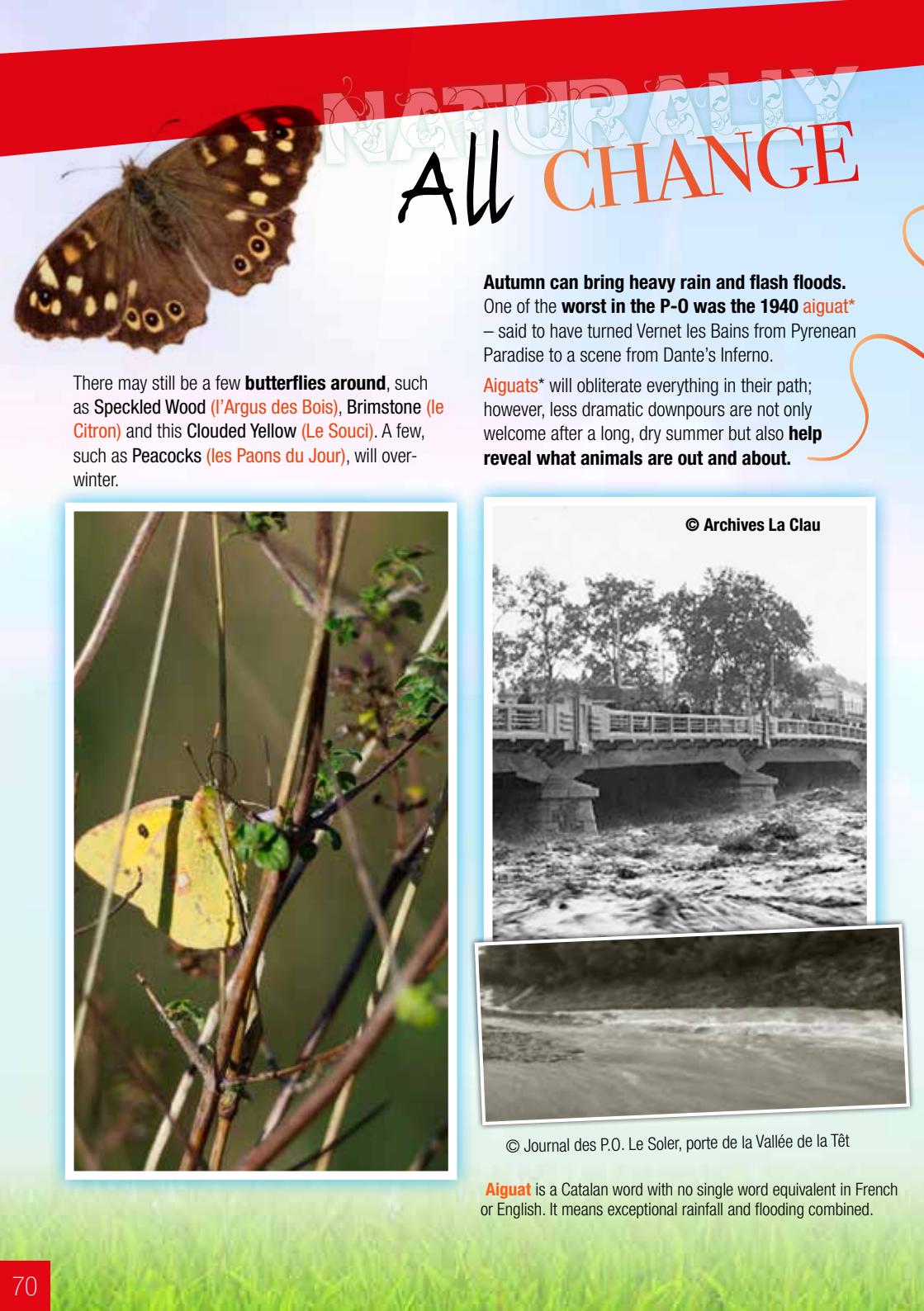
Every year, thousands of starlings, (étourneaux) on their way to Africa choose Perpignan as their ideal stop-over holiday destination. Food 'à volonté' of fruit, grapes, olives... mild climate, and well lit town with tree lined streets put our capital of Catalan culture at the very top of the starling 'Must visit' hit list.

Clouds of the feathered fiends swoop down on the fields and pillage seedlings, corn and crop. All sorts of preventative methods have been deployed, with a yearly anti-starling plan including loud speakers imitating their predators, eagles, fireworks, bright lights, cutting down of trees, and more recently a fake 'starling town' on the outskirts to tempt them out of the town centre - mostly in vain.

Agricultural menace, hygiene and health risk, (did you know that each starling produces one gramme of poo per day, according to ornithologists?), there is also the high risk of arriving in Perpignan a brunette, and returning home a blonde!!







# NATURALLY

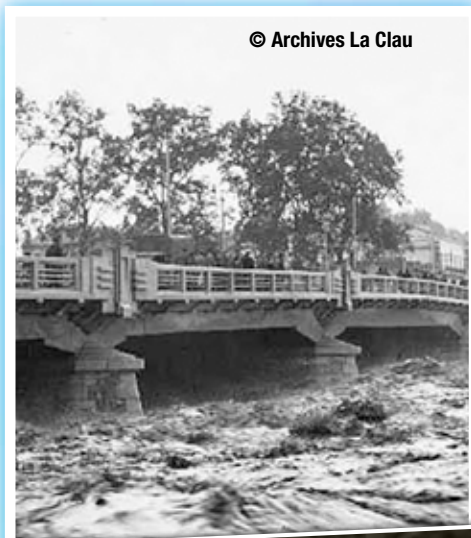
## ALL CHANGE

There may still be a few **butterflies** around, such as Speckled Wood (l'**Argus des Bois**), Brimstone (le **Citron**) and this Clouded Yellow (Le **Souci**). A few, such as Peacocks (les **Paons du Jour**), will over-winter.



**Autumn can bring heavy rain and flash floods.** One of the **worst in the P-0 was the 1940 aiguat\*** – said to have turned Vernet les Bains from Pyrenean Paradise to a scene from Dante's Inferno.

**Aiguats\*** will obliterate everything in their path; however, less dramatic downpours are not only welcome after a long, dry summer but also **help reveal what animals are out and about.**



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© Journal des P.O. Le Soler, porte de la Vallée de la Têt

**Aiguat** is a Catalan word with no single word equivalent in French or English. It means exceptional rainfall and flooding combined.



Coypu (le Ragondin)



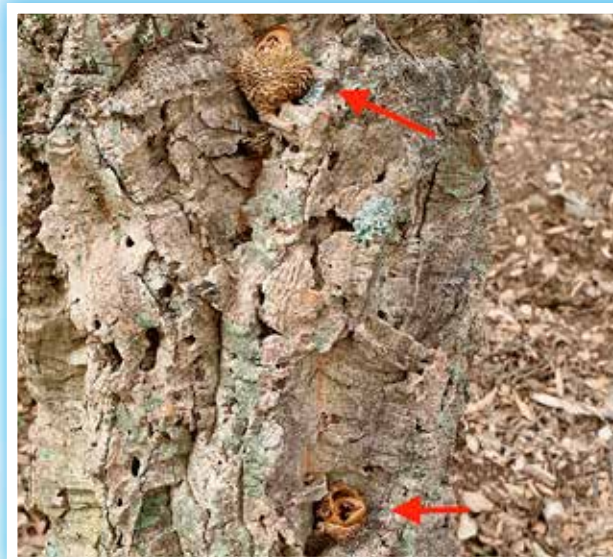
Badger (le Blaireau)



Otter – maybe (la loutre)

There may be fewer birds and animals around to observe in autumn but a **closer look at certain**

**trees** and the ground around them **can show signs of activity.**



**Nuthatches (les Sittelles de Torche-pot) AND/OR woodpeckers (les Pics)** have wedged acorns in cork crevices to get to those soft centres.



Right: Holes in conifers mark where **woodpeckers** have drilled to extract insects & grubs.

**Squirrels** have been feasting on pinecones.



# LEST we FORGET

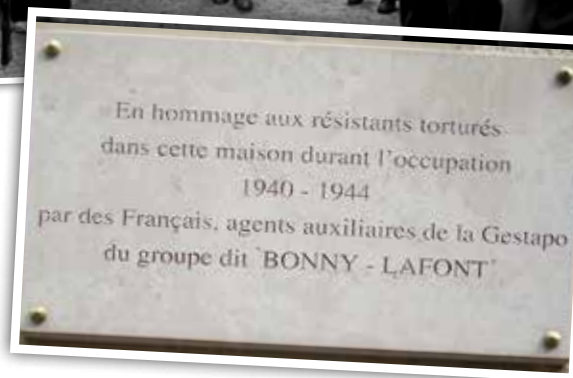
## WW2 FRANCE DURING THE OCCUPATION



Life was **not easy** in WW2 occupied France. Most of the population kept their heads down and waited for liberation, often turning a blind eye to atrocities committed by the Nazis - undoubtedly the safest course of action. Easy to judge. I wonder what we would have done in their place?

Sadly, collaboration was more widespread than romantic accounts of French resistance would have us believe. When **de Gaulle broadcast on the BBC in 1940** inviting French soldiers, sailors, airmen and technicians to resist, to come to London and join the Free French, **very few** heeded his call.

In fact, it has been calculated that, among the French, **only about 2 per cent** became involved in resistance activity, and at least **1 per cent** actively collaborated with the Germans.



### LA CARLINGUE

Everybody has heard of the deadly and hated Gestapo, the secret police of Nazi Germany, and the terror and atrocities they inflicted during WW2 – **but not everybody knows about the Carlingue, who terrorised their own people!**

Unsurprisingly, it's not a subject of national pride!

**Known also as the French Gestapo, the Carlingue** worked in collaboration with the German Gestapo during the occupation.

**Based at 93 rue Lauriston** in the 16th arrondissement of Paris and directed by SS officer Hesse, **this group of thugs, gangsters and professional criminals was founded by corrupt ex-policeman Pierre Bonny**. They were often known as the **Bonny-Lafont group**, after their two most prominent members, Bonny and former small time criminal, Henri Lafont.

When the Germans launched a recruitment drive for 2,000 auxiliary policeman in their service, they apparently received no fewer than 6,000 candidates.

**Many of the Carlingue were recruited from prisons and the underworld of French society.**

The name carlingue, meaning body of an aircraft, was chosen to indicate a strong group with a solid structure.

**Under the occupation**, equipped with a German IDs, **they were untouchable**, engaging in racketeering, the black market and prostitution, as well as their 'official' duties of rounding up Jews, providing intelligence and conducting operations against the Maquis, the French resistance, who were more likely to share information with their own countrymen.

**They are said to have worked closely with infamous French doctor and serial killer Marcel Petiot** whose home was near Carlingue headquarters. He is believed to have helped them dispose of inconvenient bodies.

After la liberation in 1944, many were caught, tried and condemned to death. Others went into hiding and evaded capture.

A 2004 Telefilm **'93, rue Lauriston'** was loosely based on the Carlingue, featuring Lafont and Bonny.







## LA MILICE

Another feared **French collaboration group** was **La Milice**, pro-Nazi French militia set up by the Vichy Government under Petain **to fight 'terrorists', otherwise known as the Resistance.**

This extreme fascist police group, answerable to **Prime Minister Pierre Laval**, was even more feared than the Gestapo, **their mission to round up Jews and résistants for deportation, torturing and murdering their way throughout France.** Often local men, their knowledge of the local area was invaluable to the Nazis, making them a particularly dangerous opponent to the French Resistance.

Guilty of the murder and torture of thousands of men and women of the resistance, and responsible for the arrest, deportation and death of many thousands of Jews, the **Gestapo appealed to their greed by allowing them to keep large parts of valuables confiscated from their Jewish victims.**

Incentives for joining the Milice included employment, regular pay and rations, so it appealed to the unemployed as well as the far right.

**Milice volunteers were also exempt from transportation to Germany as forced labour**

**Paul Touvier**, one of the most high-profile members of the Milice, **escaped and was not brought to justice until 1989.** He was the first Frenchman ever convicted of crimes against humanity,

The film **'The Statement'** with **Michael Caine**, loosely based on Touvier's life, portrays Touvier, (renamed Pierre Brossard for the film), as an ageing, whiny and self-pitying man on the run.



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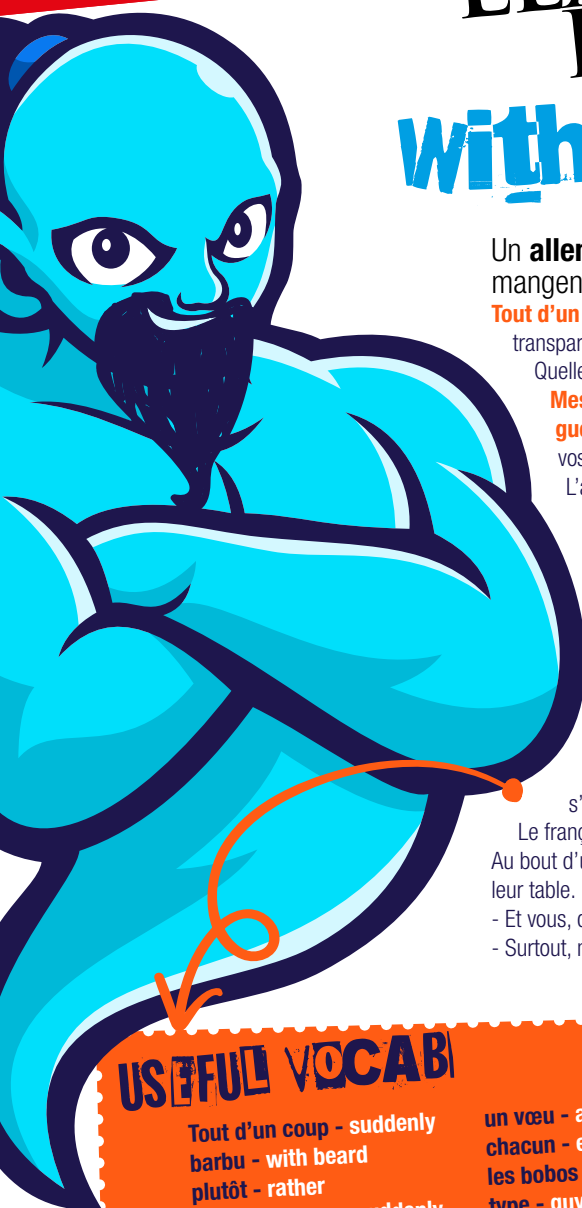
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# LEARN FRENCH with a smile



Un **allemand**, un **anglais** et un **français** mangent ensemble dans un restaurant.

**Tout d'un coup**, un homme bizarre, **barbu** et **plutôt** bleu et transparent, **surgit** de sous la table d'à côté.

Quelle chance. C'est un génie!

**Messieurs**, je suis le génie de la santé. Je peux vous **guérir**. **Vous avez droit à un vœu** chacun pour guérir vos **bobos**.

L'allemand se lève en premier, s'approche du **type** et dit:  
- Quelle chance! **En effet**, j'ai un terrible mal de tête...

Le génie clique ses **doigts**, **tend** la main, et guérit son mal de tête.

**Epoustoufflé**, l'allemand revient à sa table et raconte **ce qui s'est passé**. L'anglais se lève **à son tour** et va voir le génie:

- You are so kind. J'ai un horrible mal au cou.

Le génie clique ses doigts, tend la main, et guérit son rhumatisme.

**Médusé**, l'anglais revient à sa table et raconte ce qui s'est passé.

Le français ne bouge pas.

Au bout d'un moment, le génie se lève à son tour et s'approche de leur table.

- Et vous, dit-il au Français, vous n'avez mal **nulle part**?

- Surtout, ne me touchez pas! Je suis **en arrêt maladie**!

## USEFUL VOCAB

Tout d'un coup - suddenly  
barbu - with beard  
plutôt - rather  
surgit - appears suddenly  
Messieurs - gentlemen  
guérir - heal  
Vous avez droit - you're allowed

un vœu - a wish  
chacun - each  
les bobos - minor injuries  
type - guy  
En effet -  
As a matter of fact...  
doigts - fingers  
tend - hold out

époustoufflé - astounded  
ce qui s'est passé - what happened  
à son tour - it's his turn  
médusé - stunned  
nulle part - nowhere  
en arrêt maladie - signed off sick!

## DID YOU KNOW



### LE BLEUËT DE FRANCE

The poppy is a powerful and iconic symbol of remembrance in the UK, but did you know that the French have an equivalent, 'Le Bleuët de France', their own poignant reminder of the First World War? In 'flowerspeak', the 'Bleuët' or cornflower symbolises delicacy and innocence. It used to grow abundantly in France, and, like the poppy, was often the only sign of life, and colour amidst the mud and desolation of WW1. It was also used to describe fresh, young soldiers of WW1, whose bright blue uniforms initially stood out in sharp contrast to the grey and muddy misery of the trenches.

## DID YOU KNOW

### ORIGINS OF BONFIRE

Whilst it would be understandable to assume that the word 'bonfire' comes from the French, and describes sitting around a reet good fire, the word actually originates from 'bone fire', and describes the Celtic practice of burning animal bones to ward off evil spirits, and possibly to provide fuel. An occasional heretic is believed to have been chucked onto these fires too.



## DID YOU KNOW

### EL CAGANER

The bare bottomed bounder



The traditional Christmas nativity scene or 'pessebre', is still very much alive and kicking in Catalonia... but what every Catalan child is really looking for is that bare bottomed bounder, the 'caganer'. A popular and much

loved Catalan Christmas

figure, this small statue, originally of a pooping peasant wearing traditional floppy red Catalan cap (barretina), crouches with trousers half down, in a 'toilet' position, making his small contribution to the land. Often hidden behind a tree, or round the back of the stable, the fun is to find the cheeky chappie, symbol of fertility, hope and prosperity, health and happiness for the coming year. Some say that this uninhibited little figure is 'fertilising' the land to ensure a rich and successful harvest, others that he represents equality, in that we are all equal when it comes to biological functions.

All agree that he or she symbolises good luck for the coming year and after the past couple of years we all need a bit of that!





Répétez trois fois

Son chat Sacha sait chanter sa chanson

# Test your FRENCH

See Page 86 for answers

1

## E pour Elle!

Match up the words, all beginning with EC, with their definitions (Why not try to work them out first just from the definitions?)

- |             |    |   |   |
|-------------|----|---|---|
| écharde     | 1  | a | petite quantité pour essayer                    |
| écharpe     | 2  | b | crustacé avec deux pinces                       |
| écluse      | 3  | c | deux barres verticales reliées par des barreaux |
| écrevisse   | 4  | d | jeu avec 32 pièces                              |
| écureuil    | 5  | e | zigzags de lumière dans le ciel                 |
| échafaudage | 6  | f | tout petit morceau de bois                      |
| échec       | 7  | g | petit mammifère rongeur rouge ou gris           |
| échelle     | 8  | h | longue bande de laine ou de tissu               |
| éclair      | 9  | i | porte sur un canal pour régler le niveau d'eau  |
| échantillon | 10 | j | construction de barres et de planches           |

## FUN WORD

**Pétaouchnok** –  
the middle of nowhere

Eg J'ai une réunion cette semaine à Pétaouchnok

## Useful Expression

Du coup... (fam)  
So, you know (donc, alors...)

Eg Du coup, tu peux passer me prendre demain ou non?

So, can you come and pick me up tomorrow or not?

## Incredibly bad garlic jokes

Qu'est-ce que ça fait quand une gousse d'ail est malade ?

De l'ail au lit

Comment appelle-t-on une gousse d'ail qui rebondit contre le mur?

Le retour du jet d'ail.

2

## Making a Pass

Avez-vous votre pass sanitaire?

Passer means much more than 'to pass' in French and is used in many idiomatic expressions. For example, if you 'passe' an exam, you don't necessarily pass! Can you find the English equivalent for these French phrases which all use the verb 'passer'?

- |                                |    |   |                                      |
|--------------------------------|----|---|--------------------------------------|
| Un ange passe                  | 1  | a | The worst is over                    |
| Je ne sais pas ce qui se passe | 2  | b | A pass (for entry)                   |
| Un laisser-passer              | 3  | c | It will all work out                 |
| On passe à l'heure d'été/hiver | 4  | d | A brothel                            |
| Il passe du coq à l'âne        | 5  | e | He's going to take his driving test  |
| et j'en passe!                 | 6  | f | an awkward silence                   |
| Ca va bien se passer           | 7  | g | we turn the clocks forward/back      |
| Une maison de passe            | 8  | h | and that's not all!                  |
| Il va passer son permis        | 9  | i | he jumps from one subject to another |
| Le plus dur est passé          | 10 | j | I don't know what's going on         |

3

## How much do you know about walking?

Use the vocab below to fill in the gaps.

**LA RANDONNÉE.....(hiking/walking)**

- 1 ..... le système immunitaire
- 2 ..... les risques cardio-vasculaires
- 3 ..... contre le surpoids et l'obésité
- 4 ..... le moral
- 5 ..... les sens

a lutte b renforce c éveille d remonte e limite

**Useful Expression**  
Il nous fait de l'ombre  
He's showing us up

## UN VER VERT VERSE UN VERRE VERS MIDI

Confused? You soon will be! All these words sound the same but their spelling and meaning are different.

Un verre - a glass

Vert - green

Un ver - a worm

Vers - towards

Un vers - a verse

(Verser - to pour)

## VARY YOUR LANGUAGE!

Don't tell your partner (s) he is 'gros/grosse'  
Tell him/her (s) he is..

bouboule, corpulent, dodu  
empâté, fort, gras, grassouillet  
mastoc, potelé, patapouf,  
rondelet, bien enrobé





# LANGUAGE

## Test your FRENCH

4

Language learning is rarely black and white.  
Can you identify these idioms 'en noir et blanc'?

- |                                    |    |   |  |
|------------------------------------|----|---|--|
| Travail au noir                    | 1  | a | to go through rough patch                |
| De but en blanc                    | 2  | b | to identify oneself                      |
| Faire chou blanc                   | 3  | c | black eye                                |
| Un oeil au beurre noir             | 4  | d | stabbed                                  |
| C'est bonnet blanc et blanc bonnet | 5  | e | pet hate                                 |
| Une bête noire                     | 6  | f | to come away empty handed                |
| Montrer patte blanche              | 7  | g | undeclared work                          |
| Manger son pain noir               | 8  | h | six of one and half a dozen of the other |
| Blessé à l'arme blanche            | 9  | i | very crowded                             |
| Noir de monde                      | 10 | j | straight to the point                    |



### LANGUAGE TIP

**To visit ... people**

**Aller voir**

Je vais voir ma copine

**rendre visite à....**

Je rends visite à mon frère.

**To visit... places**

**visiter**

Voulez vous visiter ma nouvelle maison?



### GREAT WORD

Flipper - to freak out  
eg J'ai flippé!

### USEFUL EXPRESSIONS

Parler de la pluie et du beau temps  
To make small talk

**J'arrive**

I'm on my way/I'll be there soon

**À la limite....**

If the worst comes to the worst, at the end of the day...

Your teeth  
don't need glasses!



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# LANGUAGE



**Tongue twister  
(virelangue)**

**Repeat quickly x 3**

**A tricky, frisky  
snake with sixty  
super scaly  
stripes.**

## Blague Bête

**How do you tell the gender of a table?  
Look between its legs!**

**Why did Shakespeare only write with pens?  
Because pencils confused him  
2B or not 2B**

**BON CONSEIL**  
**Never take a sleeping pill and a  
laxative on the same night.**



# Améliorez votre ANGLAIS

See Page 86 for answers



## I is for Idea and J is for Jelly

**Trouvez la définition des mots suivants qui  
commencent tous avec les lettres I ou J**

- |           |                                     |
|-----------|-------------------------------------|
| ice 1     | a Sweet covering for cakes          |
| ill 2     | b Coloured liquid for writing       |
| ink 3     | c Soft food that shakes             |
| jog 4     | d Frozen water                      |
| journey 5 | e Something to make you smile       |
| in-laws 6 | f Travel from one place to another. |
| joke 7    | g To run slowly                     |
| icing 8   | h Pointed stick of ice              |
| jelly 9   | i Your husband or wife's parents    |
| icicle 10 | j Not well                          |

## Just for Spanish speakers....

**What if soy milk is just regular milk  
introducing itself in Spanish!**

**2**

## Complétez les idiomes ou proverbes

- Two wrongs... (on ne guérit pas le mal avec le mal)
- The world is... (le monde t'appartient)
- Like a bull... (maladroite)
- Beggars can't... (faute de grives, on mange des merles)
- Practice ... (C'est en forgeant que l'on devient forgeron)
- And pigs... (Quand les poules auront des dents)
- Hold your ... (Attendez, calmed-sous...)

- |                        |                   |                  |
|------------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| a...in a china shop    | d...be choosers   | g....not as I do |
| b...don't make a right | e...horses        | h...will fly     |
| c...your oyster        | f...makes perfect |                  |

**PHRASE UTILE**  
**I'm all right Jack**

**Ça va pour moi et tant pis  
pour les autres)**

**FUN WORD**  
**I am flabbergasted**  
**Je suis époustoufflé**

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*Mr. G*

• Excellente agence, des personnes dynamiques et professionnelles. Ma maison vendue en quelques semaines. Merci, je recommande Artaxa.  
*Mr. R*

• À recommander vivement ! Pour la prochaine il n'y a aucun doute que l'on s'allouera les services d'Artaxa!  
*Mr. D*

• Artaxa went over and above the normal estate agency remit to help us sell our house. I highly recommend their professionalism.  
*Mr. S*



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and at our Book Exchange at

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10h30 to 12 noon,  
Third Monday of the month





# LANGUAGE

## Améliorez votre ANGLAIS



Les expressions ci dessous sont liées par 'and'. Pouvez vous trouver les bonnes paires suivies par leur sens?

- |                  |          |                        |
|------------------|----------|------------------------|
| 1 prim and.....  | a out    | F le pour et le contre |
| 2 pros and.....  | b ends   | G guindé               |
| 3 down and ..... | c cons   | H sans moyens          |
| 4 to and.....    | d proper | I va et vient          |
| 5 odds and.....  | e fro    | J bric-à-brac          |

What do you call a deer with no eyes?  
No idea (think hard – this is l'humour anglais!!)

### TAKE A BREAK!

to break =  
casser MAIS....

to break down =  
tomber en panne

to break in =  
entrer par infraction

to break up =  
rompre

- |                         |      |                              |
|-------------------------|------|------------------------------|
| Gimme a break!          | 1 a  | Difficile d'arrêter          |
| Break a leg             | 2 b  | Bonne chance                 |
| All hell broke lose     | 3 c  | Ce fut le bordel             |
| Breaking news           | 4 d  | C'est la chance de sa vie    |
| What time is break?     | 5 e  | Respectez les règles         |
| It's his big break      | 6 f  | Qui va annoncer la nouvelle? |
| Don't break the rules   | 7 g  | Flash info                   |
| Break it up now!        | 8 h  | A quelle heure est la pause? |
| A hard habit to break   | 9 i  | Arrêtez de vous battre       |
| Who will break the news | 10 j | Laissez-moi tranquille       |

### RECENT WORDS TO ENTER THE DICTIONARY

#### Bromance

a close non-sexual friendship between men (bro + romance).

#### Scrumdiddlyumptious

delicious!



#### Warning!

Behind every angry woman...  
...is a man who has no idea what he did wrong.



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## Things You Might NEED To KNOW

### BLOODY SILLY!

Thinking of donating blood in France? Despite more than a year of pandemic which has created blood shortages in France, if you lived in Britain for one year or more between 1980 and 1996 (during the Mad Cow Crisis), your blood will be refused. Have a go at this quiz at

[www.dondesang.efs.sante.fr/puis-je-donner?](http://www.dondesang.efs.sante.fr/puis-je-donner?) quiz to find out if your blood will be accepted.



### NEED A CHEMIST OUT OF HOURS?

There will **always** be at least one chemist open on **Sundays and bank holidays in each commune**. This is called the 'pharmacie de garde' and details can usually be found on pharmacie doors, in local newspapers in hospitals and at the local police station. You can also ring 32 37 to find out the location of the nearest chemist.

but it's not a cheap call.

### NOT A GOOD WEEKEND TO POP ACROSS THE BORDER!

The 6th December is "Le Saint Nicolas" and the 8th is "l'Immaculée Conception", both of which are festival days and **bank holidays in Spain**.

Not a good weekend to pop across the border for a spot of shopping of course as **the shops will be closed and the Spanish often make a long weekend of it**.

### SNOW TYRES NOW COMPULSORY

From November 1st, 2021, snow chains or tyres will be mandatory in mountainous departments across France between November and March. This will include the Pyrenees, the Alps, the Jura, with many other areas to be confirmed.

Until now, snow chains were only legally required on roads covered in snow and marked with a road sign 'équipements spéciaux obligatoires' New signs will indicate where these new regulations start and stop.

Light commercial vehicles, as well as vans without trailer, will need 4 winter tyres or snow chains on two driving wheels.



### LANGUAGE EXERCISES ANSWERS

#### TEST your FRENCH

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

#### AMÉLIOREZ votre ANGLAIS

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



# COVID TESTS AND THE MAIDEN NAME TRAP

SEPTEMBER 2021

Covid info is ever changing and what is true today may not be true tomorrow but at the moment, **many ladies have been caught out by the Maiden Name Trap!**

Our brilliant P-O Life readers explain.

Ladies, if you're getting a PCR or antigen test for travel from France to the U.K. beware the **maiden name trap!** I lived in France for many years but am now based in the U.K. I gave my **married name for the antigen test at the pharmacie in St Génis** and waited there for the result. It was very fortunate as **I spotted that the system had recognised me from the past and the result was in my maiden name only.** I explained in the pharmacy that this wouldn't be any good at border control as we don't have our maiden name on British passports and I was sure it wouldn't pass. **The lovely pharmacy assistant wasn't sure whether she could change the name but she persisted and managed it in the end.**

JUNE

Same happened to me - **I was asked for my maiden name at the pharmacy and gave it, then realised when I got my certificate that it wasn't valid....** I've since noticed that on forms in the UK we are asked to put our family name "as it appears on your passport" whereas **French women keep their maiden name on their passport.** A thing to watch.

JANE

Going through Perpignan today I was asked to explain the difference between the name on my passport and the name on my vaccination certificate. **Fortunately, I had a copy of my birth certificate to show that.**

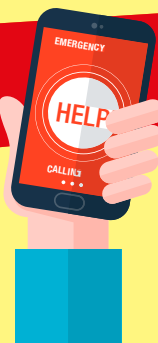
ANNE

Same situation for me, **my maiden name is used on the vaccine QR code,** however when took a flight last week no one checked my passport against the pass, although **I had copies of marriage and birth certificate with me just in case!**

ROBYN

P-O Life has researched and found a reliable test provider, Zavamed, who offer **10% off** the usual price using the promotional code **POLIFEZAVA10** when booking online at **www.zavamed.com**





# P-OLife

## Emergency numbers

**SAMU (medical emergency) 15**

**POLICE emergency 17**

**Fire service emergency 18**

**European emergency line 112**

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<b>Emergency vet</b>	<b>04 68 83 35 85</b>
<b>Anti-poison centre</b>	<b>04 91 75 25 25</b>
<b>Perpignan Hospital</b>	<b>04 68 61 66 33</b>
<b>CPAM (English spk serv)</b>	<b>09 74 75 36 46</b>
<b>Cancer Support France</b>	<b>04 68 69 01 37</b>

<b>Directory enquiries</b>	<b>118 008</b>
<b>International directory enquiries</b>	<b>118 700</b>
<b>International Mastercard</b>	<b>08 00 90 13 87</b>
<b>Local weather forecast</b>	<b>08 36 68 02 66</b>
<b>GDF (gas problems)</b>	<b>08 10 43 30 66</b>
<b>EDF (electricity problems)</b>	<b>05 56 17 40 70</b>

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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