

Winter 2021-22

P-O Life

Life in the Pyrénées-Orientales

N° 72
FREE / GRATUIT



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and bobs....

Spring's not sooooo far off now, and
despite all the doom and gloom
of Covid, **there is still loads you can
do here in the Pyrénées-Orientales
without bumping into a soul!**

Walk, cycle and picnic along the coast,
clamber around the mountains and
waterfalls, ...or just sit in a bubble in the
winter sunshine and watch the world go
by... Possibilities are endless and mostly
free!

A big thank you as always at the
beginning of a new year to all the amazing
people who have contributed to this
magazine (names credited as you read),
to those who keep our website and social
media interesting, up to date and baddy-
free, to our advertisers, without whom we
would be unable to carry the heavy print
costs - and to you, our readers, new and
old. We would be nothing without you!
**Wherever you are, whatever you're
doing, we wish you good health, warm
sunshine and a heart full of kindness
for 2022.**

Bibou

Kate

We'd love to hear from you!

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

VILLEFRANCHE
CORNEILLA



A 4h 40 mins walk with 616 metres of ascent. Route signed with yellow waymarks. Mineral mines, ruined towers, dolmens and wonderful views of Canigou throughout. Very interesting industrial and cultural heritage. Not much time to visit the pretty town of Villefranche so stay the night or come back another day.

Access: map IGN 1:25,000
Massif de Canigou 2349 ET

GETTING THERE

Take the N116 from Perpignan to Prades. Continue to Villefranche de Conflent and park in small car park near entrance to this fascinating, walled town.

Walk through town to N116 or turn right along N116 round its edge to junction with D6, signed Fuilla-Sahorre. Signed path goes up wooded hills on left at junction.



START OF WALK

Steady zig zag path climbs up to col and crossroad of paths. (1h 10mins) To right are ruins of larger Tour de Badabany at 793m, to left smaller tower.



Ruins of Grand Tour de Badabany

LES TOURS DE BADABANY overlook the triangle of Villefranche-de-Conflent, Fuilla and Corneilla-de-Conflent below, former signal towers demolished under Vauban's orders in 1659. The name comes from 'Bada' meaning watchtower or lookout and 'Bany's' meaning baths, as the towers were actually the surveillance towers for the spa baths of Vernet-les-Bains.



Old marble quarry

Follow signed path to Corneilla, downhill from col, past an old marble quarry, from which much of the rose marble used in the region was mined.

Meet a broad piste and follow it to reach a very well preserved Dolmen (628m) A short cut is available behind a fenced off section of track. There are many Dolmen in the region and these fascinating structures were Neolithic burial chambers.

DOLMENS AND CUPULES

Dolmens are believed to be early tombs or burial chambers, stone slabs showcasing the skills of Neolithic builders, with some of the crowning stones weighing in at as much as 160 tons! Many had 'cupules', coming from the Latin for 'small cup', and were used by ancient healers to control rain and weather, carved with lines and grooves to channel the rain, often in the shape of a cross, or several circles. Nobody is absolutely sure of their usage really but they are acknowledged as a form of prehistoric art.



Mineral circuit:
VILLEFRANCHE CORNEILLA

At Dolmen, **turn left and follow path steeply down to a tarmac road which crosses the Cady and St Vincent rivers** to reach D116 through Corneilla. Cross the road and enter village, to reach **the church of St Marie** (2h 15 mins).



Pass behind the church, **past small Laverie, and take path down to river.** Cross the footbridge and **start the ascent to Roc Ample.** (30 mins from Corneilla)
On the way up to **Roc Ample** note the interesting **stone Orries** on the hill side.



Eglise de St Marie, Corneilla

A PLEASANT STOP

This Romanesque style church was originally transformed into an Augustine Priory after the Crusades in 1097 by the Count of Cerdagne. On its façade, you will find pink marble, Madonna with Child and Angels, rampaging lions, palms and sheep. The size of the interior was tripled to create a similar layout to the Priory of Serrabone. There are benches in front of the church which provide a pleasant refreshment stop.

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Vernet-les-Bains €550,000
Ref: A08789 - Spacious 6 bedroom villa with garden, swimming pool, garage and breathtaking mountain views.

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ENERGY CLASS: C CLIMATE CLASS: A



EXCLUSIVE

Ille-sur-Têt €125,000
Ref: 116852 - 2 Bedroom lock up and leave with garage, and terrace with panoramic views. In a vibrant market town.

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mineral circuit: VILLEFRANCHE CORNEILLA



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Need a bit of 'me' time? Fancy a massage, a facial, spa, jacuzzi, sauna, a warm swim in a cold and snowy mountain landscape? Refresh the body, Relax the mind, Soothe the soul at LES BAINS DE SAINT-THOMAS near Villefranche de Conflent or LES BAINS LLO a little (lot) further up the road!

Otherwise, turn right to continue route. After a few minutes reach an old Talc quarry. Here, talc was quarried until 1960 and used in the ceramics trade.



Pass a tree with seat of stones round its base – a resting place in hot weather as long as you don't mind an occasional insect down your neck.



COOL CAVES

LES GROTTES DE CANALETTES, a network of spectacular caves, leads visitor deep into the heart of the Massif du Canigou mountain range, following a qualified guide along specially adapted bridges and walkways. Underground rivers have hewn passages, sculpted walls and created vast chambers containing wonderful stalagmites, stalactites and coloured pillars of mineral rock. Head a little further up into the mountains to Fontrabieuse, near Formigüères to discover the GROTTES DE FONTRABIEUSE, a fascinating and perfectly preserved underground world with underground lake, hundreds of stalagmites and stalactites in a spectacular array of colours – and perfect conditions for maturing wine, so you can even taste as you visit!

Reach a T junction. A diversion 100 metres to the left is worth taking to viewpoint looking down on Villefranche, the valley of river Cady, Les Grottes de Canalettes and further mountains.



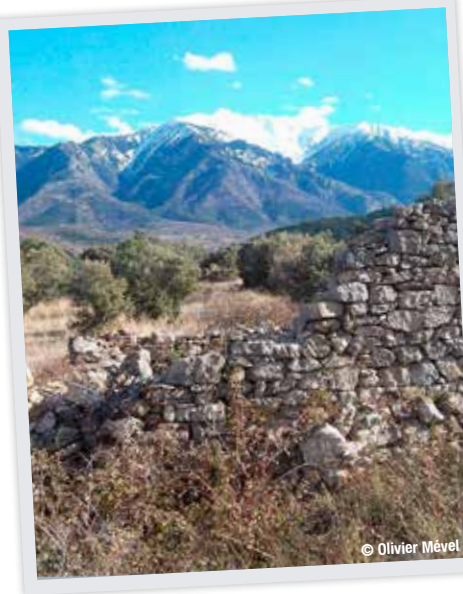
ABOUT TALC

Most of us have used talc to powder babies' (or someone else's) bottom, but did you know that it has loads of other uses including pottery making? This soft mineral is dug from the ground, and thanks to its softness and ability to absorb moisture, the powdered form is used in cosmetic creams and lotions, making them easier to spread, added as a filler in capsules, pills and chewing gum, used to prevent sticky foods from clumping together, and can even be used in processing olive oil to create higher yields.



Path drops under power cables and bends right. At junction take stony path up on the left. The path gradually narrows to reach another signpost.

A Roman Bergerie can be visited to left (10 mins) but our route is to the right, and it comes down to the main track on the grassy plateau. Turn left to quickly reach Ambulla, site of ancient manganese mines and crossroads of paths. (1h 15mins from Corneilla 711m). To the right here, manganese was mined. Apparently, the men mined the manganese and the women carried it down to Villefranche, so the path of ascent and descent is called "le chemin de manganèse").



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mineral circuit: VILLEFRANCHE CORNEILLA

Turn left from Ambulla to enter woodland and descend to Villefranche de Conflent, crossing the Canal de Bohère on the way down. Path very stony lower down.

A WINTER STROLL.... ALONG THE CANAL DE BOHÈRE TO ST MICHEL DE CUXA.

Running from Serdinya above Villefranche de Conflent and ending near the lake of Vinça, parts of this 42 km length canal path provide the perfect winter walk for lovers of peace, beauty and easy strolling. It's a beautiful walk at any time of year, winding under little bridges, past gardens, orchards and woods of chestnuts, cherries, walnuts, acacias and figs but, in winter, the naked trees reveal stunning views across the valley as the canal meanders high above the towns on the plain below. Arriving at the beautiful Abbey of St Michel de Cuxa, the walk ends at an impressive spurring siphon. An easy descent takes you down to the Abbey to refresh body and soul with cheese, honey and home made jam on sale in the shop (Covid permitting) or simply retrace your steps back along the canal to your car. Have a lovely day.

Once back at the pretty walled town, **make sure you have enough time on your parking ticket to spend a while exploring the narrow streets and shops.** Sit in a café, take a walk round the ramparts. A tour of **Fort Liberia** is also well worthwhile when you are in the area – but maybe save that for another day if your legs are tired, as it is a nice little climb unless you take the 4x4! Coming back down the underground marble steps is an absolute must if you do visit the Fort! •

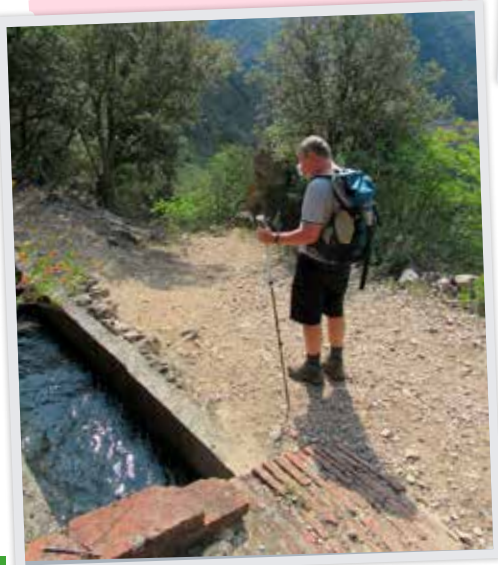
CHATEAU FORT LIBÉRIA

An underground tunnel, built between 1850 to 1853 on orders from Napoléon III joins Fort Libéria to Villefranche de Conflent via a flight of stairs named 'Le Souterrain des Milles Marches' (the tunnel of 1000 steps) although it only actually has 734 steps! Cut out of a very brittle rock, many workers died during its construction.



THE VILLEFRANCHE CONSPIRACY

The fort itself was used as a 'prison pour dames' several times. One such dame was Inès de Llar. Her Catalan family were plotting to kill the French garrison in Villefranche. Inès, in love with French officer Louis de Parlan, warned her lover. Naturally, her lover warned the garrison! Her family were captured, tortured at the Castillet in Perpignan, the bodies of her father and brother hung on Villefranche's gates for all to see. After a stay in the 'prison pour dames', Inès, humiliated and rejected by her family, (no surprise there!) was sent to a convent in Spain, where she died. Her lover, Louis, was appointed commander of Villefranche as his reward.



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AVALANCHE

Rescue in the Pyrenees Orientales



International Mountain Leader, **Mike Rhodes**, joins the CRS, Secours en Montagne on one of their avalanche search and rescue retraining days.

Research has shown that **90%** of people recovered within **15 mins** from an avalanche, survive, against 30% within 30 mins. **It takes on average 40 mins** for the rescue team to arrive so anything that the rest of us mountain users can do, may help save lives.



Our first session in **St Pierre dels Forcats**, was **classroom based**, and included several doctors from the Perpignan area. **It covered the many forms that need to be filled in when attending an avalanche incident.**

The **majority of avalanches happen outside of the controlled ski domains** and are likely to have been set off by a skier or snow-shoe walker. It is probable **in this situation that other skiers will be the first people on the scene.**

Consider this. If you come across an avalanche and believe that someone is buried, what do you do?

Has anyone called the rescue? **Can you get a signal on your mobile? Has anyone already gone to get help? Has anyone started a search? Does anyone have an avalanche transceiver?**

The questions are innumerable and someone assertive has to take charge. This is where the CRS's structured paper trail and form filling starts to make sense as we cover the different roles of the leaders coordinating the search, severity of the incident, flags, tags for each casualty and incident report forms and summaries.



After the theory, the first practical session takes place on the lower slopes of the ski station as we gather round to see **what the CRS carry in their huge orange bags when they attend an incident.**



Once it's unrolled we see a bewildering array of different flags. Flags to mark a safe entry and exit to/from the site, yellow and black flags mark the limits of the avalanche, red the immediate probe search area, yellow marks items found and most importantly where teams should dig.

Up the slope I am asked to join a team digging for a potential casualty. **Teams of 4**, with 2 in front and 2 behind start shoveling. **The 2 in front move snow back to the second pair who then move it down the slope.** Tiring work. After two mins we all rotate clockwise.

Over lunch plans are made for the afternoon session which is to take place in the bowl above the upper lifts – which are not actually working. The CRS **tow their people to the top on their quad and ski-doo but the rest of us, climbing on touring skis up past the Pla de Cambre d'Axe, are beginning to regret eating so much at lunch.**

AVALANCHE

Rescue in the Pyrenees Orientales

Just below the Pla, the quad stop and offer us a lift up the last bit. **Hanging on to a rope behind a quad going at 60kmh is quite frightening!**

Our group are split into three, with some left at the bottom in the car park and the rest up into the bowl where a potential avalanche site had been marked out. **Skis, gloves and sticks are scattered about the slope. Two people and dummy bodies buried in the snow are waiting to be found.**

The radio crackles into life, an incident is reported to the team in the car park who call out a helicopter. Within minutes it appears with a person dangling on a wire just below. **This is where it is essential to be organized as the rescue coordinator guides them to drop the person at the top of the slope to start a search.**

Other people are nominated different roles and I join a team to search the snow with probes as the helicopter brings in yet another person together with his rescue dog.

Now we have three coordinated groups searching the slope, importantly controlled by just one person to ensure no duplication. **The live bodies are quickly located but our probe search in really deep and soft snow proves to be more difficult and we have to redo our search to find our "dummy" body.** It shows just how difficult these searches are, even with professionals and why regular practice is so important.

On the short ski back to the café, I reflect on the way that, even the professional services have to continually keep their avalanche rescue training and skills up to date and just how much we now rely on the speedy response of the courageous helicopter teams.

The next time that you keen skiers venture off piste, please do remember to wear avalanche transceivers, carry a small shovel and snow probe AND KNOW HOW TO USE THEM.

They may save your life.



Les Angles

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Piste again?

CHOOSING YOUR P-0 SKI RESORT



BACK ON THE PISTES?

Covid has forced most of us to have at least a year away from the ski slopes, so skiers are looking forward to getting back on the pistes.

Those not in the know may think that the Pyrénées are less likely to see snow than the Alps. In fact, our P-0 resorts are actually pretty reliable and have had some amazing snowfall over the past few years, often beating the Alps. Add to that the fact that they're more affordable, less crowded, with plenty of safe, all-levels family skiing alongside exciting and challenging descents, and you'll wonder why you ever thought of going anywhere else!

so where to go?

LES ANGES

55 Km downhill
36km cross country

In brief

- + Snowpark
 - + Luge
 - + Spa, sauna, beauty...
- Advanced skiers ★★★★★
Intermediate ★★★★★
Beginners ★★★★★
Snowboarding ★★★★★



Tourist Office: 04 68 04 32 76
www.lesangles.com

FONT- ROMEU /PYRENEES 2000

43 Km downhill
111 cross country

In brief

- + Olympic training facilities
 - + Family focussed
 - + Night ski
- Advanced skiers ★★
Intermediate ★★★★★
Beginners ★★★★★
Beginners ★★★★★



Tourist Office: 04 68 30 68 30
www.font-romeu.fr

FORMIGUERES

25km downhill
20km Cross Country

In brief

- + Safe and family-orientated
 - + Night in an igloo?
 - + Conveyor belt for beginners
- Advanced skiers ★★
Intermediate ★★★★★
Beginners ★★★★★
Beginners ★★★★★



Tourist Office: 04 68 04 47 35
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PORTÉ PUYMORENS

45 Km downhill.
20 Km Cross Country

In brief

- + 15 min drive from Andorra
 - + Vast snow park
 - + Great snow!
- Advanced skiers ★★
Intermediate ★★★★★
Beginners ★★★★★
Beginners ★★★★★



Tourist Office: 04 68 04 82 41
www.porte-puymorens.net

LA QUILLANE

Tiny!!

- + Family resort
- + First timers or nervous beginners
- + Helicopter ride?

In brief

- Beginners ★★★★★
- Snowboarding ★★



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CERDAGNE - PUIGMAL

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- + Challenging black runs
- + Superb panoramic views.

In brief

- Advanced skiers ★★
- Intermediate ★★★★★
- Beginners ★★★★★
- Beginners ★★★★★

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PUYVALADOR

Very small and family orientated

In brief

- + Beginners and families
 - + Ice rink and sledge piste
 - + Lessons for beginners
- Advanced skiers ★★★★★
Intermediate ★★★★★
Beginners ★★★★★
Beginners ★★★★★



Tourist Office: 07 87 36 72 71
www.puyvalador.com

CAMBRE D'AZE

35 Km downhill
5 Km Cross Country

In brief

- + Nearest resort to Perpignan
 - + Views of the Med!
 - + Dog sleigh
- Advanced skiers ★
Intermediate ★★★★★
Beginners ★★★★★
Beginners ★★★★★



Tourist Office: 04 68 04 25 25
www.cambre-d-aze.com



Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow...but just in case it doesn't, a battery of more than 370 snow canons in Les Angles and 500 in Font Romeu will be working overtime to ensure good skiing conditions. **The snow must go on!** (Ouch!)

BIZARRE FRENCHMEN

LE PETOMANE

Marseilles born **Joseph Pujol** was a natural entertainer as a young boy, showing talent in both **acting and music**. Despite being skilled on the trombone, it was a completely different type of wind instrument that brought him fame and fortune. In fact, **Pujol became a very famous vaudeville act due to his amazing ability to control the muscles of his derrière!** His stage name of **Le Petomane** (loosely translated as "the farter") rather gives it away!

One of the highlights of his act was pumping out the Marseillaise through his bottom!

At the beginning of each show, he would explain to the audience that the emissions he was about to produce were completely odourless, as he irrigated his colon daily. **He became one of the most well-known and highly paid entertainers in France.**



MONSIEUR MANGETOUT

Grenoble born **Michel Lotito** was diagnosed at an early age with an **eating disorder known as Pica**, causing an incredibly resilient digestive system, powerful digestive juices and abnormally thick stomach lining and intestines. **At 16, he became famous for consuming indigestible objects such as metal, glass, rubber and other materials.**

Over the years of his stage act as **Monsieur Mangetout**, he munched his way through bicycles, metal shopping carts, televisions, skis, a metal bed, a coffin and even a Cessna 150 light aircraft - not all in one sitting of course. He washed this strange diet down with mineral oil which served as a lubricant to ease the metal in one end and no doubt out the other - and large quantities of water.

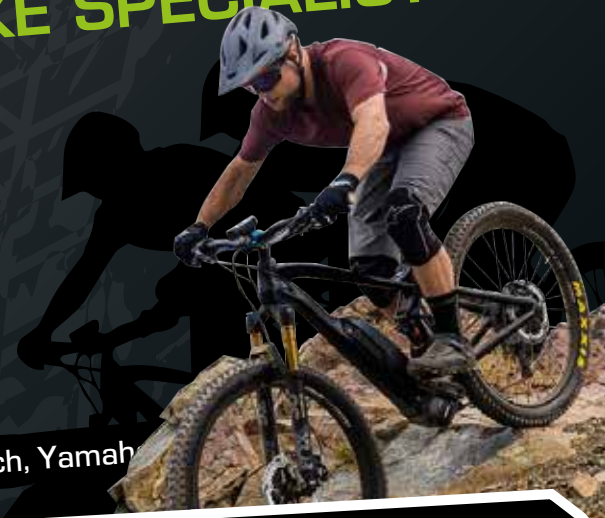
M. Mangetout holds the world record for the 'strangest diet' and was awarded a brass plaque by the Guinness Book of Records - which he ate! Please do not try this at home!



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Grand re-opening of Musée d'art moderne in Céret

After more than 2 years of renovation, **the Musée d'Art Moderne in Céret will reopen its doors to the public on Saturday 5th March 2022...** put the date in your diary!

The brand new 1300m² building with 550m² exhibition hall will be home to temporary exhibitions, leaving the original space entirely dedicated to the permanent works of artists such as **Marc Chagal, Henri Matisse and Pablo Picasso.**

And who better to inaugurate the new space than a local artist? From the **5th March to 6th June**, enjoy Barcelona-born sculptor, **Jaume Plensa's** newest exhibition, **'Each face is a place'** (Chaque visage c'est un lieu).



Find out more about this exhibition in the spring edition of P-O Life



Au musée, un monsieur regarde un tableau
 "Ah ! Il est moche" dit-il.
 "Mais c'est du Picasso"
 lui dit le guide.
 Dans une autre salle,
 le monsieur dit :
 "Ah ça aussi c'est moche."
 "Ah ça, Monsieur? C'est un miroir!"



tableau – painting,
 moche – ugly

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MODEL, MUSE AND MAQUIS

Dina Vierny was model and platonic companion to artist Maillol from the mid-1930s. Based in Banyuls sur Mer, she helped to smuggle refugees into Spain, easily identifiable from a distance by her trademark red dress, commemorated by Maillol in one of his last paintings.

Michael Kaufman, deputy foreign editor at The New York Times said "People trying to escape the Germans were told to take the train to Banyuls and go to the station cafe, where they would find a young woman in a red dress. She would lead them to a studio where they could sleep, and the next day they would walk a couple of miles into Spain. She saved the life of my father." Sadly, her own father died in Auschwitz.

Arrested by the Gestapo, she was released after six months when Maillol intervened by appealing to Arno Breker, Hitler's favourite sculptor.

She died in 2009, aged 89.



MUSIC, DANCE and THEATRE

OUR THEATRE BY THE LAKE



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In these difficult times, we all have to be careful about what we do and who we do it with! **The Théâtre de l'Étang is putting on some great entertainment this season**, with every precaution taken to make your visit as safe as it will be exciting. **High quality music, dance and theatre at low prices - and several free events.**

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.



**[DON'T FORGET
YOUR PASS SANITAIRE!]**

SOME HIGHLIGHTS

LE BLIND TIGER SWING QUINTET MUSIC 5€

Thursday 17th February at 20h30
French 'greats' along with **swing from the 30s, style Cotton Club.**
This quintet including lady vocalist bring you classics such as **La vie en rose, Mack the knife, St Louis Blues, What a wonderful word.....**

ROCH VOISINE MUSIC

Friday 18th March at 20h30
Bilingual Canadian singer-songwriter **Roch Voisine has been on the scene for 30 decades.** In this new 'unplugged and intimate' concert, he performs **acoustic versions of his greatest hits accompanied by two other musicians.**

LE CURÉ DE LA CANEBIÈRE! MUSICAL 'OPERETTE'

Sunday 27th March at 15h
Meet the colourful character of the **small, typically Provençal village of Saint Pataclet** and follow their lives, loves and adventures, accompanied by the most famous songs of **Vincent SCOTTO:**
Le plus beau tango du monde, Cane canebière, À Toulon, Les Pescadous, Zou un peu d'aioli ..

BOEING BOEING - THEATRE/FARCE

Saturday 9th April at 20h30
Based around the **1965 American farce starring Tony Curtis and Jerry Lewis.**
Bernard is a successful architect who juggles relationships with three air hostesses, each one unaware of the existence of the other two.

LA FEMME QUI DANSE DANCE

Saturday 21st May at 20h30
An iconic figure in the world of dance in France, **Marie-Claude Pietragalla, ballerina, member of the jury panel of the French "Dancing with the Stars" dances alone as she celebrates 40 years of her dancing life as a female artiste.**

-FREE CINEMA-

Check out the programme at www.theatre-de-letang.fr for the monthly dates of LES TOILES, FREE CINEMA FESTIVAL showing some great films on a variety of themes.
This season: from book to screen.

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Restaurant REVIEWS

WINTER 2022

Aie aie aie! Will we ever be able to go out to a restaurant without worrying about what we might bring back home? Still, we are lucky here in the P-O. We can still often eat outside on a sunny winter's day. Fresh air and fresh food.



A few of the following reviews were compiled before our world was turned upside down by Covid-19. Others are new to us. They cover a wide range of tastes, prices, and places. All have been reviewed objectively (we hope) by readers who have enjoyed and recommended, based on personal opinion. 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. Many restaurants close during January, sometimes a last minute decision if business is slow - don't get caught out.

ARBEQUINA

Thuir....with Kate

Young **chef Guillaume** has trained with some of the top Perpignan chefs – and it shows. **Predominantly Mediterranean, fresh, light and sunny**, plenty of colourful vegetables, not over complicated, **this restaurant is deservedly a Michelin Bib Gourmand** (see below), reasonably priced for its high standard, its menu developed according to the seasons, and traditions of the region. Small but busy, pleasant atmosphere, attentive service, clean loos..... **Highly recommended.**



21 Rue de la République, Thuir,
Tel: 04 68 34 46 64

GOOD FOOD AT MODERATE PRICES.

In 1900 the Michelin tyre company launched its first guidebook to encourage road travel around France. Today, the Michelin Star is a hallmark of fine dining, and status. But great food doesn't always come at affordable prices, so the Michelin Bib Gourmand was launched. The award highlights restaurants offering exceptional food at moderate prices... (which is exactly what you will find at Arbequina).



LE FANAL

Banyuls-Sur-Mer....with Olivier

Michelin stars are awarded to 'restaurants offering the finest cooking, regardless of cuisine style, and the inventive quality dishes and mouth-watering creations by Michelin starred **chef Pascal Borell** offer just that, revisiting traditional Catalan and Mediterranean dishes. There are some pretty steeply priced menus, as you would expect for a restaurant of this calibre, but there are also menus at €24 or €35, making the Michelin starred restaurant more accessible to all. **Pascal invites you 'à table' to sample his mouth-watering creations overlooking the port in Banyuls-sur-Mer.** A warm welcome awaits!



Av. Pierre Fabre, Banyuls-sur-Mer
Tel: 04 68 98 65 88

LOU GRILLADOU

Perpignan....with Kate

Just a couple of minutes walk from the train station, always busy and recommended by the locals. Excellent 2 course lunchtime menu for 15,50 € (or just 12 € for the plat du jour) and plenty of reasonably priced à la carte alternatives for vegetarians. **Semi-gastronomic, Mediterranean-style cuisine**, friendly service and clean loos. Free street parking nearby, if you can find a place.

LE PABLO

Céret....with Steven and Denise

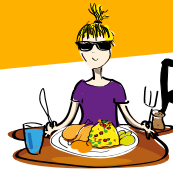


Famous for being the haunt of Pablo Picasso and Salvador Dali who allegedly swapped paint brushes, opinions and a variety of hallucinogenic eats, smokes and drinks in a back room, Le Pablo has always been more famous for its art than its food. **However, post Covid, it now has a brand-new look, new menu, new everything, a modern, vibrant Catalan Trattoria with fantastic food**, genuine friendly service and an Italian feel to the menu. Pizzas and pastas marry with Catalan cuisine, Tapas, Iberican hams, Manchego cheeses and the obligatory entrecote, a real mixed palette. No fish to be seen apart from the odd anchovy seasoning the salads. Modern presentation, pleasant youthful service and happy ambience at this new Pablo. We cannot recommend it highly enough. **Bon appetit!**

1 Pl. Pablo Picasso, Céret
Tel: 07 86 72 11 94



7 Pl. Albert de Belgique, Perpignan
Tel: 04 68 34 86 81



**Restaurant
REVIEWS**
WINTER 2022

LES POISSONNERIES DE LA COTE CATALANE

Port Vendres...with Michelle

Seafood platters to eat in or take out, oysters, seafood and wine **'formules' from 10 €** and a delicious choice of fishy tapas will tempt you into the restaurant and **pearl of a panoramic Oyster Bar overlooking the bay!**

In the shop, shelves of seafood delicacies, condiments and wines, counters of fresh fish, seafood, soups, and prepared dishes, live lobsters and langoustines.....Smells like fun?

Pop in and enjoy.



Anse Gerbal, 66660 Port-Vendres
Tel: 04 68 98 46 00



LE PUB A LA FRANÇAISE

Saint Cyprien Village...with David and Andrea

Tonight we went to this **French style Pub** in search of a bit of warmth and atmosphere on a cold night. It was amazing and the food was spot on. Live music kept us entertained in a very cosy bar. Great service. **We did reserve a table as the bar was full.** Covid pass was carefully checked. Tables were close together but I considered this OK as we had all been checked in. Saint Cyp village at night is so pretty. Lots of blue neon lights and sparkling roads lined with illuminated palm trees. Fab Friday night 10/10



37 avenue du Roussillon
Saint-Cyprien Tel: +33 7 86 68 60 33



CAFE DE LA ROTJA

Fuilla...with Suse

Had lunch there yesterday with friends! Excellent food, all fait maison. For starters we had Clafoutis de Chevre Chaud et lardons and Tarte tomate aux oignons - then two of us had Magret du canard plus frites maison and the other two Tournedos d'Agneau Catalan with sauce thym et miel - purée de carotte et pommes Anna. **Absolutely delicious.** We also **tried their special Apero offer** (couldn't move after all that food) which is **tapenade, pizza, olives and pickled beans with a glass of white Bio wine and a glass of red Bio wine from Domaine de Cazes.** Whole thing was excellent!



34 Av. de la Rotja, Fuilla
Tel: 04 68 96 12 35



BISTROT DU TECH

Le Tech...with Norman



My wife and I are delighted by the new restaurant that has opened in Le Tech, near Prats de Mollo. The recently refurbished premises on the site of the old village café, has been taken over by a very enterprising couple, **Cédric and Cindy** and their hard-working young children. The cooking is of a very high standard and the service, in which the children play a major part, is exceedingly pleasant and efficient. A daily changing menu has some interesting touches, such as the **excellent raclette evening on a Friday.** For all of the major festivals, Cédric prepares a special menu - the one for St. Sylvestre is a masterpiece- unfortunately we will miss it as we will be enjoying a real Hogmanay in Scotland, but we are looking forward to Valentine's Day!

5 Rue nationale, Le Tech
Tel: 06 34 23 06 94



CAN MARCEL

Canet Plage...with Lesley Anne

On the left, on the seafront as you drive towards the aquarium, a **superb, very copious lunch of 3 courses for €18.50** and a warm welcome from the whole team. **Booking recommended,** probably essential when it gets busy.

101 Prom. de la Côte Vermeille,
Canet
Tel: 04 68 80 64 55.



YORI IZAKAYA

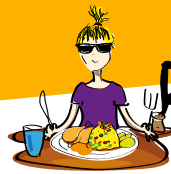
Perpignan...with Robyn



This **Japanese restaurant opposite the Theatre Archipel** is like a Japanese tapas bar so **it's a great place to sample more than just sushi.** After starters of wakame (a type of seaweed), calamari salad and edamame beans the four of us shared two mixed platters - one of brochettes and one of tempura. Everything was freshly prepared and beautifully presented. With wine and dessert, the bill was around 25 euros per person. There's **plenty to choose on the menu and it would be a perfect place for a pre or post theatre snack.**

63 Av. Maréchal Leclerc, 66000
Perpignan
+33 7 69 29 41 33





Restaurant REVIEWS

WINTER 2022

RESTAURANT LE FRANCE

Céret...with Kate

Opened in 1927 as a 'cooperative' by local workers, **Le France is very much an institution in Céret.** It's also a great place for people watching from the terrace in any season, with a **very nice restaurant upstairs for the winter months.** Staff are friendly, service is dynamic, and they've got the food just right! At 15€ for two courses, the **menu is honest and fresh**, quality fare at reasonable prices, well priced à la carte, and excellent pichet wine. And if the weather isn't kind and you do have to go upstairs, take a look at the toilets whether you want to spend a penny (10 centimes?) or not. **It is worth a trip to this fabulous 'petit coin' for the artwork alone!**



35 Bd Maréchal Joffre, Céret
Tel: 04 68 87 11 27

UN DES SENS

Torreilles...with Jan

Menu du jour from 12 - 18€ depending on one two or three courses, but we were tempted by the à la carte. Shared starter of gratin de moules, then I had a filet de bœuf with fresh foie gras poêlé and a side of little roasties with mushrooms and Ray had a Médaille de lotte with truffle slices (lots of truffle slices) and a risotto at 28€ and 25€. I couldn't finish mine, the meat was huge. We don't eat pud so can't comment on those but enjoyed the red wine. **The room is pleasant and comfy, the welcome was warm, plates were hot and the terrace would be lovely on a dry warm day.** Well worth a repeat visit.



17 Pl. Louis Blasi, Torreilles
Tel: 09 50 78 17 72

KIM LONG

Saint Cyprien...with Joe and Chloe

We have eaten regularly both in and out at this **Vietnamese restaurant** for years and we have never been disappointed. **Tasty, varied, well cooked and consistent**, sometimes it's just a nice change from typical Catalan fayre. **Staff friendly and attentive** whether you're **eating in or taking away.**



Bd Maillol, Saint-Cyprien
Tel: 04 68 55 15 89

We only publish the great reviews...but of course, **we know that dinner out is not always perfect. Here is some useful vocabulary to help you to explain politely when a 'plat' is not quite 'comme il faut'.**

C'EST (TROP).... – IT'S (TOO)...

...fade – bland/tasteless
...sucré – sweet
...salé – salty
...poivré -peppery
...epicé/piquant – spicy (hot)
...acide/aigre – sour
...amer – bitter
...dur – tough
...cuit – overdone
...cru – raw
...tiède – luke warm

C'EST.... – IT'S...

...mangeable/immangeable – edible/inedible
...dégoûtant – disgusting
...infect – awful

CE N'EST PAS...

... assez cuit – It is underdone.

IL MANQUE DE..

... sel – salt
...poivre – pepper
...gout – taste

Garçon, garçon, Il y a une mouche dans ma soupe!



DO YOU KNOW A RESTAURANT YOU WOULD LIKE TO RECOMMEND?
We'd love to hear from you.
CONNAISSEZ-VOUS UN RESTAURANT QUE VOUS VOUDRIEZ RECOMMANDER?
On serait ravi de vous entendre-send your comments to us at info@anglophone-direct.com

(no restaurant owners please!! :-)



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FOOD and DRINK



Ideas for EATING OUT IN...

No crowds in winter so a perfect time to stroll along the prom prom prom (tiddly-pom-pom-pom) followed by lunch on the port or sea front, or a wander around the market, a visit to the museum or theatre, and a cosy meal in an inviting town bistro....

But wait! Oh là là! Everything's closed! 'Fermeture annuelle', or 'congés d'hiver' on the doors of two out of three of the eateries in the P-O, leave us to shuffle home with heavy heart and empty tum.

Mais ne vous inquiétez pas. All the restaurants advertising in this winter edition of P-O Life remain open most of the season. (though its always worth giving them a ring in advance just to be on the safe side)

...BANYULS-SUR-MER

La Vieille Cave.....04 68 88 39 86
Restaurant-Pizzeria www.restaurant-vieille-cave.com

Le Fanal.....04 68 98 65 88
Original gift sets online or visit the restaurant

...CERET

Bella Pizza.....04 68 87 70 26
Open daily (except Sunday lunch-time and Thursdays)

Quattroceto04 68 87 15 60
www.lequattroceto.net.....Open 7/7 all year round

...ILLE SUR TET

La Table de Mai Ly04 68 28 70 43
Specialist in vietnamese and Asian cuisine

...LAROQUE-DES-ALBERES

Cave Le Carignan.....04 68 56 83 01
Cosy Wine Bar... Belgian beers, wine at winegrowers' prices

...MONT LOUIS

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

...PERPIGNAN

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

Lou Grilladou04 68 34 86 81
.....Closed Sat lunch-time, all day Sun and Mon eves

Les Ateliers04 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

...SAINT ANDRE

El Celler Iberic.....04 68 61 92 93
Restaurant, Tapas and Wine Bar

...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 Plage04 68 55 15 89
Open all yearf: [restaurant-Kim-Long](https://restaurant-kim-long)

...SOREDE

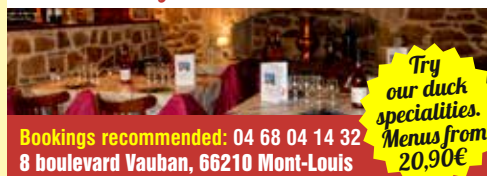
La Salamandre04 68 89 26 67
Fine mediterranean cuisine..... free parking next door

...THUIR

Arbequina.....04 68 34 46 64
www.arbequina-restaurant.com..... f: ArbequinaRestaurant

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Anse Gerbal - La Criée, 66660 Port-Vendres

ROSEHIP RELISH



A great accompaniment for cheese, charcuterie, paté etc and great in sauces and gravies, particularly duck and greasy meats, to cut down the fat.

The fruit of the rose comes in a variety of shapes and sizes but the most usual ones are teardrop shaped, found on bare branches of wild and cultivated roses.

They contain **50% more vitamin C than oranges**, and a single tablespoon of the pulp gives an adult more than the recommended daily allowance of 60 mg. They are an **excellent immune system booster**, often used as a **supplement to prevent or treat a cold**.

INGREDIENTS

- 2lb / 1 kilo de-seeded Rosehips
- 6 fl oz / 175 ml distilled malt vinegar
- 10 fl oz / 275 ml Water
- ½ vanilla pod
- 1 lb / 500g sugar
- Juice of 1 or 2 lemons

HOW TO DO

Place rosehips, vinegar, water and vanilla in a large pan.

Simmer until soft, add sugar until thickened and add lemon juice to taste.

Remove vanilla pod and pour into sterilised jars.



Place rosehips, vinegar, water and vanilla in a large pan.

Simmer until soft, add sugar until thickened and add lemon juice to taste.

Remove vanilla pod and pour into sterilised jars.

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Port. 06 25 89 14 93

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restaurant-Kim-Long
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RESTAURANT www.restaurant-lou-grilladou.fr

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Some fishy vocab

- > Aigrefin/Eglefin – Haddock
- > Anguille (Congre) – (Conger) Eel
- > Bar – Sea Bass
- > Cabillaud/Morue – Cod/salted cod
- > Carrelet – Plaice
- > Colin/Merlu – hake
- > Daurade/Dorado – Bream
- > Espadon – Swordfish
- > Lotte – Monkfish
- > Loup – Sea Perch
- > Rascasse – Scorpion Fish
- > Requin – Shark
- > Rouget – Red Mullet
- > Saint Pierre – John Dory
- > Seiche – Cuttlefish

- > vider – to gut (lit. to empty).
- > (court) bouillon – stock or broth
- > médaillon – small, round pieces (of fish/meat)
- > (sans) arête – (without) bones.
- > en papillote – cooked in foil.
- > darne – fish steak/slice
- > décortiqué – shelled or peeled
- > écailler – to scale fish



NEW WINE ON THE MARKET FOR THE ELDERLY

On April 1st 2022, the producers of Pinot Blanc, Pinot Noir and Pinot Grigio will unveil a new wine, the product of an innovative hybrid grape that acts as an anti-diuretic.

It is expected to reduce the number of trips to the loo during the night. The new wine will be marketed as...

PINOT MORE



ASPARAGUS

Did you know that the distinctive smell in urine after eating asparagus is believed to be due to sulphur-containing amino acids that break down during digestion? However, not all of us have a gene that enables us to smell the resulting effects on our pipi!! Lucky for some 'cos it's time to go wild asparagus hunting!

Fern-like, spindly, and packed with flavour, they are rather good at concealing themselves amongst the briars and grasses of the undergrowth, but hunting them down can become a great day of fun-filled adventure. Take them home, blanch them for a few seconds, add a little olive oil, salt, and pepper, et Robert est ton oncle!



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MENU FROM THE MIDI:

A gastronomic journey through the South of France. BY COLIN TAYLOR



Ice house

Colin Taylor has been living in the south of France for 20 years, and through his books he shares his passion for the region's culture, gastronomy, history and language. **Menu from the Midi** explores French gastronomy from the farmer's field to the dining room table, a celebration of the dedicated and passionate people who produce some of the finest raw ingredients and foodstuffs you are ever likely to taste.

The oldest sparkling wine in the world, le Roll-Royce of olives, pink garlic soup, meats of the black Gascon pig, the legendary cassoulet, cheese from the caves of Roquefort...

Let's take a trip along the ice house trail, an excerpt from one of the topics covered in his new book.

ON THE ICEHOUSE TRAIL

Sorbets and other frozen delights probably crossed into France from Italy in the early 17th century. By 1659, the consumption of ice in France had become so prevalent that **Louis XIV decided to bring its production under royal control**, starting in the region where demand was greatest: **the royal province of the Languedoc**.

Pradelles-Cabardès lies just below the highest point of the Montagne Noire – the Pic de Nor. A century ago, this tiny mountain village dominated the ice industry in our region and **sent its frozen products as far afield as Perpignan, Montauban, Toulouse and even Bordeaux**.

The best way to grasp the scale of this enterprise is to **take a stroll along Le Sentier des Glacières** (The Icehouse Trail) where you will discover half-a-dozen icehouses in various stages of decomposition or restoration. For some people, this walk will be more appealing in summer, but for a more authentic experience, head up the mountain when there is snow on the ground and a glacial chill in the air.

Download a map and a description of the route from the Montagne Noire tourist office website:

www.tourisme-montagnenoire.com
(search sentier-des-glacieres).

Find out more at www.colinduncantaylor.com



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LE FERMIER Gilles ET LA CHARRUE

A really, really bad joke... but good for your French learning! 😊

(Only check out the useful vocab after reading through the whole text first.)

Le **fermier Gilles** se lève **tôt** pour travailler son **champ**. Il fait chaud et le **sol** risque de **devenir dur** très rapidement. Arrivant dans la **grange**, il découvre que sa **charrue** est cassée.

Un peu inquiet, il se dit "Ce n'est quand même pas un problème énorme. Je vais demander à mon voisin, le fermier Murphy, si je peux **emprunter** sa charrue. C'est un homme bien. Je suis sûr que **ça ne le dérangera pas** de me **prêter** sa charrue."

Le fermier Gilles commence donc à marcher les quatre kilomètres jusqu'à la ferme de Murphy.

À la fin du premier kilomètre, il se dit: «En réflexion, j'espère que le fermier Murphy a terminé son **propre boulot** ou il ne va pas pouvoir me prêter sa charrue ...»

Un peu inquiet, il continue à marcher.

À la fin du deuxième kilomètre, il se dit "En réflexion, si la charrue de Murphy est vieille et **en mauvaise état**, il ne va pas vouloir me la prêter n'est-ce pas?"

Plus qu'il marche, **plus** qu'il s'inquiète.

À la fin du troisième kilomètre, il se dit "En réflexion Murphy n'a jamais été un homme très **serviable**. **Je parie** qu'il ne va pas vouloir me prêter sa charrue **même si** elle est en parfait état et que son propre boulot est terminé"

À la fin du dernier kilomètre, il commence à **s'énerver**. "Maintenant que **je me rappelle**, ce Murphy peut être un vrai imbecille. Je parie que, même si sa charrue est **disponible**, il ne va pas me la prêter parce que **ça lui fera plaisir** de me voir **malheureux** avec mes **récoltes ruinées**."

Arrivé chez Murphy, le fermier Gilles frappe à la porte et Murphy répond.

"Bonjour fermier Gilles, **que puis-je faire pour vous?**"

"Furieux, le fermier Gilles répond "Et ta soeur, vieux **abruti**."

Va te faire cuire un oeuf avec ta charrue!"



USEFUL VOCAB

tôt - early
 champ - field
 le sol - the ground
 devenir dur - become hard
 grange - barn
 charrue - plough
 Un peu inquiet - a little worried
 emprunter - borrow
 ça ne le dérangera pas - he won't mind
 prêter - lend
 propre - own (in this sense)
 boulot - work
 vieille - old
 en mauvaise état - in bad condition
 Plus....plus - the more....the more

serviable - helpful
 Je parie - I bet
 même si - even if
 s'énerver - to get annoyed
 je me rappelle - I remember
 disponible - available
 ça lui fera plaisir - he'll enjoy
 malheureux - unhappy
 récoltes ruinées - ruined crops
 que puis-je faire pour vous? - what can I do for you
 Et ta soeur - mind your own damn business
 abruti - idiot, moron
 Va te faire cuire un oeuf - go jump in a lake

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THE Fly Flag



If you know Catalonia, particularly the south, you will be used to seeing Catalan flags draped over balconies and official buildings - but how closely have you looked? Whilst the colours mainly stick to the red and gold that most people recognise, there are variations with different significations. Here are the main ones to look out for.



THE SENYERA (CATALAN FOR FLAG OR BANNER)

This is the one that most people recognise immediately, four red stripes on a golden background, **the official flag of Catalonia and one of the oldest to still fly in Europe.** It dates back to the **11th Century** and the Count of Barcelona and is flown at official events. Legend has it that **Sunifred 1st** challenged his father's assassin to a duel. Wounded himself, **he dipped his hand in his own blood, traced 4 bloody stripes** on the surface of his golden shield, and the Catalan coat of arms and flag were born! A more likely story suggests **that in 1068 Sancho Ramirez, king of Aragon,** was given the title 'gonfalonnier' (standard bearer) to the Pope in return for placing himself and his land in the Pope's care, giving him **the right to wear the Pope's colours,** red and yellow representing blood and gold.



L'ESTELADA BLAVA

(THE BLUE STARRED FLAG)

This more modern flag adds a blue triangle with five-pointed star and is the flag of Catalan separatism, typically flown unofficially at protests by the many supporters of Catalan independence. (Estelada means 'starred flag' from estel for star.)



L'ESTELADA VERMELLA

(THE RED STARRED FLAG)

This variation of the blue starred flag is associated more with Socialist and Communist separatists.

You might also notice....



L'ESTELADA NEGRA

(BLACK STARRED FLAG)

Used by 14th century Catalan Almogàvers (soldiers and mercenaries), and flown to **commemorate the 18th century War of Succession,** it is flown to signify no surrender. **During the siege of Barcelona in 1714,** it accompanied the words "Viurem lliures o morirem" (We will live free or we will die"). Often flown on 11th September to mark the end of the siege, now commemorated every year as Catalonia's national day.

And of course, don't forget the **ROJIGUALDA,** the official flag of Spain, with its two red stripes on gold, and a coat of arms in the middle. You will almost never see this in Catalonia!



FESTIVALS Events and Traditions

SUNDAY MARCH 27TH 2022 - FRENCH SUMMERTIME

DON'T FORGET TO TURN YOUR CLOCKS FORWARD

CARNIVAL

Pull out your masks, costumes and confetti - it's carnival time! February and March see carnivals all over the P-O – fancy dress, street parades and fireworks, singing, dancing....and you can burn away your bad luck when the straw-filled **Carnival king**, symbol of infertility, sins, and bad luck is burned in a spectacular ritual on Mardi Gras.



FETE DE L'OURS

FEBRUARY BEAR FESTIVALS (COVID PERMITTING)

Arles-sur-Tech: Sunday 6th February

Prats-de-Mollo: Sunday 20th February

Saint-Laurent-de-Cerdans: Sunday 27th February

'Bears' wearing sheep skins, their faces and hands blackened with a mixture of suie (soot) and huile (oil), 'hunters' carrying guns and gourds of wine, men covered in flour, dressed in white lace bonnets carrying black pudding, circle dance to try to set the person in front alight!..... **Intrigued? Visit our website or the local tourist office to find out more.**



A DELIGHTFUL MESS-FEST

Look out for '**calçots**' (pronounced cal-show), a variety of long, thick green onion (rather like skinny leeks) that have their peak season in January, February, and March. Or even better, watch the events news for a '**calçotada**' in a village near you.

These delicious onions are normally cooked on a barbecue, turned until entirely blackened outside and soft and sweet inside, **dipped into sauce, and held above the head before being lowered into the mouth.** A delightful mess-fest.



HOW TO SURVIVE PANCAKE DAY

'Celui qui la rapporte chez lui allumée Pour sûr ne mourra pas dans l'année' (Whoever brings the lit candle home will definitely not die this year!)



Apart from the well known Mardi Gras, the nearest French equivalent to Pancake Day is the '**Fête de la Chandeleur**' (Candlemas), celebrated 40 days after Christmas on **2nd February**.

Also known as the '**jour des crêpes**', this festival dates back to Roman times.

The tradition was to light a candle in the church and carry it home without the flame going out if you wanted enjoy your pancakes..... and live see the year out!

LES GRÉGOIRES IN AMÉLIE

When **Pélage II** was carried off by the plague on February 8, 590, **Grégoire** was elected Pope. Rome was ravaged by the plague and threatened by famine and flood, so Grégoire organised prayers and processions to boost morale.

During one of these processions, the '**Ange exterminateur**' (Exterminating Angel) appeared and ended the plague. To celebrate, '**Sa majesté carnaval Grégoire**' and the Swiss Guard lead a procession every year through the streets of Amélie. **Behind walk the villagers, dressed in white, with pointed hats, sprinkling flour around them as they walk, before burning their Carnival King.**

Remind you of any other historical hooded gatherings?





A passenger was having a tough time carrying his lumpy, oversized travel bag onto the plane. Helped by a flight attendant, he finally managed to stuff it in the overhead lockers.

“Do you always carry such heavy luggage?” she sighed.

“No more,” the man said. “Next time, I’m riding in the bag, and my wife can buy the ticket!”



2022 JAN-MARCH by Robbie Shaw

Hopefully with an increasing number of people in Europe being vaccinated, the airline schedulers might have more confidence in trying to write schedules. In the past the P-O region has been poorly served in the winter months, and I think it unlikely there will be an improvement, but fingers crossed for summer 2022. I am writing this in late October 2021, but no doubt within a week there will be changes, so please continually check airline websites, and REMEMBER THIS FEATURE IS ONLY A GUIDE. The winter season runs to Saturday 26th March, with summer schedules starting on 27th. Check out our spring mag for April onwards.

FRANCE

BEZIERS



Like Carcassonne, **Ryanair** has a free run at this small airport. The airport is showing some new Ryanair services for next summer, including from **Bristol, Edinburgh, Manchester and Stansted.**

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
LUTON	2	RYANAIR

CARCASSONNE

Ryanair remains the sole operator here, but like Beziers, **is planning new services in summer 2022**, this time from **Cork and Edinburgh.**

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

MONTPELLIER

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
GATWICK	7-9	EASYJ



PERPIGNAN



Sad news is that yet again we have a winter with **no direct UK flights.** **Ryanair** will restart **Birmingham** and **Stansted** service at the end of March. They also **plan to operate from Perpignan to Agadir, Charleroi, Lisbon and Marrakech.** As yet **Aer Lingus** have not indicated when their **Dublin flights** will operate.

TOULOUSE / BLAGNAC



There tends to be more flights to Toulouse from UK regional airport in the winter due to **skiing opportunities**, with **Andorra** not too far away. **Jet2** are planning a **Manchester service for the summer.**

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
BRISTOL	2-4	EASYJET
EDINBURGH	2	RYANAIR
GATWICK	1-7	EASYJET
HEATHROW	13	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. 54 of these from Gatwick alone.**

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
BIRMINGHAM	2	JET2 10 Feb-31 March
	5	RYANAIR
	4	VUELING
BRISTOL	3-6	EASYJET
EDINBURGH	6	RYANAIR
GATWICK	15-19	EASYJET
	35	VUELING
HEATHROW	52	BRITISH AIRWAYS
LEEDS-BRADFORD	2	JET 10 Feb-31 Mar
LIVERPOOL	2	RYANAIR
LUTON	2-3	EASYJET
	4	RYANAIR
MANCHESTER	1-3	EASYJET
	2-4	JET2
	7	RYANAIR
STANSTED	5	VUELING
	22	RYANAIR
DUBLIN	10	AER LINGUS
	14	RYANAIR
	4	VUELING

GIRONA

Jet2 are showing a return to the airport from April 2022 from many UK airports. Although **Ryanair** too had no plans for winter services, a late change of heart saw service from **Dublin and Stansted**. For the summer season **Ryanair** are planning a significant number of services to the UK and Ireland. Planned are ; **Bournemouth, Bristol, Cork, Dublin, Knock, Leeds-Bradford, and Stansted**, also possibly **Luton and Manchester**. For the summer **Jet2** are planning services from **Birmingham, Bristol, East Midlands, Leeds-Bradford, Manchester, Newcastle and Stansted**.

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



**What do you call a flying primate?
A hot air baboon.**

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Blue TO CHASE AWAY THE BLUES

Winter can be tough for humans as well as animals – especially if you suffer from seasonal affective disorder (SAD). But sunshine can boost your mood and, happily, that's something the P-O has a lot of, even at this time of year. Though the wind may be cold it keeps the clouds away, and bright days and colours – such a variety of blues! - can make your heart sing.



MOON OVER CANIGOU



In winter **the sun may be lower than the moon** in those blue skies above our mountains.



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

www.mediterraneanpyrenees.com
Twitter @66warblers

NATURE ALLY

Blue TO CHASE AWAY THE BLUES

The Med can look sooo inviting – and plenty of people leap into it on New Year’s Day ...



... but it's not for the faint-hearted!



Even the gulls can be hesitant.

February’s weather is billed as the worst of the year here, and yet some nectarine trees are already beginning to bloom, along with almond and many other flowers – cultivated or otherwise.

BRIGHT GOLD MIMOSA IS AT ITS MOST STUNNING AGAINST A CLEAR BLUE SKY



You might not associate **February** with insects, but **all early flowers – many of which are blue – provide welcome nectar for a variety of bumblebees.**

BUMBLEBEES’ HAIRY BODIES CAN WITHSTAND TEMPERATURES FAR LOWER THAN HONEYBEES CAN COPE WITH.

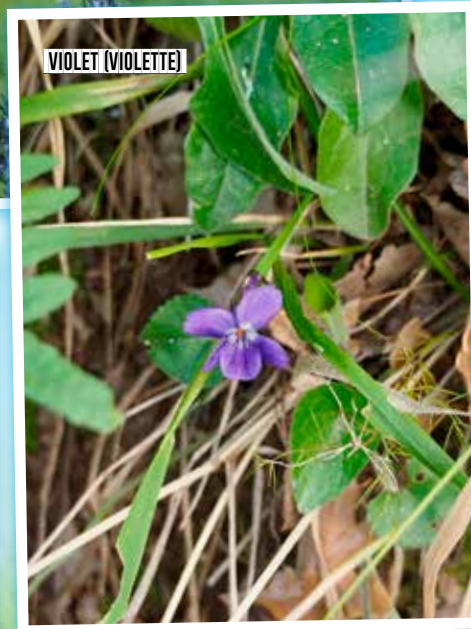


The first **HUMMINGBIRD HAWKMOths** may also appear.



P-O Life NATURAL ALLY

Blue TO CHASE AWAY THE BLUES



Winter in the P-O can be an uplifting time of year!

P-O Life

LEST WE FORGET

Betty Pack: All's Fair in Love and War

Built way back in 990AD, the Château de Castelnuou has survived sieges, crusades, family feuds and wars. It has also been the base of one of the most successful Allied spies of World War II, American debutante and sexy séductrice Betty Pack, alias Cynthia, agent for Britain's MI-6 and America's OSS .



This 'femme fatale' with 'radiant smile and emerald-green eyes' used beauty and brains to seduce diplomats and officials across the globe in exchange for their bedroom secrets, including **vital information about Vichy collaborators, naval codes for the Vichy flotilla, and even Germany's famous Enigma code machines.**

Described as having a 'shaky moral compass', she seduced her way into many a collaborator's bed during the Occupation of France.

One of these was **Charles Brousse, press attaché at the Vichy French embassy in Washington, who she later married.** After the Armistice, **they came back to settle in the Château de Castelnuou.** She died in 1963 and is buried along with her two dogs in a discreet corner of the castle's grounds. In 1970 Brousse was electrocuted by his electric blanket, a fire which damaged much of the castle, which his chauffeur inherited but was unable to maintain. **The castle was abandoned, sold, resold until it was finally bought by the Department of the Pyrénées Orientales in 2018.**

When asked after the war about her questionable morals, **she said "My superiors told me that the results of my work saved thousands of British and American lives. Wars are not won by respectable methods."**

'The Last Goodnight' by **Howard Blum** uses personal diaries and unclassified files to look back on the life of the glamorous, determined, yet troubled and unsung **World War II heroine who became known as the Blonde Bond.** He describes his book as 'as much a psychological detective story as a suspenseful non-fiction spy thriller'.



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Give us this day,
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The great French baguette, (meaning stick or baton) has long been the iconic symbol of French bread culture. In fact, by French law, it contains only 4 ingredients – flour, yeast, salt and water. However, today it is just one of a mind boggling selection of different types of bread. Here's a little bit of useful vocabulary to help you to recognise which side your bread it buttered on when you visit the boulangerie.

- le pain..... (bread)
- ...azyme - unleavened bread
- ...de campagne - farmhouse bread
- ...complet - wholemeal bread
- ...d'épices - gingerbread
- ...grillé - toast
- ...au lait - sweet bread bun
- ...perdu - eggy bread
- ...de seigle - rye bread
- ...de son - bran bread
- ...multi céréales – multi-grain bread
- ...biologique (pain bio) - organic bread
- ...au levain - traditionally made yeast
- ...de mie - sliced, packed sandwich bread
- ...au pavot - with poppy seeds ideas?
- ...de seigle noir – dark rye bread (pumpernickel)

- une baguette – french stick
- un petit pain – roll
- une flûte – similar to baguette, slightly fatter
- une ficelle (lit. string) – very thin baguette
- un bâtard – thick, long French stick
- la croûte – crust
- croustillant – crusty
- une tranche (de pain) – slice (of bread)
- la fougasse - lattice-shaped Provençal bread
- enfourner – to put the bread in the oven
- tranché – sliced
- la levure – yeast

SOME FRENCH BREAD EXPRESSIONS

- Avoir du pain sur la planche**
to have a lot on your plate
- C'est du pain bénit** – It's a godsend
- Ca ne mange pas de pain**
you've got nothing to lose
- Partir comme des petits pains**
to sell like hot cakes
- Long comme un jour sans pain**
very long (and often boring) time



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

- Excellente agence, des personnes dynamiques et professionnelles. Ma maison vendue en quelques semaines. Merci, je recommande Artaxa. Mr. R
- Artaxa went over and above the normal estate agency remit to help us sell our house. I highly recommend their professionalism. Mr. S

VENDU



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DID YOU KNOW

THE EXCUSE WE NEEDED....
Middle-aged women who drink a **couple of glasses of wine every day** may potentially enjoy a 'healthier old age' and a reduced risk of stroke, than women who only drink occasionally!

A study carried out by Harvard University in Boston into the drinking habits of more than fourteen thousand women revealed that those who partook of one or two glasses of wine most days in middle age had a **28 per cent better chance of 'successfully surviving'** to old age, compared with non-drinkers or occasional binge drinkers.
Cheers ladies! (hic)

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Test your FRENCH

See Page 70 for answers

1 E pour église!

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

- | | | | |
|-------------|----|---|--|
| évier | 1 | a | qui ne pense qu'à soi-même |
| épave | 2 | b | étendue d'eau douce |
| étroit | 3 | c | bassin fixé au mur |
| étiquette | 4 | d | qui ne laisse pas passer l'eau |
| épouvantail | 5 | e | mari ou femme |
| éprouver | 6 | f | morceau de carton avec renseignements dessus |
| époux | 7 | g | qui fait peur aux oiseaux |
| étanche | 8 | h | retirer la peau |
| étang | 9 | i | bateau au fond de la mer |
| égoïste | 10 | j | contraire de large |

To wish someone a good day in the late afternoon....
Bonne fin de journée

Réflexions sur le confinement

Une pensée particulière pour tous les hommes qui ont dit à leur femmes "je vais le faire quand j'aurais le temps"

WHAT THE DEVIL.....

One of longest words in the French dictionary
-hexakosioihexekontahexaphobie -
(29 letters) describes a fear of the number 666.



NEW WORDS IN THE FRENCH DICTIONARY

Quatorzaine
quarantine of 14 days
déconfinement
coming out of confinement
distanciation physique...
keeping your distance

3 Fill in the blanks with the words below

Un homme 1 au cinéma et est très 2 de trouver une femme 3 un gros chien poilu assis 4 lui. Encore plus étonnant est le fait que le 5 rit toujours aux bons endroits tout au long de la 6 "Excusez-moi" dit l'homme "mais je 7 que c'est étonnant que votre chien 8 clairement le 9"

"Je suis moi-même surpris" répond la femme. Il a 10 le livre! "

a apprécie b pense c chien d film e devant
f détesté g comédie h va i surpris j avec

2 Can you finish off these well known similes... and do them as quick as a flash?

- | | | | |
|---|----|---|---------------------|
| Myope comme... (Blind as a bat) | 1 | a | une casserole |
| Pleuvoir comme ... (Easy as A,B,C) | 2 | b | le monde |
| Dormir comme... (Sleep like a log) | 3 | c | un clou |
| Manger comme ... (Eat like a horse) | 4 | d | un pot |
| Sourd comme ... (Deaf as a post) | 5 | e | un taupe |
| Maigre comme... (Thin as a lath) | 6 | f | un loir |
| Chanter comme ... (Sing badly) | 7 | g | une vache espagnole |
| Rire comme ... (Laugh your head off) | 8 | h | une baleine |
| Vieux comme... (Old as time) | 9 | i | quatre |
| Parler français comme... (Speak french badly) | 10 | j | vache qui pisse |



GRAMMAR TIP

Eeeee ('cos that's how you pronounce it)
Depending on how you use it, Y can mean there, itor be completely lost in translation. Here are a few set expressions, which just need learning off by heart

Allons-y
Let's go (there)

J'y vais
I'm going (there)

On y va (?)
Let's go (Shall we go?)

Ça y est
That's it, it's done

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

Il y a
There is, there are

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

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

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

y compris
including



Great word

Flipper -
to freak out
Eg J'ai flippé!

Useful Expression

À la limite....
If the worst comes to the worst, at the end of the day....



4 Can you match up these French proverbs with their English equivalents?

- | | | | |
|--|----|---|---|
| Mieux vaut prévenir que guérir | 1 | a | Don't count your chickens before they hatch |
| Qui dort dîne | 2 | b | Never say never |
| Il ne faut pas vendre la peau de l'ours avant de l'avoir tué | 3 | c | Better safe than sorry |
| On n'apprend pas à un vieux singe à faire des grimaces | 4 | d | No pain, no gain |
| L'habit ne fait pas le moine | 5 | e | You can't teach an old dog new tricks |
| Il ne faut jamais dire "Fontaine, je ne boirai pas de ton eau" | 6 | f | Every cloud has a silver lining |
| Un bouillon de chou fait perdre au médecin cinq sous | 7 | g | An apple a day keeps the doctor away |
| Impossible n'est pas français | 8 | h | There is no such word as 'can't' |
| Après la pluie, le beau temps | 9 | i | He who sleeps forgets his hunger. |
| Il faut casser le noyau pour avoir l'amande | 10 | j | Don't judge a book by its cover |



Quel est le café préféré des Espagnols ?
Le café Olé

FEELING CHILDISH?
SAY.....
Caca-boudin (Yucky pool!)

LANGUAGE TIP

Aller chez or aller à (au - aux) ?

chez + person

Je vais chez le docteur
il va chez le boulanger

à/au/aux + place

je vais au cabinet médical
il va à la boulangerie

Useful Expression
Il est facile à vivre
He's easy to live with

Even more useful for the ladies
Il n'est pas facile à vivre!!

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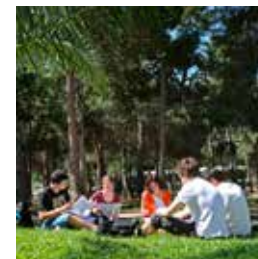
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Tongue twister (virelangue)

Améliorez votre ANGLAIS

See Page 70 for answers

Repeat quickly x 3

The sixth sick sheik's sixth sheep's sick

1 L is for Life!

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

- | | | |
|---------------|---|--|
| ladder 1 | a | Young sheep |
| lark 2 | b | Pretty cloth with holes in |
| launderette 3 | c | Small round beetle, red with black spots |
| lamb 4 | d | Steps for climbing |
| lawn 5 | e | Not wanting to work |
| lane 6 | f | Washing machines for the public |
| lavatory 7 | g | Small bird with long pointed wings |
| lazy 8 | h | Smooth ground covered in grass |
| lace 9 | i | Toilet |
| ladybird 10 | j | Narrow road or track |

Blaque Bête

Doctor, I need an appointment. I think I've become invisible.
Sorry, I can't see you today.

Word of the Year

Cwtch (Welsh, pronounced 'kutch', rhyming with 'butch')
A special hug that makes you feel safe in the world.
(hug – calin)

2 Qui est Jaques? Je ne sais pas...mais il y a beaucoup d'idiomes en anglais avec son nom. Trouvez leur équivalent en Français.

- | | | |
|----------------------|---|---|
| Jack-o'-lantern 1 | a | Ça va pour moi! (et tant pis pour les autres) |
| Jack Frost 2 | b | Abandonner, quitter quelque chose |
| Jack of all trades 3 | c | Un jeune frimeur |
| Jack-in-a-box 4 | d | Un abruti |
| Jack-ass 5 | e | Un touche-à-tout |
| Jack it in 6 | f | Une citrouille d'Halloween |
| Jack the lad 7 | g | Le Général Hiver |
| I'm all right Jack 8 | h | Un diable à ressort |

USEFUL EXPRESSION
Before you could say Jack Robinson
en un clin d'œil/ avant d'avoir pu dire "ouf"

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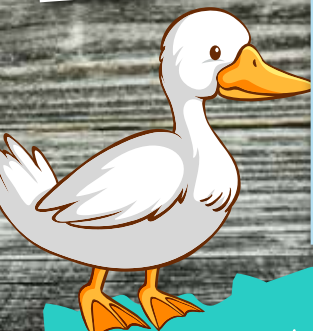


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3 Trouvez l'équivalent en français pour ces expressions anglaises

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------|----|---|--|
| That's beside the point | 1 | a | Ça fait réfléchir |
| I'm going to hit the sack | 2 | b | Ça n'a rien à voir |
| Sit tight | 3 | c | Il est très distrait |
| He's loaded | 4 | d | Il n'y a aucune bruit |
| What a couch potato | 5 | e | Je l'ai acheté pour pas grand-chose |
| I bought it dirt cheap | 6 | f | Il est blindé |
| That's food for thought! | 7 | g | Quel mollasson! |
| He is extremely absent minded | 8 | h | Je me couche |
| You can hear a pin drop | 9 | i | Elle est plus gentille qu'elle n'a l'air |
| Her bark is worse than her bite | 10 | j | Patientez |

Cute joke
What do you call a magic dog
A labracadabrador



Rather Bad JOKE

A duck goes to the chemist.
- A tube of **lipsil** please.
- Certainly, that will be 1,50 €.
- Put it on my bill, please.
(bill – addition OU bec)

4 Argot oui, mais méchant? Non. Trouvez les équivalents

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|------------------|
| To throw a wobbly | 1 | a | Pas de problème |
| Stark raving bonkers! | 2 | b | Decontracté |
| Laid back | 3 | c | Une tasse de thé |
| A brew/cuppa | 4 | d | Je te soutiens |
| My bad | 5 | e | Piquer une crise |
| No biggie | 6 | f | Fou |
| I've got you | 7 | g | Mon erreur |
| I'm in | 8 | h | Je suis partant |

Useful Phrase
Deal with it! - Débrouille-toi!

NEW WORDS IN THE DICTIONARY

Double vaxxed – having received two vaccinations against a disease
Range anxiety - concern of electric car driver that the battery may not last until the next charging point.



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TEST your FRENCH

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

AMÉLIOREZ your ANGLAIS

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



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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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Musée d'Art Hyacinthe Rigaud, Perpignan... 04 68 66 19 83
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MUSIC Musée des Instruments, Céret 04 68 87 40 40
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Théâtre de l'Archipel, Perpignan 04 68 62 62 00
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Théâtre de l'Etang, Saint Estève..... 04 68 38 34 95
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And also FNAC, Perpignan - www.fnac.com

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Argelès Heritage & Culture 04 68 81 42 74
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..... www.argeles-sur-mer.com.uk

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

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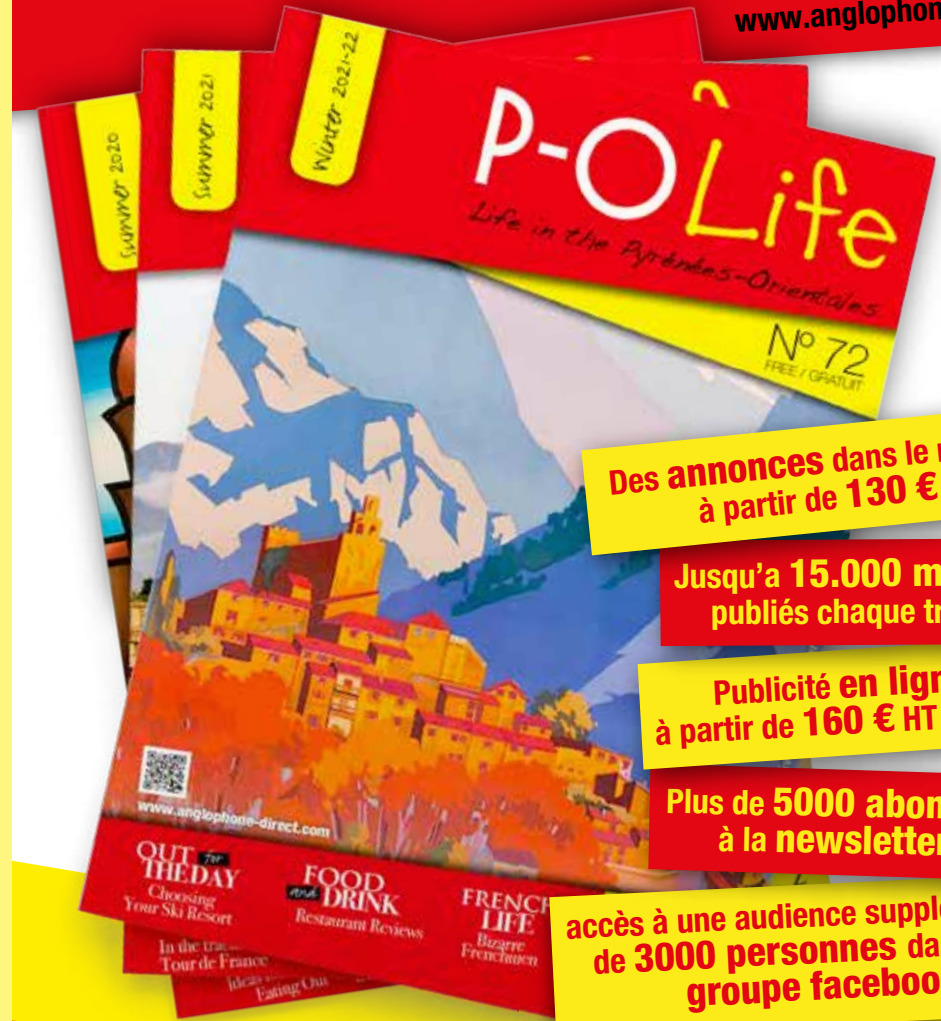
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www.lesangles.com f: LesAnglesSki..... 04 68 04 32 76

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Place de la République (Village) www.portbarcares.com

Roussillon Conflent Tourist Office 04 68 57 99 00
Place Henri Demay, Ille sur Têt .www.tourisme-roussillon-conflent.fr

St Cyprien Tourist Office, St Cyprien Port..... 04 68 21 01 33
Quai Arthur Rimbaud.....www.tourisme-saint-cyprien.com

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