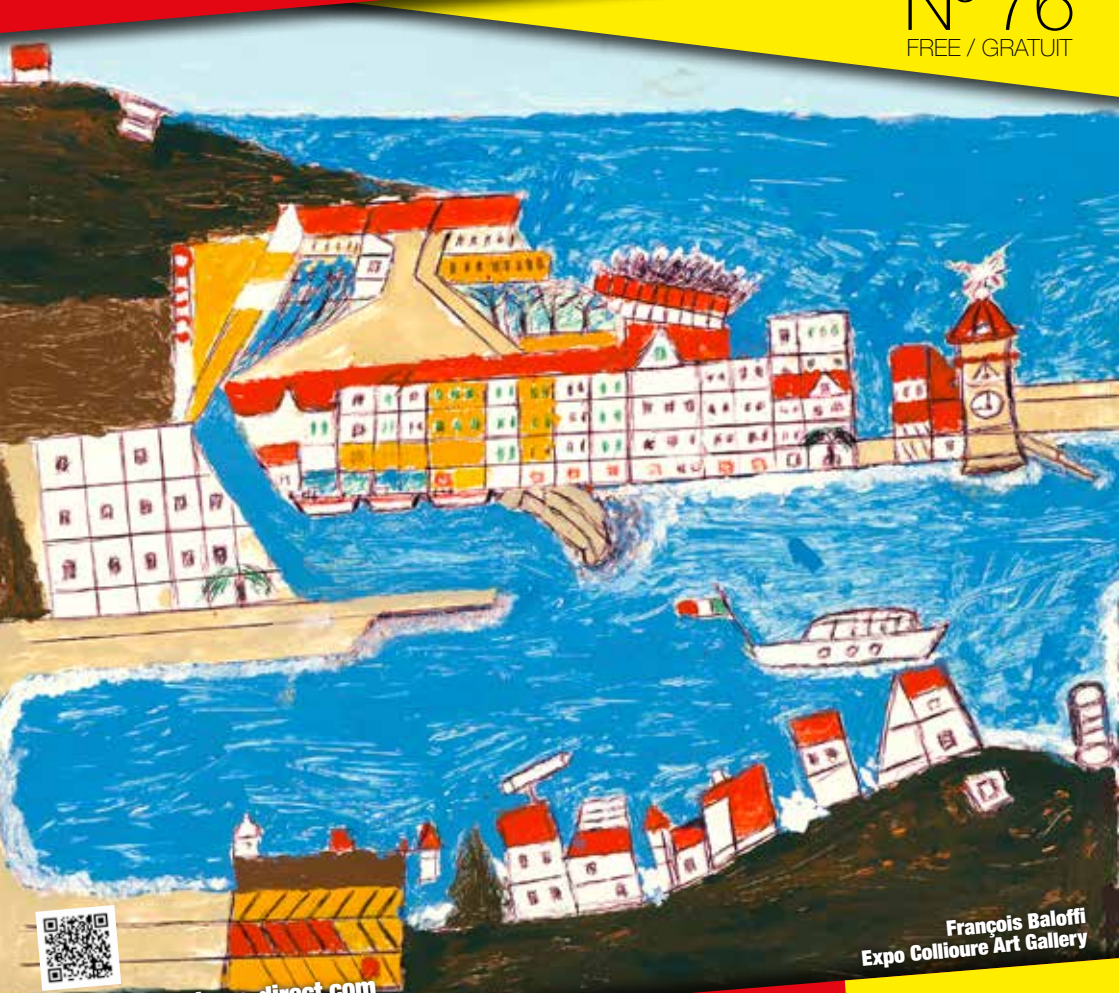


Winter 2022-23

P-O Life

Life in the Pyrénées-Orientales

N° 76
FREE / GRATUIT



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François Baloffi
Expo Collioure Art Gallery

OUT *for*
THE DAY
Sometimes
it rains!

French
LIFE
Growing old
in France

FOOD
and **DRINK**
Reader
Restaurant
Reviews

TEST *your*
FRENCH
AMÉLIOREZ
*vo*tre **ANGLAIS**



CARNAVAL

Sunday, February 26

15h, departure from the Post Office (Route Nationale)

Saturday, March 4

20h, departure from the Post Office (Route Nationale)
followed by the **Carnival Ball** at Espace Jean-Carrère

Sunday, March 26

15h, departure from the Post Office (Route Nationale)



ville-argelessurmer.fr

Edito ☺



From one sheet of folded-over A4 in 2005, meet the team behind P-O Life Mag today.

So lucky to have **my fab friend and partner, Laura** at my side, turning my chaos into order and remembering all the things that I forget!

Then there is our **amazing P-O Life designer**, the magnificent **Maite** from Barcelona: patient, (she has to be with all the mistakes we make) thoughtful and just the right side of zany, she makes sure that P-O Life looks and feels like fun. **Our belle Isabelle keeps the wolf from the door**, the most difficult job of all, finding finance to keep us free and made out of paper. Warm and lovely, easy smile, but made out of steel when we need it.

And not forgetting **Oscar from Madrid, creator and maintainer of our website**, our only boy, he puts up with so much and never ever says "I already showed you how to do that 5 times"! What a team!

A big THANK YOU to the many talented and generous people who contribute to P-O Life, keeping content current, policing our occasionally turbulent social media. We couldn't do it without you!

And **of course to our readers...** thank you for accompanying us on days out, for continuing to smile and tut at our bad jokes, for supporting our advertisers who make the printing and production of P-O Life possible... P-O Life would quite simply not exist without you.

Wishing you sunshine and laughter to warm your winter. Fins aviat!!

Kate



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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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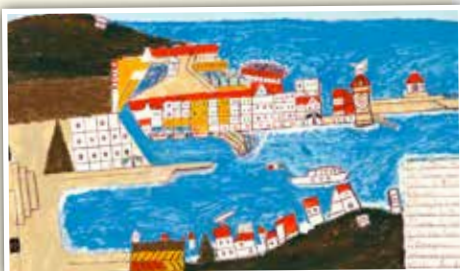
EDITORIAL

For editorial queries & comments: info@anglophone-direct.com 06 79 61 96 46 (editorial only)

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COSPRONS

Circular from le Pont de l'Amour

(LENGTH 5.3KM, ASCENT/DESCENT 230M)



A delightful circular walk of approximately 2h with good paths and short ascents and descents inland from Port Vendres. Suitable as a family walk. No-stress parking away from town.



Walking boots recommended.

Waymarked yellow. Suitable at any time of year except immediately after torrential rain, as route crosses several stream beds



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

START

Park on gravel area on right off roundabout at exit of dual carriageway N914 approaching Port Vendres. The road up to lotissement (housing estate) le Pont de l'Amour is to the left as you turn off the roundabout but don't go this way; turn right into parking area to side of roundabout.



THE WALK

Take road up towards lotissement. Path is waymarked with yellow boards halfway up on right. Take this path, which soon runs between 2 stone walls.

Lotissement will be across valley on left. After approx 20 minutes emerge onto D86a.

Cross directly opposite to right of 2 storage tanks and take track to right of stone cabin. Rise gently alongside vineyard to reach crossing of tracks. Go straight across and descend to cross stream bed just after path becomes single track.



Follow path left above narrow road until you join it at the end of its tarmac section. Turn left onto double track with a holiday hideaway cottage on left, with vines on right.

Path turns right down vineyard towards the stone water tower of Cosprons. Look out for single path on left before right hand bend on track. Path leads to a road. Cross it to continue downhill across dry stream bed then up to the impressive water tower. (45-50 mins to this point).



Over the past few months, you'll probably have noticed wrinkly black olives scattered around the bases of unpicked olive trees. In fact, did you know that the perfect black olives that you buy in tins are very pretty and shiny because they are cured in an alkaline solution, and treated with oxygen and an iron compound (ferrous gluconate), which turns their skins black, - and affects their flavour of course. If you're looking for healthy and tasty black olives, don't go for the shiny black ones, (marked 'confites' here in France) as they're the least natural of the lot!



COSPRONS

Circular from le Pont de l'Amour



According to legend, the village of Cosprons grew up following a miracle. A fisherman from the Bay of Paulilles caught a statue of Christ on the cross in his nets. Amazed, he loaded his catch onto his donkey to take back to his village. When they arrived, the donkey refused to stop and continued walking until he reached the top of the hill, where he stopped and refused to move any further.

A donkey with Christ on the Cross was of course interpreted as a divine sign and the villagers built the **Église Sainte-Marie on the spot**. The village of Cosprons grew up around the church.

The painted wooden statue of Christ on the cross, called '**Christ marin**' because of the legend of its discovery can still be seen in the church.



> Cosprons church



> Christ marine



Around the tower is a garden planted with olive trees. Here you will find a memorial sculpture for Olivier Ferrand, a local man who died in 2012 and set up the Terra Nova Foundation, an internationally well known French independent liberal think tank. The sculpture is in metal and in 2 parts.



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PORT-VENDRES: Splendid, bright apartment of approx 87sq.m. Large living-room, fully equipped kitchen, 3 bedrooms, 2 large terraces. **Must see!**

PRICE: 363 000 €



LAROQUE DES ALBÈRES: Detached villa of 142 sq.m with 4 bedrooms, one en-suite with dressing room. **Heated swimming pool and garage.** Close to shops.

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COSPRONS

Circular from le Pont de l'Amour

Descend to left of water tower and continue left, **below the church, to emerge on main street in hamlet of Cosprons** (Alt 39m).

A waymarker indicates a route to **the Vinaigrerie of La Guinelle**, for those who may be interested.



VINEGAR...NATURALLY

Surrounded as they are by some of the most renowned vineyards in the region, it seems only natural that the vinegar produced at the **Vinaigrerie de la Guinelle** should be based on sweet and aromatic grapes from local vineyards.

Aged outdoors beneath the Mediterranean sun, **the Vinaigrerie de la Guinelle is the only vinaigrerie in France producing its vinegars with traditional wine based methods, organic and natural, without additives.** The vinegar is only good if the wine is good.

Try before you buy....**Vinaigre de Banyuls Rouge, Vinaigre de Banyuls Blanc, fruity vinegars, nutty vinegars....** but remember you have to carry it back!

Soon pass a ruined cabin on left. After a further half km, on the corner of zig zag in road, turn left onto double track which descends between cut out rock into vineyards. (A path opposite, on right, continues down to Paulilles and Banyuls).

HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT THE 'TRAGINERS'?

These 'muletiers' (muleteers) were former Catalan traders who travelled from village to village selling coal, wood, fabric and food, carried on the back of mules. Many of the tracks we walk today were originally forged by these sturdy beasts.

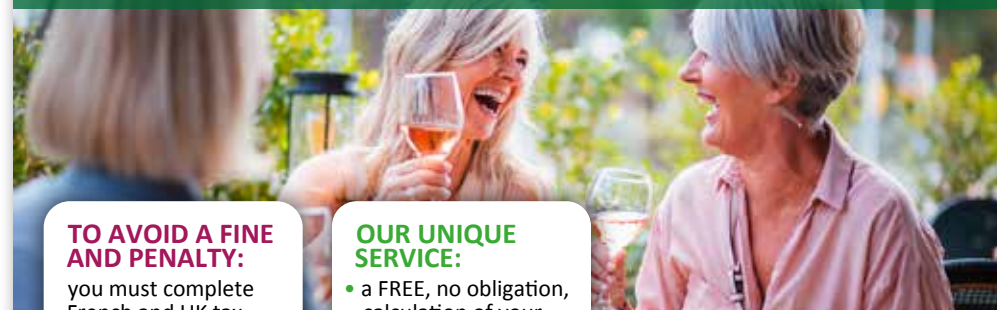
Find out more at the « Maison de l'Histoire » in Le Boulou, a small, free museum documenting the history of Le Boulou from prehistory to present day.



After 20 metres fork right onto single track in vineyard and soon bend right above large ruined Mas. At a large pine tree the path drops down into valley, across dry stream bed, past vines and over a rickety wooden bridge to cross another stream bed. Follow the stream bed left a few metres before going up into vineyard and following the chemin muletier over rock and up to a cabin near a road where you can see Paulilles to the right.



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HANKY PANKY IN THE RANK(Y)S

Roman Emperor Claudius II wasn't against a bit of hanky-panky in the ranks, but **actual marriage was forbidden in his army, as he believed that married men made poor soldiers.**

Along came **Saint Valentine, patron saint of lovers**, but also of bee keepers, plague victims and epilepsy sufferers! (It's a hard job but somebody has to do it!) According to legend, our Val, worried that soldiers would nevertheless abuse their Christianity by indulging in the sin of extra marital nooky, performed secret wedding ceremonies to encourage them to remain faithful Christians.

Caught out by Claudius, he was imprisoned and later beheaded for his sins on February 14, 270 AD. **Happy Saint Valentine's Day!**



Happy Valentine's Day

'PARTIR' À CERBÈRE

Described as a sort of «bourgeois Lady Chatterley's Lover », French film '*Partir*' was partly filmed in the Languedoc-Roussillon and stars Kristin Scott Thomas, a married lady who falls for her builder. Whilst the main filming took place in Nîmes, several scenes were filmed in Cerbère.



KRISTIN SCOTT THOMAS SERGI LOPEZ YVAN ATTAL
PARTIR
un film de CATHERINE CORSINI

COSPRONS

Circular from le Pont de l'Amour

FOLLOW YOUR ASS

There are 'chemins muletiers' or mule tracks throughout the Pyrenees as hardy mules and donkeys were used for transporting people and goods in the mountainous terrain. They brought ice down the mountains from the ice wells, delivered food to isolated dwellings and helped out with the vendange. Distinguishable by their height of 1,45m – 1,60m, the Catalan donkey is typically black or brown, with a white circle around the eyes, white nose and belly. They are also known to be stubborn, solid and agile...and you may well have noticed a donkey sticker on the back of cars, on T shirts etc, the unofficial national symbol, el burro, of Catalonia!



> footpath to Col del Mitg

Cross the road to follow footpath to Col del Mitg (Alt 101m). At the Col where you see Port Vendres laid out below you, cross the road to descend the slope behind the houses of the lotissement (signed Port Vendres).



After the houses, look out for path on left which takes you the few metres up to the approach road into the lotissement le Pont de l'Amour, **near a bench. Descend the road to return to parking area.**

CHICKEN BAKED IN VINEGAR

with Hilary Cacchio

When I first moved to the Vallespir my friend found it highly amusing that visiting the local vinegar producers within the region was one of my top priorities despite the fact that I was sleeping on an air-bed having not found the time to buy a bed!

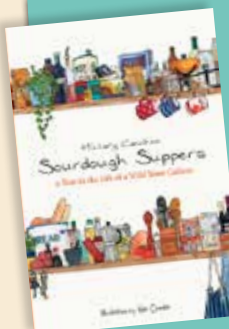
I have been impressed by the difference in the styles and tastes of the vinegars available from the Vallespir vineyards.

I was told by one vineyard in Cosprons that I am the only English visitor they have ever received, I can only hope that I made a good impression on behalf of England!

The use of vinegar is not new to Catalan cookery and was probably introduced by the Moors.

Throughout the spring and summer the farmer's markets in the Vallespir are laden with baskets of tiny potatoes (the size of marbles) and bunched fresh onions (like huge spring onions) and these ingredients, along with the wealth of show-stopping vinegars from the region inspired this dish.

Visit Hilary's blog for a slightly more modern take on Catalan recipes, or order her new book, **Sourdough Suppers'** on Amazon.fr or ebay.fr or by email at hilaryjj@btinternet.com



INGREDIENTS:

- > 2 Large Coeur de Bœuf Tomato (Beef Tomatoes) or Marmande tomatoes chopped into bite-size pieces
- > 4 Cloves of Garlic (ideally new season) with the skins removed and chopped in half lengthways if particularly large
- > 2 Tendre Oignons, peeled and chopped into quarters (or eighths if the bulbs are particularly large) and roughly chop the green shoot (you can use spring onions)
- > 200g Tiny New Potatoes
- > 45 mls Good Quality Red Wine Vinegar (I use Treloar)
- > 45 mls Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- > 1/4 Tsp Pimente d'Esplette or Cayenne Pepper
- > 2 Cuisses de Poulet (chicken leg and thigh joints)
- > 200g Boudin Blanc or White Pudding cut into 2 cm pieces (optional)
- > Bunch of Parsley roughly chopped
- > 4 Handfuls of Rocket Seasoning
- > 24cm Paella Pan



- > Preheat Oven to 150°C
- > In medium-sized bowl whisk together vinegar, oil, Pimente d'Esplette/Cayenne Pepper, and seasoning. Add tomatoes, garlic, onions, and new potatoes into the bowl and toss to coat thoroughly.
- > Put chicken joints into paella pan and pour tomato/potato mixture over chicken, ensuring it is well-coated. If you are using Boudin Blanc/white pudding, sprinkle over chicken too. Put paella pan into preheated oven for 1 hour.
- > Toss chicken and vegetables in the pan to recoat with juices and vinegar, turn oven up to 200C, and return paella pan to oven for 30 minutes.
- > When 30 minutes is up, remove chicken and keep warm. Turn oven up to 225C and return vegetables to brown for about 10 minutes. Return chicken to paella pan and sprinkle over parsley.
- > Spread rocket over a large serving platter and tip chicken, vegetables and cooking juices from paella pan onto the platter.
- > Serve immediately.

Sometimes it rains...



Consistently averaging over 300 days of sunshine each year, the P-O is one of the driest regions in France...but sometimes it rains!

Here are a few suggestions of things to do and places to go when the sun hasn't got his hat on.

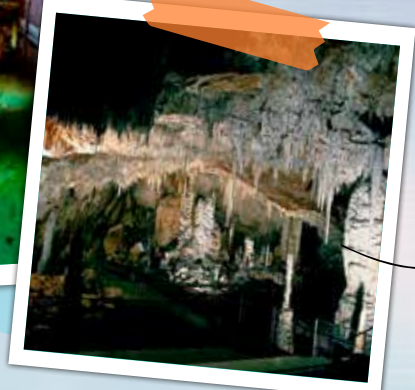
PAMPER

Join **Fit66** for pilates and personal training, try a massage with **Léa Rom** or **Huna Mana** in Céret or **Flordaki** in Thuir, pop into **Sam's Salon** for some hair care or, from 1st April, head up to the fabulous **Falgos** Golf course (no golf today, remember it's raining!) for **sauna, jacuzzi and general beautification!**

Search names on our website at www.anglophone-direct.com or just Google them

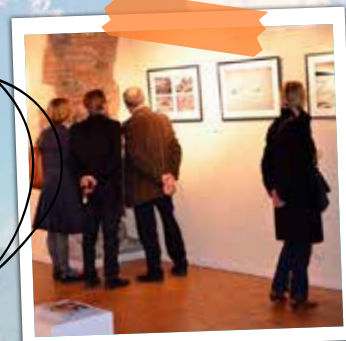
CAVES

Not far from the ski slopes of Formiguères, the impressive caves of Fontrabiouse are set on two levels, with chamber after chamber of geological marvels: **an underground lake, hundreds of stalagmites and stalactites in a spectacular array of colours...**and unique conditions for maturing wine, so you can even taste as you visit!



ART

How about a breath of art and culture in Céret and Collioure at their **Musées d'art moderne**, in Perpignan at the **Musée d'art Hyacinthe Rigaud**, the **Espace des Arts in Le Boulou**, the **Collection François Desnoyer in Saint Cyrien** village or the **Galerie Marianne in Argelès sur Mer**.



THEATRE

Theatre at prices you can afford at the **Théâtre de l'Étang, Saint Estève** or cinema, sometimes in English language or with English subtitles, at the **Ciné Movida (Mega Castillet)** next to Jardiland or **Cinéma Castillet** in Perpignan centre.

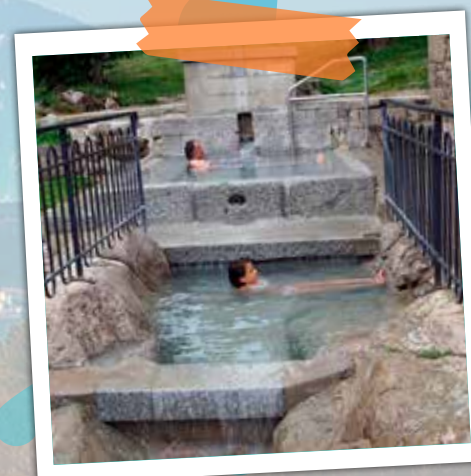


WINE

The **Caves Byrrh in Thuir** boast the biggest oak barrel in the world. A fascinating guided tour takes you through the station concourse, shows you how the wines are flavoured and fortified to make the aperitifs, passes by evocative old advertising posters and ends with a tasting. Or **pop in and say hello to any of our oenophile partners such as Mas Cristine 'tween Saint-André and Argelès, Terrasous in Céret or Terrats, Cave le Carignan in Laroque des Albères...**or just try a new winery near to chez vous.

GET INTO HOT WATER

Get wet in the rain at **St Thomas les Bains or Baths of Llo**, naturally hot baths up in the mountains. Or try the rather more 'rustic' **Roman Baths of Dorres**, with magnificent view of **Carlit's peak**, and the mountains separating France from Spain.



CASTLES

There are plenty of forts and castles to wander round too, just oozing with history, including the **forteresse de Salses, Fort Liberia in Villefranche de Conflent, the Palais des Rois de Majorque in Perpignan, the Château Royal in Collioure.....**

MEMORIAL

.....and if you haven't already visited the **Memorial Museum in Rivesaltes**, you really should! A reminder of **how lucky we are to roam freely around this beautiful region.**



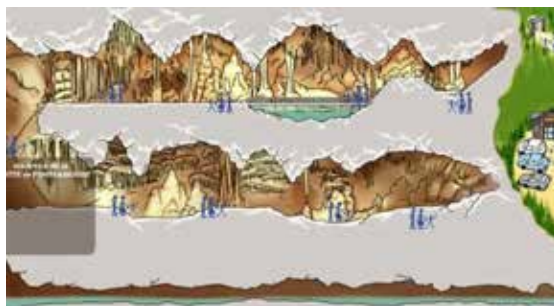
OUT *for* THE DAY

Fontrabiouse Cave Magic!

Why not take some time off the skiing to rest those weary legs - and visit the highest cave in France?

Not far from the ski slopes of Formiguères, the impressive Grotte de Fontrabiouse is set on two levels, a fascinating and perfectly preserved underground world with instructive tour and passionate guide.

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



Grotte de Fontrabiouse

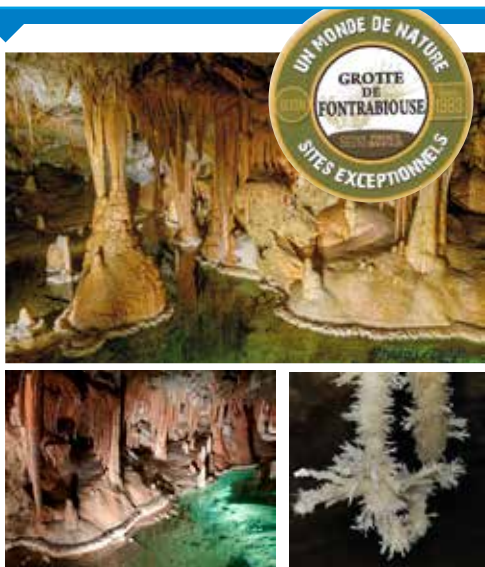
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+ ICE DIVING - DOG PULLED SLEIGH RIDES
BIKE AND SCOOTER IN THE SNOW - SNAKE LUGE

GO WITH THE SNOW

P-0 resorts have had some amazing snowfall over the past few years, often beating the Alps. They're more affordable, less crowded, with plenty of safe, all-levels family skiing alongside exciting and challenging descents. Here are a few basic facts to help you choose the perfect resort for you. Bon ski!



RÉFLECTIONS
Si le ski alpin...
qui a le beurre et la confiture ?



FORMIGUERES

- + Safe and family-orientated
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At an altitude of 507 metres, the panorama from this stunning view point extends along the coastline **from Port-Vendres to Leucate, across the Agly and Têt valleys, over the Albères, Canigou, Carlit... Truly fabulous.**

Força Réal (Royal Fortress) has been many things to many people! Signal tower and fortress for the defence of the Roussillon, welcoming beacon landmark for returning fishermen, hermitage, and today a 'tour de guet' for fire spotting.

Built in 1258 by the kings of Aragon to reinforce Roussillon defences, the original signal tower and small fort, constructed on two adjacent hills, were destroyed in the 17th century. The fort was transformed into an hermitage and 'Conjurador', its function to appease the elements and chase away storms and summer drought.

Unfortunately, the chapel is rarely open, **but masses and processions do take place there on festival and Saints' days.**



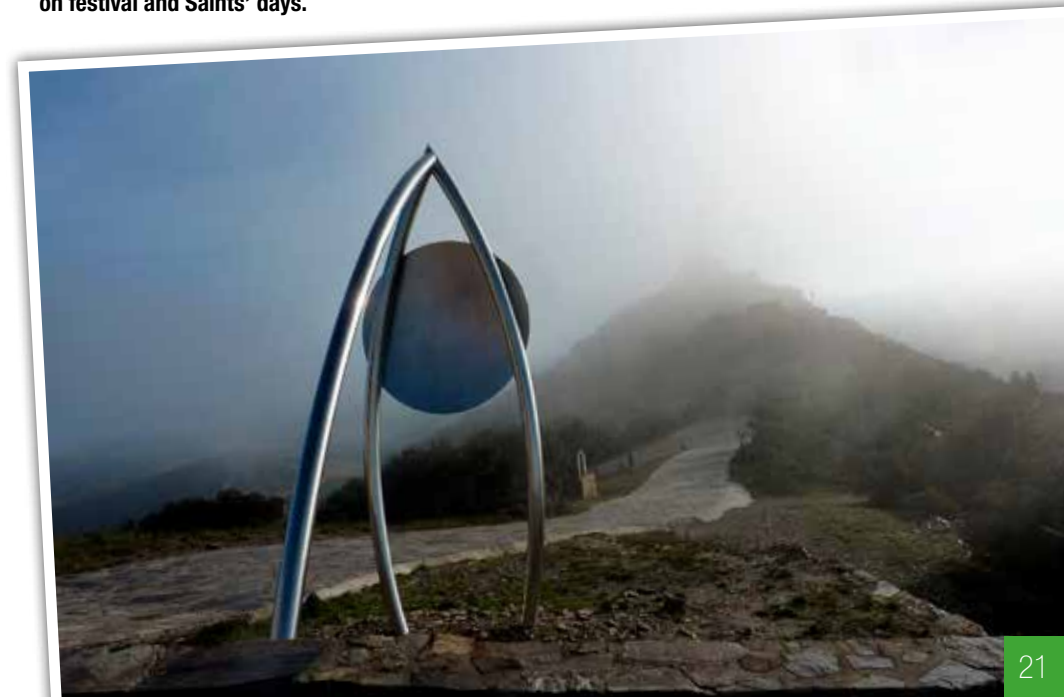
Walk it or drive it FORÇA RÉAL

Sometimes it's nice to just grab a picnic basket, drive somewhere with amazing views, and have a little sit!



Starting off at Millas, on the N116 between Perpignan and Ille sur Têt, follow the signs towards our destination, **Força Réal.**

Follow the winding road up to the large free car park and a short five minute climb will take you up to the pretty chapel with orientation table, passing the fascinating polished steel convex mirror which reflects back the enormous views around you.



OUT ^{for} THE DAY

Walk it or drive it
FORÇA RÉAL

LEGGETT
IMMOBILIER INTERNATIONAL

LOCAL KNOWLEDGE YOU CAN TRUST

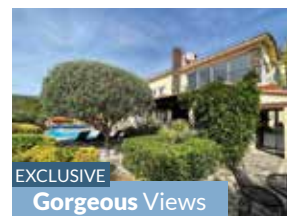


For the more energetic, a labyrinth of well signed walks for all levels, with 'sentier botanique' identifying trees and shrubs, will take you up to a large viewing platform, looking out over the wine villages of Montner, La Tour de France to your far left, Estagel in the distance. Further afield the Corbières and Queribus.



On a clear day, the view will take your breath away.

However, on a windy day, a visit to Força Réal is not recommended unless you wish to lose your hat and anything else that's not well secured to your body!



EXCLUSIVE
Gorgeous Views

Catllar €550,000
Ref: A16528 - Lovely 6 bedroom property with garden, swimming pool and garage.

Agency fees paid by seller.
ENERGY CLASS: E CLIMATE CLASS: E



EXCLUSIVE
Hidden Gem

Finestret €215,000
Ref: A16530 - 3 Bedroom village house with terrace and garage, 5 min from village with amenities.

Agency fees paid by seller.
ENERGY CLASS: F CLIMATE CLASS: C



EXCLUSIVE
Income Potential

Spanish Border €370,000
Ref: A15210 - Stunning 136m² hotel property with 8 bedrooms, close to ski slopes and beaches.

Agency fees paid by seller.
ENERGY CLASS: E CLIMATE CLASS: B



Thuir €715,000
Ref: A17188 - 4 Bedroom house with independent studio, set on almost 8 acres of land.

Agency fees paid by seller.
ENERGY CLASS: C CLIMATE CLASS: A



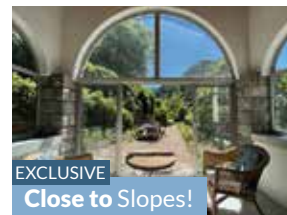
Canet-en-Roussillon €449,000
Ref: A17067 - 2 Bedroom villa with garage and parking, close to beach, port and commerces.

Agency fees paid by seller.
ENERGY CLASS: D CLIMATE CLASS: D



Vinça €124,000
Ref: A14283 - 4 Bedroom village house with garage and views, only 25 min from Perpignan.

Agency fees paid by seller.
ENERGY CLASS: F CLIMATE CLASS: C



EXCLUSIVE
Close to Slopes!

Vernet-les-Bains €250,000
Ref: A15572 - 4 Bedroom house with large garden and views, close to amenities.

Agency fees paid by seller.
ENERGY CLASS: G CLIMATE CLASS: F



Canet-en-Roussillon €305,900
Ref: A16672 - 2 Bedroom apartment with terrace and garage, close to port and beaches.

Agency fees paid by seller.
DPE: N/R



EXCLUSIVE
Great Location

Perpignan €266,000
Ref: A13589 - 4 Bedroom townhouse with independent apartment and garden.

Agency fees paid by seller.
ENERGY CLASS: C CLIMATE CLASS: A



Start your property search today!

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MUSEE D'ART MODERNE Collioure



He depicts groups of children painting, climbing trees or picking flowers. **Movement is also the subject of his drawing of fishermen tugging on ropes, pulling their boats up onto the Boramar beach.**



NEW SHOW WITH OLD FRIENDS
The permanent collection:
1915-2020

By Ellen Turner Hall

The winter exhibition at Collioure's Musée d'art moderne is a survey of artists' visions of Collioure over the last hundred years, starting with Augustin Hanicotte's drawing classes for the gosses (kids) of Collioure (1915-1944).

The **physical struggle of the fisherman** contrasts with Rolande Déchorain's serene view of the village **from the Fort Miradou looking down onto a white sea**. A visitor discovering Collioure, she was struck by the picturesque: **long lines of nets drying on the sandy Faubourg beach or a peaceful street scene with mother**



and child, drying laundry and a reader. François Bernardi (one of Hanicotte's gosses), who worked on the boats and knew firsthand the hard life of the fishermen, drew their faces, hands and feet scored with dramatic black lines. **He paints the vineyards rising directly from the back of the beach, as if crushing the village below.**



A refugee from the Spanish Civil war, **Balbino Giner**, whose portraits of the **Pous family** line the walls of the **Templiers bar**, is represented by a striking self-portrait and an angular ink drawing of two boats with a wavy line to suggest the mountains beyond.



More recent works are remarkable for experimentation with a variety of size, shape, material and sheer playfulness. Don't miss the 3-D ducks of **Joel Desbouiges** on a background of motifs from **Matisse and army camouflage.**

In a collection that takes inspiration from the people, the vines, the boats and the ever-changing moods of the sea, what, you may ask, is permanent?



VISIT THE MUSEUM FROM 3 FEBRUARY UNTIL 14 MAY 2023

Info: www.museecollioure.com

Watch this space for news of the summer 2023 exhibition which will concentrate on the year 1940 and the response of local artists caught between two wars.



Bad joke but good for your french.

(A bit of a ruddy so don't read if you're a bit prim!)



Une femme se plaint à son médecin que son mari ne s'intéresse plus au sexe.

Le médecin lui dit

"Par hasard, j'ai ici quelque chose qui est encore expérimental. On n'en connaît pas tous les effets encore. Vous voulez l'essayer quand même ?"

La femme décide de l'essayer, et une semaine plus tard, elle revient voir le médecin et lui dit

"Docteur, ces pilules ont super bien marché! Je lui en ai donné 2 juste avant le repas, et 5 minutes plus tard, il s'est levé de table, il a balayé du bras tout ce qui traînait sur la table, plats, couverts, assiettes, il m'a attrapée et a arraché tous mes vêtements et il m'a fait l'amour sur la table!"

"Oh là là" répond le médecin. *"Je suis désolé. Je ne pensais pas que ce médicament aurait ces effets dévastateurs. Le laboratoire qui produit ces pilules pourra peut être prendre en charge les dégâts..."*

"Mais non" répond la femme. *"C'est pas la peine... De toute façon, on n'y retournera plus dans ce restaurant".*

se plaint - complains
quand même - anyway
marché - worked
balayé - swept away
tout ce qui traînait -
everything lying around
arraché - ripped off

aurait - would have
prendre en charge -
take responsibility for
les dégâts - the damage
C'est pas la peine -
not necessary/worth it
De toute façon - anyway



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Le Boulou, Céret, Amélie les Bains (2), Arles sur Tech



Introducing **Ian Stephens**, native English speaker living in Amélie. Tel.: 06 24 65 00 15



OUR THEATRE BY THE LAKE

Here are just some of the highlights for winter and spring to come - but don't forget to visit their website at www.theatre-de-letang.fr for a full and varied programme.

GREAT ENTERTAINMENT AT PRICES THAT MAKE REGULAR THEATRE-GOING EASY.

Have you been to the **Théâtre De L'Etang in Saint Estève**?

If you haven't, you're missing out on some great entertainment at prices that make regular theatre-going easy.

This purpose built theatre has **plenty of parking space, access for the disabled**, and offers high quality music, dance, theatre, comedy and culture - **from just 5€ per person!**

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.

Sunday 8 January at 15h
VIENNESE NEW YEAR CONCERT

Waltz into 2023 with the magnificent Orchestre de Perpignan Catalogne.

Saturday 25 March at 20h30
PHANTOMS OF THE OPERA

A fusion of popular opera greats: in this musical theatre; The Magic Flute, the Barber of Seville, La Flûte enchantée, Le Barbier de Séville, La Traviata, the Valkyrie...

CHECK IT OUT...For the Kids
Weds 25 Jan
Bonnes ondes
Weds 15 March
Blanche Neige doit mourir



Sunday 29 January at 15h
AN EVENING OF LIGHT OPERA

Fifty years of French opera greats; les Mousquetaires au Couvent, La Mascotte, Les cloches de Corneville, Le Petit Duc, Faust, La Fille du régiment.....

Friday 21 April at 20h30
Opera: COSI FAN TUTTE

'Women are like that', the final collaboration between Mozart and Ponte. Laughter and tears, pain and pleasure in this bittersweet meditation on women's faithfulness.

CHECK IT OUT...
Apero concerts (5€)
Sat 4 Feb - Rouge
Sat 18 March - Lili Charles
Sat 22 April - Duo Mar



-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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s a i n t e s t è v e



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Samedi 21 Janvier 2023



DIDIER BARBELIVIEN
Samedi 1^{er} Avril 2023



D'JAL
Vendredi 14 Avril 2023



ELISABETH BUFFET
Vendredi 12 Mai 2023

www.theatre-de-letang.fr - 04 68 38 34 95 Magasins FNAC ou www.fnac.com





Restaurant REVIEWS

WINTER 2023

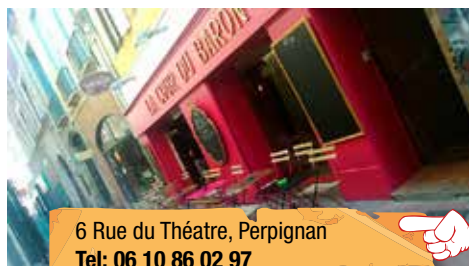


We love publishing your reviews. They're honest (we hope!) objective, (surely?) unrelated to advertising (bien sûr!) and cover a wide range of tastes, prices, and places. You might not always agree, the chef might be having a bad day, your standards might be higher...or lower – but they give you an idea of what's available. We haven't checked if they are open over the winter months so make sure you ring first to check.

LA COUR DU BARON

Perpignan...with Petra

We wanted to try this brunch forever, but never quite made it. Finally today we did and very much enjoyed it. **In a very nice atmosphere, pleasant background music and excellent service, we enjoyed an array of dishes.** Starting with a mini burger and cheese fries along with a green salad and a creatively stuffed avocado with egg, salmon and chive crème fraîche. This was followed by pancakes with caramelised apples and a chia mango creation. Coffee and orange jus/green drink which was amazing were included. The food was fresh and very tasty - and way too much, but we ate it all anyway 😊. **Nice way to indulge on a beautiful Sunday. We will be back!**



6 Rue du Théâtre, Perpignan
Tel: 06 10 86 02 97

PUB À LA FRANCAISE

Saint cyprien village...with David

Looking for a bit of warmth and pub atmosphere on a cold winter, we tried this cosy bar, with **atmosphere of an Irish pub combined with a stylish French interior.** Great wines and cocktails with some interesting and original tapas dishes. **We thought it was amazing.** Friendly service and live music kept us entertained and apparently they have frequent music nights. Saint Cyp village at night is very pretty for a wander too. **Fab Friday night 10/10**



35 Av. du Roussillon, Saint-Cyprien
Tel: 07 86 68 60 33

BRASSERIE LA FAUCEILLE

Perpignan...with Claudia

Good price, good menu, and best Chef ever! Friendly service, nice décoration, very kind owner, **always loads of french & locals, no tourists.** I would eat there everyday 😊 because the chef puts always puts the same high standard food on the table. **I go there as often as I can and I'm never ever disappointed!**



4 Rue de Mont Louis, Perpignan
Tel: 04 68 64 39 46

MA MAISON

Sorède...with Leigh & Merry

Fantastic meal here in November. Excellent grilled sardines to start and an interesting combination of egg yolk mousse and pork belly with a chestnut puree that was delicious and beautifully presented. Mains were a lovely roasted Dorade and an extremely tasty braised Black Angus steak with crusty polenta cubes and a subtle pepper sauce (See picture) For dessert, **chocolate mousse artfully presented and a very nice Pa d'ous, 3 superb courses for a very reasonable 33 euros.** Book in advance, they get busy.



3 Rue Saint-Jacques, Sorède
Tel: 04 68 89 00 44

LITTLE BUDDHA

Le Boulou...with Catherine

Excellent sushi and thai food. If you have the opportunity, please go and taste this restaurant (open since early September, previously "Changuito", closed because of Covid confinement). Open for take away at midday, **you have to reserve for dinner** (not many tables). **A wonderful meal, every little thing prepared by the chief, Kampui. Lots of surprises!** No menu, no carte, you will eat what the chief has cooked depending on his mood of the day!



40 Av. Général Joseph Santraille,
Le Boulou
Tel: 06 79 14 21 79

LE PIED DANS LE PLAT

Céret...with Kate & Olivier

At 12 euros for 3 courses, (2022 price) lunch was excellent value. **Not gourmet, just very nice.** Anchovy and tuna salad, moules frites, mini crepes. **Perfect for lunch.**



9, Place des Neuf Jets, Céret
Tel: 04 68 87 17 65



Restaurant REVIEWS

WINTER 2023

DROGUERIE TRATTORIA

Perpignan...with Caroline

For my mother's 75th birthday, we decided to go to a really good Italian restaurant in the historic district of Perpignan - a real coup de coeur. It's a timeless place with a very nice vintage Italian decoration. **We felt like we were eating in our grandmother's kitchen.** The owners are charming, attentive to our needs. A bit hidden, you can walk past without realising it's a restaurant. **The food is delicious and the dishes are well prepared, fresh and full of flavour.** Choose from a large blackboard - you won't find any pizza, only very good family dishes at very affordable prices.



37 rue des Augustins, Perpignan
Tel: 06 26 53 49 89



BELLA PIZZA

Céret...with Denise & Steven

Can't recommend this place too highly. We've gone from top to bottom of their extensive menu and it's all high quality food and really good value. **Great service, lovely little roadside terrasse, you won't be disappointed.**



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



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 ravis de vous entendre.

Send your comments to us at info@anglophone-direct.com

(no restaurant owners please!! :-)

OVER THE BORDER

...IN SPAIN

CAFÉ BAR L'ARENGADA

Figueres...with Maria

Those of you who like posh restaurants, read no further! Needing food and a warm place to wait for returning husband at Vilafant Station I was directed to this equivalent of a village pub. **What a surprise, a warm welcome, great atmosphere, Argentina v Croatia on the TV, tasty cooked to order food.** Little salt cod balls with the wine, delicious patatas de Olot with a generous salad, grilled calamari with sautéed vegetables and chips followed by ice-cream. **€16.00!** The meat portions are huge. My only problem was the rosé. Scousers will understand, I'll be glad when I've had enough! Tasted better with the food.



Carretera d'Olot, 35, Vilafant Spain
Tel: +34 972 51 38 31



LA TABERNA DEL TAPEO

Figueres...with Fred

We found this **great tapas bar** on the outskirts of Figueres. Good food, good prices, lovely people and great service... (and easy to park) It was not touristy and **I recommend the plate of 'fried mixed fishes of the day' for 9,50€.** nearly too much to eat! With a plate of patatas bravas this would be enough for 2 people to share.



Carrer Pení, 43, 17600 Figueres,
Tel: +34 872 09 58 22



RESTAURANT TORTUGA

La Jonquera...with Maria

We use the Tortoise when we are shopping. It is much smaller and quieter than the truck stops. The **€14.50 menu is good.** It includes drinks. Obviously not for a gourmet meal but very acceptable.



Poligono Industrial Campa, Par, 3,
La Jonquera
Tel: +34 972 55 42 75



Ideas for EATING OUT

Summer may be over but the **winter sun is still shining, the sky is blue** – it's a perfect day for a stroll along the prom prom (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.... Mais attend! Oh là là! Everything's closed! 'Fermeture annuelle', or 'congé 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). **Bon app.**



...ARGELES

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www.mas cristine.com Facebook: mas cristine



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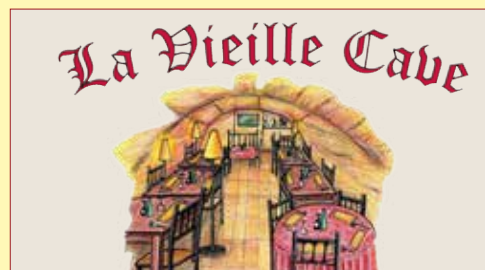
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Restaurant-Pizzeria www.restaurant-vieille-cave.com



Restaurant-Pizzeria

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isabelle@anglophone-direct.com

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Invented by Australian Tom Angove in 1965, today's bag in box wine (**cubi** in French) has evolved into a **tap-and-bag system which dispenses the wine without allowing air into the bag, preventing oxidation.**

A BIB has a shorter shelf life than bottled wine because over time, tiny amounts of oxygen pass through into the wine. Opinions differ, but **in general an unopened box can be kept for 6 months to a year, and once opened, should stay fresh for several weeks**, depending on cool, dark, dry storage conditions. You can also reduce your carbon footprint by removing the bag and recycling the box with your paper products.

...LAROQUE-DES-ALBÈRES

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**GO
SNUFFLE A TRUFFLE**



Winter truffles tend to be tastier than summer truffles and are harvested **from November to March.** They are also far more expensive.

Amongst them are black truffles (coming from the Latin 'tuber', meaning "lump") which sell for over 1000 euros a kilo in local markets and over 3,000 euros per kilo in some sectors of the retail world!

Truffles are fungi that grow underground from small organisms which grow on the roots of certain trees, in particular green and white oaks.



In order for the truffle to develop, the right combination of soil, climate and host tree must be present and even then it is not guaranteed. The soil must be chalky, the climate Mediterranean and the tree of the right species.

Specially trained dogs sniff them out and indicate their presence to the 'trufficulteur' who will carefully investigate the site with the help of a trowel or spoon.

Female pigs are also used by some truffle farmers. The piggie positive is that they don't need any training; they're naturals. The piggie negative is preventing them from snaffling rather than snuffling as they do enjoy a tasty snack!

The truffle is well protected by law with heavy fines and even prison sentences for poaching. At all reputable truffle fairs the goods on sale will be inspected by an expert to ensure that they are the genuine article.

Want to snuffle a truffle?

- January**
- Sunday 15th - Calce
- Saturday 21st - Argelès-sur-Mer
- February**
- Sunday 5th - Améle-Les-Bains Palalda
- Sunday 12th - Castelnou

FOOD
and DRINK

Ideas for
EATING
OUT



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Closed Sunday & Monday

www.restaurant-lou-grilladou.fr

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3-course menu
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Sunny terrace
Closed Sunday and Monday

7 place de Belgique
66000 PERPIGNAN **04 68 34 86 81**

...PORT-VENDRES

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Pub Bistronomique

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...THUIR

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FESTIVALS *Events* *and Traditions*



SPRING IS
(NEARLY) HERE!



Don't forget to turn your clocks forward **during the night of Saturday 25th/Sunday 26th March.**



LA GALETTE DES ROIS

THE KING'S CAKE

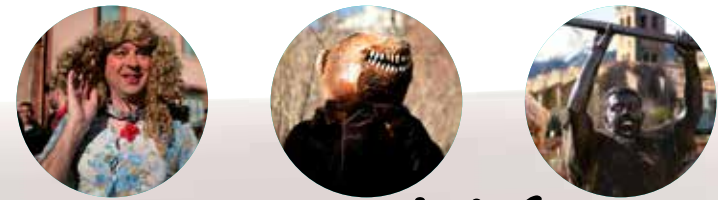
The French used to have a bit of a reputation for decapitating their royalty, but these days, it's more about cutting up cakes than kings. **The tradition of eating a 'Galette des Rois' actually dates back to the 14th century,** and was said to "draw the kings" to the Epiphany. **These frangipane filled tarts, complete with paper crown and 'fève' or trinket, can be found in patisseries and supermarkets throughout January, and are usually eaten around the 6th, the twelfth day of Christmas**

Not surprisingly, the name was replaced with **'Gâteau de l'Égalité'** (equality cake) during the French Revolution, as the word 'king' was not too popular amongst those wishing to keep their heads!

CARNIVAL

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

OUR PICK
DON'T MISS THE ARGELES CARNIVAL (See our front inside cover)
FOR ONE OF THE BEST CARNIVAL PROCESSIONS IN THE REGION.



BEAR NECESSITIES

Everyone should go to at least one bear festival in their lives - and here in the P-O we have **THREE every year!** Taking place in Arles sur Tech (5th Feb), Prats de Mollo (19th Feb) and St Laurent de Cerdans (26th Feb), with slightly different story in each commune, **this quirky and ancient event sees men and women running through the streets dressed as bears and hunters, some wearing sheepskins, their faces and hands blackened with a mixture of suie (soot) and huile (oil), others covered in flour and dressed in white lace bonnets, others dancing in a circle trying to set each others bottoms on fire.....and many more fascinating and fun traditions. Intrigued? Visit our website or the local tourist office to find out more.**

BEAR HERITAGE And guess what? This quirky and ancient tradition has this year been added to UNESCO's world heritage list!

DID YOU KNOW that it is believed that the carnival float comes from 'carrus navels' the 'naval car' or ship, which carried the Gods to the winter feasts.

The medieval Church reinterpreted this as the **Ship of Fools**, sailing sinners to their deaths ... and so was born the float.

Other aspects of Carnival are believed to derive from the **ancient Roman festival Saturnalia**, when social rules of behaviour and class were reversed, masters waited on their slaves, men dressed like women, **people wore fancy dress, paraded in the streets and, thus disguised, could be as wicked as they wanted.**

PANCAKE DAY

2nd February

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

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

LA SANCH

The **Procession de la Sanch** opens the celebrations of the "Semaine Sainte" (Holy week) on 7th April in Perpignan.

"Sinister black hooded and robed figures walk slowly through the silent streets of Perpignan. Some walk bare-foot, others shuffle on their knees...."



Find out more in the next edition of P-O Life Mag

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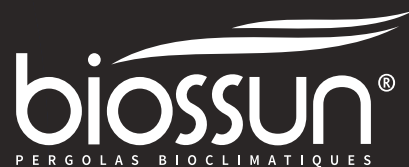


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**26 MARCH
28 OCTOBER 2023**
by Robbie Shaw

This report covers the period from 26 March till the end of the summer schedules on 28 October. I am writing this in December but even after just a few days it may well be out of date as airlines schedules constantly change according to demand. As always, **my best suggestion is to regularly monitor the airline websites yourself**, particularly as frequency of service increases towards summer.

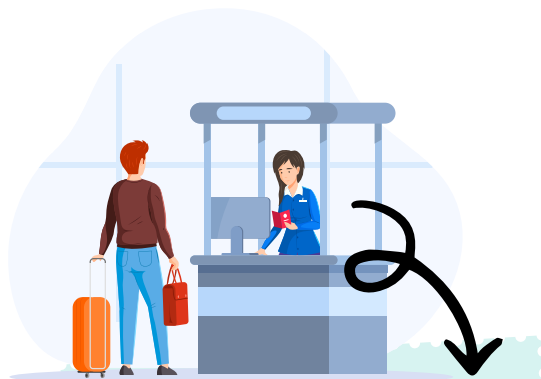
What continues to be very noticeable is car hire prices, still very high, and not as we would imagine just down to fuel prices but apparently due to the shortage of cars caused by a shortage of computer chips.

FRANCE

BEZIERS

Like Carcassonne, **Ryanair** has a free run at this small airport. Rather strangely the **Luton** service stops at the end of March, restarting in June. **Shannon** is a new destination.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
BRISTOL	2-3	RYANAIR 26 March-25 Oct
EDINBURGH	2	RYANAIR 27 March-26 Oct
LUTON	2	RYANAIR 29 March-28 Oct
MANCHESTER	3	RYANAIR 27 March-28 Oct
SHANNON	2	RYANAIR 27 March-27 Oct
STANSTED	3	RYANAIR 28 March-28 Oct



Un homme arrive au **comptoir d'enregistrement** de l'aéroport de Perpignan avec ses bagages.
"Bonjour Madame. Je voudrais que ce sac aille à Londres, celui-ci à Édimbourg et celui-ci à Leeds s'il vous plaît".
 « Je suis désolée » répond-t-elle « mais nous ne pouvons pas faire ça »
"Pourquoi pas?" Vous l'avez fait la semaine dernière.

comptoir d'enregistrement - **check in**
 aille - **subjunctive of aller**
 celui-ci - **this on**
 Vous l'avez fait - **you did it**

CARCASSONNE



Ryanair remains the sole operator here. In September my wife flew **Carcassonne-Cork**, booking only a few weeks notice – the fare was €15! Can't complain at that.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
EAST MIDLANDS	2	RYANAIR 1 June-26 Oct
EDINBURGH	2	RYANAIR 27 March-26 Oct
MANCHESTER	3-4	RYANAIR 26 March-27 Oct
STANSTED	7	RYANAIR 26 March-28 Oct
CORK	2	RYANAIR 28 March-28 Oct
DUBLIN	4	RYANAIR 27 March-28 Oct

MONTPELLIER

EasyJet operate from both **Gatwick** and **Luton**. The latter only for a short period. The **British Airways** flight from **Heathrow** which operated only in 2018 appears not to be operating again this year.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
GATWICK	13	EASYJET 26 March-28 Oct
LUTON	3	EASYJET 27 June-2 Sep

NIMES



Ryanair is the sole operator for P-O readers. **Luton** has been dropped, but **Dublin** and **Edinburgh** are now served along with **Stansted**.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
DUBLIN	2	RYANAIR 1 May-26 Oct
EDINBURGH	2	RYANAIR 29 March-28 Oct
STANSTED	2	RYANAIR 29 March-28 Oct

PERPIGNAN

Aer Lingus flights from **Dublin** restart, and the good news – no more 0600 departures, now at a better time, though fares have risen significantly. Good news for Kate, **Ryanair** have just listed **twice-weekly flights to Perpignan from Leeds Bradford**.

If you are looking at the websites and find the fares to P.O. are very high look at the rugby fixture list and that could explain it. Often changing just a few days can reduce the fare, and car hire prices. Also fares are generally cheaper midweek, especially in the summer months – or ridiculously expensive in school mid-term.



FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
BIRMINGHAM	2	RYANAIR 1 June-26 Oct
DUBLIN	3	AER LINGUS 3 May-30 Sep
LEEDS BRADFORD	2	RYANAIR 1 June-26 Oct
STANSTED	5	RYANAIR 26 March-26 Oct

TOULOUSE / BLAGNAC

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

Ryanair have added service to **Birmingham** whilst **Manchester** will be introduced by **Jet2**.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
BIRMINGHAM	2	RYANAIR 28 March-28 Oct
BRISTOL	7	EASYJET 26 March-28 Oct
EDINBURGH	3	RYANAIR 27 March-28 Oct
GATWICK	4-6	EASYJET 26 March-28 Oct
HEATHROW	28	BRITISH AWYS 26 Mar-28 Oct
STANSTED	10	RYANAIR 26 March-28 Oct
DUBLIN	3	AER LINGUS 26 March-28 Oct
	3	RYANAIR 27 March-27 Oct





SPAIN

BARCELONA / EL PRAT

As always, a huge variety of flights to **Barcelona**, most of which run all year round, but with seasonal increases. For those unfamiliar, take care on the Barcelona ring-road, one wrong turn could be very time consuming. Quite a few changes. **Ryanair** now operate flights from **Luton** and **Newcastle**, though **Prestwick** has been dropped. There are now four operators on the **Manchester** route. **easyJet** have dropped the **Newcastle** and Southend service but added **Manchester**. This summer **Vueling** are no longer offering flights from **Belfast City, Cardiff, Cork and Newcastle**. **Glasgow** has lost the **Jet2** service but gained **easyJet**. **Jet2** have added **Birmingham**.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
BELFAST INT'L	3-5	EASYJET 27 March-27 Oct
BIRMINGHAM	2	JET2 26 March-29 Oct
	6	RYANAIR 27 March-28 Oct
	7	VUELING 26 March-28 Oct
BRISTOL	10-14	EASYJET 26 March-28 Oct
	5	RYANAIR 27 March-28 Oct
EAST MIDLANDS	7	RYANAIR 26 March-28 Oct
EDINBURGH	9	RYANAIR 26 March-28 Oct
	4	VUELING 26 March-27 Oct
GATWICK	24-33	EASYJET 26 March-28 Oct
	53	VUELING 26 March-28 Oct
GLASGOW INT'L	2	EASYJET 26 March-28 Oct
HEATHROW	49	BRITISH AWYS 26 Mar-28 Oct
LEEDS BRADFORD	2-4	JET2 27 March-30 Oct
LIVERPOOL	3-7	EASYJET 26 March-27 Oct
	5	RYANAIR 27 March-28 Oct
LUTON	12-14	EASYJET 26 March-28 Oct
	5	RYANAIR 26 March-27 Oct



MANCHESTER	4-5	JET2 26 March-31 Oct
	6-7	EASYJET 26 March-28 Oct
	10	RYANAIR 26 March-28 Oct
	10	VUELING 26 March-28 Oct
NEWCASTLE	2	RYANAIR 26 March-26 Oct
STANSTED	28	RYANAIR 26 March-28 Oct
DUBLIN	14	AER LINGUS 26 March-28 Oct
	19	RYANAIR 26 March-28 Oct
	11	VUELING 26 March-28 Oct

GIRONA

In the last couple of years there had been a big increase in flights to **Girona**. No doubt passenger confidence in the Boeing 737MAX will have taken a battering after two crashes, and the type being grounded for a considerable time. To counter this **Ryanair** has renamed the 737-MAX8 as the 737-8200, and many are now in service, with more to come. Subject to aircraft deliveries the number of flights listed could well change. **Ryanair** have added **Belfast, Birmingham, East Midlands, Manchester and Shannon**. **Jet2** who suddenly found the airport two years ago once again have a whole raft of flights. They have re-introduced **Glasgow**.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
BELFAST	1-2	RYANAIR 31 March-27 Oct
BIRMINGHAM	2	JET2 1 May-27 Oct
	2	RYANAIR 3 June-28 Oct
BOURNEMOUTH	2-5	RYANAIR 31 March-28 Oct
BRISTOL	1	JET2 27 May-30 Oct
	4-6	RYANAIR 27 March-28 Oct
CORK	2-4	RYANAIR 26 March-27 Oct
DUBLIN	2-6	RYANAIR 27 March-27 Oct
EAST MIDLANDS	1	JET2 27 May-28 Oct
	2	RYANAIR 26 March-22 Oct
GLASGOW	1	JET2 28 May-24 Sep
KNOCK	2	RYANAIR 1 June-26 Oct
LEEDS BRADFORD	2	JET2 From 30 April-29 Oct
	4	RYANAIR 2 June-26 Oct
MANCHESTER	2-4	JET2 1 May-30 Oct
	2	RYANAIR 1 June-26 Oct
NEWCASTLE	1	JET2 7 May-29 Oct
SHANNON	2	RYANAIR 1 June-26 Oct
STANSTED	2	JET2 1 May-30 Oct
	7	RYANAIR 26 March-28 Oct



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COLLIOURE AND CANIGOU

The bluest blue I ever saw
Was sea surrounding Collioure
The whitest white you'll ever view
Is snow-cloaked, sun-soaked Canigou
And from its peak along the shore
You'll catch a glimpse of Collioure
The whitest white, the bluest blue
Collioure and Canigou

By Jon Benns

READER'S WARNING
(YOU MIGHT NOT BELIEVE IT BUT IT'S GOOD PRACTICE FOR YOUR FRENCH!)



ARNAQUE AU SUPERMARCHÉ

UN LECTEUR NOUS MET EN GARDE

Au cours des derniers mois, j'ai été victime d'une arnaque scandaleuse pendant que je faisais mes courses à l'Intermarché.

Attention! Ces escrocs visent surtout les hommes d'un certain âge!

Voici comment ça marche.

Deux belles filles dans leurs 20 ans s'approchent de votre voiture pendant que vous rangez vos courses dans le coffre, et commencent à nettoyer votre pare-brise de manière provocante.

Pour vous en débarrasser, vous proposez de les payer, mais elles montent derrière et vous demandent de les emmener dans un autre magasin. En chemin, l'une commence à se déshabiller, grimpe sur le siège avant et commence à vous faire des bisous, tandis que l'autre vole votre portefeuille.

Alors, dites à vos amis de faire attention. J'étais complètement traumatisé!

On m'a volé mon portefeuille les 4 et 9 janvier, deux fois le 15, trois fois samedi dernier et très probablement encore ce week-end prochain.

USEFUL VOCAB

Arnaque **scam**
lecteur **reader**
met en garde **warns**
visent **target**
Au cours **during**
escrocs **thieves**
rangez **put away**

coffre **boot**
nettoyer **clean**
pare-brise **wind screen**
débarrasser **get rid**
emmener **take**
se déshabiller **undress**
grimpe **climb**
siège **seat**
portefeuille **wallet**



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LE PERTHUS

Stroll down the 'route principale' from the French side, and you are still in France..... until you arrive at the stone 'borne' or marker on the left hand side, just past the town hall. At this point, it all depends what side of the road you're on! In fact, based upon a rather bizarre border agreement which dates back to the signing of the treaty of the Pyrénées in 1659, Le Perthus becomes Spanish on the left hand side and French on the right. Difficult to know where to stop saying 'Bonjour' and start saying 'Hola'!



LA RETIRADA

LEST WE FORGET

In late January/early February 1939 nearly half a million Spanish civilians and soldiers fled to France. Known as the Retirada (Spanish for Retreat) more than 60,000 men were herded into internment camps on the beaches at Argelès-sur-Mer and later St Cyprien and Le Barcarès. They had no protection from freezing temperatures and biting winds; most slept in holes dug in the ground. There was no water, no sanitation and scarcely any food. They were kept in by barbed wire fences, and 'Gardes Mobiles' (a special branch of the gendarmerie) and brutal Senegalese troops. A third of the Languedoc-Roussillon's present-day population are descendants of these Spanish refugees.





Argelès

THE VILLAGE

We all love a stroll along the prom prom prom (tiddly pom pom pom), and Argelès beach has prom-a-plenty but what about the village?



Just a short drive from the beach, the **trottoir bars and restaurants in the narrow streets of this bustling village are perfect for people-watching.** If you're more of a stroller, follow the old ramparts, visit the church and its treasures and **climb to the top of the 23-metre tower to enjoy the unique view of the Plaine du Roussillon** (guided visits only).

Art lovers will enjoy the **Galerie Marianne**, free municipal art gallery showcasing temporary exhibitions from internationally renowned artists, or **visit the Casa de l'Albera** to learn all about the history and heritage of the village.

Visit the **small Mémorial du camp d'Argelès-sur-Mer on the Ave de la Libération**, a stark reminder of darker times in this bright and dynamic resort.

AND DON'T MISS THE CARNIVAL (See our front inside cover) **FOR ONE OF THE BEST CARNIVAL PROCESSIONS IN THE REGION.**



DID YOU KNOW

BIRDBRAINS

Aristotle said 'One swallow does not a summer make', but when these harbingers of spring and summer promise arrive in the P-O we know for sure that winter is over. Weighing little more than 20 grams with brains no bigger than a pea, these cute little chaps accomplish the most amazing feats of navigation, flying thousands of miles using the sun, stars and familiar landscapes.



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Test your nature knowledge...

With Lesley McLaren



Have you been paying attention? As usual at the end of the year, we take a quizzical look over the year's articles – with one or two extra questions thrown in!



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

Photos by "The Warblers" unless otherwise stated.

www.mediterraneanpyrenees.com

Twitter @66warblers



MAKE YOUR CHOICE

1. What kind of ruminant is "un mouflon"?
 - a. Deer
 - b. Sheep
 - c. Goat
 - d. Cow
2. When are kestrels present in the P-O?
 - a. All year
 - b. October-March
 - c. April-September



3. In 2022, the average summer temperature in France was how much higher than records for the period 1991-2020?
 - a. 1.4°C
 - b. 1.7°C
 - c. 2.0°C
 - d. 2.3°C



4. Which type of deer is the shortest (to the shoulder)?
 - a. Red
 - b. Fallow
 - c. Roe
5. What speed can a peregrine falcon reach when stooping on prey from a height?
 - a. 120km/h
 - b. 220km/h
 - c. 320km/h
 - d. 420km/h
6. Occasionally in autumn & winter there are a few sightings of "pingouins torda" seabirds at the P-O coast. What is their English name?
 - a. Little Penguin
 - b. Razorbill
 - c. Puffin
 - d. Guillemot



TRUE OR FALSE

1. Griffon vultures do not nest in the P-O
2. This nest is made by European hornets
3. Roe deer rut in summer months
4. The sting of a black scorpion is worse than that of a yellow scorpion
5. Sparrowhawks prey exclusively on sparrows
6. Poisonous snakes (vipers) have vertical-shaped pupils; non-venomous snakes have round pupils.

T F



DON'T YOU JUST KNOW IT?

1. Name this daisy-like plant – poisonous to cattle – that is invading our high pastures



2. How did the wool-carder bee get its English name?

3. What rare animal was caught on camera on the Spanish side of the Albères in September 2022?

4. What P-O village adopted "Mr le cerf" as their mascot in spring 2022?

5. What's the French name for Moon Jellyfish? Hint: think of Greek mythology

6. Name this common butterfly



ANSWERS ON THE NEXT PAGE...

ANSWERS



MAKE YOUR CHOICE



1. **b. Wild sheep** (native to Corsica)
2. **a. All year round**
3. **d. 2.3°C.** 2022 was the second hottest summer ever recorded in France. 6 of the last 8 summers have been in the top10.
4. **c. Roe**
5. **c. Up to 320km/h**
6. **b. Razorbill** (or Lesser Auk)



Credit: Charles J Sharp



TRUE OR FALSE

1. **True.**
They only visit our mountains. They nest in colonies, for which they need large expanses of cliffs up to 1200m high. The P-O doesn't have the right kind of cliffs!
2. **False.**
It's an Asian hornet nest.
3. **True.**
Unlike red or fallow deer, they rut in July/August.
4. **False.**
Unlike those of their yellow cousins, black scorpion stings are not venomous.
5. **False.**
They will take anything up to the size of doves and pigeons!
6. **True.**



DON'T YOU JUST KNOW IT?

1. Narrow-leaved/South African ragwort (*Senecio inaequidens*)
2. Females gather soft plant fibres to line their nest
3. A wolf!
4. Eyne
5. La Méduse
6. Scarce Swallowtail

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So many questions!

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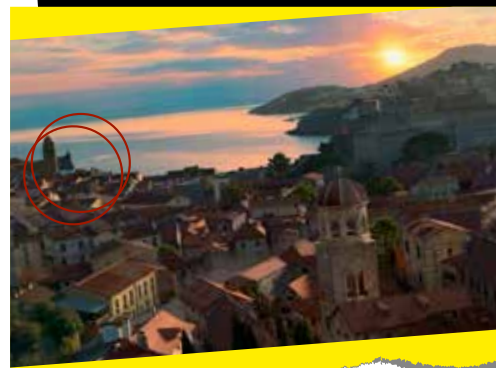
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DID YOU KNOW HOUSE OF THE DRAGON

Blink and you'll miss it...but did you know that Collioure features - very briefly - in episode 4 of House of the Dragon, the prequel to Game of Thrones. To be precise, 37 minutes into the episode, we see the bell tower and the chateau in the background - for a whole 2 seconds!



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FEMMES FORMIDABLES PART II

The Limping Lady AND CUTHBERT

Women from many countries fought alongside men in covert operations in Nazi-occupied countries during WW2. In Britain, many of them were recruited by Winston Churchill's Special Operations Executive (SOE), based at 64 Baker Street in London, an address made famous by Sherlock Homes.



The role of a woman in Nazi Germany was to look after the home and further the regime's goals of racial purity. In fact, in 1936 SS leaders created **Lebensborn (Fount of Life)** a state-directed program ordering every SS member to father **four children**, whether married or not, to create the ideal 'Aryan' community, a goal which certainly suited the men!



In the early years of the war therefore, the Nazis seriously underestimated women agents sent over to occupied France.

In fact, these ladies went through the same brutal training as the men, learning hand-to-hand combat, arms and explosive techniques, mock Nazi interrogations, parachute jumping.....and the **most dangerous job in the SOE, wireless radio operator, with an average life expectancy of six weeks on the job.**



American Virginia Hall was the **first female agent sent by the SOE into active service in Nazi-occupied France**, posing as a reporter for the New York Post.

An extraordinary lady, she set up safe houses, resistance and escape networks, located drop zones for money and weapons, coordinated airdrops, trained French resistance fighters for sabotage missions, and helped downed airmen and escaped prisoners of war to cross the Pyrenees to safety.



Even more extraordinary, Virginia had lost a leg in a hunting accident, and wore an 8-pound artificial leg bound to her body with straps and a belt at the waist. She named the leg Cuthbert.

Based in Lyon at first, the 'limping lady' (la dame qui boite) as she became known, became one of the Allies' most dangerous spies, evading capture by the Gestapo over and over. She was described as "conspicuous by reddish hair, a strong American accent, an artificial foot, and an imperturbable temper; she took risks often but intelligently."

In 1942, when the Germans moved in to occupy Vichy France, she escaped by train to Perpignan. Accompanied by a guide, Virginia and Cuthbert crossed the Pyrenees into Spain in the middle of winter, a three day journey on foot in heavy snow.



She radioed SOE during the journey to say Cuthbert was causing her problems. Not recognising the nickname she used for her wooden leg, the message came back, "If Cuthbert troublesome, eliminate him."



DID YOU KNOW

Although Baker Street exists, Number 221 did not at the time the famous Sherlock Holmes books were written, when the street was actually known as Upper Baker Street. When the street was renamed and renumbered, 221 became the offices of the Abbey National Building Society. Today, it is the site of the Sherlock Holmes Museum, a special address recognised by the Post Office - although it is actually at number 239!



P-O PUZZLE

How well do you know the P-O?

Are you up for the challenge? Dive in and test your knowledge (and spelling) for all things P-O related. It may not be 'du gâteau' but all answers can be found in past P-O Life Mags (all 76 of them!) or by trawling around on our website at www.anglophone-direct.com



Answers in next mag, Spring 23

Across

3. Name given to one of two earliest P-O towns
7. Roussillon count who left all his land to his rival, Alphonse I
10. Famous local musician who opposed the Franco regime, Pablo
12. One of 5 P-O rivers flowing to the sea
13. Number of communautés de communes (local authorities) in the P-O
14. Catalan festival of grilled onions
15. Commonly sighted P-O snake
17. Name of the Catalan flag
18. 1 of 4 P-O communes classed as 'Plus beaux villages de France'

Down

1. Catalan Easter treat
2. P-O headquarters of the Order of the Knights Templar in the 9th century
4. Danish architect of Château Valmy, Viggo Dorph
5. Smallest P-O commune (18 registered inhabitants at 2022 census)
6. French name for French resistance members who hid out in the hills during WW2
8. French for Asian hornet, asiatique
9. Devastating weather event in Vernet les Bains and P-O in 1940
10. Catalan fire & pyrotechnic festival
11. The last P-O commune when listed alphabetically
13. P-O home to one of the oldest specimens of homo erectus discovered in Europe
16. Official French language translation for 'fake news'

Your teeth don't need glasses!



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leclercq.toulouges@allianz.fr



Open as usual with safety measures in place

Test your FRENCH

Tongue Twister

Répétez trois fois
Un plat plein de pâtes plates

See Page 73 for answers



2 What's new pussycat?

The following French expressions all involve one of our favourite pets, the pussycat. Can you find their meanings in English?

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|------|--|
| Avoir d'autres chats à fouetter | 1 a | The apple doesn't fall far from the tree |
| Donner sa langue au chat | 2 b | To have other fish to fry |
| Appeler un chat un chat | 3 c | It tastes like dishwater |
| Les chiens ne font pas des chats | 4 d | Sweetie, poppet |
| Avoir un chat dans la gorge | 5 e | To have a quick wash |
| Il n'y avait pas un chat! | 6 f | There was no-one around |
| À bon chat, bon rat | 7 g | To give up (trying to guess) |
| C'est du pipi de chat | 8 h | Tit for tat |
| Mon petit chat | 9 i | To have a frog in your throat |
| Faire une toilette de chat | 10 j | To call a spade a spade |



1 I is for idée

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

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

- | | | |
|-------------|------|---------------------------|
| idem | 1 a | (Rue) sans issue |
| imbattable | 2 b | A l'intérieur de la ville |
| inondation | 3 c | Pas permis |
| inouï | 4 d | Anxieux |
| isard | 5 e | La même chose |
| interdit | 6 f | Prejugé |
| intra-muros | 7 g | Débordement des eaux |
| inquiet | 8 h | Extraordinaire |
| impasse | 9 i | Chamois des Pyrénées |
| idée reçue | 10 j | Ne peut pas être surpassé |



Coughs and sneezes spread diseases... A few French phrases to tell people to...



Get well soon
• Remets-toi/remettez-vous vite
• Bon/prompt rétablissement
• Bonne convalescence

Hang in there
Bon courage

I hope you'll soon be feeling better
• J'espère que tu iras / vous irez mieux bientôt

OR ASK...

How are you feeling today?
Comment te sens-tu / vous sentez-vous aujourd'hui?

Take care of yourself

• Soigne-toi/ soignez-vous bien
• Prends soin/prenez soin de toi /vous

Are you feeling better?
Ça va mieux?

Great joke!
Quelle nationalité est un cochon heureux ?
Un porc tout gai (Portugais)



MONEY, MONEY, MONEY... ...AIN'T IT FUNNY...

We all know the word 'argent' for money, but did you know you can also say.....

- | | | | |
|--------------|--------------|----------------|-------------|
| les sous | le fric | de la thune | les pépètes |
| les ronds | le blé | l'oseille | les biffons |
| la ferraille | la caillasse | des cacahuètes | |
| les briques | les balles | la monnaie | |
| | le pognon | | |

Useful Expression
Je n'y suis pour rien
It's not my fault/nothing to do with me

VERY BAD JOKE
Qu'est-ce qu'une limace?
Un escargot à la plage nudiste
(limace – slug)

Words that sound alike but are completely different
une amande >> an almond
une amende >> a fine



LANGUAGE

Test your FRENCH



Just for fun!

More of these literal translations of popular French idioms. Can you work out their English equivalents!

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----|---|--------------------------------|
| Go and cook yourself an egg | 1 | a | I'm getting angry |
| He has his head up his bum | 2 | b | She's being silly |
| He has a hair in the hand | 3 | c | He's not feeling well |
| She makes the sausage | 4 | d | Get lost! |
| She slipped out the English way | 5 | e | She's in a bit of a mess |
| She switches from rooster to donkey | 6 | f | She keeps changing the subject |
| When chicken will have teeth | 7 | g | He's a bit dopey |
| I have mustard climbing up my nose | 8 | h | She sneaked out |
| She is in beautiful sheets | 9 | i | When pigs fly |
| He's not in his plate | 10 | j | He's lazy |



OPÉRATION TRANQUILLITÉ VACANCES

If you're going away this winter and leaving the house empty, it's worth popping into your local gendarmerie beforehand, and leaving your contact details, and those of a local key holder. They will carry out regular checks on your property in your absence, and look out for alarms ringing or flashing, or any sign of disturbance. In case of the worst, do check your insurance policy – most French companies will not pay out unless you have receipts, photos, valuables in a safe... ..even though there may often be no written indication of this on your policy.



WORD ORIGINS

Did you know that the oh so British expression 'toodle loo' was actually taken for the French 'tout à l'heure' (see you soon)?



LANGUAGE TIP

Dans vs en
Both express time and location in French, but their uses are completely different

En - length of time something takes

eg
J'ai fini la rénovation en 3 mois
(It took me 3 months to do the work)

Dans - amount of time before something will take place

Je vais commencer la rénovation dans 2 semaines
(Haven't started yet)



Read the text in English and use the words below to fill in the blanks

HUNTING

The majority of hunters are sensible, careful and polite, but accidents happen every year nevertheless. If you must go walking during a hunt, wear a brightly coloured hat and a florescent security jacket and do not allow your pets to leave your side.

LA CHASSE

La 1 des chasseurs sont raisonnables, 2, et polis mais les accidents 3 chaque année 4 même. Si vous êtes obligé de vous promener 5 la chasse, portez un 6 de couleur vive, et un 7 de 8 et 9 vos animaux 10 de vous.

a gilet b arrivent c bonnet d gardez e près f plupart g sécurité h quand i pendant j prudents

Useful Expression

Ça tombe bien
That works out well/time is right

Bad Joke

Comment appelle-t-on un jeudi vraiment nul ?
Une trajaudi



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LANGUAGE



Tongue twister (virelangue)

Améliorez votre ANGLAIS

See Page 73 for answers

Repeat quickly x 3
Six superb ships sail south



P is for Pop!

Trouvez les définitions des mots suivants, qui commencent tous avec la lettre P.

- | | | |
|-----------|----|------------------------|
| pal | 1 | a animal companion |
| plenty | 2 | b pale red colour |
| puppy | 3 | c small metal lock |
| pink | 4 | d ami |
| paperback | 5 | e waste of time |
| pet | 6 | f small smooth stone |
| puzzling | 7 | g enough or more |
| pebble | 8 | h book with soft cover |
| padlock | 9 | i difficult to explain |
| pointless | 10 | j young dog |

Spanish Joke!

How does a Spanish sheep say Merry Christmas?

Fleece Navidad.



AIE AIE AIE, GET HUMOUR ANGLAIS!

What does the cat in bird mask say?

ME OWL

Trouvez les définitions de ces expressions amusantes

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|----|----------------------------------|
| Do you have a pooper-scooper? | 1 | a C'est du charabia |
| She's a flibbertigibbet | 2 | b Passons aux choses sérieuses |
| He's an old fuddy-duddy | 3 | c Avez-vous un ramasse-crottes? |
| It's a lot of mumbo-jumbo | 4 | d Allez! Arrête de tergiverser ! |
| Everything's hunky-dory | 5 | e Pas de galipettes SVP! |
| Let's get down to the nitty-gritty | 6 | f Ça me fait peur |
| It gives me the willies | 7 | g C'est un vieux schnock |
| Oops-a-daisy! | 8 | h Hop-là! |
| Come on! Don't dilly-dally! | 9 | i Tout va bien |
| No hanky-panky please! | 10 | j Elle a la tête en l'air |

REFLEXIONS

I hate spelling mistakes. You mix up two letters and your whole sentence is urined!

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LANGUAGE

Améliorez votre ANGLAIS



Trouvez la définition de ces abréviations d'usage courant
(les réponses sont ci-dessous mais ne trichez pas.... Je vous surveille !)

- | | | |
|------|---|--------------------------------|
| AKA | 1 | a généraliste |
| ASAP | 2 | b absent sans prévenir |
| GP | 3 | c pour info |
| DOB | 4 | d sandwich au bacon |
| AWOL | 5 | e date de naissance |
| BLT | 6 | f un peu de tendresse |
| FYI | 7 | g aussi connu sous le nom de.. |
| TLC | 8 | h dès que possible |

Averagely bad joke
Where are average things manufactured?
The satisfactory.

LANGUAGE TIP

Still, yet, already
Still (encore, toujours) indique que quelque chose est toujours en cours et n'est pas encore terminé,
It's still raining!

Yet (jusqu'à présent, déjà) indique que quelque chose ne s'est pas encore arrivé, mais qu'on s'y attend.

Hasnt it stopped raining yet?

Already (déjà) indique presque la surprise que quelque chose s'est terminé si tot.

Has it already stopped raining?

(Quoi? Mais ça vient juste de commencer!)

Very Bad Joke

How do you recognise a worm's head from its tail?
Tickle it in the middle and see which end laughs!
worm - ver de terre
tickle - chatouiller

....et les voilà

Also Known As
As Soon As Possible
General practitioner
Date of birth
Absent Without Official Leave
Bacon, lettuce and tomato
For your information
Tender Loving Care
Etre très bavard

4

Choisissez la bonne réponse

1. After all these years, I **already/still/yet** get lost in Perpignan.
2. Don't go **already/still/yet** You've only just arrived!
3. Haven't we **already/still/yet** seen that film?
4. I'm getting worried. She hasn't come home **already/still/yet**
5. Lazy thing! Are you **already/still/yet** in bed?

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DID YOU KNOW

ART IN SAINT-MARTIN DE FENOLLAR

Have you visited the little chapel of Saint Martin yet? Decorated with spectacular 12th-century frescoes, which probably would have covered every wall top to bottom, the chapel was abandoned and used as a barn, then restored in the mid 1900s. Today, the frescoes are acknowledged as the best Romanesque wall paintings in Roussillon. Their colours are few. Glowing ocre, red and green, so favoured by XII century artists, dominate. Centuries later Picasso and Braque were said to be much inspired by them. Miraculously many survived despite several scenes behind the altar being lost due to an ill-placed farm door. Nevertheless, in the vaulted ceiling, Christ in Majesty is surrounded by angels bearing the symbols of beasts representing the evangelists and above the altar is Mary the Virgin. From Le Boulou, take the D900 towards Le Perthus and turn right over a ford signposted for the tiny chapel.



Growing old IN FRANCE

The Pyrénées-Orientales are a wonderful place to spend your retirement but as you get older, you may need to consider additional support.

If that's the case, for yourself or for a loved one, navigating the different options can be daunting, particularly if you lack confidence in your French.

This **TWO PART** guide, continuing in the **spring edition of P-O Life**, looks at some of the key considerations for growing old in France.

BENEFITS

While France's health system, *la sécurité sociale*, covers medical care, it does not cover age-related care. Nevertheless, there are different financial benefits available depending on your situation.



1. APL (allocation personnalisée de logement)

Housing benefits or APL are means tested, regardless of age, and allocated by la CAF (Caisse d'Allocations Familiales). You can calculate housing benefit eligibility via the online simulator at <https://connect.caf.fr>

If you don't already have an account, you can create one using your social security number (on your carte vitale).

2. ASPA (allocation de solidarité aux personnes âgées)



For people over 65 with a low income, the allowance is a means-tested monthly benefit, dependent on your family situation. The Aspa is paid by your retirement provider (caisse de retraite) and so you need to address your application to them directly. If your retirement is paid by la sécurité sociale, you can fill in the form at www.lassuranceretraite.fr.



3. APA (allocation personnalisée d'autonomie)



Calculated according to a person's level of dependence. The evaluation scale is called le GIR (groupe iso-ressources) and is based on both physical and psychological variables, such as coherence, mobility and communication skills.

GIR 6 is attributed to people who are autonomous but may need occasional help with domestic activities.

GIR 1 is attributed to those who are confined to bed, requiring the continuous presence of caregivers.

Individuals with an attribution of GIR 1-4 are eligible for the APA benefits. If you are not eligible for APA, you can request an aide ménagère to help pay for someone to come and undertake domestic tasks in your home.

There are two types of APA; one for individuals wishing to remain in their home and one for individuals in, or moving to, a care home (More about that in the next edition).

In both cases, you must request an APA assessment through your local authority. For P-O residents, you can find the form online at www.ledepartement66.fr.

APA payments are usually made directly to the care providers and not to the individual concerned.

OTHER BENEFITS

For more details of the above benefits and other benefits available, take a look at the French government website www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/N392.

If the person concerned is hospitalised, the assistant social there can help you.

NEXT EDITION:
Retirement/care homes & End-of-life care

USEFUL VOCABULARY
Allocation - allowance, benefit
Logement - housing, accommodation
Retraite - retirement
Aide ménagère - home help



Although its origins are a little hazy, many believe that the tradition of April Fool's Day was actually born in France in the 16th century.

In 1562, Pope Gregory changed the calendar from the Julian calendar, on which New Year started on April 1st, to the present day Gregorian calendar. With no trains, planes, phones, emails or Ipads and somewhat unreliable info passing services, news took a while to get around the Hexagon in those days.

When King Charles IX toured his realm, he discovered that the date of New Year celebrations varied depending on the department.

In 1564, he signed the 'Edict of Roussillon', attempting to make the dates of the New Year clear by declaring January 1st as the official first day of the year throughout France.

As we know, the French don't take kindly to being told what to do, and many continued to celebrate New Year on the 1st April. Those who had adapted to the new order called the others **Poisson d'Avril (April fish)** and played tricks on them.

Today in France, those who are fooled on April 1 are called the "**Poisson d'Avril**". Children (and silly adults :-)) place a paper fish on the back of an unsuspecting person and shout 'poisson d'Avril' when the paper fish is discovered.



Why? Maybe something to do with the zodiac sign of Pisces (a fish), which falls near April, or maybe, because April fish are young and easily caught? Nobody is absolutely sure.

French Olympic and Paralympic Games 2024

We know there are some seriously sporty folk among the P-O readers but if you're like us here at HQ, thinking you stand zero chance of ever being part of an Olympic team... think again!



So, if you're over 18, speak English (and/or French, of course!), you could be part of the Olympic magic, with a range of roles, including:

- Greeting, orientation and assistance for spectators, participants and stakeholders
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- Operational support – organisation
- Transport
- Support for medical services
- Support at ceremonies

Recruitment will be open from February to March 2023 as the OCOG wants enough time to select volunteers to "reflect the diversity" of France. They're expecting around 100,000 applications but if yours is successful, you can expect the call in September 2023.

As a global ambassador of the games and of France, you will be more than a spectator, you will be part of the unforgettable experience, the largest sporting event in France's history!

<https://www.paris2024.org/en/volunteers/>

The Organising Committees for the Olympic Games (OCOG) have confirmed they'll need some 45,000 volunteers for Paris 2024. Better yet, they're looking for English speakers!



THOSE DAMN SCAMS

If your French is up to it, keep an eye on www.hoaxbuster.com a site which lists and describes all the latest scams, and hoaxes, including a list of 'Hoax les plus consultés'.



Things You Might NEED TO KNOW

AIRFARES FAIR?

Did you know that, according to a recent fare comparison site study, **air fare prices from France are cheaper if you book online on Mondays or Tuesdays?** Saturdays and Sundays are the most expensive days to book flights.

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

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



MORTGAGE INSURANCE

Is the insurance on your mortgage imposed by the bank and hefty? According to the Loi Lemoine, you can now change insurance taken out on loans whenever you want - at no extra cost, which means you can search for an insurance policy that suits you, and your pocket, better.

DON'T STOP STOPPING AT STOP

You arrive at a stop sign, you can see for miles, you KNOW that there is no traffic around...so you breeze across that solid white line. We've all done it. However, the gendarmes take this offense very seriously! You must be seen to stop for 3 seconds, even if nothing is coming or they will fine you €80 with great pleasure! And whilst we're on the subject of fines, did you know that, in theory, if you are caught sitting in a stationary car with the engine running, but without your seatbelt on, you can be fined 90€ and lose 3 points on your licence? The same applies to the use of your mobile phone.



RISE IN MOTORWAY TOLLS

From February 2023, tolls on French motorways will rise by an average 4,75%, less than originally predicted. The government also proposes various discounts to "limiter les hausses de prix pour la vie quotidienne, en protégeant ceux qui doivent utiliser la voiture pour aller travailler et en encourageant la transition écologique". For example, owners of electric vehicles are exempt from the increase and can also benefit from a 5% reduction.



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LANGUAGE EXERCISES ANSWERS

TEST YOUR FRENCH

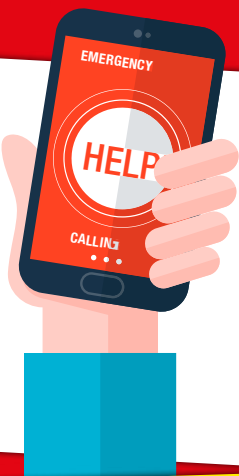
- 1e 2j 3g 4h 5i 6c 7b 8d 9a 10f
- 1b 2g 3j 4a 5i 6f 7h 8c 9d 10e
- 1d 2g 3j 4b 5h 6f 7i 8a 9e 10c
- 1f 2j 3b 4h 5i 6c 7a 8g 9d 10e

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



EMERGENCY numbers



15 SAMU
(medical emergency)

112 European
emergency line

17 POLICE
emergency

114 Emergency number
for the deaf and hard
of hearing by SMS

18 Fire service
emergency

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.

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Emergency vet 04 68 83 35 85
Perpignan Hospital 04 68 61 66 33
CPAM (English spk serv) 09 74 75 36 46
Cancer Support France 04 68 69 01 37
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International Mastercard 08 00 90 13 87
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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,
I e bébé arrive, la poche
des eaux a percé.

ENGLISH speaking SERVICES

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 Events and Wine tasting..... www.domaine-perdrix.net/en

Domaine Treloar, Trouillas 04 68 95 02 29
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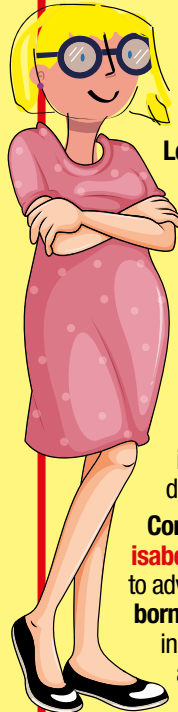
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