

Autumn 2024

P-O Life

Life in the Pyrénées-Orientales

N° 82
FREE / GRATUIT



Sofia...Festa Major, Saint Cyprien

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Editorial

Reflecting back over 20 years of P-O Life Mag, I see the young(ish), eternally inquisitive teacher that I was...never still, always questioning, poking my snout into the P-O way of life.... and realise as I become creakier and crankier, how fortunate I am to now be surrounded by such a great team, (Laura, Maite, Laurianne...love you

ladies) thousands of loyal readers, and so many (although never enough) supportive sponsors.

I simply couldn't do it without you! Nor would P-O Life be the same without the many generous contributors of excellent articles, many of whom have become good friends. Leigh and Merry, Chris and Tim, Lesley, Robbie, Henry, Ellen, Suzanne and behind the scenes, Wendy who keeps a watchful eye on our Facebook group and routs out the baddies! Oh, and the photographers and the artists....I could go on and on (and apparently I do according to my long suffering husband and patient friends!) but honestly, we quite literally wouldn't exist without you!

Sometimes it's a big struggle. Financing a paper magazine isn't easy.

Please support our advertisers. Check out the ads throughout and the 'Yellow Pages' in the back of the mag and contact them when you need a butcher, a baker, a candlestick maker...

Summer always hangs around well past the allotted 'official' season here in the P-O, a warm sun loitering over the beaches and plains, in no hurry to slip into autumn. Bright days, cooler evenings (phew), long deserted beaches, and the prospect of waking up to a snow topped Canigou one unexpected morning. Lucky, lucky, lucky to be a part of it.

HOPE YOUR AUTUMN IS GOLDEN

Ps.
DID I EVER TELL YOU ABOUT
THE TIME I THANKED A
FRENCH FRIEND TO DEATH?
IT WAS A MERCI KILLING.

Kate



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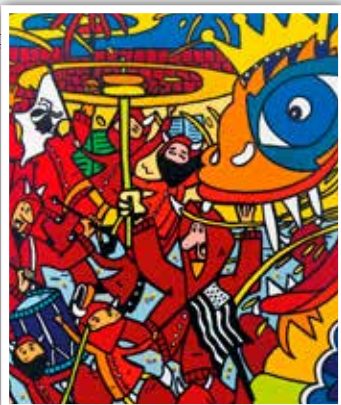
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a paper mag. Please, please support our advertisers

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DO YOU LOVE OUR FRONT COVER AS MUCH AS WE DO?

Check out page 42 to find out more about festivities in Saint Cyprien this autumn.

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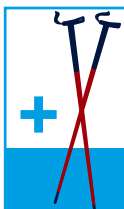


OUT ^{for} THE DAY

LA SERRE de VINGRAU circular



with
TIM AND CHRIS PARKER



Access: map IGN 1:25000
Durban Corbieres 25470T

A 3h 30m – circular walk of 9 km with 450metres of ascent. Well signed route with yellow way marks and also cairns along summit crest. Impressive cliffs in view on the ascent. Views across Roussillon from the summit. Walking boots essential. Not advisable in high winds or poor visibility. The cliffs are internationally renowned with around 400 climbing routes.

Approach Vingrau on D12 from Rivesaltes or from Espira de l'Agly behind Perpignan airport. Parking available by the Stade/Mairie in Vingrau or close to the cemetery.



VINGRAU

The Vingrau town hall was destroyed by a fire in 1935, along with all the municipal archives. Charles Béringuier, 62-year-old road worker was in the cellar fetching anti-hail rockets when an unexplained explosion set fire to the municipal building. His body was found later amongst the rubble. He left behind a widow and five children.

START OF WALK From Stade, leave car park, walk up Rue Millère past school. At main street turn right then second left into Rue de la Poste. Look out for yellow way marks – some are on the ground! Right at crossroads, left into Place Jean Jaures, left again then right into Rue Bizet then rue Rameau. Up cobbled steps to old church, right alongside church then left behind it. You are now in open land! Just follow the yellow way marks up the stony path among cypress and pine trees.

>...



VINGRAU

Vingrau takes its name from the Latin expression "viginti gradi", the twenty grades or steps, describing the path leading to the village which in Roman times consisted of a paved road on which these steps were built.

OUT for THE DAY



Path continues to climb through scrub and **gently up the plateau du Planal de l'Achartell**. Wild narcissus abound if you walk in springtime, as do grape hyacinths and other plants. Wild rosemary and thyme are everywhere. **As you go higher look out for interesting shapes in the rocks from centuries of rain and weathering.**



You never know what ancient artifact you might find around Vingrau, occupied by man (and woman) since prehistoric times. Snout scrapers, chisels, knives, and stone arrowheads are amongst tools discovered by archeologists over the years.

Walk the region LA SERRE de VINGRAU circular

with TIM AND CHRIS PARKER



After 40 minutes cross the dry ravin des Couillelets and **turn left** to continue on the opposite side of the valley. Look out for rock climbers as you continue to climb up the valley. **Twenty minutes later, arrive at the Refuge Yves Bernard nestled in a pine grove.** This sturdy refuge can sleep 6-8 on huge bunks, has a fireplace, pans, matches, spade etc. So no problem if you are benighted!



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LANDSCAPING AND PASSION...

BACK TO HIS ROOTS

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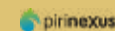
AUTUMN....

...in the P-O is the perfect season to explore the region by bike or on foot.

With 353 kilometres of cycle track, parts of it purpose-built for safe cycling and walking, the transborder Pirinexus route takes you through 53 towns and two different countries, combining stretches of 'voie verte' with rural, low traffic level roads.

Along the way, restaurants, wine-tasting, ancient roads, castles and abbeys, fascinating architecture and ruins, art, craft, local produce - a cocktail of fresh air and exercise combined with culture, gastronomy and fun.

www.viesverdes.cat/en/



Walk the region LA SERRE de VINGRAU circular

with TIM AND CHRIS PARKER



The area around Vingrau has been classed as a 'Natura 2000' zone due to its ecological interest.

Natura 2000 is a network of protected areas covering Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats, its aim to protect habitats and species of wild fauna and flora.

Another 25 minutes up the valley will bring you to its head at a T junction of paths on the col. Notice a huge cairn on your right. **Ignore the yellow cross and take the path to that cairn.** (553m)
From here turn right for the summit ridge.



Surprisingly for such a small village, Vingrau has 3 churches! Notre-Dame de l'assomption perches at the top of the village, with enough steps up to get your daily cardio exercise! It's mostly empty. Notre-Dame de Fontfroide in the centre has some interesting art, and an ancient altarpiece. Finally, the chapel at the village entrance is dedicated to Notre Dame du Bon Conseil with an interesting Virgin and Child.



Yellow way marks and cairns help you negotiate the summit ridge. There are a few places where you must pay close attention to the route.

Generally, the way across the first part of the ridge is very straightforward but **there are a couple of tricky bits where going down on your bottom may be required** – it all adds to the excitement!

After the first section things get much more straightforward, as you go along a series of summits at 564m, 576m, and 528m. **At the second one, (about 35 minutes from the col cairn), find a rusty old mast on the ground.**

Very soon after this, beware of a cairn on your right at the top of one of the cliffs – it does not mark the route but a place where you take a sharp left away from the cliffs, so look out for the continuing cairns.

The path continues along the crest, gradually descending. It seems a long way, but bear in mind that the cliffs are alongside the road into Vingrau as well as continuing into the valley up which we walked.

From the fallen mast it is approx. 45 minutes to reach the D 12 on a sharp bend.

Cross road to a path descending below more cliffs, used for training rock climbers, until it reaches the vine covered valley floor.

On reaching the main road, cross into Vingrau, passing chapel Notre Dame de Bon Coeur, the cemetery and then into the village. Find a way through the narrow streets back to the parking.



From Vingrau, turn right at signs for the Château d'Opoul and Perillos, a winding and narrow road so be kind to the driver.

The chateau, also known as Salvetera, (the land that saves) is an ancient and ruined stronghold on a limestone plateau surrounded by cliffs - difficult to scale in armour! Sections of the castle walls remain and there is also access to a vaulted room and part of the castle church. Two vast vaulted cisterns, dug into the rock remind us that water was also a rare commodity in days gone by, confirmed by the local geology studies.

A wide moat separated the castle from the fortified town, part built into the castle. Every year, volunteers join in the restoration of walls and passages. A visit is free, but avoid windy days.

Just follow the painted arrows that lead to the plateau via the (relatively) gently ascending track.



Les Plus BEAUX VILLAGES

DES PYRÉNÉES-ORIENTALES

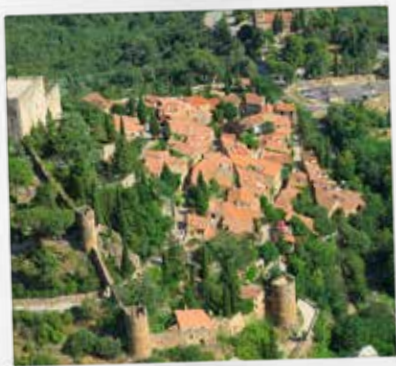


There are so many beautiful villages to visit in the P-O that it would be difficult to shortlist... but 'Les Plus Beaux Villages' de France have done just that.

HOW ARE THEY CHOSEN?

Any village can put their name forward (for a fee) but amongst other criteria, a village has to have 'less than 2,000 inhabitants, at least two heritage sites (churches, monuments, castles.....) and offer accommodation and leisure activities if it wishes to be added to this prestigious list. There are so many beautiful villages in the P-O but here is a very brief glimpse of the chosen few.

www.les-plus-beaux-villages-de-france.org/fr/



CASTELNOU

Tumbling down a hillside topped by a castle, the ancient village of Castelnou is a delightful maze of pretty cobbled streets and alleys, crammed with workshops and galleries. Wood-turners, potters and painters create their wares in intriguing spaces, sometimes cut into the rock of the hillside. The chateau, originally built way back in 990AD, was home to the powerful counts and countesses of Vallespir and has seen sieges, crusades and wars, infighting and drama. Home to British agent Elizabeth, code name Cynthia, during WW2, it even has its own ghost!



During the German Occupation, British agent Elisabeth was sent to live in the castle, her mission to seduce and extract information from Vichy collaborators. Much invaluable information was gathered between the sheets. After the war, she returned to the chateau to marry one of the men she seduced. Buried along with her two dogs, her grave occupies a discreet corner of the castle's grounds.

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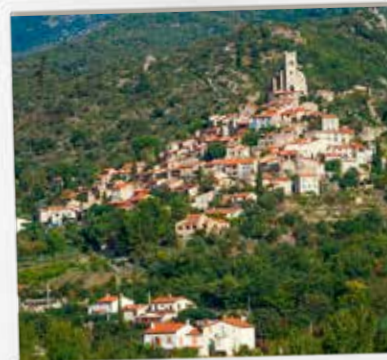
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EUS (pron ay-00s)

This once-fortified pyramid shaped, **pedestrian only village**, built into terraces on a granite hill, played its part in defending the Franco-Spanish borders – on both sides! There is still a subtle Spanish flavour to the narrow, be-flowered, cobbled streets, joined by ancient vaulted passageways. **At the top, the imposing 18th century church of St Vincent perches** on a rocky peak, built partly, it is said, by women labourers who moved the huge granite blocks from which it was constructed, and suffered 21 miscarriages and 7 deaths as a result. In the lower village, visit the 13th century Romanesque chapel, its porch crafted in pink marble from Villefranche de Conflent, or take a number of easy walks through olive groves and cork oak forests.



Eus takes its name from a type of green oak tree called the Yeuse, which grows around the village.



EVOL

This tiny cobbled hamlet of mottled schist houses, slate roofs and bulging ancient bread ovens on external walls, is dominated by the 13th century feudal castle of the Vicomtes de So and the Romanesque Church of Saint André. In the mairie, the small 'Musée des Arts et Traditions Populaires' displays ancient tools and rural history. According to legend, the village and surrounding mountains were home to fairies and witches, requiring a trip to the nearby Conjurador where the village priest would exorcise evil spirits before villagers could take their flocks to summer pasture.



THE CONJURADOR

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



PRATS-DE-MOLLO

With Canigou at its back and the River Tech in front, the views all around this fortified medieval town are stunning. **The walls of the town, built on 14th century foundations, are pierced by four arched gateways: La France, L'Espagne de la Cavalerie, la Fabrique and le Verger.**

Enter any of them and follow the narrow cobbled streets of the old town to the **beautiful 13th century church**. The curls and swirls of the local iron on the door never rust, the lock is a serpent and, next to it, planted in the wall is a 2 metre whale bone.

In 1659, following the Treaty of the Pyrenees, Prats became a border town, and Fort Lagarde was built for protection. Later, a tunnel was built to link the village to the fort, its original aim to protect the much hated soldiers sent to enforce the French king's tax collectors. Today, it is a long, cool climb on a warm day. **Wander around the fort, take a guided tour, check out the local tourist office for dates of summer afternoons when the salt tax rebellion is re-enacted with much costume, cavalry, fencing and jousting.**



LA GABELLE

This outrageous salt tax was introduced by Louis XIV to finance the maintenance and construction of fortresses and security around France. In fact, it privileged the wealthy and penalised the poor. The funds were much misused by the king. **The peasants of Prats revolted and refused to pay.** To punish the villagers, Louis had parts of the medieval walls destroyed, later to be rebuilt and extended by the his own engineer, Vauban, including a tunnel to protect the king's tax collectors sent to enforce the hated salt tax.



VILLEFRANCHE-DE-CONFLENT

This perfectly preserved fortified medieval town was built at the end of the 11th century by Count Guillaume Raymond de Cerdagne to protect the valleys from invasion, and later reinforced by Vauban in the 17th century. Enter the town by one of two ancient gates, the **Porte d'Espagne** or the **Porte de France**. With just two main pedestrian-only streets, take Rue St Jacques to visit the 17th century Romanesque church of Saint-Jacques, with its 12th century carved pink marble entrance, or choose Rue Saint Jean for the many art galleries, souvenir shops and local craft shops, many with fascinating shop signs, forged from local iron.

Walk the ramparts, alone, or with an audio guide (small fee) or take 'Les milles marches', underground staircase to visit Fort Liberia (entrance fee) with its 'Prison de Dames', a horrible history of female prisoners. Give yourself at least 20 minutes for the climb! Inside, you can buy tickets or a guide, available in English, and drinks, snacks and loos are available.

LES MILLES MARCHES (underground staircase)

Built in the reign of Napoleon III in the nineteenth century, 22 men fell to their deaths during its construction. Steep, narrow and dimly lit, it is cool on a hot day but might not be the best option for those with claustrophobia or bad knees! Alternatively, you can walk the steep open pathway, with its stunning views over mountain and valley, or take a shuttlebus from inside the town walls.

ART EXPOS ELLEN'S choice

With Ellen Turner Hall

Art lovers are spoilt for choice in our beautiful region so which exhibitions to visit?

P-O writer, Ellen Turner Hall's passion for art leads her all over the P-O, visiting exhibitions featuring some incredible artists, both living and long-departed, some famous, others waiting in the wings.

Here are just a few, but you can read more of Ellen's reviews at

www.anglophone-direct.com



**MUSÉE D'ART MODERNE,
COLLIOURE**

Plein Soleil: Collioure 1945-1985
8 June to 29 September 2024.
www.museecollioure.com

The sun is the subject of this summer exhibition, reminding us "the sun never allows you to forget the shade".



Plein Soleil tells a dramatic story, touching, violent and hopeful in turns. One of the pivotal actions took place in 1962 in the aftermath of the Algerian war. The local fishing industry was already in decline when the Algerians arrived with state-of-the-art fishing boats. Seeing they could no longer compete, the fisherman of Collioure made of their traditional wooden barques a massive bonfire on the beach and watched their past go up in flames.

A painting by Sarthou shows the hunched figures of three women, their heads and bodies shrouded in black, repairing fishing nets in the shade of a boat. One feels the violence of the sun, the difficulty of their task, the toll it takes on their lives. It is a portrayal of bleak survival. In marked contrast is Plage de Collioure by Martin Vives in 1970. The boats have disappeared from the beach to be replaced with bikini-clad tourists soaking up the sun, lying at ease, enjoying a carefree day.

Noteworthy is René Perrot's colourful canvas of sea urchins against a pink background, Jean-Jacques Prolongeau's porcelain vase

decorated with bathers and Alice Martinez-Richter's painting of a white-clad fisherman, a Christ-like figure trapped in his own ropes.



The period of 1945 to 1985 also marks a story of renewal and regeneration. With the end of the local fishing industry, tourism offered a way forward. In 1985 the Museum of Modern Art was inaugurated. Its mission to encourage and welcome new artists under the Collioure sun continues today.



**MUSÉE D'ART MODERNE,
CÉRÉT**

Max Jacob: Le cubisme fantastique
29 June to 1 December 2024.
www.musee-ceret.com

A mystery. An enigma. A paradox. The descriptions of Max Jacob are as various as his character. An intimate friend of Picasso and his artistic milieu, Jacob wrote with remarkable clarity about the revolution which was Cubism.



In spite of stating in a letter "I haven't done cubism", a few of Jacob's drawings of Céret in 1913, demonstrate the contrary. His Cows in the river combines a clear study of cattle within a distorted cubist landscape.

While many of Jacob's drawing are executed with the lightest touch, his words are forceful and direct. In another letter he wrote, "Everything is at right angles in this homeland of Cubism: houses..., shop fronts..., people's noses, men's shoulders and women's breasts, the twisted olive trees of the fields."



A lover of opera, theatre, circus, and all kinds of popular entertainment, Jacob became a bit of an acrobat himself searching for the delicate balance between farce and tragedy as witnessed in his painting "At the circus". By dividing his talents between poetry, art criticism, painting, astrology and mysticism, Jacob never gave himself wholly to any single goal.

The various portraits of him by Picasso, Jean Metzinger (the poster of the exhibition), Modigliani and Cocteau among others all concentrate on the deep-set eyes and wrinkled forehead, the head of a thinker. Perhaps the greatest tribute is that by Francis Picabia who represents Jacob as a torch, suggesting Jacob illuminated the way for others, helping them understand the moment and interpret it through their individual styles.

MUSÉE RIGAUD, PERPIGNAN

La terre, le feu, l'eau, l'air
22 June to 29 December
<https://www.musee-rigaud.fr>

This retrospective of Jean Lurçat's work emphasises the elemental, experimental, and protean nature of the artist's journey

Jean Lurçat (1892-1966) started his artistic career as a painter, later turning his hand to designing tapestries and ceramics, pursuing the ideal of making art integral to everyday life.



In his paintings Lurçat combines the banal with the surreal. A plain white table is engulfed by a jungle profusion of leaves. A voluptuous bather dancing in the sun creates a grotesque black shadow on the sand.

In his monumental tapestry "Apollo, les quatre éléments" (1961) Lurçat fills the space with his personal symbols: sun, stars, fish, leaves, mermaids, and man to compose his vision of perfect harmony.

While human figures dominate the four panels of a woven screen, the lower sections depict an overflowing cornucopia, a desert landscape, swimming fish and a galaxy among constellations. Here is life in all its abundance and essential mystery.



The largest section of the exhibition is devoted to the decorative plates, vases and urns which Lurçat produced during his regular visits to Perpignan's famous pottery workshop at San Vicens. His fish vase is a notable example of Lurçat's mastery of balance and proportion. On a grander scale, stand the colossal figures he created on lava tiles for a building in Perpignan. One holds the moon to his ear, the sun to his bare midriff, his lower body draped in a long blue skirt of stars, the whole wreathed in leaves. Lurçat's vision of man as the centre of all creation.



ART EXPOS ELLEN'S choice

Perpignan has an ego

WHAT GREAT NEWS!
WITH LAURIANNE

Marseille-born Ego is a fantastic new artisan ice cream and sorbet café, recently opened by the lovely **Ania** and **Romain** on **Place de la République** in Perpignan.



Tried and tasted

Since my partner and kids discovered **ego**, it has become a firm family favourite.



Help yourself

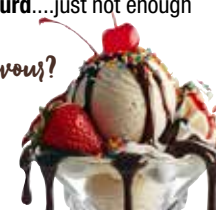
Open 7am till 7pm (10pm in the summer!), **SEVEN DAYS A WEEK** (finally somewhere to go on a Sunday in Perpi!), help yourself to the flavours, quantities and toppings of your choice. Price is per weight (4,20 € per 100g). **I loooooove the sesame noir....and the erable pecan, oh, and the miel lavande, and the lemon curd....**just not enough space....

What's **YOUR** favourite flavour?



Vegan and low sugar

Large vegan selection, and sorbets that are up to **80% fruit** for those seeking more taste with less sugar. A new taste idea? Let them know. They'll see if they can whip it up!



Did I hear home made?

VEGAN OPTIONS

Sandwiches (homemade bread!), pastries (homemade), drinks (have I mentioned homemade?) and some delicious looking breakfast options.



Kiddie corner & work area

Comfy cushions, light and bright work area for a change from the kitchen table.



Pick up a copy of PO Life mag at the counter. **Ania** and **Romain** have sponsored this article as they love the Anglophone community here. Send the love back! Don't forget to mention us wherever you go - **it keeps us alive, fresh and fruity.**

Thank you, lovely readers!



with **Leigh** and **Merry Foster**

Orgues, Gorges, Cathars, Romans and dams

Length, circuit from Thuir 111km, approx. 2-1/2 hrs plus stops.

This is one of our favourite rides, as it includes some spectacular scenery, lovely winding mountain roads, and lots of fascinating places to stop and explore. You could equally do it by car, but we find the motorbike more fun and easier to pull off the road to look at the beautiful views in safety.



Our start point is Thuir, but join at any point, depending on where you're coming from. **From Thuir centre, follow D612 to roundabout at edge of town and turn almost 180 degrees towards Ille Sur Têt.** Follow this road for about 14km through charming fruit orchards and vineyards on the Têt plain. Once in Ille sur Têt, follow one-way system, then turn left on D916 towards Prades. After 200m take right fork towards Sournia, Bélesta and the Site des Orgues. **Cross bridge over dual carriageway and river Têt, then at roundabout turn right on D2, still towards Bélesta.**



LES ORGUES

A striking geological rock formation, these strange limestone cliffs have been sculpted by nature over the last five million years. The amazing 'Cheminées des Fées', clusters of 'fairy chimneys', form a natural amphitheatre, a paradise for photographers, a haven for birds and a fascinating walk for visitors who follow the well laid out trail.



Follow this road as it winds upwards, and after 500m **pass the right turn towards the Orgues.** Well worth a visit, but if you don't have time, just keep going on D2 **up to the Belvédère** des Orgues at junction with D21, 1.3km further on. Worth a quick stop here for panoramic views east down to Orgues, and southwest towards mighty Canigou, visible behind another dramatic set of sandstone peaks atop small hill north of river. A Table d'Orientation tells you what you can see on a clear day.

After your stop, continue on D21 following valley de la Ribèrette. The landscape is mostly wild and rugged, as the road winds its way through the hills. After about 5km, **reach the picturesque village of Belesta,** perched on a



hillside above a dry riverbed. **Stay on D21 towards Caramany, and enjoy twists and turns through stunning scenery.** To the north, the massive limestone peaks of the Corbieres, with their Cathar castles marking the border from the



with Leigh and Merry Foster



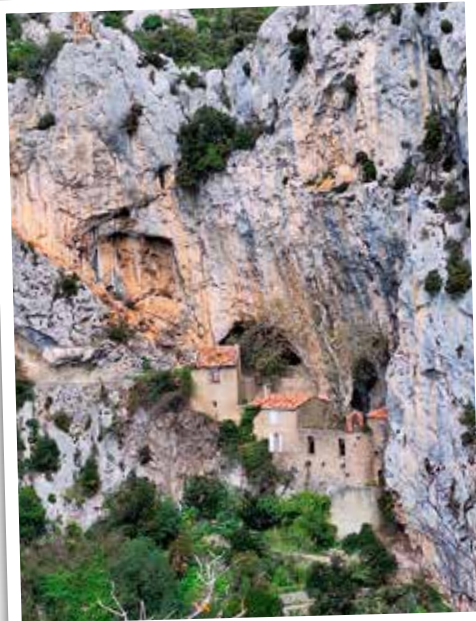
PO to the Aude. To the **west the stark peak of Bugarach**, well-known for its mysterious history (legend has it that it is named after two naughty elves, Bug and Arach who annoyed Jupiter so much he turned them into a mountain!). **Just over 4km from Belestia, before entering Caramany, turn off to right to the Belvédère du Lac.** The track to the top is marked no entry, but you can park at bottom and walk up to a fabulous shady picnic spot, overlooking the **Barrage d'Agly and the reservoir of Caramany.** It is so quiet you can almost hear the butterflies as they glide through the trees. The reservoir was nowhere near full when we were there, but still had enough water to look beautiful.



From here, continue **down through Caramany and across the reservoir bridge.** After about 3km turn left on **D9 towards Ansignan (where there is a large Roman Aquaduct you can either visit, or look down on from the road) and St Paul de Fenouillet.**



Turn right on D619, and the road now follows the Agly as it winds up through the hills and imposing gorges. Pass through the steepest bit and descend into St Paul 9km later. In the village centre, cross over the **D117 and follow the signs to the Gorges of Galamus on the D7.** After climbing steadily about 5km, reach the spectacular gorge. **There is a car park and a snack bar where you can take a break and marvel at the 14th century Hermitage hanging on a cliff above the deep river valley.** Again, if you have time to visit, there is a rough footpath, and it is amazing to wonder how on earth they built it so long ago.



Franciscan monks built the mystical sanctuary of the **Ermitage de St Antoine**, carved into the almost vertical cliff overlooking the **spectacular Galamus gorges, sculpted by nature** and the Agly River over hundreds of years. It was accessible only by donkey until intrepid abseilers armed with pick axes hacked out the road in 1880.



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ZA de la Tuilerie, Av de la Tuilerie, 66740 ST GENIS DES FONTAINES



with **Leigh and Merry Foster**

There is no road access from the north of the castle, so **keep going 3km to Duilhac-sous-Peyrepertuse**, from where you can visit it if you desire.



Afterwards, continue carefully through very narrow gorge as it cuts through the sheer valley walls. **Soon pass into the Aude and the road changes to D10.** The steep-sided gorge becomes milder, but no less beautiful. **After about 4.5km come to Cubieres sur Cinoble and turn right on D14.** Stay on this road for about 10km, meandering through the countryside and pastureland to **Rouffiac des Corbieres**, from where you can see the impressive **Château de Peyrepertuse** high on your right.



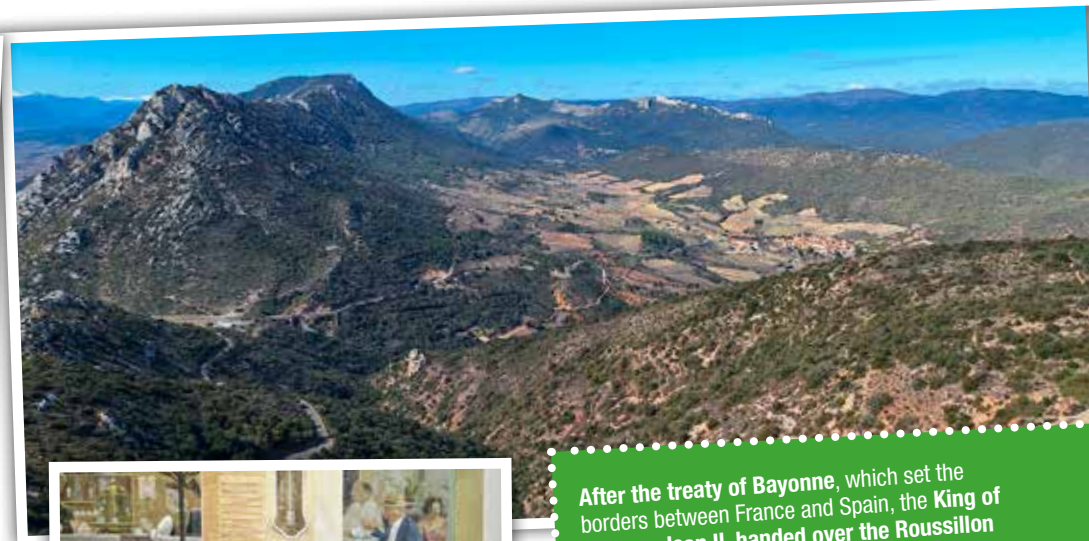
From here, **follow D14 a further 4km until just before Cucugnan.** Turn right up the hill on the D123 towards Maury. This takes you up to the **Col de l'Auzine at 426m**, and the turn off for another **Cathar castle, Queribus.** Now you are back in the PO, the road changes to the D19 and after 5km, arrive at the famous wine village of Maury.

Turn left on **D117 towards Estagel**, which you reach after about 9km. Now turn right onto **bridge**

over Agly, and follow road into centre of town. Turn right again on D612 towards **Millas.** Initially straight towards **Montner**, but becoming more bendy as it climbs another hill, the road **takes you past the Ravin de Caladroy and up to the Col de la Bataille at 264m.** Here you can find the turn off for the **Força Real** if you want to stop at a **fantastic viewpoint over the plain of Roussillon.** After this, descend again towards the Têt. This road is great fun if you can do it when it's not too busy!

After you reach the Têt and Millas 13km after Estagel, turn left on D916 and at roundabout, **turn right towards Thuir on D612.** About 9km from Millas, return to Thuir and your start point. Enjoy the riding and safe travels!

Remember "Mieux vaut être en retard dans ce monde, qu'en avance dans l'autre!"



Well worth the visit for its great wines, it is also a delight in **Maury to wander around the "Chemin de Trompe l'Oeil"**, tricks of the eye, painted in 1998 by master muralist **Bernard Gout.**

A dog guards the entrance to the Cave Co-operative. Or does it? Three old men sit on a bench in the sun - or do they? From a distance you're really not quite sure. A horse looks over a stable door, a pretty fountain tempts closer inspection. **At least the café is open. Isn't it? Fascinating.**

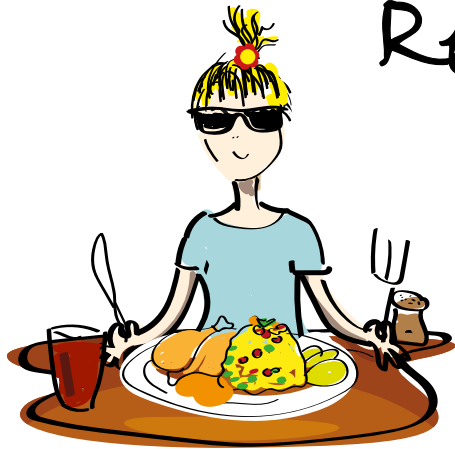
After the treaty of Bayonne, which set the borders between France and Spain, the **King of Aragon, Jean II, handed over the Roussillon and the Cerdagne to Louis XI of France.** Years later, Louis's successor, **Charles VIII,** decided that the rebellious Roussillonais were trouble and **handed them back to Spain!** In 1496 this fickle king changed his mind again, marched back into the Roussillon and waged war to win back the region, a decisive **battle which took place on the Col de la Bataille**, as it was subsequently named. It is on this spot that you will find the memorial to members of the resistance group **Henri Barbusse**, whose leader **Julien Panchot**, along with other members of the group, **was interrogated, tortured and shot by the Germans whilst defending the villagers of Valmanya.**





Restaurant REVIEWS

SUMMER - AUTUMN 2024



We love publishing your restaurant reviews, written BY readers FOR readers. They're honest (mostly!) objective, (we hope) 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....and like beauty, good food is in the eye of the beholder.... but they give you an idea of what's available. Enjoy!

CAN PLA

Collioure...with Suzanne

Just 5 minutes from my home, I can't believe I haven't been here before! **It is FANTASTIC!!!** The location has no view of the sea, but the tables are outdoors, separated and under a big protective roof. **Fantastic tapas, lovely fresh fish with roast potatoes and vegetables and simple but magnificent desserts.** The owners are such lovely people. A GREAT find. Absolutely loved this restaurant and it was very reasonable, not cheap but worth every euro.



7 Rue Voltaire, Collioure
Tel: 04 68 82 10 00

LE MAJA & GALAPAGOS

Lakeside Villeneuve de la Raho...with Toni

On the lake, **Le Maja** is open all day (10am to midnight or later) Delicious and you can have a swim **too** Next to it is the **Galapagos** with a new chef - some Japanese influences in the new dishes, also good. (Careful. Probably both close out of season so check ahead to avoid disappointment)



lac de Villeneuve-de-la-Raho
Tel: 06 30 19 97 52 (Le Maja)
06 12 44 90 77 (Galapagos)

QUESTION

Looking for recommendations for lunch with my 85 year old Irish dad who has dementia, and needs kind, patient service. Near Céret or Saint Jean Pla de Corts.

THANKS FOR YOUR RECOMMENDATION

GUY MOLAS

Zone Oulrich, Céret (Near Intermarché)...
with Helen

Easy parking/access. Large, airy interior. Fabulous view. In or outside dining. **Lovely, patient, cheerful staff.** Buffet starter - could be overwhelming for someone with dementia, but you could make the choice for your Dad whilst he remains seated.



Rue de Batere, Céret
Tel: 04 68 21 84 62

RELAIS D'OULRICH

Zone Oulrich, Céret...with Geraldine

The ladies at Relais d'Oulrich are always very kind. They do an hors oeuvre or help yourself charcuterie/salad bar then a small selection of mains and desserts.



6 Rue du Néoulous, Céret
Tel: 04 68 39 17 28

LE BISTROT CORTAL

Vernet Les Bains...

with Kendel

I love this bistro.

Delicious food and a wonderful view.

14 rue du Château, Vernet-les-Bains
Tel: 04 68 05 55 79



LE PETIT REST'EAU

Argelès Port...with Linda

We ate at the port today. It was excellent. **The service, food and the staff are so friendly.** I wanted a good lunch for my birthday and I was not disappointed.

Someone mentioned it in P-O Life recently. Whoever it was thank you!!!



3 Quai Vasco de Gama, Argelès-sur-Mer
Tel: 04 34 10 13 61

Restaurant
REVIEWSFANCY A FOURSOME
WITH MARIA?

LA LOGE

Salses le Château.

A smallish place with a few tables on the main road and a listed decor interior. **The food is Catalán, very good, cooked to order by Monsieur.** Do not eat here if you are in a hurry! The set menu was about €28 at the weekend and well worth it. All three courses were too much for me.

38 Av. Xavier Lloberes,
Salses-le-Château
Tel: 04 68 38 62 86

LE CABANON DES PÊCHEURS

Port Vendres

New restaurant on the quay. Had drinks and tapas there last night. My sangria was excellent as was the white wine. About 8 individual tapas to choose or 3 platters to share, cheese, charcuterie or a mixture of both. Main course fish €23, not bad for Port-Vendres. **It belongs to fishermen so it's fresh fish, catch of the day.** We'll be back for lunch.

9 Quai Fanal, Port-Vendres
Tel: 07 66 98 83 00

LA VOILE

Collioure



I'm not sure that I want to tell PO about this magic place :) **we don't want to share it!** It's a bar and restaurant perched on a series of terraces on the cliff. We've had drinks and breakfast. Breakfast was orange juice, croissant and tartine with a choice of hot drink, reasonably priced especially for Collioure. Although we haven't eaten there, the food being prepared looked and smelt good.

9 Rte de Port-Vendres, Collioure
Tel: 06 34 89 01 95

MAS ULLASTRE SPAIN

Capmany and Espolla

Can eat on terrace or air-conditioned dining room. We had the menu for about €17. **Delicious gazpacho and freshly cooked sardine salad as 1st course followed by grilled squid cooked to perfection.** Homemade cheesecake and melon as dessert. Choice of wine and water included.

Not too far from La Jonquera.Ctra. De Capmany A Vilajuiga S/N,
Sant Climent Sescebes, Spain
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WITH WENDY

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2 Rue de la Place, Arles-sur-Tech
Tel: 09 79 30 38 02

LA FONTAINE DES BUIS

With the beautiful setting down by the riverside and festooned with fairy lights in the evening it's an instagrammable location. Additionally **the food is also delicious; tapas with an Asian twist.**

1 Chem. du Stade, Arles-sur-Tech
Tel: 06 20 95 56 49

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 :-)



Summer may be officially over but the sun is still shining, the sky is blue – perfect for a stroll along the prom prom prom (tiddly-pom-pom-pom) followed by lunch on the port or sea front, or a wander around the market, a visit to the museum or theatre, and a cosy meal in an inviting town bistro.... 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 autumn/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 :-)**

ideas for EATING OUT

P-O Life *ideas for* **EATING OUT**

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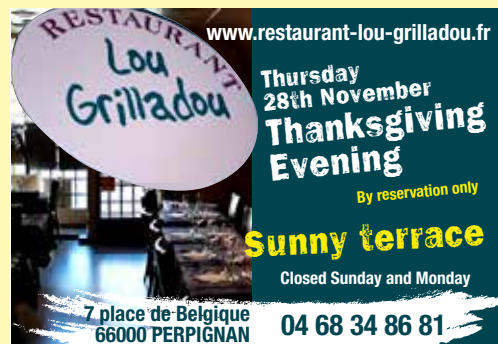
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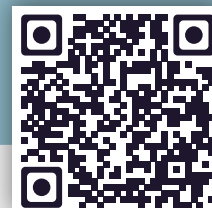
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© Robert Tullett

Late
Summer
Soups

WITH SUZANNE DUNAWAY

The "Beautiful Soup" song from Alice in Wonderland has remained with me since childhood. My mother made exquisite soups for all seasons, and now I have discovered how little bowls of magic may be made from my tiny but bounteous garden in the medieval town of Collioure.

ALL OF THESE
SOUPS MAY
BE FROZEN
FOR FUTURE
SWELTERING DAYS,
AND WHEN AUTUMN
SIDLES IN, SERVE
THE SOUPS WARM
WITH CROUTONS.

After years of experience in her own kitchen, cooking schools and private classes all over the world, talented artist, columnist, and cookbook author Suzanne Dunaway shares her P-O-inspired creations.
www.suzannedunaway.com

Chilled melon
and tomato soup

Take 4 large, very ripe tomatoes, 1 very small sweet onion, 2 large sprigs of basil, the requisite splash of olive oil, a tiny garlic clove, a pinch of sugar, a squeeze of lemon, and 1 or 2 packaged toasts for the texture. You might wish to turn this cold pappa al pomodoro (minus the broth) into a gazpacho and add cucumber, peeled red peppers and a very tiny hot pepperoncino, but I like the pure tomato version best.

It is also very good using mint instead of basil and if you wish to thin it with a little chicken broth, do so, but chill it nonetheless.

It is to this basic tomato soup that I added two large slices of a very ripe melon, giving the soup a mysterious and lovely cool flavour along with a touch of mystery.



Vichyssoise



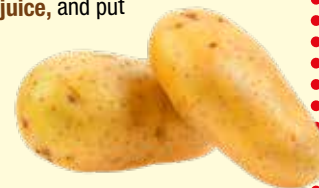
Another summer favorite made with tender little new potatoes and leeks. I do not even peel the potatoes, which may not appeal to some, but you may strain the soup after

having whizzed it up in the processor, creating a perfect, silky substance that might cause a guest or two to faint.

Use 8-10 absolutely new potatoes, 1 small sweet onion, and 2 small leeks, all sliced thin and sautéed in 2 soup spoons of olive oil and the same amount of butter until translucent and soft.

Add 2 cups rich chicken broth, salt and pepper, and a squeeze of lemon juice, and put the contents of the pan into the processor.

You do not have to add heavy cream, which is the norm, but a little Greek yogurt suffices for adding a rich flavour. Taste for seasoning adding fresh ground pepper, which really snazzes up the soup. Use a hand mixer to whiz until very smooth. Chill well and serve with the classic garnish, chopped chives, or lemon thyme leaves for an unusual flavour.



Beetroot, cucumber and yoghurt

Packaged, cooked beets may be found at the market and are fine for this recipe: Put into the top of a food processor 1 package or 4-6 cooked beets (or boil your own until tender), 1 peeled cucumber, 1 tiny garlic clove, 1 small plain yogurt, a good splash of extra virgin olive oil, the juice of a lemon, 2 sprigs of mint or basil and salt and pepper to taste. Whiz up the ingredients until very smooth and serve chilled with shreds of mint or basil for garnish, or very fine slices of cucumber scattered over the top.



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MAUREILLAS (foyer municipal)
Le Docteur Miracle
Opéra by Georges Bizet.



Sunday 15th September at 16h

L'ALBÈRE (église Saint-Jean)
Quintette Aérés
From Bach to Gershwin



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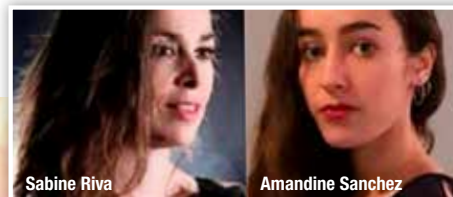
Sunday 6th October at 17h

LES CLUSES (HAUTES) (Église Saint-Nazaire)
Concerts JustS: cello & violin.



Sunday 13th October at 18h

SAINT-JEAN PLA DE CORTS
(Salle polyvalente)
Recital for 2 Sopranos.



TICKETS ON THE DOOR (for everyone)
Adults over 25: 20€ – Carmen 23€
Pass Thermal: 18€ – Carmen 21€
Adults 18 – 25: 12€ – Carmen 15€
under 18: free

TICKETS IN ADVANCE
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Non-members over 25: 20€ – Carmen 23€
Music school / Conservatoire: 15€ – Carmen 18€
Members 18 – 25: 10€ – Carmen 13€
Non-members 18 – 25: 12€ – Carmen 15€
Under 18: free

Saturday 2nd November at 20h
Sunday 3rd November at 16h

CÉRET (Salle de l'union)
La Tragédie De Carmen.
Opéra by Bizet Constant



Sunday 10th November at 16h

TAILLET (Église Saint-Valentin)
Wind Quintet with CRR Perpignan



Sunday 17th November at 16h

LE BOULOU : (Église Sainte-Marie)
Concert Prestige – Sacred Music



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P-O Life AUTUMN

Saint-Cyprien STYLE



FESTA MAJOR

13TH - 15TH SEPTEMBER
Place de la République
FREE

A weekend at this free family fiesta will soon chase away those 'back-to-school' blues. It's perfect opportunity to get acquainted with Catalan traditions, flavoured with Corsica, Brittany, the Basque country, Aveyron....
Whether it's castellers, gegants, sardane, correfocs, games or workshops, the weekend promises to be full of surprises!

Everybody loves a market

Thursday morning Place de la Mairie – village
Friday beach Rodin



LATE SUMMER DAYS

20TH - 22ND SEPTEMBER
Port, Quai Arthur Rimbaud
FREE

The sun is still shining, the sea still sparkling, the traffic has thinned out ...and the roads of Saint Cyprien are taken over by the Chapter 66 Harley Davidson club.

Mean machines, leather-clad bikers from all over Europe, information stands, market stalls, tattoos, clothing, jewellery, accessories, barbers, motorbike exhibitions and demos, parades, food trucks, Country demos, Harley Davidson Rides.....

AND IT'S ALL FREE!

Music lovers will enjoy the tribute bands covering Deep Purple (Friday at 4pm & Sunday at 3.45pm), AC/DC (Friday at 9.15pm) Queen (Saturday at 9.15pm).

CASTANYADA AND NEW WINE

17TH OCTOBER
Place de la République
FREE

Who doesn't love new wine and hot chestnuts on a cool autumn day? **Meet local vigneronns and wine merchants to celebrate the arrival of the 'vin nouveau'...**and enjoy free tastings of course.



CHRISTMAS MUSCAT

21ST NOVEMBER FROM 6PM
Place de la République
FREE

Musical Muscat tasting with creative workshop for children at **Les Collections de Saint-Cyprien** so the adults can enjoy a tipple in peace!

NATIVITY SCENES FROM AROUND THE WORLD

7TH DECEMBER - 4TH JANUARY

Fancy a Christmas stroll? **Visit over 90 nativity scenes from around the world**, following a well marked out route of 800m around the village. (Check with Tourist Office for more details)

FOR MORE INFO
Saint-Cyprien tourist office
Quai Arthur Rimbaud, 66750 Saint-Cyprien
Tel: 04 68 21 01 33
contact@otstcyp.com
www.tourisme-saint-cyprien.com

FESTIVALS and Traditions

CORREFOCS

Groups of 'diables' or devils, wearing horns and masks, weave amongst the crowds waving sparklers, firecrackers, roman candles, spitting fire around them....Leave your health and safety head at home.

CASTELLS

Human pyramids, sometimes up to eight or nine storeys high and usually topped off with a brave child, who raises one hand on arrival, with four fingers erect, in a gesture said to symbolise the stripes of the Catalan flag.

GÉGANTS

Enormous painted papier-mâché figures, sometimes 14 or 15 ft tall, with traditional clothing and a very hot person inside!

SARDANE

Considered the national dance of Catalunya, this traditional circle dance is designed to bring whole villages out into the streets, and get them in party mood – a little like a more sober and complicated version of the 'hokey cokey' in fact! Join in! What better way to make friends and take a little exercise at the same time.



FRENCHLife

CHANGING YOUR ELECTRICITY SUPPLIER- electrifyingly easy!

When we move to a new country, or buy a second home abroad, we often continue with the energy provider already in place. It's easier... and with moving house right up there with divorce and death for the most stressful life events, we really don't need the extra hassle.

So are you aware that there are plenty of electricity suppliers to choose from, nearly all cheaper than the former state-owned EDF who are still the biggest electricity supplier on the market?



To be clear, we are talking energy PROVIDERS, not energy DISTRIBUTION which remains a monopoly via Enedis, responsible for operating and maintaining the power grid and electricity infrastructure.



It certainly pays to shop around for most of your utilities, (gas, water, TV, Internet....) to ensure you have the right supplier for you at the best possible price. For example, some electricity providers offer green options, others packages and discounts which may, or may not, suit you, and of course, in this region of wall to wall sunshine, it is well worth considering installing your own solar panels.

You're nodding your head. Checking out the electricity providers is on the 'to do' list once you get your head round all the other stuff that needs doing, because knowing French admin, it's going to take a lot of thought and paperwork to change providers....

Well no actually. It's much easier than you would expect. In fact, the most difficult part is choosing out of so many.

HOW TO SWITCH

It's free, you keep the same meter, and your new supplier will do all the work when you sign up! What's more, if you find the new supplier doesn't suit you, you can change back or change to a different supplier as many times as you like, with no minimum commitment period, and no cancellation

fees or charges, which are prohibited by French law. Termination of your old contract is automatic, and could end up saving you hundreds of euros. C'est du gâteau!

HOW TO CHOOSE

Now there's a thorny one. Making a choice can be challenging because there are so many.

Watch out for hard sell. As with everything, some companies can be pushy and offer misleading packages to close the deal.

Make sure they have the right tariff for you.

Would you be better off with off-peak rates?

Do the off-peak hours they offer suit you?

What about tempo where rates vary throughout the year?

Are they providing enough power, or do you need more, bearing in mind that you can choose the 'puissance du compteur', and the more powerful, the more you pay.

Check out some of the comparison sites which will help you search by various criteria.

According to one comparison site, **Selectra** (<https://en.selectra.info>), the cheapest electricity provider in France in June 2024 was **OHM Énergie**, thanks to its offer Giga Eco. The price per kWh of 0.1883€ with the Base option was 25.2% cheaper than the EDF blue tariff.

A visit to the government comparison site <https://comparateur-offres.energie-info.fr> is also worthwhile, 'though you have to answer quite a few questions (in french) before you get down to the nitty gritty.

Making a complaint

There's loads of info on the web about making a complaint about your energy provider, which some might take as a bit of a warning, but remember that you can change back any time if you're not satisfied.

Bonne recherche!

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SUNTEQ



Robbie Shaw lives near Gatwick where he was an Air Traffic Controller and travels regularly to his place in Collioure. His wife describes him as an 'aviation geek', just what we need in fact. :-)
He travels all over the world photographing aircraft, but manages to fit in many hours trawling local airport sites to keep us up to date with flights between the region and UK & Irish airports....and any other airport news that seems relevant.

Airlines are constantly changing schedules due to demand, so apologies if I have missed any. My best suggestion is to constantly monitor the airline websites yourself.

Winter schedules start on Sunday 27 October until Saturday 29 March.

Un pilote veut atterrir sur la piste.
La tour de contrôle lui dit:
*Bienvenu à l'aéroport de Perpignan.
Donnez-moi votre position et votre hauteur*"
Le pilote répond:
"Bonjour Perpignan. Je suis assis et je mesure 1,80m"

atterrir - to land
la piste - runway
La tour de contrôle - control tower
votre hauteur - your height
Je suis assis - I am sitting



FRANCE PERPIGNAN



Afraid that **Ryanair** still have the blinkers on. As **Ryanair** operate **Stansted-Perpignan** at least three times a week (except peak season) they could easily fill **Gatwick-Perpignan** flights once or twice a week even in winter, but once again **no Ryanair** flights to the UK or Ireland in their winter schedules. Similarly, **Aer Lingus** only operate their **Dublin** service in summer.

COME ON RYANAIR! LOADS OF IMPROVEMENTS TO THIS FABULOUS LITTLE AIRPORT AND PLENTY OF BRITISH AND IRISH WHO WOULD BE HAPPY TO PUT BUMS ON SEATS IN WINTER.

BEZIERS



Like **Carcassonne**, **Ryanair** has a free run at this small airport, but come the winter schedules only Luton survives.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
LUTON	2	RYANAIR 27 Oct 29 Mar

CARCASSONNE



Ryanair remains the sole operator here, however services reduced significantly in winter with only **Manchester** and **Stansted** surviving.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
MANCHESTER	2	RYANAIR 27 Oct – 25 Mar
STANSTED	2	RYANAIR 27 Oct – 25 Mar

A buzzard turns up at the airport with two dead animals. The lady at check in says,
"Sorry, only one carrion per passenger".

MONTPELLIER



Easy jet operate from both **Gatwick** and **Luton**. The latter only for a short period during the summer. **British Airways** have a new **Gatwick** service which once again only operates in the summer months.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
GATWICK	8	EASYJET 27 Oct – 29 Mar

NIMES

Ryanair is the sole operator for P-O readers, but nothing at all in the winter.

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. This winter there are no **Aer Lingus** flights from **Dublin**, but they are due to restart on 30 March 2025.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
BRISTOL	4	EASYJET 27 Oct – 28 Mar
GATWICK	6	EASYJET 27 Oct – 3 Nov
HEATHROW	18	BRITISH AWYS 27 Oct-29 Mar
STANSTED	10	RYANAIR 26 Oct -29 Mar
DUBLIN	2	RYANAIR 27 Oct – 29 Mar



SPAIN

BARCELONA / EL PRAT



As always a huge variety of flights to **Barcelona**, most of which run all year round, but with seasonal increases. It will be interesting to see if recent protests by the locals against tourists has any effect on the amazing number of flights to the city.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
BIRMINGHAM	2	EASYJET 27 Oct - 28 Mar
	2	JET2 27 Oct - 27 Mar
	8	RYANAIR 27 Oct - 29 Mar
	4	VUELING 30 Oct - 29 Mar
BRISTOL	12	EASYJET 27 Oct - 28 Mar
	4	RYANAIR 27 Oct - 29 Mar
EDINBURGH	2	RYANAIR 28 Oct - 29 Mar
GATWICK	28	EASYJET 27 Oct - 29 Mar
	54	VUELING 27 Oct - 29 Mar
GLASGOW INT'L	2	EASYJET 27 Oct - 27 Mar
GLASGOW PRESTWICK	2	RYANAIR 27 Oct - 29 Mar
HEATHROW	53	BRITISH AWYS 27 Oct - 29 Mar
	14	VUELING 27 Oct - 29 Mar
LEEDS BRADFORD	2	JET2 28 Oct - 25 Nov
	2	JET2 14 Feb - 28 Mar
LIVERPOOL	2-3	EASYJET 28 Oct - 28 Mar
	2	RYANAIR 27 Oct - 29 Mar
LONDON CITY	4	BRITISH AWYS 27 Oct - 29 Mar
LUTON	11	EASYJET 27 Oct - 29 Mar
	3	RYANAIR 27 Oct - 29 Mar
MANCHESTER	3-5	EASYJET 27 Oct - 28 Mar
	1-4	JET2 27 Oct - 28 March
	12	RYANAIR 27 Oct - 29 Mar
	7	VUELING 27 Oct - 29 Mar
NEWCASTLE	2	RYANAIR 27 Oct - 29 Mar
STANSTED	32	RYANAIR 27 Oct - 29 Mar
CORK	2	RYANAIR 27 Oct - 25 March
DUBLIN	11	AER LINGUS 27 Oct - 29 Mar
	21	RYANAIR 27 Oct - 29 Mar
	7	VUELING 27 Oct - 29 Mar



OOOOPS BARCELONA T1.
CAN YOU SPOT IT?

GIRONA



Ryanair services to **Girona** increased significantly during the summer, but once again come the winter they have almost disappeared, only **Stansted** remains.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
BIRMINGHAM	2	JET2 28 Oct - 1 Nov
BRISTOL	1	JET2 2 Nov only
LEEDS BRADFORD	2	JET2 27 Oct - 3 Nov
MANCHESTER	2	JET2 28 Oct - 1 Nov
NEWCASTLE	1	JET2 27 Oct - 3 Nov
STANSTED	2	JET2 30 Oct - 2 Nov
	3	RYANAIR 27 Oct - 29 Mar

MORE THAN JUST A PRAT

Did you know that the full name for **Barcelona Airport** is actually **Barcelona Josep Tarradellas El Prat**, named after the first President of Catalonia?

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EL BULLI... WITH PETER

A 15 minute drive on a twisty and vertiginous road from Roses will take you to "**Badia de Montjoi**". Looking down on this pretty cove you'll find the recently opened museum of "**El Bulli**". It's quite a place dedicated to the culinary skills of **Ferran Adrià**, arguably the best chef on the planet.

Look out for the bulldogs. The lady who originally owned "**El Bulli**" owned one.

BON APP.



THOSE DAMN SCAMS... AND a warning from the local bobbies

A sobering winter message from the local gendarmes reminds people, particularly the elderly, to be on their guard against scammers and con artists. The following scams and unfair procedures reported by locals are not new, but have come to our attention recently.

For many, many more, check out our website at www.anglophone-direct.com and search SCAMS



Package delivery

A text message informs you of a delivery and asks you to click a link to verify/complete/confirm delivery details. They ask for your credit card or other personal details. **The links can be very realistic, often in the name of Chronopost or DHL.**

If you are expecting a delivery, this can be a dilemma. Check delivery details via the original vendor or contact Chronopost or DHL directly via their websites if possible.

Never click on a link received by text.

Firewood Order and Delivery

Winter is here. Wood and pellets for your fires can be hard to come by. Scammers know this too. **They create fake websites, often usurping the name of veritable businesses, offering delivery of cheap wood or pellets....which never arrive.**

It's a difficult one, but our advice is if it seems too good to be true, it probably is!

Don't pay for anything in advance, even a deposit, before receiving the goods.



Don't pay for anything in advance, even a deposit, before receiving the goods.



Never click on a link received by text.

One lady was approached by two men at her gate.

While working on next door's roof they said (the house is a semi) they spotted some tiles that needed replacing next door and kindly did so while they were up there. **How kind.**

Was there any chance, the men enquired, that the householder could reimburse 20€ for the tiles? The roof is 25 years old so it was feasible.

However, suspicion was quickly raised when they refused to take cash and **insisted on using a card reader.**

When presented, the card reader showed €2000 on the screen instead of €20. **The men said the extra zeros were 'normal' for their type of card reader.**

Fortunately, the householder wasn't duped, the men got angry, and left with nothing.

Other **similar incidents include offering to clean the outside of your house, or interior and exterior of your car for €20, payment by card reader of course.**



OUR ADVICE.

Do not engage with **ANYONE** going door to door offering **ANY** services, no matter how friendly they are. Close the door on them politely and firmly, and have your phone ready to take a photo to pass on to the police if they insist.

Be philosophical if met with a certain indifference in some local gendarmeries.

There's so little they can do and they know it!

Stay safe

Another lady tells us...

We have in the past paid to receive a small parcel which they say is because of VAT. Fair enough. Today though, we were astounded to be charged 9 euro for a small Father's Day card from our son to my husband.

The postman said it is because it is from outside the EU. The card is clearly marked letter, 20g and no value. It is £2.50 postage paid Royal Mail so can't be to do with insufficient payment. My husband paid the 9 euro but was told they don't issue receipts.

After 22 years and paying tax here I sometimes wonder if we are seen as fair game!



The P-O gendarmerie adds...



NEVER LET ANYONE THAT YOU DO NOT KNOW INTO YOUR HOME: GENUINE DOOR-TO-DOOR SALESPeOPLE, CHARITIES AND CANVASSERS WILL NOT ASK TO COME IN AND SHOULD NOT BE OFFENDED IF YOU DO NOT INVITE THEM TO.



TELL THE PERSON THAT YOU HAVE NO MONEY ON YOU: DO NOT PART WITH CASH OR CARDS IN ANY UNOFFICIAL CIRCUMSTANCES.



NEVER SIGN ANYTHING: IF YOU THINK YOU COULD BE INTERESTED BY THE OFFER, TAKE THE DOCUMENTATION AND TELL THE PERSON YOU WILL RETURN IT TO THEM AT A LATER DATE.



REPORT FRAUD: IF YOU ARE THE VICTIM OF FRAUD, CONTACT THE POLICE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. IF YOU THINK YOU HAVE IDENTIFIED A FRAUD, YOU CAN REPORT IT VIA THE ONLINE PLATFORM, PHAROS.



Unbelievably BAD JOKE (but good for your French)

Un homme entre dans un salon de coiffure et demande
“Dans combien de temps pourrai-je me faire couper les cheveux?”
 Le coiffeur regarde autour de lui et répond
“environ deux heures”.
 L’homme s’en va.

Quelques jours plus tard, le même homme passe la tête par la porte et demande: **“Dans combien de temps pourrai-je me faire couper les cheveux?”**

Le coiffeur regarde autour de lui et répond **“environ trois heures”.**

Le client repart.

Une semaine plus tard, le même homme passe à nouveau la tête dans le magasin et demande **“Combien de temps avant que je puisse me faire couper les cheveux?”**

Le coiffeur regarde autour de lui et dit **“environ une heure et demie”.**

Le type s’en va.

Le coiffeur dit à son ami qui attend pour se faire couper les cheveux

“Bob, rends-moi service, suis-le et vois où il va. Il vient ici chaque semaine pour demander combien de temps il doit attendre pour une coupe de cheveux, mais il ne revient jamais.”

Dix minutes plus tard, Bob revient à la boutique en riant.

“Alors, dit le coiffeur. “Où va-t-il ?

“Chez toi” répond son ami!



USEFUL VOCAB

pourrai-je.. - will I be able to...
 autour - around
 bondée - packed
 environ - about
 l’homme s’en va - the man leaves
 à nouveau - once again
 avant que je puisse - before I can...
 Le type - the guy
 pour se faire couper les cheveux - to have his hair cut
 rends-moi service - do me a favour
 suis-le - follow him
 vois où il va - see where he goes
 il ne revient jamais - he never comes back
 en riant - laughing

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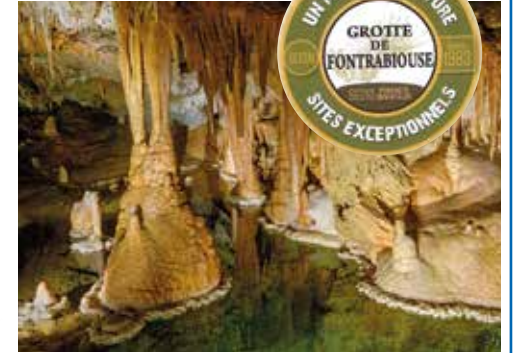
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*Cannot be used with other offers

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Open until November 3rd 2024 and from December 5th to 30th, 2024, including weekends and public holidays (except December 24, 25 and 31).



TREAT YOURSELF TO A WITCH FRIGHTENER

Why would you paint your windows blue, or put your shirt on backwards? Well, to protect yourself from witches of course!

Watch out for low flying broomsticks on Halloween as stories of ‘encantades’ (enchantresses) or ‘bruxes’ (witches) are scattered throughout the history of the P-O. Or you could build yourself a witch repellent, an ‘espente bruxes’, forged from iron, a jagged tile or tall stone, and placed to prevent witches making a comfortable landing on your roof.

Also called ‘cue de gall’ (cockerels tail), these witch frighteners were believed to protect from bad spells and bring prosperity to the inhabitants of the building. The bruxes were believed to do most harm to animals, so the espentes were often placed on barns, to protect the harvest and the cattle.



Look around the rooftops of ancient villages, as they can still be seen on some old buildings. In fact, it’s not unheard of for builders to be asked to build them into new constructions to this very day!

FUN FACTS ABOUT

HOPPERS & GRATERS

BY LESLEY MCLAREN

If you ever wonder what just catapulted out of the grass, or is driving you mad, grating louder than a lawnmower, here's how to tell your crickets from your grasshoppers and cicadas.



Lesley McLaren is an amateur naturalist. She can be contacted via www.mediterraneanpyrenees.com



crickets (Grillons)



Cricket nymph



Great Green Bush Cricket (Grande sauterelle verte)

Lifespan: about 2-3 months, 6 weeks of which are spent as adults (except mole crickets which can live up to 3 years)

Diet: Omnivorous – insect larvae, aphids, flowers, seeds, leaves, fruit and grasses

Antennae (of wingless nymphs and winged adults) are always very long

Hearing mechanisms are in their forelegs

Males create their "song" by rubbing their wings together, and they mostly sing at night

If you want to know the outside temperature, apparently you can count the number of times a cricket chirps in one minute, divide that by 4 and add 40. Or you can check the thermometer!

In China they are a sign of good luck. Much money is gambled on cricket fights



Rough Saddleback Bush Cricket (Ephippigère carénée)



Field Cricket (Grillon champêtre)



Egyptian Grasshopper nymph (wingless) (Cricket Égyptien)

Grasshoppers (Sauterelles)

Lifespan: 12 months

Diet: Vegetarian – mostly leaves but also flowers, stems and seeds. They eat about half their body weight per day

Antennae are always quite short (compared with those of crickets)

Hearing mechanisms are on their bellies

Males create their "song" by rubbing hind legs against their wings

They can spit a brown liquid to deter predators

Like crickets, those long back legs are designed to catapult them to great distances (equivalent to a football pitch for humans), but adults can also fly of course



Eurasian Pincer Grasshopper (Caloptène ochracé)



Adult Egyptian Grasshoppers (our biggest species) mating

HOPPERS & GRATERS

Cicadas (Cigales)

Lifespan: about 2-4 years for our species. Only about 5 weeks of which are spent in adult form. Eggs are laid in holes in twigs and branches. Once hatched, nymphs drop to the ground and bury themselves in the earth. After a few years, when the soil temperature is high enough, they emerge from underground and climb a tree, where they shed their exoskeleton for the last time. Now in their winged, adult form, their sole purpose is to mate.

Diet: Trees – nutrients from tree roots as nymphs and sap from twigs and branches as adults

Antennae are very short

Hearing mechanisms are at the base of the abdomen

Males create their ear-splitting, incessant racket by contracting drum-like plates inside their abdomen 300-400 times a second. At 100+ decibels, it just isn't cricket, is it, when you're trying to snooze after lunch. There's a myth in Provence that the cicada was sent by God to disrupt peasants' siestas and stop them from growing too lazy. If you're a female cicada, however, you'll flick your wings to show you're interested!

They can only sing when the air temperature is high enough (rendering their internal drum kit suitably elastic). Which is why you rarely hear them here before July, and only during daytime. If it rains or the sun goes in, blessed silence falls.

They don't have long legs for jumping. Adults don't even walk well, but fly if they need to move more than a few centimetres



Common cicada (Cigale grise)
Heard but rarely seen



Common cicada (Cigale grise)

While crickets and grasshoppers are related to each other, cicadas are in a completely different family: that of aphids and, ironically, leaf hoppers. At times you wish they would just hop off somewhere else!



BEASTLY TREACLE

Did you know that the word treacle originally entered English from Old French as triacle, meaning 'antidote for poison'?

In fact, the French inherited this word from various ancient languages, meaning 'antidote against a venomous bite', and involving wild beasts. So there you are. Stick that on your pudding and eat it!



SAFFRON

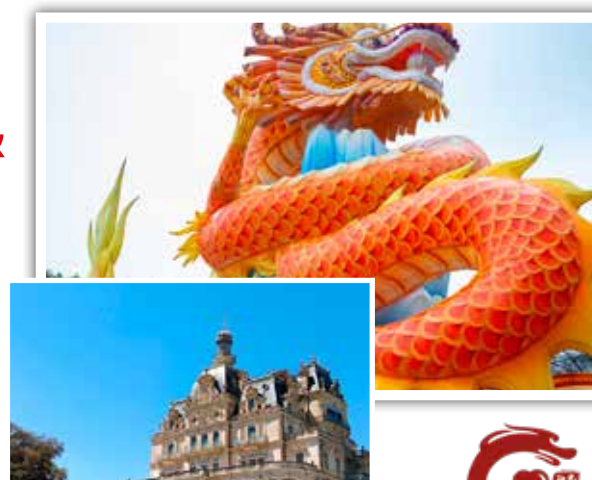
From the Arabic za'faran, meaning yellow, keep an eye out in the P-O for saffron fields of deep purple crocuses, in bloom in autumn. It can take 250,000 saffron stigmas, fine, richly coloured, orangey-red strands pulled from the flower, to produce half a kilo of saffron spice.

Cultivated and harvested by hand, it is hardly surprising that it is considered one of the world's most expensive spices, and even costs more than gold. And beware! If it's cheap, it's probably not the real thing!

Chateau d'Aubiry, Céret & Les Splendeurs de Chine

This winter, 2024, Céret's Chateau d'Aubiry will host 'Les Splendeurs de Chine', a theme park dedicated to Chinese culture.

From November 15, 2024 to February 16, 2025, expect an enchanted and luminous kingdom with thousands of lanterns, a 30-metre-long illuminated dragon, dream creatures, parades across the park, Asian cuisine, folk dances and music....



And Céret will receive a fee of 90,000 euros for allowing **the company, Soleil France to set up the theme park in Aubiry every winter for the next 3 years.**

Admission will range from 14 to 16 euros for adults, and 11 to 13 euros for children aged 10 to 17. (Free for children under 10.)



Test your FRENCH



Répétez trois fois
Douze douches
d'eau douce

See Page 69 for answers

1 R is for Rouge!

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

- | | | | |
|-----------|----|---|---|
| raccourci | 1 | a | coup de vent très fort |
| raide | 2 | b | poisson de mer plat |
| rayon | 3 | c | coupé en petits morceaux ou lamelles |
| rame | 4 | d | mince zone de lumière |
| ranger | 5 | e | promenade |
| rafale | 6 | f | oiseau au bec crochu et grandes griffes |
| randonnée | 7 | g | mettre à leur place |
| rapace | 8 | h | contraire de souple |
| râpé | 9 | i | pour faire avancer une barque |
| raie | 10 | j | chemin plus court |

Communication is far more important than perfect grammar.

In fact some people might tell you that a few mistakes and a pronounced 'eengleesh' accent are rather sexy! However, some words change their meaning completely depending upon whether you use the correct gender (le or la). Here are just a few common ones.

LE POSTE ..JOB, POSITION
LA POSTE ..POST OFFICE

UN POÊLE WOOD-BURNER
UNE POÊLE FRYING PAN

UN LIVRE BOOK
UNE LIVRE POUND

LE GREFFE COURT CLERK'S OFFICE
LA GREFFE TRANSPLANT, GRAFT

LE CAPITAL CAPITAL (MONEY)
LA CAPITALE CAPITAL CITY, CAPITAL LETTER

OMG! Want to express surprise or disbelief?

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------|
| OH LÀ LÀ | PURÉE! |
| OH LÀ LÀ LÀ LÀ (PAUSE) LÀ LÀ! | PUNAÏSE! |
| OH LA VACHE | PUTAIN! (vulgar) |
| HOU LÀ | TIENS! |
| DIS DONC! | AH BON |
| | HEIN? |

INTERESTING WORD
DÉGLINGUER
to break or destroy

Quel super-héros joue le mieux au cricket?

BATTE-MAN

Useful Expression
BON DÉBARRAS!
GOOD RIDDANCE!

2

These familiar words and phrases are used quite regularly in French, and whilst not actually rude, they are indisputably slang. Can you find their meanings in English?

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----|---|------------------------|
| Il est au taquet | 1 | a | What a mess! |
| C'est du charabia | 2 | b | It's something amazing |
| Quel bordel | 3 | c | He's half asleep |
| Ça baigne? | 4 | d | Yuk, disgusting |
| C'est un truc de ouf | 5 | e | I'm super motivated |
| Il est complètement dans le coaltar | 6 | f | End of (conversation) |
| Beurk! | 7 | g | It's gobbledegook |
| J'ai la niaque | 8 | h | Can't be bothered |
| Point barre | 9 | i | He's going flat out |
| J'ai la flemme | 10 | j | You OK? |

DE QUELLE COULEUR
SONT LES PARAPLUIES
QUAND IL PLEUT?

ILS SONT TOUT VERTS!

Two Really Bad International Jokes :-)

What happens when you drink too much water in Perpignan?
European.

Mum: Can my son visit another French speaking country?
Tourist Office: Of Corsican!

Think about this one or ask a French friend...

Si UNE FRÎTE N'A PAS DE MAYO, ELLE NE PEUT PAS ALLER À LA PISCINE

...



3

REMPLISSEZ LES BLANCS

Un homme, en train de --1-- le journal, dit à son --2--: "Savais-tu --3-- les femmes utilisent 30.000 mots par --4-- et les hommes 15.000?"

La femme lui --5--: "Ça, c'est --6-- à expliquer, c'est parce qu'il faut toujours --7-- deux fois la même chose aux --8--"

L'homme se retourne vers elle et dit: "Quoi?"

a jour b que c répéter d lire e hommes f répond g épouse h facile

(en train de -- in the middle (of doing something) / son épouse -- his wife
L'homme se retourne -- the man turns to her / Quoi? -- what?)

4

MAKING A PASS

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

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

Very bad joke...

Un enfant rentre de l'école et dit à sa maman

- Maman, tout le monde me dit que j'ai de grandes oreilles!

- Mais non mon petit lapin!

(mon lapin - affectionate term in French)

Can the jokes get any worse? They most certainly can!

- Docteur, je n'en peux plus. Tout le monde dit que je sens mauvais!

- Avez-vous essayé de prendre une douche?

- Oui, plusieurs fois déjà. Mais au bout d'un mois, ça recommence!

(je n'en peux plus -- I can't take any more
je sens -- I smell au bout de -- at the end)



You don't have to be a student to go to university!

Living or holidaying in France? Whatever your age or level, go local and learn French all year round at the university of Perpignan.

→ Teaching

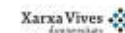
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- ✓ Lessons per module or semester
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→ Objectives

- ✓ Improve oral and written communication skills
- ✓ Reinforce vocabulary and grammatical elements
- ✓ Develop understanding of French culture and civilisation



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JUST A LITTLE PRICK...



Covid still lurks and the health service particularly recommends the jab for over-65s and for those with health problems that could make them more vulnerable to the bug (heart or lung problems, chronic illnesses etc). You don't need a prescription and if you're really looking for a bit of fun, you can opt to have both flu and Covid at the same time, one in each arm!

Vaccines can be obtained from and administered by your GP, pharmacy, nurse, midwife, dentist or vet (only joking about the vet). Vaccination against Covid-19 is reimbursed at 100% by the French health insurance system.

Support your local CSF, providing invaluable help for cancer victims and their families in France. You never know when you might need them!

FÊTE OCTOBRE ROSE

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Route de Cabestany, 66200 Saleilles

Améliorez votre ANGLAIS

See Page 69 for answers

**Tongue twister
(virelangue)**

Repeat quickly x 3....

The sixth sheik's
sixth sheep's sick



T is for Tart

Trouvez les définitions des mots suivants, qui commencent tous avec les lettres TA.

- | | | |
|----------------|------|--|
| tabloid | 1 a | adapted to meet your needs |
| tadpole | 2 b | exciting and tempting |
| tailor-made | 3 c | strike lightly |
| tame | 4 d | newspaper dominated by sensational stories |
| tam-o'-shanter | 5 e | with appetising flavour |
| tail | 6 f | docile or submissive. Not wild |
| tantalizing | 7 g | immature frogs and toads |
| tasty | 8 h | story, sometimes difficult to believe |
| tap | 9 i | Scottish hat with pompon in middle |
| tale | 10 j | back end of an animal |

Useful Expression

It's nothing to write
home about!
Ça n'a rien
d'extraordinaire!

2

Anglais britannique et anglais américain

Les Anglais et les Américains ne sont pas toujours d'accord en ce qui concerne la langue. :-)
Trouvez l'équivalent en anglais pour ces mots américains

AMERICAN		BRITISH
butt	1 a	braces
eraser	2 b	bottom
pants	3 c	torch
yard	4 d	bill
suspenders	5 e	aubergine
Fall	6 f	trousers
check	7 g	autumn
flashlight	8 h	rubber
rubber	9 i	condom
eggplant	10 j	garden

ATTENTION! TERRIBLE JOKE

A duck goes into the chemist's shop.
'A tube of lipsil please.'
'Certainly, that will be 50p.'
'Put it on my bill, please.'
(bill – facture or bec)

Kate's Favourite Joke of 2024

What happens when you cross an
angry sheep and an angry cow?
You get two animals in a
BAAAAAAD MoooooOOOOO.



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Améliorez votre ANGLAIS

3

Complétez les idiomes.

Practice ... 1 a in my throat
And pigs... 2 b be boys
Boys will... 3 c makes perfect
It's raining... 4 d cats and dogs
I have a frog... 5 e might fly

Maintenant, trouvez la bonne définition pour chaque phrase complétée.

- Quand les poules auront des dents !
- C'est en forgeant qu'on devient forgeron.
- J'ai un chat dans la gorge.
- Il faut que jeunesse se passe.
- Il pleut des cordes.

ENGLISH HUMOUR....

Sometimes when you're hurt,
nobody sees your pain.
Sometimes when you're sad,
nobody sees your sorrow.
Sometimes when you cry,
nobody sees your tears.
BUT FART JUST ONCE.....

(FART - PETER)

DID YOU KNOW....
... that no matter what
letter you remove from
the word SEAT, it will still
make a real word? Try it!

Expression Utile

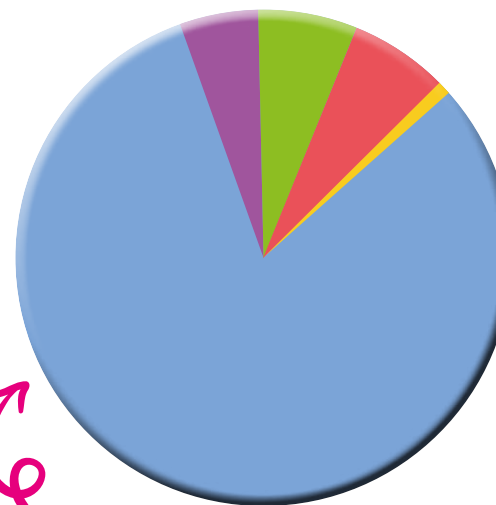
(He is) all talk and no trousers
(C'est) quelqu'un qui parle beaucoup
mais ne fait pas grand chose!

4

Lisez ces proverbes connus... et trouvez leurs contraires

The bigger, the better	1	a	Talk is cheap
Knowledge is power	2	b	Fools never differ
Money talks	3	c	Opposites attract
Two heads are better than one	4	d	Ignorance is bliss
Many hands make light work	5	e	The best things come in small packages.
Great minds think alike	6	f	If you want something done right, do it yourself.
Birds of a feather flock together	7	g	Out of sight, out of mind.
Absence makes the heart grow fonder	8	h	Too many cooks spoil the broth

METHODS OF TRANSLATING SPANISH WORDS INTO ENGLISH



- ASKING A SPANISH FRIEND
- TRYING TO REMEMBER SPANISH CLASS
- GOOGLE TRANSLATE
- THINKING ABOUT ROOT WORD IN LATIN
- ADDING AN "O" TO THE END OF A WORD

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of the month

and at our Book Exchange at

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

BAGUETTES AND BLANQUETTE

A WORD FROM THE EDITOR,
JO O'NEILL

"My idea for this book came from the realisation that many of us here have made the momentous decision to uproot and leave the familiar; our countries, houses, towns, jobs, families and friends, to make this area of France our new home. This is what connects us. I wanted to explore how and why we have taken this journey.

A group of strong, adventurous, beautiful women agreed to join me and tell their stories and so 'Baguettes and Blanquette' was born."

SYNOPSIS

Ten women from various parts of the globe find themselves living in a small town nestled in the foothills of the southern-French Pyrenees.

These are their true stories of heartbreak, joy, adventure, endurance, laughter and tears. Marriage, divorce, births and deaths. Workplace bullies, depression, families and friendships. Elephants and giraffes, treacherous roads, beautiful and terrifying locations.

Join these women as they share their journeys to their new lives in France.

Available on Amazon France, UK, US

LES POILUS

(hairy ones)

Le Poilu, informal term for French World War I infantryman, named for the wearing of long scruffy hair and beards to express their masculinity, **was originally also used to describe soldiers in the time of Napoleon Bonaparte.** The term 'groggnard' (grumbler) was also common.

The stereotype of the Poilu was brave but undisciplined. During the disastrous '**Chemin des Dames**' offensive of 1917, they were said

to have **gone into battle baa'ing like sheep**, to symbolise lambs to the slaughter..... as proved to be the case. Widespread mutiny followed, and a mini military revolution was only avoided by withdrawing from the whole offensive.



Chanson d'automne... by Paul Verlaine

1844-1896

Paul Verlaine's 'Chanson d'automne' (Autumn Song), comes from his collection *Poèmes Saturniens*, published in 1866.

At the end of World War II, the BBC used the opening lines of this poem to signal the start of D-Day operations and it became famous for its connection to the French Resistance.

Les sanglots longs
Des violons
De l'automne
Blessent mon coeur
D'une langueur
Monotone.

Tout suffocant
Et blême, quand
Sonne l'heure,
Je me souviens
Des jours anciens
Et je pleure;

Et je m'en vais
Au vent mauvais
Qui m'emporte
Deçà, delà,
Pareil à la
Feuille morte.

VOCAB

sanglot - sob

blessent - injure

blême - pallid

je m'en vais - I leave

Qui m'emporte -
that carries me away

Deçà, delà - to and fro

Pareil - same

Feuille - leaf



Things You Might NEED To KNOW



WATER RESTRICTIONS IN THE P-O

Despite several days of torrential rain amidst the summer heat, ground water levels remain critical in many parts of the P-O and most of the earlier restrictions remain in place.

Check out our website at www.anglophone-direct.com (search water-restrictions) for the latest updates



FREE MEDICAL TREATMENT ABROAD

If you're a French resident, don't forget to take a 'Carte Européenne d'Assurance Maladie' (CEAM) with you when travelling to other EU countries or Switzerland...and even the UK!

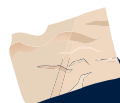
This card will ensure free or subsidised medical treatment (depending on the country visited of course) and is easy to obtain, assuming that you are already part of the great machine that is the French medical system.

Visit <https://www.ameli.fr> and search CEAM for several different and easy options to apply.



Paying To receive parcels

Charges for receiving parcels from abroad seem to be 'ridiculous and haphazard' but apparently, it's not the Post Office, but the French Customs Office who decided on this silly rule; La Poste is just the enforcer. A P-O Life reader advises: "Tell senders to write 'cadeau', 'effets personnels' and 'non-commercial' on the envelope and to estimate the value at under €45. This SHOULD, in principle, signal to the postal worker that the customs duty need not be applied."



MAKING A POINT

Have you built up points on your French driving licence?



Naughty, naughty - but did you know that you can recover them over time, depending on how many points lost, as long as you do not commit another offence leading to loss of more points.

You recover one point after 6 months, 2 after 2 years etc, depending on the circumstances. You can also pay 200 euros to take a 2 day road safety course (stage de sensibilisation) and recover up to 4 points, within the limit of the maximum 12 points of the license.

Drive safely!

LANGUAGE EXERCISES ANSWERS

TEST your FRENCH

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

A READER REPORTS...

Forgive me if this is old news, but Perpignan airport has changed the car park arrangements. You need to take your ticket to the info desk BEFORE you fly to get the discount. There's also now a double barrier arrangement to get out of the airport, which was incredibly slow & caused absolute mayhem - took more than half an hour just to get out of the airport.



GETTING RID OF YOUR OLD BANGER?

Did you know that it is easy, and free to scrap your old car in France? Your local préfecture can provide you with a list of approved wreckers who offer a free service, although a charge may be made if the vehicle has to be towed to the breaker's yard.

You then have 15 days after scrapping your vehicle to make the 'déclaration de cession pour destruction' at the préfecture of your choice, using a form which you can download at here:

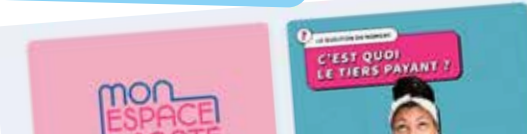
www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F1468



STRUGGLING TO FIND A MEDICAL PROFESSIONAL?

Can't find a doctor or a dentist because no-one seems to be taking on new patients?

Visit www.ameli.fr/pyrenees-orientales, search for 'mission accompagnement sante', and enter your details. A personal advisor will call you back and offer to help and accompany you in your search, help you to clarify any confusion with your rights, sort out any problems, organise help if you have transport problems. You may be lucky enough to come across someone who speak English but it's not guaranteed.



Annuaire
Trouvez les psychologues participant à Mon soutien psy



Données de l'Assurance Maladie
Data ameli, des données de santé en datavisualisation

EMERGENCY numbers



15 SAMU
(medical emergency)

17 POLICE
emergency

18 Fire service
emergency

112 European
emergency line

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

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.

SOS Doctor 24/24 08 20 20 41 42
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
MDPH (Departmental
House of Disabled People) 04 68 39 99 00

Directory enquiries 118 008
International Mastercard 08 00 90 13 87
Local weather forecast 08 99 71 02 66
Electrical emergency 09 72 67 50 66
Gas emergency 08 00 47 33 33

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, l'eau du bébé arrive, la poche des eaux a percé.

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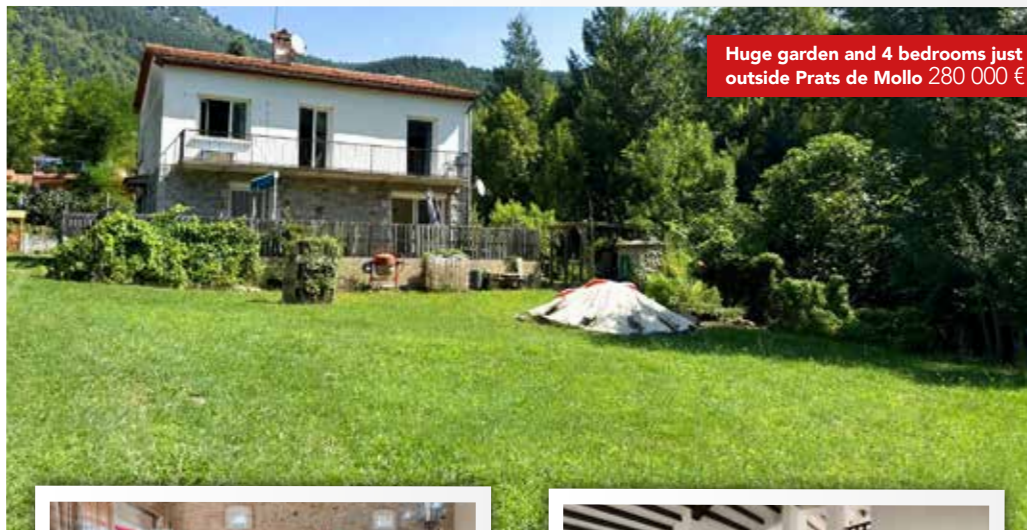
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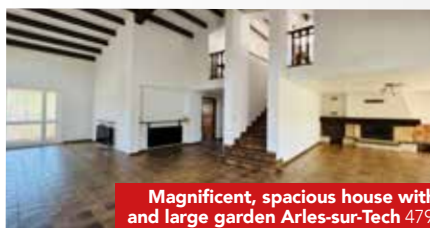
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