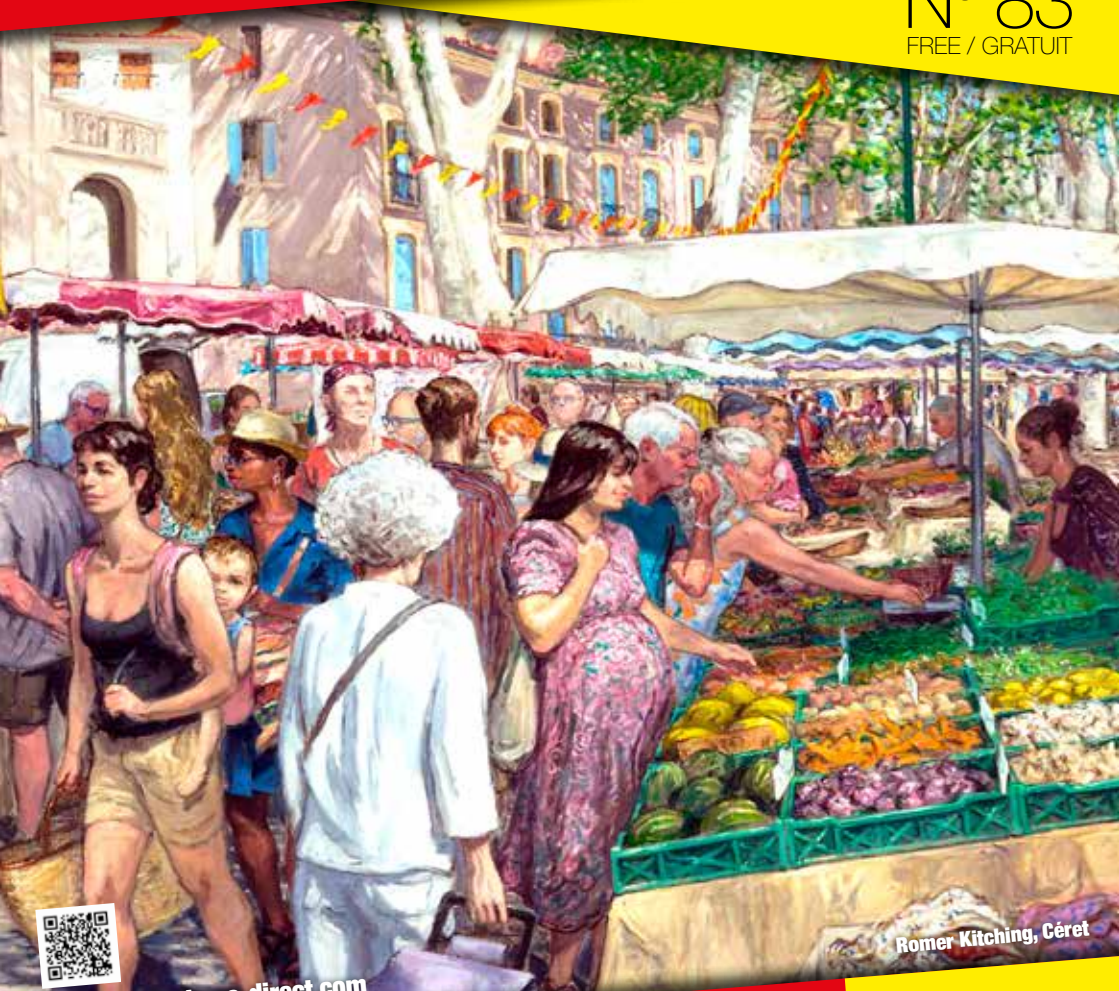


Winter - Spring
2025

P-O Life

Life in the Pyrénées-Orientales

N° 83
FREE / GRATUIT



www.anglophone-direct.com

**FRENCH
LIFE**

Your Health Rights

OUT for
the **DAY**

The Pirinexus:
one for the
bucket list

**FOOD
and DRINK**

Your Restaurant
Reviews

TEST your
FRENCH

AMÉLIOREZ
votre **ANGLAIS**

TRYBA®

DESIGN • MANUFACTURE • INSTALL
WINDOWS • DOORS • SHUTTERS



THIS YEAR
TRYBA
CELEBRATES ITS

5TH
BIRTHDAY



*Understanding
your project,
that's our job!*



10% DISCOUNT WITH P-O LIFE
WHEN YOU RING THE NUMBER BELOW

04 20 98 15 88

TRYBA PERPIGNAN

Chemin De La Fauceille
66100 PERPIGNAN

Edito ☺

The sun is never far away in our safe little P-O world, and although our thoughts and minds must naturally stray to wars, disasters and poverty in other parts of the world, nothing can stop the flowers from bursting into colour or the sun from shining through the cloud. **We have beaches, sea, lakes, mountains, cycle paths and marked walks, pretty villages, perfect picnic spots, wine tasting...and peace to enjoy them.** How lucky are we?

As usual, we ask you to please support our advertisers wherever you can so we can continue to print. Paper prices are high and financing the mag is an uphill struggle. "Go digital" we're told...but isn't there's just something about the feel of a paper mag.....

In another cracking edition of P-O Life, **Chris Bratherton** takes you for a **long, long bike ride**, **Robbie** sets out his painstakingly researched **airport news** - and hands up please if you can answer all the questions in **Lesley's nature quiz**. No cheating please, though you will find all the answers somewhere in past P-O Life mags. **Only about 60 to check out ☺**

As for me...I just love being a part of it all
STAY SAFE AND WELL MES AMIS.
JOYEUX PRINTEMPS!

Kate



Scan your phone here
to sign up to
our newsletter

To find out more about how your business can
benefit from advertising in P-O Life, contact us
on info@anglophone-direct.com

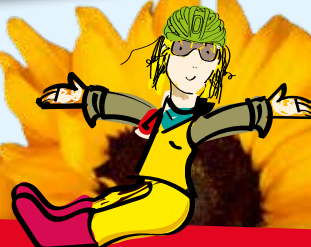
EDITORIAL

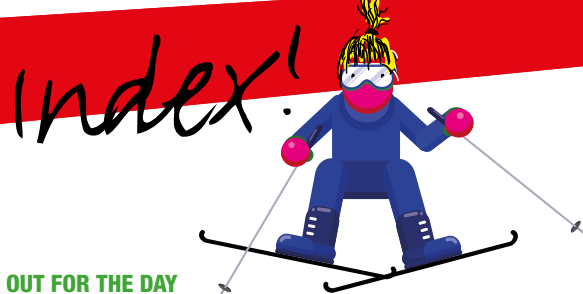
For editorial queries & comments:
info@anglophone-direct.com 06 79 61 96 46
(editorial only)

**We continue to struggle to finance heavy costs involved to produce
a paper mag. Please, please support our advertisers.**

**TERRIBLE JOKE TO START
THE NEW YEAR OFF WITH A
GIGGLE**

Have you heard about the new
Edith Piaf salad dressing?
Non, je ne vinaigrette rien





OUT FOR THE DAY

Walk: The Battle of Le Boulou Circular	6
Attitude at Altitude in Font Romeu	12
Over the Border Biking the Pirinexus	20

FESTIVALS, MUSIC & EVENTS

Carnivals, Bears And Pointy Hoods	38
Saint Cyprien all-year-round	40
More strange Catalan Traditions	42

P-O LIFE

La Retirada	16
Losing our Lunch	18
P-O Naturally: Test your P-O Nature Knowledge	54
BookLife: Le Poilu	64
Things You Might Need to Know	68

FOOD AND DRINK

Restaurant Reviews	26
Recipe: Fèves Catalanes	31
Ideas for Eating Out	32

FRENCH LIFE

Free-Flow Tolls... What's That About?	14
Opening a Bank Account when the Bank says NON!	44
French Health Rights Lost & Regained!	50

AIRPORT NEWS

Spring-Summer 2025	46
--------------------	----

LANGUAGE

Unbelievably Bad Joke (but good for your French)	43
Test your French	58
Améliorez votre Anglais	62

ENGLISH SPEAKING SERVICES

Emergency numbers	70
Directory	71

JOIN THE CONVERSATION
Join over 5000 members in our Facebook group. Search Facebook for 'P-O Life Mediterranean Pyrenees' Keep up to date with us by following our Instagram 'POLifemag66' our Facebook page 'P-O Life Mag' Twitter @magazine_po Or simply visit our website www.anglophone-direct.com for daily articles and have your say in the comments.



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

English artist/painter **Romer Kitching** lives and takes much of his inspiration from Céret. This talented young artist trained in Florence and works exclusively from life and imagination. Find out about his workshops on romerkitchingart@gmail.com or visit his website at www.romerkitching.com

Impression: **ROTIMPRES** (Girona): 8.000 ex.
Ne pas jeter sur la voie publique - Anglophone-direct accepts no responsibility for the competency of people and services advertising in P-O Life.
Concepteur et rédacteur: Kate
Collaboratrice et rédactrice indispensable : Laura
Maquette & Création: Maite

WELCOME TO THE PYRENEES-ORIENTALES!

www.tourisme-pyreneesorientales.com

Agence de Développement Touristique
2, bd des Pyrénées - CS 80540 - 66005 Perpignan Cedex
Tél : +33 (0)4 68 51 52 53 - info@cdt-66.com



Laroca Immobilier

Property Experts for *Les Albères* and *La Côte Vermeille*

PRICE: 199 000 €

SOREDE



Quiet area, a short walk to all amenities, this 64 sqm semi-detached house has attached flat and fenced private garden + parking space. Ground floor: 29 sqm bright living room with open-plan kitchen, separate WC and bathroom. Upstairs: **two large and bright bedrooms.**

PRICE: 108 000 €

CERBÈRE



Located in village centre, very pleasant 35sq.m apartment with terrace, comprising: entrance hall, living room with open kitchen, 1 bedroom, shower room with toilet. **Terrace. In very good condition.**

PRICE: 284 000 €

LAROQUE DES ALBERES



Top of the village, just 3 km to all amenities, very comfortable renovated detached house with garden and breathtaking panoramic view! Flat garden on street level (very rare in this area), living room with wood stove and large terrace, kitchen, WC, modern shower room and two bedrooms. **Cellar and spacious covered terrace.**

PRICE: 349 000 €

BANYULS-SUR-MER



Quiet area in village centre, close to all shops and beach. Very pleasant and bright 80sq.m apartment comprising: living room with fireplace opening onto a south-facing terrace, dining room, separate kitchen with cellar, 2 bedrooms with cupboards, shower room and separate toilet. **Large garage.**

PRICE: 459 000 €

MONTESQUIEU DES ALBERES



Comfortable 135 sqm 3 bedrooms detached house on fantastic 1500 sqm flat and fenced landscaped land with private pool, just a 5 minute drive to all amenities! South facing covered terrace with mountain view, bright living room with wood stove, spacious fitted kitchen, veranda, large garage. **Great sun catching outdoor space.**

PRICE: 105 000 €

CERBÈRE



2 steps away from beach! In a residence with pool and tennis court, very pleasant and bright apartment with terrace comprising entrance hall, living room with open kitchen, south-facing terrace, 1 bedroom, shower-room, separate toilet. **In excellent condition.**

Contact us to successfully market your property now!

2 agencies at your service:

Place de la Mairie, LAROQUE-DES-ALBERES
1 rue Saint Pierre, BANYULS-SUR-MER
www.laroca-immobilier.com



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



walk the battle of LE BOULOU

A **historic** circular walk with signs and explanations

This one and a half hour circuit in the footsteps of the French and Spanish soldiers who fought in the battle of Le Boulou is a historical eye opener. Stunning views over the Albères, Roussillon plain as far as the Med and across to Mount Canigo, are a stark contrast to the bloody tableau of wounded and dying, which once stained this peaceful landscape.

Close your eyes and you will hear the thunder of the cannons, the beat of the drums, the cries of the wounded and dying, smell the gunpowder. A bloody landmark in the history of the Roussillon, engraved on the Arc de Triomphe in Paris.

IN 1794, ON THE PLATEAU OF PLA DEL REY, the Battle of le Boulou took place. Led by the seasoned Général Dugommier, it was a decisive victory over the Spanish, who, with the way back to Bellegarde blocked at Les Cluses, were forced to flee in disarray via Maureillas las Illas and the Col du Porteil. Spanish dead and wounded were estimated at over 2,000 whilst French losses were reported as 20 killed and 300 wounded.



GETTING THERE

Drive out of Le Boulou on the main road towards Perpignan. Look out for a small, rather awkward left turn after a hotel and level crossing, **signed to Domaine Els Barbats**, delightful, organic vineyard and degustation cave, which you will soon pass on the right. Wind along this pretty road for around 3km, until a left turn indicates the site of the battle. Follow the signs, and the distant French flag, (not always hoisted) to arrive at this historic and relatively unsung panoramic site and free car park. **This is the Pla del Rey, small plateau surrounded by vines and perched on the hill, from where the generals directed the troops below.** A fascinating panoramic viewpoint map looks out over the battle ground, giving battalion numbers and positions.



Pierre Bayle, 10 years old, soldier of the brand new French Republic, was the first child to officially die at the battle of Le Boulou in 1794. His weapon was his drum.

He is remembered for his courage in drumming continuously throughout the night to mask the sounds of cannon movement and military preparation before the battle. Believing that the attack was coming from that direction, the Spanish turned their cannons on the drummers.

It was noted that 'le petit Pierre prend contact avec les horreurs du champ de bataille mais est fier d'accompagner les soldats victorieux'.

He was hit in the face and died on the spot.

Le Petit Tambour was immortalised by sculptor Gérard Vié. His statue stands proud in Le Boulou centre, homage to the brave little drummer boy.



OUT ^{for} THE DAY



THE WALK

From the car park, with the orientation table on your left, take the sandy track and arrive at a T junction. Turn right onto the main, wide path, (rutted and can be muddy after rain) which will wind, climb and descend for around 20 minutes, **until you arrive at a tarmac road.** You may wish to turn sharp left here for a 10 min detour to the pretty **Chapelle Saint-Luc**, with shady picnic tables on a sunny day, but will need to retrace your steps back to the tarmac road to continue the circuit.



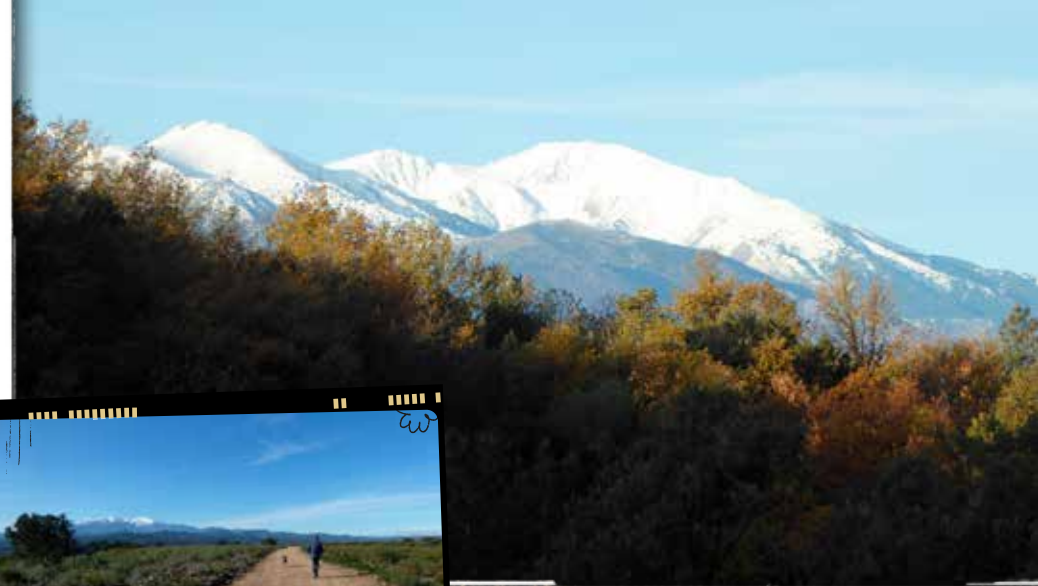
walk the region walk the battle of LE BOULOU



with
KATE AND OLIVIER



Back at the road, turn left, and continue until you arrive at a crossroads. Turn left here, **following signs for Mas des Pins and Mas d'en Bosch**, and continue down this road, swinging round to the left, until you arrive at the bottom, where the road bends round to the right, signposted Le Boulou. **Take the left hand track, signed Pla del Rey.**



This rough and deeply rutted path quickly becomes steep and **is the only part of the walk that might require some real effort**, but you will be well rewarded when you reach the top and find yourself once again surrounded by those magnificent panoramic views!



Continue up this track, stopping every now and then to admire the views behind you (and get your breath back!) until you arrive at a T junction. **Turn left, then right and you will find yourself back at the car park.**



walk the region walk the battle of LE BOULOU

with
WITH KATE AND OLIVIER



LE BOULOU: THE TOWN

Wander around the town with pedestrian zone, la Ramblas, pretty cobbled streets and ancient monuments tucked away off the main through route.

The door of the Église Sainte-Marie surrounded by its frieze, depicting scenes from the childhood of Christ, was sculpted by anonymous 12th century sculptor, the Master of Cabestany. It is the only remaining part of the original 11th century church.

Around the church is the 'cellera' — heart of the original small walled settlement. Farmers would build cellars or fortified areas around churches, surrounded by pits, to store and protect their crops from abusive local lords seeking inflated and unjust taxes.

A little further on, watched over by the statue of the Little Drummer Boy, a small and shady public garden with pretty fountain makes a pleasant stop before entering the tiny 15th century Chapelle de Saint-Antoine.

Named after the patron saint of Le Boulou, originally built on the site of the former cemetery and intended as a crypt for sheet salesman, Guillaume Nègre, it has since served as a school room, flour storage, and army bread oven before being restored as a chapel.



ARSE BOATS

Le Boulou, or El Voló, takes its name from the Catalan for cliff, situated as it is between rivers Tech and Valmanya with sheer ravines overlooking the town. In the early 18th century, 150 years before the present suspension bridge was built to allow passage into Spain, the Tech River regularly flooded the valley. The wooden bridges rarely won the watery war with the angry river and at times of high rainfall, it was impossible to cross. A group of young men built up a nice little business by forming a human chain and transporting travellers across the river on their naked backs. Known as 'Les Barques de Cul' (arse boats) due to their bottoms sticking out of the water to form a bridge, they provided a sight for sore eyes for the ladies of Le Boulou on a rainy day.

Why not visit.....

...the Maison de l'Eau et de la Méditerranée (MEM), an exciting new concept inviting visitors of all ages to consider the vital role that water plays in our way of life.

...the Maison de l'Histoire, small museum in the car park opposite the mairie, documenting the history of Le Boulou from prehistory to present day.

...the delightful 'Espace des Arts' art gallery for local artists and sculptors.



La Gaïeté du Feu
l'univers du feu

WOOD-BURNERS

PELLET-BURNERS

We specialise in...

Wood-burning stoves
Log fires
Pellet burners
Bio-ethanol & gas heating

TRADITIONAL, LOG-FIRE INSETS

MODERN CHIMNEYS

04 68 54 13 33
2540 ave Julien Panchot,
66000 Perpignan
gaïetedufeu@wanadoo.fr
www.cheminees-gaïetedufeu.com

OUT ^{for} THE DAY

CHANGE YOUR ATTITUDE AT ALTITUDE IN FONT ROMEU

The development of Font Romeu as a ski resort and tourist destination started more than 100 years ago, when the Petit Train Jaune, highest railway track in France, was built to connect the plain with the mountains.



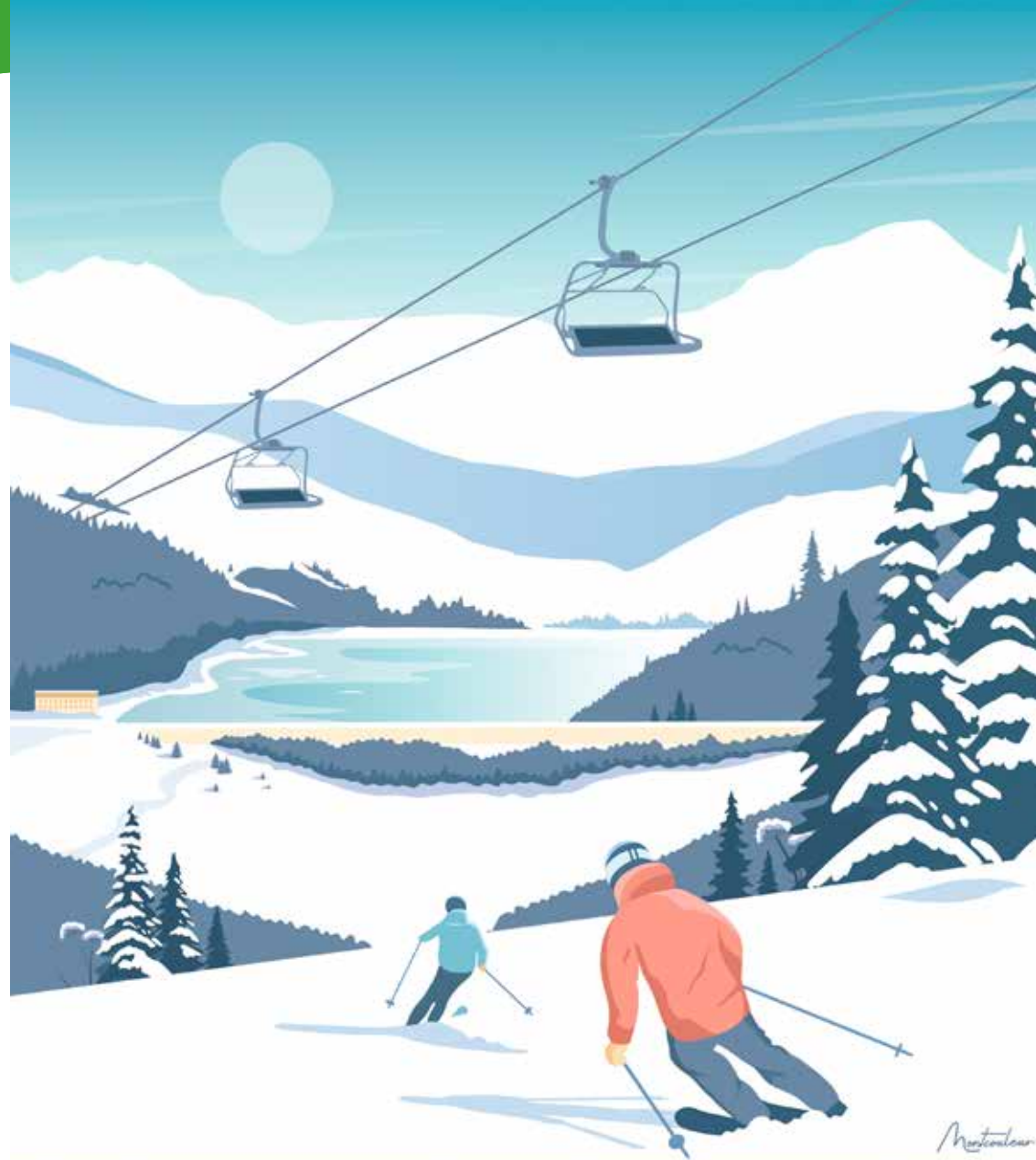
When Le Grand Hotel was built in 1911, Font Romeu became **THE place to be seen in high society** on both sides of the nearby Spanish border, welcoming the **Spanish royal family, Pablo Picasso and Salvador Dali** amongst its many guests.



Today Font Romeu is a **dynamic and modern ski resort** with casino, cinema, disco, nearby natural hot baths, plenty of hotels, bars, and restaurants, and a wide variety of ski slopes for all levels, from children's nursery runs to challenging adrenaline-fuelled north-facing slopes.

FONT ROMEU - PILGRIM'S FOUNTAIN

Bustling and modern all-year-round ski resort and altitude training centre, renowned around the world for its biathlon facilities, **Font Romeu (Pilgrim's Fountain)** was named after the 17th century **Ermitage de Font-Romeu**, built on the site of a 1035 oratory. **According to legend**, a cowherd noticed his bull bellowing and scratching at the ground from where water was spouting. On investigation, he unearthed a statue of the Virgin. **News of the miracle spread, attracting pilgrims en route to Santiago de Compostela** in north-western Spain, who stopped at the holy fountain, putting **Font Romeu firmly on the map of Medieval Europe**.



FONT-ROMEU
changez d'altitude!

www.font-romeu.fr

OFFICE DE TOURISME
+33 (0)4 68 30 68 30
office@font-romeu.fr



FRENCH Life

FREE-FLOW TOLLS... WHAT'S THAT ABOUT! (le péage en flux libre)

We've all been stuck in big tail backs at the péage barriers, waiting for the driver who's lost his ticket or the one who's scrabbling around for loose change, or even the solo Brits who have to jump out and run around to the other side to access the payment station!



Well, in a bid to reduce traffic jams, save fuel and emit less carbon dioxide, the **Ministère de la Transition Écologique** has announced that **free-flow tolls will slowly become the norm on France's autoroute system.**

If you are one of the elite with electronic badge that allows you to sail through the barriers, while others queue, enjoy it while it lasts! **This will soon be possible for all vehicles**, with or without the badge, as physical barriers are replaced by highly sensitive cameras that will record car number plates or read electronic toll badges as they pass.

PAYMENT

Your toll will be calculated automatically by smart sensors, based on the vehicle information registered to the number plate.

IF YOU ALREADY HAVE A BADGE....

....do nothing. The payment process remains the same.

IF YOU DON'T HAVE A BADGE....

...read on...or risk an unwelcome surprise in your boîte aux lettres!

> Enter your number plate details on the route website **BEFORE** your journey and your bank card will be debited automatically.

> Enter your number plate details on the route website **AFTER** your journey and pay by bank card within 72 hours of each journey.

> Pay at any newsagents or tobacconist equipped with the Nirio payment system. (depending upon the society responsible for the section of the autoroute you are driving on.)

Payment should be made within 3 days of passing the toll.

IF YOU DON'T PAY WITHIN THE ALLOCATED 3 DAYS....

...a **penalty of €10** is added to your bill, which must be paid within 15 days. **Missed this second deadline? The amount goes up to 90€ and 375€ after 2 months!**

At time of writing (late 2024), the free-flow tolls are only in place in northern France, but if you are heading that way, you can find your nearest Nirio payment point at www.nirio.fr/trouver-point-de-vente. (Not particularly useful to know but interestingly (or not) Nirio is a contraction of the English 'Near You')



Because this is a new system, the French government are 'kindly' waiving the surcharge on any first passages without payment, but rest assured, after that, you can expect a letter through your door!

What's more, the cameras are said to be particularly reliable, with 98% successful number plate recognition!

READER EXPERIENCE (THANK YOU CAROLINE)



WHATS THAT ABOUT!

On the way down through France I went on a **motorway A79 'flux libre'** and thought "what's that about!?" Then I forgot about it.

Today I got a letter (**posted 8th, received 19th**) telling me I had 70 hours to pay the 1€ either on their website <https://aliae.com>, or at a payment point in a service station.

They sent me a QR code so I could pay the 1 euro. **In the future I will not receive a warning letter; I will receive a 90€ fine!**

LA RETIRADA



“We had been fighting for freedom from Fascism for three years. We expected to be given a hero’s welcome”



This February, we take a moment to reflect on **Europe’s recent history** and, in particular, the role played by our region.

In early 1939, the Second Spanish Republic collapsed. As **General Francisco Franco**, aided by Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, declared a fascist government, **nearly half a million Republican civilians and soldiers fled over the border, via the frontier towns of Cerbère, Le Perthus, Coustouges, Puigcerda, Prats-de-Mollo...** This was known as the **RETIRADA - THE RETREAT.**



Admitted as ‘foreign undesirables’, women and children were initially sent to accommodation centres whilst men were refused entry and gathered in miserable huddles in the Spanish border towns.

As Franco’s troops advanced towards Figueras, the borders were opened for all and around 60,000 men were herded into **internment camps on the beach at Argelès-sur-Mer**, behind barbed wire fences, supervised by ‘Gardes Mobiles’ and brutal Senegalese troops.

These camps had no protection from freezing temperatures and biting winds apart from a few improvised flimsy shacks. **Most men slept in holes dug in the ground. There was no water, no sanitation and scarcely any food.** Men died of exposure and were buried where they lay.

Similar internment camps soon followed at St Cyprien and Le Barcarès. Unspeakable squalour, food and water shortage, dysentery, rat-infested conditions.....



Many returned, willingly or by force, to Franco’s ‘new Spain’, to be met by harsh reprisals against Franco’s former enemies; persecution, prison, torture and death.

Others were later moved to designated ‘concentration camps’ spread over the South of France: Bram (west of Carcassonne), Agde, Vernet in the Ariège, and Rivesaltes where they were to be joined following the German occupation by other ‘undesirables’ including East European Jews and ‘gypsies’.

Under German occupation, thousands of Spanish Republicans perished in the Nazi gas chambers – especially at Mauthausen.



Others, despite their treatment in France, joined the French Resistance and, as **‘Guerilleros Espagnols’** contributed substantially to the **Liberation in 1944.**

A third of the Languedoc-Roussillon’s present-day population are descendants of these Spanish refugees.

Take a **walk in Argelès in the footsteps of the Retirada on the ‘circuit de la Mémoire’, starting at the monolithe (rue des Dunes – Beach) marking the entrance to the camp in Argelès-sur-Mer and ending at the small memorial museum**



26 Avenue de la Libération in Argelès Village.

LOSING OUR LUNCH

Old dogs and non-spring chickens will remember a time when lunch in France was 'slow food only', a minimum 2 hours, even at work or school, and fast food was practically unheard of. Today, the many take-aways, food trucks and quickie disposable packaged lunches show a change in French eating habits and attitudes and long leisurely lunches with apéro and carefully chosen wines to accompany hors d'oeuvre, main courses, salad, cheese, desert seem to be becoming a thing of the past.

WE ASKED FRENCH FRIENDS HOW THEY FEEL ABOUT LOSING THEIR LUNCH.

BRUNO, Céret

La France suit toujours les mauvais exemples des USA... avec du retard!

Autrefois, le repas de midi se composait plusieurs plats de l'apéritif au petit digestif, le tout accompagné de beaucoup de pain et arrosé de vin. Le développement des fast-foods, la réduction du temps de pause, l'augmentation des prix et les contrôles d'alcoolémie ont fait que peu à peu, les repas sont devenus plus courts, plus légers en quantité et moins alcoolisés.... au "bénéfice" de la junk food. Tout est speed de nos jours.

J'ai 68 ans, je vis à Céret, je n'ai jamais fréquenté de fast-foods de ma vie.

ANNIE, Le Barcarès

Tu manges quoi ce week-end alors? Moi j'ai prévu un tajine d'agneau comme je l'ai appris au Maroc. La cuisine, c'est ça pour moi, ça rapproche les cultures différentes, ça permet de communiquer et de trouver l'humain en chacun de nous.

PEDRO

Le temps moderne nous empêche de passer du temps autour de la table. Par contre, il y a un moment et la place pour un bon fast food.

CHRISTIAN, Céret

Fast food? Mais aussi casquettes, tatouages, réseaux sociaux, rap... Jusqu'où les USA vont-ils infecter notre savoir-vivre? Ici en Méditerranée il ne nous manque qu'un peu d'EAU!!



USEFUL VOCAB

follows (from suivre)
 suit
 Autrefois
 se composait
 arrosé
 contrôles d'alcoolémie
 plus courts/légers
 fréquenté
 j'ai prévu
 ça rapproche
 en chacun de nous
 nous empêche
 Par contre
 casquettes
 tatouages
 réseaux sociaux
 savoir-vivre
 il ne nous manque que...
 in the past
 was made up of
 washed down (with)
 breath tests
 shorter/lighter
 visites
 've planned
 it brings together
 in each of us
 prevents us
 on the other hand
 (baseball) caps
 tatoos
 social networks
 way of life, manners
 all that is missing is...



SME Languedoc Roussillon

HOME SECURITY...

- ✓ Wireless Alarms & Interphones
- ✓ Home automation (lights, temps, shutters...)
- ✓ Security cameras
- ✓ Bioclimatic or 'smart' pergolas
- ✓ Gates, shutters, garage doors, awnings...



Your PROXEO AGENCIES: **04 68 89 87 98** www.alarme-sme.com

Centre Commercial des Albères, Carrefour Market, 66740 LAROQUE-DES-ALBERES
 ZA de la Tuilerie, Av de la Tuilerie, 66740 ST GENIS DES FONTAINES

CATALAN

Abans no et burlis d'algú, mira qui ets tu

FRENCH

Avant de te moquer de quelqu'un, regarde-toi

ENGLISH

Before mocking someone else, take a look at yourself!



WORD ORIGINS

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



A TIME FOR QUIET REFLEXION

If you have a quiet hour or so, why not visit **Camp Joffre in Rivesaltes**? Under the shadow of a wind-farm, behind an industrial estate, the desolate ruined huts and latrines of this former concentration camp bear witness to man's inhumanity to man.

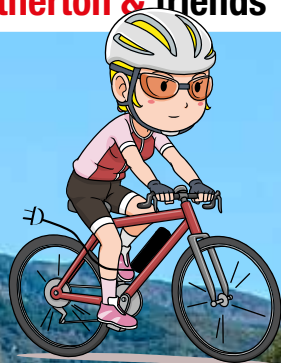
In the former block F, an underground museum, a concrete monolith, in part above ground level, is entered via a long ramp which is also partly underground. The only view of the outside world is the sky. Inside there are exhibitions, learning annexes, and bare minimalist spaces for reflexion but the exterior remains as it is – a crumbling and sombre witness to the past.

with **Chris Bratherton & friends**

Over the border with the Pirinexus

One for the Biker's Bucket List

This 350km cross-border cycle loop passes through 53 towns and villages, including our beautiful P-O, the Costa Brava, Girona, the volcanic Garrotxa region, the Col d'Ares above Prats de Mollo... A diverse potpourri of beautiful scenery with restaurants, winetasting, ancient roads and railway tracks, castles and abbeys, fascinating architecture and ruins....a heady cocktail of fresh air and exercise.



Car-free and low traffic with 175km of additional signed detours to points of interest that you can add to lengthen your tour. We have concentrated below on a 4 day tour but taking longer is a great way to ride in the mornings and have all afternoon to explore.

CHRIS RECOMMENDS.....

...a touring / gravel / hybrid bike to allow you to carry bags.



The most popular direction is clockwise, as you descend the steeper gradients of le Col d'Ares (Prats de Mollo) and if there's a Tramontane wind, you should have it behind you from Céret to the Costa Brava section.

From snowy peaks to sunbathing on the Med, via steep mountain and flat coastal roads. Pirinexus is great for leisure cyclists, ebikers and even families.



Section 1:

Céret to L'Escala (80 kilometres)

Tarmac climb from Maureillas to the Col de Panissars where the off road descent begins just behind the small military cemetery. **This is the most technical part of Pirinexus** with loose surfaces and steep ramps following storm erosion, so you may want to re-route through Le Perthus on the main road, but if you're up for the challenge this section is both beautiful and rewarding to cycle.



In the shadow of fort Bellegarde at Le Perthus, the col de Panissars was the crossing point of two great Roman highways; the Via Augusta and the Via Domitia, probably taken by Hannibal and his army on their way to attack Rome.

with **Chris Bratherton & friends**



The fascinating ruins of Greek and Roman cities, and the stone remains of the Ancient Greek sea port built around the 1st century BC are thought to be only 25% uncovered, after having been abandoned in the 3rd century AD and disappeared beneath the dunes.



Through La Jonquera, a short but punchy climb takes you into the beautiful rolling tracks of the Emporda wine-growing region. The villages of Capmany and Peralada are good options to stop for coffee (or wine), then ride next to the sea on the coastal path at Sant Marti d'Empuries past the fascinating archaeological site of Empúries and onwards to L'Escala, the end of the first section of the tour.



Section 2: L'Escala to Girona (90 kilometres)



Cycle along flat, fast rolling trails, through acres of apple farms, alongside rivers teeming with wildlife, and back out to the coast again. In Torroella de Montgri, cross the Ter river towards Palafrugell. Keep your wits about you where the bike path takes a one way street against the direction of the cars – although traffic and cars are in a minority on this adventure!

Along the superbly-surfaced old narrow gauge railway trail towards Palamos, follow the Med to Platja d'Aro, Sant Feliu de Guixols, then inland on the Ruta del Carrilet bike path, direction Girona. The old narrow gauge railway has been surfaced with a compacted sand, a 40km, car-free bike path from the beach to central Girona without sharing a single kilometer with a car! Some of the old stations are converted into cafes and bike charging stops, there are tunnels that take you under main roads and the wide trail is safe for families and children.

Girona is very bike orientated with bike cafes, shops, mechanics.... Take a hotel in the old town but book in advance!



TEAM EFFORT – TIP FOR A WINDY DAY!
Did you know that by riding behind another cyclist, you can save up to a third of your energy by reducing aerodynamic drag?



Section 3: Girona to Olot (60 kilometres)



Another disused railway, the Carrilet, runs from Girona all the way to the volcanic town of Olot. This section is pretty much constant climbing all the way from 70 metres above sea level to 440 meters but with an average gradient of only 1.5% (according to viasverdes.cat) it's not as strenuous as it sounds.

with **Chris Bratherton & friends**



Section 3:

Girona to Olot (60 kilometres)

From the Girones region into the Garrotxa, the hills become taller and a lush green - this is volcano country. If you have time, take a detour to see more of the **Garrotxa Volcanic Natural Park**.



Section 4:

Olot to Céret (90km)

This is the leg for the climbers, to complete the clockwise loop back over the Pyrenees into France; high mountains, border crossings and a great sense of achievement... but easily split if it sounds too much.

Have a good breakfast as the climb **from Olot to the Coll de Santigosa** climbs over 600 vertical meters on a long and beautiful ribbon of twisting tarmac with very few vehicles.



The descent into the medieval village of **Sant Joan de Les Abadesses** is spectacular.

No posh Girona coffee shops now, you're in the foothills of the Pyrenees so you may need some snacks to keep you going between villages... and definitely keep an eye on the weather forecast. Heading for le **Col d'Ares**, the French border, at 1500 metres altitude, this is the only



part of the loop that could be closed due to snow in winter. No problem. If there's a storm on le Col d'Ares, just stay another day in the delightful village of **Camprodon** and wait for it to clear. Keeping some flexibility in your travel plans makes the whole experience more fun!

At the old French customs building you've made it to the highest point of the whole tour at 1500 metres - just **45km of downhill ahead to the pretty fortified village of Prats de Mollo**, steep in places so don't let complacency creep in! **Prats de Mollo to Arles sur Tech** is all downhill on the main road shared with cars, then back on the 'voie verte' bike path which includes sections of old railway line and quiet roads back to Céret.

CHECK OUT viesverdes.cat
The official website of the public body who create and maintain these bike paths, showing water stops, charge stations, route planner....

At the border, sculptures of refugees who walked this road to escape the Spanish Civil War remind us that Pyreneen 'cols' have not always been playgrounds for cyclists - they have played key roles in a dramatic and tragic history.



The Vallespir bike path was once the Arles sur Tech to Elne railway - used to transport both people and material to and from the Haut Vallespir iron mines. At le **Pont de Reynes**, we cycle through the famous iron bridge, scene of a ferocious **battle in 1944** when Vallespir resistance ambushed a German army convoy and the French captain **François Madern** was killed. His monument stands at the entrance to the bridge, and you can also see bullet holes in the steel structure if you look closely.

With 40 inactive volcanoes, the last to erupt was Croscat about 11,000 years ago. You can even fly over the craters at dawn in a hot air balloon!



ABOUT CHRIS AND PYRENEES CYCLING CLUB

your local experts for all things bike tours

Pyrenees.cc

Don't want to do the planning and logistics yourselves?

At **Pyrenees Cycling Club** we **organise both self-guided and accompanied Pirinexus tours for all abilities in the P-O and Costa Brava areas**. We run 'home from home' tours staying at our remote farmhouse in the Haut Vallespir, and 'point to point' tours across the region staying at different places each night.



Choose which services you need for your tour - from **bike hire and transport, luggage transfer to and from hotel or campsite, guides or just accommodation**, we are your local experts for all things bike tours. We also pick you up if the route or weather become a little too challenging.

Visit our website at <https://pyrenees.cc> to find out more or email Chris at

pyrenees.cc@gmail.com

Restaurant
REVIEWS

WINTER- SPRING 2025

I'M FULL/
I'VE HAD ENOUGH TO EATSAV je n'ai plus faim
j'ai trop/assez mangé
je suis rassasié/e (ra-saz-ee-ay)DO NOT SAY... Je suis plein(e)....
unless you are a pregnant animal
or drunk!

LE CISTELL DE CALMEILLES

Calmeilles... with Gillian

A little off the beaten track but wonderful food. **Charles the chef, is of gourmet standard** with a set 3 course menu every day. It is around 37 E for 3 courses. **Totally unexpected in such a small village.** Would recommend you give it a try. Very small so you need to book in advance.

Le Village, Calmeilles
Tel: 06 12 69 32 29



ISTINTO

Thuir... with Kev

Been here several times recently & can really recommend. **The cuisine is Sicilian/Italian, the chef being from Tuscany** & the Sicilian wines are terrific! As it's a small operation, **the service is personal, friendly & spot-on.** Prices are very good, approx 25 euros per head with booze. The **Sicilian sculptures of busts adds a real flavour to the place.** Love it.



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

LE JARDIN DE JASMIN

Vernet les Bains... with Leigh and Merry

A great place for a curry, with all the side dishes, crispy poppadoms, samosas and dips. You can choose how spicy you want your curry and it was all delicious with all the special spices. **Plenty of veggie options.** We ordered more than we could manage and they kindly packed it up for us to take home. **One of our party was not a curry person and enjoyed the fish and chips.** Vernet les Bains is a pretty drive so you can combine some walks and sightseeing with a lovely lunch.



1 Bd du Cady, Vernet-les-Bains
Tel: 06 75 66 29 82

LE BOUT DE MONDE

Peyrefitte beach... with Leigh and Merry

A Winter menu of three courses for 22€ had two choices for entrée and plat, then dessert or cheese. All home made and great quality. Salmon terrine worthy of a top class restaurant, duck with maple syrup and cheesy mash, merluza (hake) in a spicy curry sauce, and a salted caramel profiterole. All delicious. We sat outside overlooking the bay, a lovely spot, and a **great place to pause if you are driving along the coast road between Banyuls-sur-Mer and Cerbere.** Turn off at the roundabout and wiggle down to the beach, following the signs to the snorkel trail.



Résidence El Reparo,
Anse de Peyrefitte, Cerbère
Tel: 04 68 88 47 33

MAISON SECALL & L'IDÉA

Torreilles Village

Elné

Five exquisite dishes around 42€ at **Maison Secall.** No choice, evenings only, except Sunday lunch. Mainly seating in the lovely garden, so essential to look at the forecast before booking. **Also highly recommend l'Idéa** at Elné. Again, must book. **An amazing chef, 5 courses that he invents each day.**



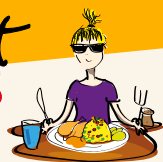
MAISON SECALL

Av. Mal Joffre, Torreilles
Tel: 06 18 04 31 93



L'IDÉA

8 Rue de la République, Elné
Tel: 09 83 29 47 37

LE COMPTOIR DE
MAMIE BIGOUDE

with Leigh and Merry

With quirky 1950's kitsch decorations this crêperie keeps you entertained just looking around at the interesting decor. There is a tasty selection of savoury galettes and sweet crepes. **We found it an ideal dining solution for a place to eat in central Perpignan** before going to a concert, also close to the cinema.



11 Quai François Batllo, Perpignan
Tel: 04 68 83 25 09

BAGELSTEIN

with Erika

Newish place along the river in Perpignan centre. Went for the first time and loved it. I did not actually have a bagel but their chocolate cookie was dripping with chocolate and melting on the tongue. Need to get back there to try more of their mouthwatering offerings.



41 Quai Sébastien Vauban, Perpignan
Tel: 04 68 84 39 40

CAFÉ VIENNE & CHEZ NOI with Nance Li

Café Vienne is always a good choice. They have **very nice vegetables for vegetarians** like me, and their traditional French food attracts many loyal clients.

Chez Noi is fantastic if you like **real Chinese food**. It is my canteen! I have brought many friends there, everyone is happy. Very reasonable price.



CAFÉ VIENNE

3 Pl. François Arago, Perpignan
Tel: 04 68 34 80 00



CHEZ NOI

25 Rue Sébastien Vauban, Perpignan
Tel: 04 68 84 91 16

Ó DELICES AFRICAINES

with Suzy

Just tried this **African restaurant**. Delicious homemade food. Generous portions. Friendly owners. Big advantage is that it's **open all day long**. Take away too. **Bon appétit**



16 Av. de Grande Bretagne, Perpignan
Tel: 07 74 67 28 55

LE 17

with Lesley Anne

Sublime lunch today - it's **all about fish at lunchtime with a unique menu** but it was well worth 30 Euros for the 3 courses. Fantastic. Booking is essential. **Just next to the Cathedral in Perpignan.**



1 Rue Cité Bartissol, Perpignan
Tel: 04 68 38 56 82

QUELQUES
QUICKIES

UN XIC DETOT,

Eus....with Harbeer
A great lunch experience.
8 Carrer del Canigou, Eus
Tel: 06 31 60 69 50

LA CIGOGNE,

Olette....with Justine
Lovely sunny Sunday lunch at newly refurbished bar, with great new vibe...so glad it's changed for the better.

D66, 66360 Olette
Tel: 09 82 79 66 66

LENEPTUNE,

Collioure...with Jackie
Set menu from Wednesday to Friday. Great value, incredible food and service, spectacular views...

www.leneptune-collioure.com

LEFRANCE

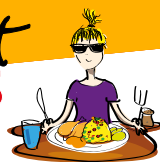
Céret...with Liliane
Much improved since new young owners took over. Special menu changes weekly. Really good and original. Staff great fun. I recommend.
35 Bd Maréchal Joffre, Céret
Tel: 04 68 87 11 27

LA PETTETABLE

Rouffiac-des-Corbières...with Ann
Fab little resto, even the bread is home made.
6 Rue de la Coopérative, Rouffiac-des-Corbières
Tel: 04 68 40 84 81

L'ÉTRILLE

Sainte-Marie-la-Mer..with Stephanie
Highly recommend. Thierry is a real chef and he only cooks fresh quality food.
The lunch menu (3 courses) is only 20€.
43 Av. des Marendes, Sainte-Marie-la-Mer
Tel: 04 68 63 82 21



CALA PAULA SPAIN

Castellfollit... **with Dave**

A fantastic day out over the border exploring the **Volcanic Garrotxa area around Olot**. We explored the fantastic Castellfollit village and ate in one of the best value and quality restaurants I have found in years. **The menu for 18,50€ ttc. included 3 courses, wine and coffee** Excellent service and quality Catalan cooking. **RECOMMENDED!!**

Plaça Sant Roc, 3,
Castellfollit de la Roca, Spain
Tel: +34 972 29 40 32



P-O RECIPES



Spring is sneaking up on us, bringing fresh fèves for eating raw with Pecorino or Gouda or any hard French cheese, but fèves are also delicious when sautéed in olive oil along with spring's little green onions, a few slices of crisp bacon, a little chopped mint and a splash of Rivesaltes, or any slightly sweet wine.

Fèves
Catalanes

WITH SUZANNE DUNAWAY

INGREDIENTS

- 2 generous cups of raw fèves, or 1 pack of frozen fèves, skinless or not, unthawed
- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 or 2 spring green onions, sliced fine including the green tops
- 4 slices bacon, fried crisp
- 1 branch of fresh mint leaves, the leaves chopped fine
- A splash of Rivesaltes

In a skillet heat the olive oil and sauté the green onion slices until soft.

Add the fèves and toss in the olive oil, lower the fire and cover for a few minutes until the fèves are tender. This takes only a few minutes if you use peeled fèves.

Remove the lid, add the splash of wine, the mint and the crumbled bacon and toss together.

Season with salt and pepper to taste.

A slice of lemon is nice, too, over the whole dish.



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

PANCAKE DAY
2nd February

Don't 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.



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



These are hard times for restaurant owners, particularly for those run by couples who work long hours and get little spare time off, to spend with their children and each other. The following restaurants support this magazine and help us to stay free. Please support them when you can.

Bon app.



La Dulcine 04 68 92 91 91
Franco Japanese Fusion and Regional Specialties

La Dulcine
• RESTAURANT •

Franco Japanese Mediterranean Fusion..
...an exciting and unique culinary experience

www.ladulcine.com

SPACIOUS, ELEGANT DINING ROOM.
PRETTY SHADED TERRACE

1, Route de Céret 66400 Reynès
(2 mins from Céret, direction Amélie)
tel: **04 68 87 02 22**

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

BELLA PIZZA

Eat in or take away delicious Pizzas and Italian Specialties

Open every day (except Sunday lunch-time and Thursdays)

Tel. 04 68 87 70 26
13, av. Michel Aribaud - CÉRET

Le Jardin de Céret 04 68 92 91 91
Regional specialties www.lejardindeceret.fr

Le Jardin de CÉRET
Restaurant
- Spécialités Catalanes -

New in Céret
CATALAN CUISINE,
REGIONAL SPECIALTIES, OYSTER BAR....
PATIO DINING, SECRET GARDEN,
PANORAMIC VIEW OF THE VALLESPÍR FOREST

PRIVATE ROOM AND TERRACE AVAILABLE
FOR YOUR SPECIAL EVENTS
(From the designers of the Jardin de Collioure)
www.lejardindeceret.fr
Rue de la République, 66400 Céret · R: **04 68 92 91 91**

...COLLIOURE
La Côte à l'Os 04 68 05 42 75
Restaurant and cocktail bar www.lacotealos.fr

MATURED MEATS AND GRILLED FISH
Restaurant and cocktail bar

La Côte à l'Os

www.lacotealos.fr
21 Pl. Jean Jaurès, 66190 Collioure · **04 68 05 42 75**

Le Jardin de Collioure 04 68 95 12 52
Charcoal-Grilled, Fish and meat www.lejardindecollioure.com

Le Jardin de COLLIOURE

Specialising in
CHARCOAL-GRILLED FISH AND MEAT

www.lejardindecollioure.com
LEAFY COURTYARD GARDEN · PRIVATE PARKING
4 Rte de Port-Vendres, 66190 Collioure · **04 68 95 12 52**

...EUS
Pizz'Eus 06 49 23 16 88
Original and Creative Pizzas

PIZZ'EUS

Original and creative pizzas
PRETTY TERRACE
OVERLOOKING CANIGOU

Open
Fri/Sat/Sun
eve until
end October

1 rue du commandant Jacoby
66500 EUS
Tel: 06 49 23 16 88

...LAROQUE-DES-ALBÈRES
Le Catalan 04 68 98 20 57
Bar - Cave à Vins

Restaurant Le Catalan


[f](https://www.facebook.com/LeCatalan) [i](https://www.instagram.com/LeCatalan)

2, Place de la République - Laroque Des Albères
Bar - Cave à Vins - Réservation **04 68 98 20 57**

FOOD and DRINK

...PERPIGNAN

Lou Grilladou 04 68 34 86 81
..... Closed Sunday & Monday



RESTAURANT Lou Grilladou
www.restaurant-lou-grilladou.fr
Lunch-time
3-course menu
just 19,00€
(Tue-Fri)
Sunny terrace
Closed Sunday and Monday
7 place de Belgique
66000 PERPIGNAN 04 68 34 86 81

EGO Ice Creamery, pl. République
Open 7/7 www.glaces-ego.com/perpignan
Vilavigne new wineshop 04 68 81 03 08
La Fauceille next to Maison Paré



Vilavigne
des Hommes et des Vins
NEW WINESHOP IN PERPIGNAN
More than 500
wines and spirits
from producers
throughout France.
Come and Check us Out!
perpignan@vilavigne.fr 04 68 81 03 08 La Fauceille
(next to Maison Paré)



SHARING A SANDWICH

DID YOU KNOW that the
word companion (compañero
in Spanish or copain in French) actually
comes from the Latin 'companionem',
meaning 'one with whom you would eat
bread' hence 'con' (with) and 'pan' (bread)



...PORT-VENPRES

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



**POISSONNERIE
BAR À HUITRES
DE LA CRIÉE**
DEPUIS 1970
**ENJOY PANORAMIC VIEWS
OVER THE PORT**
• FOR THE BEST OYSTERS • SHELLFISH • SEAFOOD
TO EAT IN OR TAKE AWAY
+33 (0)4 68 98 46 00
ANSE GERBAL - LA CRIÉE
66660 PORT-VENPRES
WWW.COTECATALANE.COM

..SAINT LAURENT DE CERDANS

Domaine de Falgos 04 68 39 51 42
OPEN 7/7 lunch and dinner www.falgos.com



DOMAINE DE FALGOS
RESORT - GOLF - SPA
STUNNING PANORAMIC TERRACE
OPEN 7/7 LUNCH AND DINNER LUNCH + SPA 49€
Tél : 04 68 39 51 42 66260 SAINT LAURENT DE CERDANS WWW.FALGOS.COM

Les Poissonneries
de la Côte Catalane



A GOURMET ESCAPE BY THE SEA

- FISHMONGER • READY MEALS
- PANORAMIC OYSTER BAR
- SEAFOOD PLATTERS • DELICATESSEN
- TO EAT IN OR TAKE AWAY

+33 (0)4 68 98 46 00

ANSE GERBAL - LA CRIÉE
66660 PORT-VENPRES

VISIT OUR
ON-LINE SHOP



WWW.COTECATALANE.COM



...SAINT GENIS DES FONTAINES

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

L'Auberge des Albères

*Mediterranean and Traditional Cuisine
Terrace*

*Close to Argèles-sur-Mer, come
and discover our tasty home
cooking in a rustic setting.*

- 🚩 *Seafood, Fish platters, Tapas to share,
Mussels & Chips...and much more!*
- 🚩 *Lunch-time menu just 19,90€ (Tues-Fri)*
- 🚩 *Free parking adjacent*

www.restaurant-auberge-alberes.fr/

For reservations, telephone:

04 68 89 88 38

78 avenue Maréchal Joffre

66740 Saint Genis des Fontaines



...SOREDE

La Salamandre 04 68 89 26 67
Fine mediterranean cuisine..... free parking next door



P-O Life

Ideas for
EATING OUT

**Votre restaurant ici
à partir de seulement 40€ HT**

Contact US

06 89 25 88 01

info@anglophone-direct.com

Grotte de Fontrabieuse

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

- **Guided Visits**
- **Bar**
- **Free Parking**
- **Gift Shop**

-10%

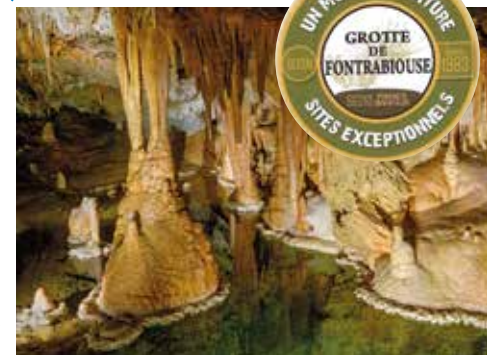
off an adult entry
on presentation
of P-O Life*

*Cannot be used with other offers

66210 Fontrabieuse Just 30 mins from Font Romeu and 10 mins from Les Angles

Tel: +33 (0) 4 68 30 95 55 www.grotte-de-fontrabieuse.com

Open every day 7/7 from 2 Jan - 2 Nov 2025 and 5 30 Dec 2025 (except 24,25 and 31 Dec)



Some of you may remember an old Flanders and Swann song, '**A SONG OF THE WEATHER**' (Check it out on YouTube.)

I loved this song that my mother used to play to me on a wind up gramophone!
Hearing it recently, I started to think of life here, so I wrote a PO version.

Hope you enjoy it

BY CATHERINE KING

January skies are blue,
Sparkling seas reflect their hue.

February snow on hills,
Sledging, skiing, fun and spills.

March and blossom's everywhere,
Peach and apple, plum and pear.

April spring is really here.
Cool rosé and ice cold beer.

May and time for the first cherry.
Long weekend and making merry.

June arrives and still no rain.
Constant sunshine, what a pain.

July brings us the Northern hordes.
Sailing, swimming paddle boards.

August summer saunters by.
Then suddenly the days just fly.

September and it's 'La Rentrée'.
It's the end of holiday.

October vines are turning red.
Shorter days; early to bed.

November time for walks and rambles.
Strolls and climbs and coastal scrambles.

December comes and "Oh mon Dieu"
Another year's gone. Sacrebleu!



P-O Life

Festivals and TRADITIONS

BURN AWAY YOUR BAD LUCK.

It's Carnival Time!

February and March see carnivals all over the P-O – fancy dress, street parades and fireworks, singing, dancing.....along with the symbolic burning of evil spirits. Watch out for the burning of the straw-filled **Carnival king, symbol of infertility**, sins, and bad luck – an important character in the traditions of modern carnival, who is burned in a spectacular ritual at the end of the festivities, **on Mardi Gras, the day before Ash Wednesday.**



FETE DE L'OURS FEBRUARY BEAR FESTIVALS

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

Arles-sur-Tech:
Sunday 2nd February
Prats-de-Mollo:
Sunday 16th February
Saint-Laurent-de-Cerdans:
Sunday 23rd February



LES GRÉGOIRES IN AMÉLIE

When Pélage II was carried off by the plague on **February 8, 590, Grégoire was elected Pope.** Rome was ravaged by the plague and threatened by famine and flood, so Grégoire organised prayers and processions to boost morale. During one of these processions, the '**Angel exterminateur**' (Exterminating Angel) appeared and ended the plague. To celebrate, '**Sa majesté carnaval Grégoire**' and the **Swiss Guard lead a procession every year through the streets of Amélie.** Behind walk the villagers, dressed in white, with pointed hats, sprinkling flour around them as they walk, before burning their Carnival King. Remind you of any other historical hooded gatherings?

LA SANCH

The 'Procession de la Sanch' is without doubt a great crowd puller and a fabulous photo opportunity... but for the 'penitents' carrying 'misteris', full-size representations of the different scenes of the Passion, crosses, crucifixes and religious statues weighing up to fifty kilos, this re-enactment of Christ's Passion is real enough.

Impressive, mysterious, just a little frightening, sinister black hooded and robed figures walk slowly through the silent streets of Perpignan. At their head, robed in red, walks 'le regidor', intermittently ringing an iron bell to warn of their approach as he leads the penitents to the gallows. Some walk bare-foot, others are on their knees as they move slowly forward to the solemn beat of black veiled tambourines. Over the centuries the Sanch has been forbidden several times but it has always been resurrected.



GOOD FRIDAY PROCESSIONS

18TH APRIL

Perpignan: 3pm

Arles-sur-Tech: 830pm

Collioure: 9pm



We are undoubtedly spoilt for fabulous 'stations balnéaires' (seaside resorts) here in the P-O, but many of them are all about the beach and the sea itself – which means there's not much going on in winter and early spring. Saint Cyprien however is an all-year-rounder.

HIGHLIGHTS

Our Pick of what to do and where to go.

ART

Until March 23rd

Visit the rather original 'Collections de Saint Cyprien' art gallery in the village. As well as the many works of talented French artist **Francois Desnoyer**, you will find **Albert Marquet, Utrillo, Suzanne Valadon, Salvador Dali** and many other major artists. New, up-and-coming artists regularly exhibit here also..

Exhibition:
Jacky Kennedy - Parlez-moi d'amour.



FUN... AND A LITTLE BIT SILLY!

Don't miss.....

Le Casament Tremblant

Saturday, March 1st at 16h

in front of the town hall (village)

Come in fancy dress for a bit of fun with lots of laughs.



TRADITIONS

EASTER WEEKEND:

April 19th to 21st

GOIG DELS OUS,

www.tourisme-saint-cyprien.com

/chasse-aux-oeufs-et-traditions-enseleillees



SANT JORDI,

Sunday, April 27

One of the most beloved celebrations among Catalans, a festival of books and roses, symbols of love and culture.



TASTERS

Dare you!
(oser - to dare)

Two days,
one tasting glass,
lots of different
tastings

OSÉ LE ROSÉ, Saturday, May 10

Enjoy seeing life through rosé-coloured glasses? Explore various wines presented by numerous participating winemakers.

OSÉ LES BULLES, Sunday, May 11

Get fizzy throughout the day. Relaxation areas and fun activities in a lounge-style musical atmosphere.



VA VA VROOM!

FESTIMOB FESTIVAL,

Saturday, may 17 and sunday, may 18

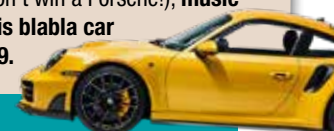
The moped is back! Don't miss this **major gathering of mopeds at the port**. Exhibition, stands, parade, moped village, and an evening concert.



TRA'MONTANE PORSCHE,

May 23, 24, and 25

Passionate about Porches? Just enjoy a good day out? **The Porsche Club Roussillon** invite you to exhibitions, competitions, (No, you don't win a Porsche!), **music and fun, celebrating this blabla car** first showcased in 1939.



SAINT-CYPRIEN TOURIST OFFICE

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

FIND OUT MORE >>...



LE CASAMENT TREMBLANT

A weird old Catalan carnival custom which parodies and ridicules marriage via the mock marriage of two men, usually particularly hairy and macho. The 'ceremony' is presided over by a mock mayor, 'witnesses' and 'family' who accompany the 'wedding procession' through the streets. Some say that it was started years ago to 'point a finger' at certain couples in the village, whilst others say that it is simply based on an original and amusing alternative to a stag night! French/Catalan humour at its weirdest?

GOIG DELS OUS,

(JOIE DES OEUFS)

Dating back to the Middle Ages, these traditional Easter songs, sung by choirs in Catalan costume, signal a return to life after the sadness of winter. Villagers would place gifts of eggs, black pudding, charcuterie, and wine into a "cistella", a basket for contributions, in thanks for the music.



GEORGE AND THE DRAGON

Sant Jordi (St George), patron saint of Catalonia, was a Christian Roman soldier, who was martyred around 303AD for refusing to renounce Christianity. According to popular legend, he rescued the king's daughter from the dragon and the whole kingdom converted to Christianity in gratitude.

Roses grew from the ground where the dragon's blood had been shed...and it became traditional to give a rose and a book to a loved one.



Un soir, un couple senior est couché dans son lit. Le mari s'endort tout doucement, mais la femme a envie d'un peu de romance et veut parler.

Unbelievably BAD JOKE

(but good for your French)

"Au début, quand on sortait ensemble, tu avais l'habitude de me tenir la main"

lui dit-elle

Lassé, il lui prend la main pendant 10 secondes, la lâche, et essaie de se rendormir.

Quelques instants plus tard, elle lui dit

"Au début, quand on sortait ensemble, tu avais l'habitude de me tenir la main, et ensuite, tu m'embrassais"

Légèrement irrité, il lui prend la main, l'embrasse sur la joue et essaie de se rendormir.

Trente secondes plus tard, elle dit

"Au début, quand on sortait ensemble, tu avais l'habitude de me tenir la main, et ensuite, tu m'embrassais et tu me grignotais le cou"

Furieux, il rejette les draps et sort du lit.

"Où vas-tu?" demande-t-elle.

JE VAIS CHERCHER MON DENTIER!

USEFUL VOCAB

s'endort - (is) falling asleep

tout doucement - gently

Au début - at the beginning

tu avais l'habitude de - you used to

Lassé - wearily

la lâche - lets it go

essaie de se rendormir - tries to go back to sleep

ensuite - after that

tu m'embrassais - you used to kiss me

Légèrement irrité - mildly irritated

la joue - cheek

tu me grignotais le cou - you used to nibble my neck

il rejette - he throws off

les draps - the sheets

dentier - dentures



How to open a french bank account when the bank says NON

LE DROIT AU COMPTE

French bureaucracy; admin and forms requiring personal details about yourself, your life, your great great grandmother's maiden name, blood and stool samples (hopefully only joking about the latter) mean that some of us just give up applying for some things even though **it is our right**.

So did you know that opening a bank account in France **is your right**?

'Le droit au compte' ensures **all French residents have access to a bank account**. Banks DO have a right to refuse applicants but if you have already been turned down, the 'Banque de France' can appoint a bank to open an account for you. This will include access to basic banking services: receive and make transfers, consult your account remotely, make transfers, cash checks, obtain a systematic authorisation payment card...You are NOT entitled to overdraft facilities.

The aim is that everyone over the age of 18 has a bank account to receive their salary, social security benefits, make payments, settle their bills, etc.

Who can benefit from the **le droit au compte**?

You must not already have any individual account in your own name, and been refused an account. You must then also meet one of the following conditions:

- Domiciled in France, regardless of nationality
- French and reside abroad
- Legally resident in a European Union country other than France and not acting in a professional capacity.

Even if you are banned from banking, registered in the FICP file (fichier des incidents de crédit aux particuliers = national register of household debt), or over-indebted, you are entitled to a basic account.

Where to get help if it's all feeling a bit too complicated

Start off with your local CAF (Caisse d'Allocations Familiales) www.caf.fr



OPENING THE ACCOUNT

First submit a file to the Banque de France with the following supporting documents: *(well, nobody said it was easy!)*

- a completed and signed application form, available from a Banque de France branch or on its website (www.banque-france.fr)
- a letter of refusal from the bank with whom you originally tried to open an account
- a copy of a valid identity document
- a copy of proof of address less than three months old
- a sworn statement that you do not have a personal or business deposit account
- a sworn statement that you are legally resident in another Member State of the European Union, if that's the case.



SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION....

- by going to a Banque de France branch
- online via the Banque de France website
- by post to: Banque de France – TSA 50120 – 75035 PARIS cedex 01.

The Banque de France will appoint a bank to **open an account for you within one working day of receiving your application**.

SOME USEFUL VOCAB TO HELP YOU OUT:

Application form	Formulaire
Banking ban	Interdit bancaire
Basic banking services	Services bancaires de base
Business account	Compte professionnel
Fortnight	Quinze jours
Over-indebted	Surendetté
Proof of address	Justificatif de domicile
Proof of a recorded delivery	Accusé de réception de lettre recommandée
Proof of hand-delivery	Preuve de dépôt en mains propres
Refusal letter	Une lettre de refus
Right to an account	Le droit au compte
Sworn statement	Déclaration sur l'honneur
To terminate an account	Résilier un compte



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.

Summer schedules cover 30 March to 25 October 2025
Airlines constantly change schedules due to demand, so apologies if there are any I have missed. easyJet will operate a new Birmingham-Barcelona service, a crazy decision in my opinion, as there are already three airlines flying that route. Ryanair will start Shannon twice weekly.

However **that could all change, especially for Ryanair customers as November 24 strike at Boeing has affected delivery of new 737s** – of which Ryanair has many on order, so the airline will take delivery of less aircraft than planned and may well cut back on some schedules.

You may have noticed that car hire prices are high. Apparently, this is due to a shortage of cars caused by a shortage of computer chips!

FRANCE

PERPIGNAN



Sorry Kate, Leeds season is shorter this year. 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 4 June - 27 Sep
DUBLIN	3-4	AER LINGUS 21 May-19 Sep
LEEDS BRADFORD	2	RYANAIR 4 May - 28 Sep
STANSTED	5	RYANAIR 30 Mar - 24 Oct

BEZIERS



Like Carcassonne, **Ryanair** has a free run at this small airport. **Edinburgh** does not start till June, whilst **Stansted** this year has a shorter season – May to September.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
BRISTOL	3	RYANAIR 31 Mar - 25 Oct
EDINBURGH	2	RYANAIR 1 June - 28 Sep
LUTON	2-3	RYANAIR 30 Mar - 23 Oct
MANCHESTER	3	RYANAIR 1 Apr - 25 Oct
SHANNON	2	RYANAIR 30 Mar - 22 Oct
STANSTED	3	RYANAIR 2 May - 29 Sep



CARCASSONNE

Ryanair remains the sole operator here. Cork does not start till June.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
BOURNEMOUTH	2	RYANAIR 3 May - 25 Oct
EAST MIDLANDS	2	RYANAIR 2 May - 29 Sep
MANCHESTER	4	RYANAIR 30 Mar - 25 Oct
STANSTED	7	RYANAIR 30 Mar - 25 Oct
CORK	2	RYANAIR 3 June - 30 Sep
DUBLIN	3	RYANAIR 31 Mar - 25 Oct

MONTPELLIER



easyJet did operate from both **Gatwick** and **Luton**, however it seems **Luton** has been dropped this year. **British Airways** operated a new **Gatwick** service last year and do so again this summer.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
GATWICK	3-4	BRITISH AWYS 23 May-27 Sep
	5-6	EASYJET 30 Mar - 25 Oct

NIMES

Ryanair is the sole operator for P-O readers.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
DUBLIN	2	RYANAIR 31 Mar - 24 Oct
STANSTED	2	RYANAIR 30 Mar - 22 Oct



TOULOUSE / BLAGNAC

There tends to be more flights to Toulouse from UK regional airports 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 1 Apr - 25 Oct
BRISTOL	4-5	EASYJET 30 Mar - 24 Oct
EDINBURGH	3	RYANAIR 1 Apr - 25 Oct
GATWICK	4	EASYJET 30 Mar - 24 Oct
HEATHROW	20	BRITISH AWYS 30 Mar-25 Oct
STANSTED	10	RYANAIR 30 Mar - 25 Oct
DUBLIN	3	AER LINGUS 30 March-18 Sep
	3	RYANAIR 30 Mar - 23 Oct

SPAIN

BARCELONA / EL PRAT



Quite a few changes. **Ryanair** have restarted **Cork** and **Prestwick**. **Birmingham** has been added to the **easyJet** schedules – only four airlines on the route now ! This summer **Vueling** are no longer offering flights from **Edinburgh**, **British Airways** now operate a service from **London City airport**. **Jet2** are listing twice weekly to **Newcastle** for 2026, but nothing for 2025. Which I suspect is a mistake.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
BELFAST INT'L	2-5	EASYJET 30 Mar - 22 Oct
BIRMINGHAM	2-4	EASYJET 31 Mar - 23 Oct
	2	JET2 30 Mar - 24 Oct
	8	RYANAIR 30 Mar - 25 Oct
	6	VUELING 30 Mar - 24 Oct
BOURNEMOUTH	3	1 - 3 Apr ONLY
BRISTOL	9-12	EASYJET 30 Mar - 25 Oct
	6	RYANAIR 30 Mar - 25 Oct
EAST MIDLANDS	7	RYANAIR 30 Mar - 25 Oct
EDINBURGH	11	RYANAIR 30 Mar - 25 Oct
GATWICK	21	EASYJET 30 Mar - 25 Oct
	56	VUELING 30 Mar - 25 Oct
GLASGOW INT'L	2	EASYJET 2 Apr - 25 Oct
GLASGOW PRESTWICK	5	RYANAIR 1 Apr - 25 Oct
HEATHROW	53	BRITISH AWYS 30 Mar - 25 Oct
	14	VUELING 30 Mar - 25 Oct
LEEDS BRADFORD	2	JET2 31 Mar - 24 Oct
LIVERPOOL	3	EASYJET 31 Mar - 24 Oct
	5	RYANAIR 30 Mar - 25 Oct
LONDON CITY	5	BRITISH AWYS 30 Mar - 15 Oct
LUTON	13	EASYJET 30 Mar - 25 Oct
	3-8	RYANAIR 30 Mar - 25 Oct
MANCHESTER	8-9	EASYJET 30 Mar - 25 Oct
	4-5	JET2 30 Mar - 24 Oct
	11	RYANAIR 30 Mar - 25 Oct
	11	VUELING 30 Mar - 25 Oct

OOOOPS BARCELONA T1. CAN YOU SPOT IT?



NEWCASTLE	4	RYANAIR 31 Mar - 25 Oct
STANSTED	28	RYANAIR 30 Mar - 25 Oct
CORK	2	RYANAIR 30 Mar - 22 Oct
DUBLIN	14	AER LINGUS 30 Mar - 25 Oct
	21	RYANAIR 30 Mar - 25 Oct
	10	VUELING 30 Mar - 25 Oct



REAL ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM PILOTS AND CONTROLLERS WITH A SENSE OF HUMOUR .

Pilote : "Le dernier hors de l'avion, doit le nettoyer."

Pilote : "Contrôle, on est à quelle distance du terrain?"

CTL : "N823, plus vous irez vite, plus vite vous arriverez."

Pilote : "...Tour, appelez-moi un camion de fuel."

Tour : "Roger, vous êtes un camion de fuel."

USEFUL VOCAB

hors – out, off

le nettoyer – clean it

terrain - ground

plus vous irez vite – the faster you go

GIRONA



Subject to aircraft deliveries the number of flights listed could well change. **Ryanair** services to **Girona** have increased with several starting earlier than last season. **Stansted** is now twice daily. They also offer **Edinburgh** this summer. **Jet2 Stansted** flights doubled to four a week.

FROM	NUMBER OF WEEKLY FLIGHTS	AIRLINE
BELFAST	4	RYANAIR 31 Mar - 25 Oct
BIRMINGHAM	2	JET2 7 Apr - 24 Oct
	3	RYANAIR 30 Mar - 24 Oct
BOURNEMOUTH	7	RYANAIR 30 Mar - 25 Oct
BRISTOL	1	JET2 3 May - 18 Oct
	5	RYANAIR 30 Mar - 25 Oct
CORK	3	RYANAIR 1 Apr - 25 Oct
DUBLIN	7	RYANAIR 30 Mar - 25 Oct
EAST MIDLANDS	1	JET2 4 May - 19 Oct
	3	RYANAIR 31 Mar - 25 Oct
EDINBURGH	1	JET2 3 May - 18 Oct
GLASGOW	1	JET2 4 May - 19 Oct
KNOCK	2	RYANAIR 31 Mar - 23 Oct
LEEDS BRADFORD	2	JET2 3 Apr - 23 Oct
	5	RYANAIR 30 Mar - 25 Oct
MANCHESTER	2-4	JET2 4 Apr - 24 Oct
	4	RYANAIR 30 Mar - 23 Oct
NEWCASTLE	1	JET2 6 Apr - 19 Oct
SHANNON	2	RYANAIR 31 Mar - 23 Oct
STANSTED	4	RYANAIR 30 Mar - 25 Oct
	14	JET2 3 Apr - 25 Oct

Showroom

External Thermal Insulation

Loft insulation

Interior insulation and interior plasterwork

gfpeinture

Frédéric Gaudry

Wallpaper, painting and renovation company with 30 years experience

- Little Greene stockist
- Interior Decoration
- Facade renovations
- Interior Plasterwork
- Flooring
- External thermal insulation
- Glazing

04.68.53.64.19
accueil@gfpeinture.fr

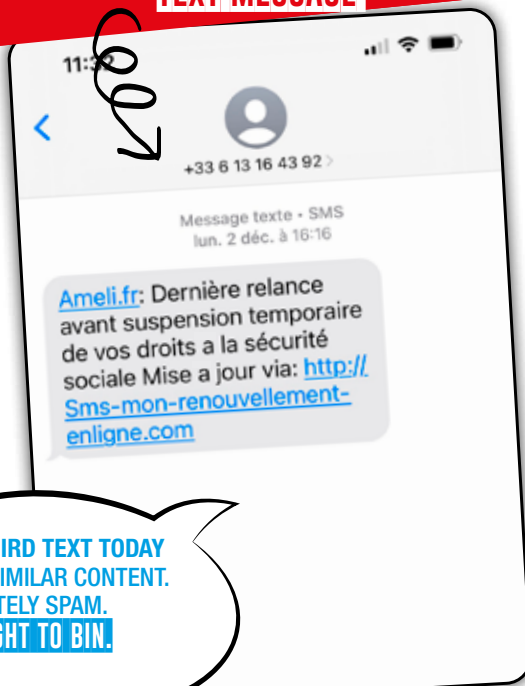
www.facebook.com/gf.peinture.fr/
www.gf.peinture.fr

9 avenue de la Côte Vermeille
66300 THUIR

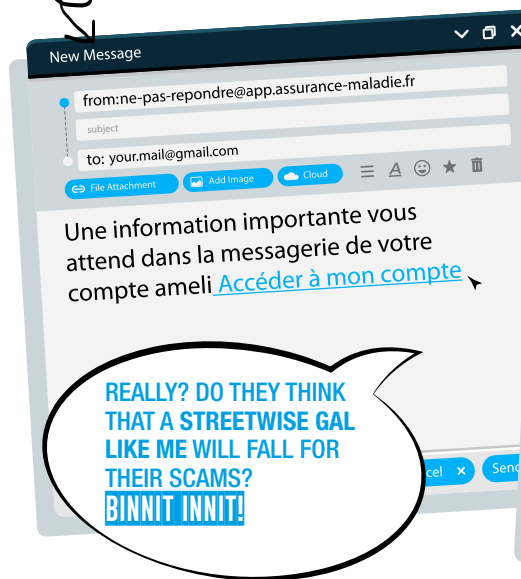
A TRAGIC TALE OF FRENCH HEALTH RIGHTS LOST... AND REGAINED



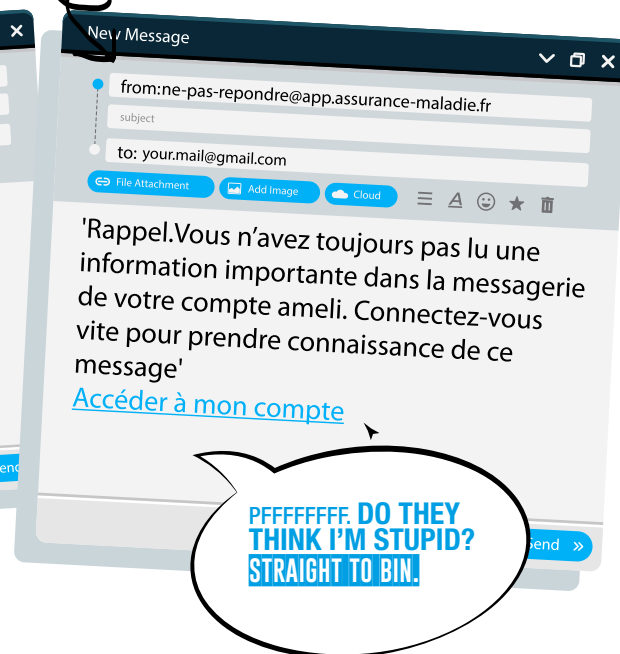
TEXT MESSAGE



EMAIL



EMAIL X 3 ON SEPARATE DAYS



A WEEK LATER....

.... **my carte Vitale was rejected chez le doc.** "Strange...but probably the machine playing up/ internet connexion" we decided.

TWO WEEKS LATER...

...same problem à la pharmacie. "Bizarrrrrrr" said I.

THREE WEEKS LATER...

...my card was rejected a third time. Time to call the CPAM to tell them they'd made a mistake. (I'm a French resident, married to a French man, tax resident....I know my rights).

TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

"Madame. On vous a envoyé plusieurs emails vous dirigeant sur votre espace. Vous n'avez pas répondu, on vous a donc retiré vos droits et vous a effacé du système."

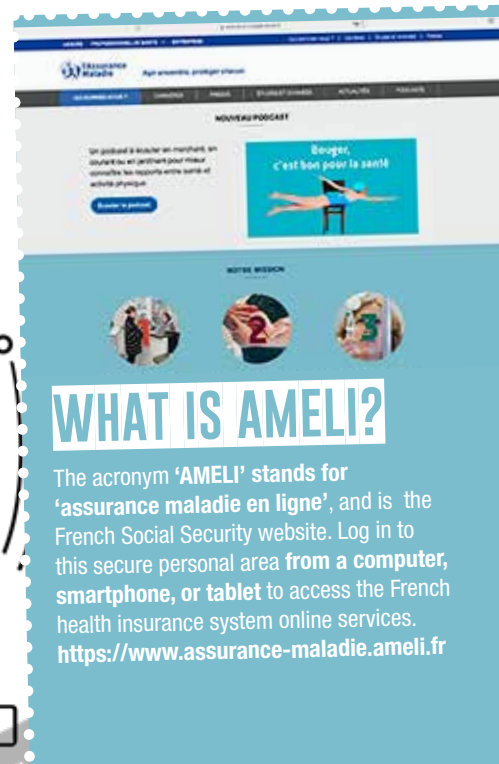
QUOI? WHAT 'ESPACE'?

WHAT'S GOING ON?

In fact, the SECU/CPAM **DOES** send you emails (never texts) to inform you to visit your 'espace' for important info/updates.

In my case, it was asking for a kind of **proof of life/continued residence in France** for which they apparently do **spot checks**. Nothing to do with nationality, the gentleman from the CPAM assured me....but **I'm not so sure**. Anyway, ignore this at your peril as you could lose your CV and rights to health care...and if you're very unlucky, have to resend all the paperwork! Aie aie aie!

>>.....



....>>

SO...TO BE CLEAR...

Once you have a social security (SS) number and are registered on the French health system, your medical matters are overseen by **Ameli.fr**, which automatically sets up an account for you (opt out system) and may periodically alert you by email about a message on their site. The email sender's address may be:

assurance-maladie@info.ameli.fr

To access your account for such notifications, visit <https://ameli.fr> and click on "Se connecter".

This should take you to a window which asks which service you require:

EITHER

Mon compte ameli (login with your SS number – less the last 2 digits – and password)

This is where you'll find messages (Notifications) from Ameli such as a spot check that **you're still resident or alive and kicking!** Best not to ignore this. Log in regularly to your espace to check for



messages, update or report any info relating to your carte Vitale, change personal details, track payments, register a birth, apply for an EHIC...

OR

Mon espace santé (login with an "identifiant" and password). N.B. also accessible direct, via <https://monespacesante.fr>

This is a kind of **digital health space launched in 2022 to allow French residents to manage their healthcare**, store and exchange health information etc.

When a new document has been added by a medical professional, e.g. prescription; lab test results; scan/X-ray reports etc, **you will receive a notification by email from** ne-pas-repondre@monespacesante.fr

You can also download the app on Apple's App Store and Google Play.

BONNE SANTÉ À TOUS ET TOUTES !

STILL NOT SURE WHAT'S GOING ON?

Call the English speaking French Health Insurance Advice Line

09 74 75 36 46
(from France)

0033 974 75 36 46
(from other countries)



DON'T WORRY, BE HAPPY

Beware! As in my case, not knowing that you have an espace does not stop them sending messages there. You may well have been informed by snail-mail or e-mail but ignored it, dismissed it as spam as I did, or just forgotten about it. **Ne vous inquiétez pas! It's never too late to set it up.**

SPRING IS HERE!



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.

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!



Test your nature knowledge...

With
Lesley McLaren

It's time for our annual quizzical look at natural history, drawing on past P O Life articles and other sources!

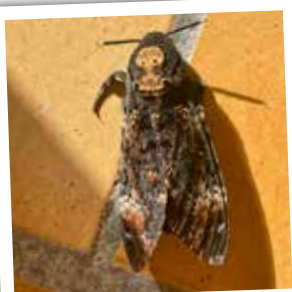


Lesley McLaren is an amateur naturalist. She can be contacted via www.mediterraneanpyrenees.com



MAKE YOUR CHOICE

- How do male grasshoppers create their song?
 - By rubbing hind legs together
 - By rubbing wings together
 - By rubbing hind legs against their wings
 - By rubbing hind legs against their abdomen
- How much does a Pipistrelle bat weigh?
 - 3-8g
 - 5-10g
 - 10-15g
 - 15-20g
- What is this big moth called?
 - Ghost-head Hawk-moth
 - Death's-head Hawk-moth
 - Skull-head Hawk-moth
 - Devil's-head Hawk-moth



- The rare, semi-aquatic Pyrenean Desman is related to which other mammals?
 - Mice & rats
 - Moles & shrews
 - Voles
 - Coypu



TRUE OR FALSE

T F

- Cicadas are a type of cricket ☐ ☐
- Octopuses have 2 hearts ☐ ☐
- 2024 was the planet's first year above 1.5C of global warming ☐ ☐
- In winter, Siskins may visit garden bird feeders more often on wet days ☐ ☐
- The only wolves seen in the P O in recent years are lone females ☐ ☐
- Another word for signs left by an animal is "spoor" ☐ ☐



DON'T YOU JUST KNOW IT?

- What is this sea creature?



- What is the French word for a young marmot?

- La Fête de l'Ours takes place in February. Why February?

- What's going on here?!



- What tells you this snake is venomous?



- Which tree makes a popping sound when you remove the bark?

ANSWERS ON THE NEXT PAGE...

ANSWERS



MAKE YOUR CHOICE

1. c) They rub hind legs against their wings
2. a) They weigh no more than a 1-euro coin!
3. b) Death's-head Hawk-moth. it's nocturnal & have a wingspan of 80-120mm
4. b) Moles & shrews
5. d) 1-3 years, depending on the species & environment
6. a) Rock Bunting



Pyrenean Desman (Credit: David Perez)



TRUE OR FALSE

1. **False.**
Cicadas are related to aphids & leaf hoppers
2. **False.**
Octopuses have 3 hearts! 2 to pump blood to their gills & 1 to circulate it around their body
3. **True.**
2024 was the hottest year on record since the pre-industrial period
4. **True.**
Pinecones close in the wet, depriving Siskins of their favourite seeds
5. **False.**
The 4 recorded have been lone males
6. **True.**
Spoor can refer to animal tracks, scents & droppings



DON'T YOU JUST KNOW IT?

1. Mottled Sea Hare – a type of sea snail (harmless)
2. Un marmotton
3. February is when brown bears first leave their winter dens (tanières) & marks the return of spring. Sadly, the last time a bear was spotted in the P O was 2019.
4. A spider-hunting wasp has caught and paralysed a wolf spider & is dragging it back to its nest, where an egg will be laid inside it.
5. The vertical pupil & head shape. It's an adder
6. A cork oak 🍷



*Subject to conditions

Looking for better, cheaper insurance?

It's possible with up to 5 month's money back from Axa.

For complete peace of mind at home and at work...

- Comprehensive health cover adapted to your needs (individual & professional)
- Responsabilité civile et professionnelle (civil and professional liability cover)



Home / Holiday Rental Insurance



Car / Camper Van Motorbike Insurance



Life Insurance & Savings



Banking



Business Protection Plans



Isabelle & Christophe Côté
Contact us now to find out how we can help make life better for you

ORIAS N. 0701386 et 07013871

Agence des Albères
04 68 89 72 75

agence.co@axa.fr

84 avenue des Albères 66740 Saint Genis des Fontaines

DID YOU KNOW?



JUST THE EXCUSE WE NEEDED.

Did you know that middle-aged women who drink a couple of glasses of wine every day may potentially enjoy a 'healthier old age' and a reduced risk of stroke, than women who only drink occasionally!

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

CHEERS LADIES. HERE'S TO SUCCESSFUL SURVIVAL! (HiC)



CATERPILLAR CHAOS

If you have pine trees with Processionary Caterpillar nests on your property, you are advised to cut off the branch and burn the nest. If the property has a large quantity of nests, ask advice from your local mairie. Take care. Hairs on their back containing a protein which causes severe irritation and dermatitis to both humans and animals.

Even after the caterpillar is dead, **the hairs remain toxic**. Take care when walking your dog in areas where the caterpillars may be, and be very careful crouching down for a sneaky pipi sauvage ladies!



Test your FRENCH

See Page 69 for answers

Tongue Twister

Répétez trois fois
Charles cherche à
changer son siège.

1 S is for Sangria!

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

- | | | | |
|------------|----|---|--|
| sabot | 1 | a | perdre du sang |
| saigner | 2 | b | porc sauvage |
| sableux | 3 | c | danse catalane en cercle. |
| sage-femme | 4 | d | insecte sauteur vert ou gris |
| sanglier | 5 | e | chaussure généralement faite de bois |
| sain | 6 | f | goût |
| sauterelle | 7 | g | céréale généralement transformé en farine |
| sarrasin | 8 | h | qui contient du sable |
| saveur | 9 | i | en bonne santé |
| sardane | 10 | j | assiste les femmes lors de l'accouchement. |



(Did you know that this is actually illegal in France, punishable by 2 years of prison, 4500 euros fine and 6 points on licence.)

2

REMPLISSEZ LES BLANCS

Une 'opération escargot', qu'est ce que c'est?

Une --1-- pour provoquer un --2-- important ou un blocage de la --3-- et attirer l' --4-- des personnes bloquées sur les --5--.

a ralentissement b revendications c attention d manifestation e circulation

REFLECTIONS

Il ne faut pas se fier aux apparences. Beaucoup de gens n'ont pas l'air aussi bêtes qu'ils ne le sont réellement.

se fier à - to trust
avoir l'air to seem
qu'ils ne le sont réellement - than they actually are

INTERESTING EXPRESSION

Métro-boulot-dodo

Literally meaning "Subway, work, sleep," this saying is used to express boring daily routine and 'same old same old'

Eg "Ca va?" "Oh, tu sais. Métro-boulot-dodo"

Où traversent les serpents ?

sur le passage pytho

3

Find the English for the idiomatic expressions below

- | | | | |
|------------------------------|----|---|-----------------------------------|
| Arriver à la bourre | 1 | a | to be speechless |
| Motus et bouche cousue | 2 | b | to take offense |
| Faire la tête | 3 | c | to be late |
| Mettre son nez partout | 4 | d | to be nosey |
| Rester bouche bée | 5 | e | to put in your two pennies' worth |
| Couper la poire en deux | 6 | f | to miss out on something |
| Manquer le coche | 7 | g | to have a lot of work on |
| Mettre son grain de sel | 8 | h | to meet someone halfway |
| Prendre la mouche | 9 | i | to keep a secret |
| Avoir du pain sur la planche | 10 | j | to sulk |

Aie J'ai mal

Patient: Docteur, j'ai un problème. Quand j'appuie là, (il appuie sur son bras) j'ai mal

Et quand j'appuie là (il appuie sur son nez) j'ai mal.

Et quand j'appuie là, (il appuie sur sa jambe) j'ai mal.

Docteur: Je crois Monsieur que vous avez le doigt cassé !!

Deux gendarmes discutent

Tu fais trop jeune pour être flic.
C'est quoi ton secret?

Une crème qui fait la peau-lisse

(Tu fais - you look
flic - cop peau - skin lisse -
smoother)

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)

INTERESTING EXPRESSION

(Avoir) l'esprit de l'escalier (staircase wit)
When you think of the perfect reply too late.



4 Innit!

Like most languages, French has many informal shortened versions of longer words. Here are just a few. Can you find their equivalents in English?

les actus	1	a	brother-in-law
comme d'hab	2	b	honest, dependable
d'acc	3	c	waste
la der des ders	4	d	the news
la fac	5	e	OK
l'hosto	6	f	brilliant
mon beauf	7	g	hospital
le gaspi	8	h	the very last one
impec	9	i	university
reglo	10	j	as usual



Did you know...

... that there is **no word for shallow in French?**
'Peu profond' is the nearest equivalent (not very deep) so shallow water would translate as 'eau peu profonde'

Language Tip

YES, BUT NO BUT....
WHEN TO USE 'SI FOR YES'

Use 'si for yes' when someone asks you a negative question or makes a negative statement that you want to disagree with.

TU AS GAGNÉ LA LOTERIE? Oui.
TU N'AS PAS VRAIMENT GAGNÉ LA LOTERIE? Si!

PROVERBE CHINOIS

SI TU TAPES TA TÊTE CONTRE UNE CRUCHE ET QUE ÇA SONNE CREUX, N'EN DÉDUIS PAS FORCÉMENT QUE C'EST LA CRUCHE QUI EST VIDE.

(cruche - jug creux
- hollow n'en déduis pas forcément - dont necessarily assume)

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

- ✓ From A1 to C2
- ✓ Lessons per module or semester
- ✓ Possibility to sit the DELF/DALF/TCF
- ✓ Socio-cultural activities programme

→ Objectives

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



CUEF Perpignan Université de Perpignan
Via Domitia - France +33 (0)4 68 66 20 10



Looking for a really original P-O related gift?

Céret based **Guy Wilmot** has got **together with local artist, Hannah**, to bring you **P-O's own colouring book** for adults and kids alike, featuring all the famous landmarks in the Department. It's fun, it's unique, it's educational...



Buy it on Amazon.fr
(www.amazon.fr/dp/191758329X)
or contact Guy on colorzbookz@gmail.com

Améliorez votre ANGLAIS

See Page 69 for answers

Tongue twister (virelangue)

Repeat quickly x 3....

Can I cram cream
clam crams in a
clean cream can?

UVW...

Trouvez les définitions des mots suivants, qui commencent tous avec les lettres U, V ou W

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| unlikely 1 | a disappear |
| vanish 2 | b top turned to the bottom |
| wink 3 | c covering or glaze applied to surfaces |
| vacuum cleaner 4 | d not expected to happen |
| watch 5 | e knickers, bras and boxers |
| upside down 6 | f shake to and fro |
| weapon 7 | g small clock worn on wrist |
| underwear 8 | h tool for cleaning floors |
| varnish 9 | i for injuring or killing |
| wag 10 | j close and open one eye quickly |

Sooo many bad jokes...and here's another!

Kate: I'm addicted to buying old Beatles records.

Rosy: It sounds like you need help.
Kate: No, I've already got that one

2

Hold your horses! Can you find the equivalent of these animal idioms in French

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| (To go on a) wild goose chase 1 | a Attendez! |
| To be busy as a bee 2 | b Le monde t'appartient |
| The world is your oyster 3 | c Avoir le trac/les boules |
| Dog eat dog 4 | d Premier amour |
| Monkey business 5 | e Etre bien organisé |
| Hold your horses 6 | f bête noire |
| To have butterflies 7 | g (partir à) la chasse au dahu |
| Puppy love 8 | h Bêtises, manigances |
| Pet peeve 9 | i Chacun pour soi |
| Get your ducks in a row 10 | j Courir partout |

A VERY BAD JOKE

An English cat and a French cat are swimming across a river

One cat is called 'OneTwoThree', the other is called 'UnDeuxTrois'.

Which cat survives?

'OneTwoThree'
Why? Because
'un deux trois' cat sank
(sank - a coulé)

Saviez-vous que le petit mot 'run' a 645 sens différents? En voici quelques-uns. Cherchez les autres 640 dans un dictionnaire la prochaine fois que vous n'avez rien à faire!

On the run - en cavale

A dry run - un essai

To have a run-in (with somebody) - se disputer (avec quelqu'un)

To run out (of something) - être à court (de quelque chose)

To run an errand - Faire une course

To run a business - gérer une entreprise

To be run down - être crevé

.....ohhh, and so many more

3

TROUVEZ LES PLURIELS IRRÉGULIERS

1 mother-in-law

6 sheep

2 child

7 knife

3 ox

8 fungus

4 mouse

9 person

5 lady

10 tooth

4

Quelques mots un peu excentrique qui sont souvent utilisés dans la langue courante

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| chit-chat 1 | a Tà tort et à travers |
| goody-goody 2 | b en vrac |
| higgledy-piggledy 3 | c magouilles |
| itsy-bitsy 4 | d tergiverser |
| jiggery-pokery 5 | e bavardage |
| raggle-taggle 6 | f pyjamas |
| dilly-dally 7 | g sainte-nitouche |
| riff-raff 8 | h débrillé |
| willy-nilly 9 | i racaille |
| jim-jams 10 | j miniscule |

OLIVIER: Kate, for 35 years, all you have done is find mistakes in everything I say.

KATE: 36 years.

LOUIS BARTHAS: LE POILU (THE HAIRY ONE)

REVIEWED BY **JANICE WHELAN**



Poilu is an informal term used for a French soldier, usually from WW1. It means “the hairy one” and over time has become a term of endearment for the French infantry men who spent the 1914-18 war in the trenches in northern France.

An English friend in our village of Caunes told me about a French WW1 soldier who had lived in a neighbouring village.

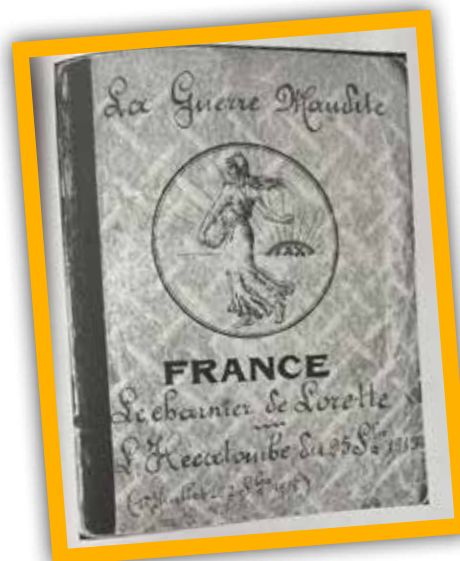
Louis Barthas, 1879 - 1952, born in **Homps** in the Aude, lived most of his life in Peyriac Minervois, also in the Aude, until his death in 1952.

He is buried in Peyriac, which is the next village to my home in the village of Caunes Minervois. **He was a “Poilu”, 35 years old when war was declared in August 1914.** He was married with 2 sons. He was an agricultural worker, later a barrel maker, a member of the Socialist party and an active trade unionist.

At the grave of Louis Barthas, barrel maker and Poilu from Peyriac Minervois.

Louis was a Corporal in the French infantry during the Great War, serving almost the whole duration of the war on the front lines, in the trenches. **He survived and was able to return home to family and friends in Peyriac**, one of the lucky ones.

Louis kept incredibly detailed diaries throughout the war. He wasn't supposed to, and his notebooks had to be hidden from those in charge. **After the war he put his writings together in a series of school-boy notebooks.** He transcribed his original notes, written on whatever paper he could get hold of, mud spattered and gnawed by rats. **Letters and cards he sent home from the trenches, postcards, drawings and maps taken from newspapers and magazines were added to his original notes.** Nineteen notebooks. He never thought to publish them, and they remained in the back of a drawer for years, **later used as a study resource by his grandson who was a history teacher.**



It wasn't until 1978, 26 years after his death, and 60 years after the end of the war, that they were discovered by Professor Remy Cazals of Toulouse University, and finally published. Since then, they have been **translated into English by Edward M Strauss** and published as “Poilu”. (ALL QUOTES FROM THE BOOK IN THIS POST ARE FROM THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION)

Barthas was a socialist, and his detailed accounts of his experiences at Verdun, the Somme and les Chemins des Dames, show clearly that he hated those in charge of the war.

His loathing was for those who made the decisions about holding positions, going over the tops or defending positions against all odds. He hated them far more than he hated the German enemy. He knew that he, along with his French comrades and German enemies were all being used as cannon fodder.

Following some flooding in 1915, which ended in French and German trench dwellers working together, **Barthas wrote in his notes:**

“Who knows? Perhaps some day, in this corner of the Artois, they'll raise a monument to commemorate the spirit of fraternity among men who shared a horror of war and who were obliged to kill each other against their wills”

In early 1916, after refusing to obey an order which he felt would endanger his comrades, Barthas was stripped of his Corporal's stripes.

"So that was all! I tore off my stripes and tossed them in the mud. I felt a sense of deliverance from remorse, liberated from chains. By accepting rank, however minor it may be, one took on a bit of authority, of this odious discipline, and one was in some way complicit in all the misdeeds of this loathsome militarism.

As a simple private, I recovered my independence, my freedom to criticise, to hate, to curse, to condemn this same militarism, the cause of this ignoble worldwide killing spree"

His horror at what he saw is expressed throughout the notebooks. **This extract is from his reflections on the defence of Verdun, Cote 34.**

"There, human flesh had been shredded, torn to bits. At places, where the earth was soaked with blood, swarms of flies swirled and died. You couldn't really see the corpses, but you knew where they were, hidden in shell holes with a layer of dirt on top of them, from the wafting smell of rotting flesh."



This image is from a contemporary postcard that Barthas included in one of his notebooks, showing the kind of billet infantry regiments were allocated in between their spells in the trenches on the front lines. They were leaking, cold, drafty, wet barns, where men slept on rat and lice infested straw, after walking miles between trench duties.

In one of the 1917 notebooks he commented:

"Exasperated and in despair, some men surrendered to the Germans and some Germans surrendered to the French. "What cowards!" say the patriots in the rear. But if all the soldiers, on both sides had done the same thing, wouldn't that have been sublime? The generals would have had to fight each other. Poincare could have gone a couple of rounds with the Kaiser. That would have been hilarious"

Marie gave me a very special bottle of wine, which the Peyriac cave developed to commemorate Louis Barthas in 2022. I'm not sure I will ever drink it. I will certainly treasure it.

I wish my French was up to reading his original words, but **I consider myself lucky and privileged to have read his translated words.** I would recommend it to anyone interested in the history of the period and in the power of the words of ordinary men and woman to reflect on the horror and outrage of war.

His words are so vivid, his reflections give a real understanding of the horrors, the idiocy and the pointlessness of wars in general, and of that particular series of battles between so called enemies, who had far more in common with each other than with those determining the action.

There is an added element to this story.

In our village of **Caunes Minervois**, a lovely couple, **Marie et Francis Boyer** bought a house near the abbey, and have developed a charming restaurant, salon de thé and glacier, '**Le Clos de l'Abbaye**', serving delicious teas, wines, artisan ice creams and tapas type meals.

I was thrilled to **discovered that Marie is actually Louis Barthas' great granddaughter.** Louis was born 3 years after my own grandfather who also fought in those trenches in northern France.

Suddenly, Louis's story meant so much more to me. I talked to Marie about Louis. **Her pride in him and his amazing contribution to the understanding of the war was clear,** he was undoubtedly an incredible man. **I have read his words, I have visited his grave and I have hugged his granddaughter.**

VISIT

Janice's blog at
<https://janiceincaunes.blogspot.com>



Francis, Marie, me and Mark at Le Clos de l'Abbaye





Things You Might NEED To KNOW

HANG ON TO YOUR TROLLIES!

Watch out for unscrupulous tricksters who are making themselves quite a few quid in the large supermarkets by swapping your trolley (before it is too full of course) for one with a 'jeton' (token), thereby pinching your euro.



GEOHAZARDS: ARE YOU AT RISK?

Worried about floods, forest fire or destructive weather in general? Check out the government website www.georisques.gouv.fr for potential natural disasters in your area, including ground movements, underground cavities and polluted soils. You will also find descriptions of different climatic events and advice and information on preventative strategies and personal safety. It may be a good idea to double check your insurance policy covers natural disasters. It is not a legal requirement and so basic cover usually does not insure you for this kind of event.



ALERTCOPS..STAY SAFE IN SPAIN



AlertCops is a free mobile app provided by Spanish Law Enforcement (Policia and Guardia Civil) to assist you in an emergency by putting you in direct, real time contact with the emergency services. Use it to report a theft, crimes, accidents, or other emergencies, send notification of your exact position in a personal risk situation (eg being followed in your car or threatened by muggers) be notified about emergencies in your area, such as earthquakes, floods, or terrorist threats....It has location GPS and an SOS button to call for immediate assistance. You can also upload photos and audio, which could be used later in court.

AVAILABLE IN ENGLISH, AND SEVERAL OTHER LANGUAGES.



AND MORE SPANISH INFO... BE MOTORWAY SAFE



New traffic laws in Spain concerning the emergency triangle for vehicle breakdowns on motorways come into effect this year 2025. In fact, just getting out of the car to place the triangle has caused many accidents itself, so it will now be replaced by V-16 emergency lights. These small, battery powered lights, fitted with a magnet, simply fix to the car roof via the open window. Ne vous inquiétez pas. They are orange so you won't be mistaken for the *policia local* and fitted with geolocators and even bluetooth in some cases. Buy them online or in all the usual



PROOF OF INSURANCE GOES DIGITAL

No need to display the green sticker or 'papillon' on your car windscreen as proof of insurance anymore... but if you are intending to travel outside the EU you need to apply to your insurance company for a 'carte internationale d'assurance automobile' or International Motor Insurance Card (IMIC). Worth keeping a copy of the insurance letter in your car in case the gendarmes haven't read the latest insurance news!

FED UP OF WAITING...

.....for parcels that just don't arrive, or interminable disputes and hanging around on the phone with the provider about your mobile or internet connexion?



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

J'alerte l'Arcep (<https://jalerte.arcep.fr>) has been set up by Communications authority Arcep (Autorité de régulation des communications électroniques et des Postes) to review complaints.

They don't actually deal with your complaint themselves, but will point visitors in the right direction to take their complaint further.

STILL CHEAP AT HALF THE PRICE

The fee for a consultation with a GP (médecin traitant) has risen from 26€50 to 30€ since 22nd December 2024. Many specialists will charge higher fee.

LANGUAGE EXERCISES ANSWERS

TEST your FRENCH

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

AMÉLIOREZ VOTRE ANGLAIS

- 1 1d 2a 3j 4h 5g 6b 7i 8e 9c 10f
- 2 1g 2j 3b 4i 5h 6a 7c 8d 9f 10e
- 3 1 mothers-in-law 2 children 3 oxen 4 mice 5 ladies 6 sheep 7 knives 8 fungi 9 people 10 teeth
- 4 1e 2g 3b 4j 5c 6h 7d 8i 9a 10f



P-O Life

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

ENGLISH speaking SERVICES

ADMINISTRATION & BUSINESS SUPPORT

Coworking development 04 68 37 86 60
info@coworking-development.com

SECURITY · EXPERTISE · PROFESSIONALISM

YOUR BUSINESS CENTER

Perpignan, Occitanie



DOMICILIATION
TRAINING ROOM
FURNISHED OFFICES

FOR MORE INFORMATION,
CONTACT US

04 68 37 86 60

info@coworking-development.com

www.coworking-development.com

70 avenue Alfred Kastler, 66000 Perpignan

AIRCON

Az Confort 06 32 81 61 13
Air conditioning-Heating- solar-pools....azconfort66@gmail.com

LE SALE, HIRE AND REPAIR

Mobile Bike Mechanic 06 66 29 45 07
Service and repair Pyrenees.cc@gmail.com

BRITISH, LOCAL & ORGANIC PRODUCE

Biosud66, Céret 04 68 22 01 29
Organic, natural and local produce.....f: biosud66

PCC (La Criée), Port-Vendres 04 68 98 46 00
f: facebook.com/cotecatalane www.cotecatalane.com
Épicerie Val Marie 04 68 81 45 69
Argeles-sur-Mer www.epicerievalmarie.com

CSF - Sud de France (11, 09, 66, 81, 82) Association no. W 112000594



Sud de France

"Supporting those whose lives have been touched by cancer"

Language support, information or someone to talk to... with our informal groups and book exchange

CSF Sud can provide practical and confidential support **when you need it most**

Contact us to find out how you can help CSF or **how we can help you**

Jill Merriam on 06 31 26 84 30

P-O Representative
sud-po@cancersupportfrance.org

cancersupportfrance.com | www.csf-forum.org



A warm welcome awaits you at our informal groups in **Céret and Ille**

Céret, Pablo's Bar - Place Picasso
10h30 to 12 noon, First Wednesday of the month

Fabregue, 15 Avenue Louis Prat, Prades.
10h15 to 12 noon, Third Wednesday of the month

and at our Book Exchange at

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

ENGLISH SPEAKING SERVICES

BUILDING, DECORATION & RENOVATION

AluTramontane, Céret, +33 782 20 17 17/+33 09 55 02 66 84
Aluminium, PVC, Iron Wood alutramontaneceret@gmail.com

ALUMINIUM /
PVC / IRON /
WOOD

**NOW OPEN
IN CÉRET**

**Alu
TRAMONTANE**
LE CONFORT DE VOTRE FOYER

Installation / Repair / Renovation

Windows • Doors • Shutters • Blinds • Verandas • Fences...

3 Av. de la Gare, 66400 Céret

+33 7 82 20 17 17 / +33 09 55 02 66 84

alutramontaneceret@gmail.com

Eamonn Fowler, 06 82 36 77 15/04 68 82 07 72
Internal renovation eamonnfowler@gmail.com

Eamonn Fowler
Internal Renovations

- Bathrooms
- Kitchens
- Decoration - Interior/Exterior
- Plaster Boarding
- Tiling

06 82 36 77 15
04 68 82 07 72
eamonnfowler@gmail.com

Entreprise BEAR: Roofing & building security
Specialist in difficult access 07 82 98 91 77

ENTREPRISE BEAR

07 82 98 91 77

**Roofing
Building security**

JUIN TEDDY

www.entreprise-bear.fr

Entreprise Bear

GF Peinture 04 68 53 64 19
Exclusive Little Greene paint stockist www.gfpeinture.fr

J & B Art Glass 06 72 68 79 95
Creation, restoration, Glass sessions .. artglassjb@gmail.com

La Gaieté du Feu Stove and BBQ specialists... 04 68 54 13 33
2540 av Julien Panchot, 66000 PERPIGNAN

Port Vendres Construction 04 68 82 12 46/06 70 29 60 72
André Baptista pvc.construction@gmail.com

**PORT VENDRES
CONSTRUCTION**
DEPUIS 1984

André Baptista
04 68 82 12 46 / 06 70 29 60 72
pvc.construction@gmail.com

NEW AND RENOVATION GENERAL BUILDING WORK DECORATIVE CONCRETE

Plateaux Acryliques, Villelongue dels Monts..... 06 42 57 99 47
Bespoke kitchen manufacturers

SARL Plateaux Acryliques

**Kitchen
specialists**

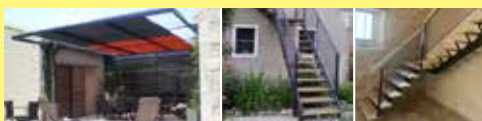
CORIAN® FABRICATOR

06 42 57 99 47

plateauxacryliques@icloud.com

Robert Morley 04 68 37 96 50
www.morleyrenovation.eu 06 80 34 45 17

Robert SIMM Metalwork/Ferronnerie..... 0780599765
Staircases, balconies, fences etc robertsimm66@gmail.com



Robert Simm
METALWORK / FERRONNERIE

Staircases • Balconies • Fences • Pergolas

Contact by email
robertsimm66@gmail.com

Tel: 07 80 59 97 65 SAS SIMCO - IMMATRICULATION - 984 403 725 - TVA - FR15984403725

VN Elec, throughout the P-O. 06 13 24 87 47
Electricity, air-con, plumbing, emergencies contact@vnelec.fr

CARAVANS AND MOBILE HOMES

Eurobase, Argelès 06 73 81 95 43
Specialist new & used mobile homes simon@eurobase.fr

CHARITIES & PLACES OF WORSHIP

St George's Church 06 80 38 65 96
Anglican church www.stgeorgevib.com

Anglican Church
in Vernet-Les-Bains

Service
every Sunday at 10.00 am

We look forward
to seeing you!

06 80 38 65 96
www.stgeorgevib.com

Cancer Support France 0800 240 200
SOS HELP - English speaking helpline.... cancersupportfrance.com

Emmaus 04 68 54 59 60
Donate any unwanted items fr.gaiadir.com/emmaus-pollestres

Les Restos du Coeur 04 68 85 04 53
Provides food packages & free meals to the poor & homeless,
& served up by volunteers..... restosducoeur66@wanadoo.fr

Riverchurch 06 15 32 36 36
English-speaking church..... www.riverchurch.fr

Riverchurch

**International,
English-speaking
Church in Perpignan**

06 15 32 36 36

www.riverchurch.fr riverchurch.perpignan

SOS Help 01 46 21 46 46
English speaking 'Samaritans'

ADVERTISE WITH US

Advertise in our English Speaking Services Directory
from just 180 € per year plus VAT.
Contact us on 06 89 25 88 01
or e-mail: info@anglophone-direct.com

Passez une publicité dans notre Annuaire des 'English
Speaking Services' à partir de 180 € par an HT.
Contactez au 06 89 25 88 01
ou envoyez un mail à : info@anglophone-direct.com.

CHIROPRACTORS & OSTEOPATHS

Centre Chiropratique, (English spoken) 04 68 29 68 69
Cabestany www.chiropratique-roussillon.com

Léa Rôm 07 24 48 93 0716
..... massage@lea-rom.com

Léa rôm
Massage • Well-being

06 24 48 93 07
massage@lea-rom.com
www.lea-rom.com

Léa rôm Massage
Affiliée FFMBE

Sebastien Roles (Osteopath), Thuir 06 32 31 82 89
English spoken

EDUCATION & TRANSLATION

Sophie Amiel 06 80 80 63 48
Certified, Official & Sworn Translations sohazell@gmail.com
French, English and Italian

Centre Linguistique Constance Cellerier 07 87 94 73 11
16, route de la mer - Argelès cellerier.constance@gmail.fr

**Centre Linguistique
Constance Cellerier**

LEARNING FRENCH can be fun!
Individual lessons & workshops for adults and children
with or without accommodation

cellerier.constance@gmail.com 07 87 94 73 11

Villa Hortensia, 16, Route de la Mer, Argelès, France, 66700

CUF, Perpignan University www.cuf.fr
French courses, etc cuf@univ-perpi.fr

ESTATE AGENTS

Agence Immotech, Ian Stephens in Amélie 06 24 65 00 15
Across the Vallespir agence-immotech.com

Laroca Immobilier, 04 68 39 20 94
Laroque-des-Albères & Banyuls-sur-Mer
laroca@live.fr www.laroca-immobilier.com

Tania Barr, 0618613562
English-speaking independant agent.. tania@martinimmobilier.fr

ENERGY SOLUTIONS

Sunteq 06 19 42 02 22
Solar Systems, panels, batteries info@sunteq.fr

**Enough of high
electricity bills?**
**Solar panels
are the answer!**

**Join with local SUNTEQ to harness
the power of the sunny Occitanie**

- ✓ Certified local installers
- ✓ Solar systems, batteries and EV-chargers
- ✓ High quality solar panels
- ✓ Free technical study and quotation in 24h



Contact
info@sunteq.fr
06 19 42 02 22



Website
sunteq.fr



FINANCE & ACCOUNTING

Saussine & Perrin, English-speaking accountants Perpignan
Individual & pro. contact@cabinetsaussine.com... 04 68 68 66 50

GARAGES & MOTOR SUPPLIES

BALADA'DEUCHE 06 42 97 93 2
Original, unique, 2CV adventure www.baladadeuche.com

PLS Land 66, Le Boulou 06 43 88 18 38
Landrover specialists plslandrover@gmail.com

GARDEN AND POOL

Albera Paysages 00 33 6 07 31 05 28
Landscaping alberapaysages@gmail.com

Canigou Tree & Garden Care 07 69 00 29 91
Garden design & maintenance canigougardens@gmail.com

RB Bois 06 71 20 13 98
Tree services contact@rbbois-elagage.com

RB-Services

Tree care work
Crane and skip hire
Sand, gravel etc deliveries

06 71 20 13 98

Terre de Vent, St Génis Fontaines 06 95 88 50 77
Plant nursery www.pepiniere-terredevent.com

TPM Pool Services-Maureillas 06 75 46 93 65
Pool maintenance and repairs www.tpm66.com

GIFT IDEAS

BALADA'DEUCHE 06 42 97 93 2
Original, unique, 2CV adventure www.baladadeuche.com

Domaine de Falgos, Panoramic Golf Course .. 04 68 39 51 42
Online shop, lunch and spa www.falgos.com

J & B Art Glass, Céret 06 72 68 79 95
Creation, restoration, Glass sessions .. artglassjb@gmail.com

HAIR, HEALTH & WELL-BEING

Fit66 06 38 38 80 82
Fitness/pilates. www.fit66.fr fit66france@gmail.com

Lea Rôm Massage, Céret 06 24 48 93 07
15 rue des Arènes, Centre Shantacorp.massage@lea-rom.com

Sam's Salon, Cabestany 04 68 29 78 74
Unisex Hairdressers, 30 av Jean-Jaurès, Cabestany

FEMMES, HOMMES ET ENFANTS

SAM'S SALON

DE COIFFURE

Opening Hours: **Mon - 2pm - 7pm**
Tues - 9am - 12 noon then 2pm - 6pm
Thurs, Fri - 9am - 6pm
Sat - 9am - 5pm

**English-Speaking
Hairdresser**
Ladies, Gents & Children

Styling for special
occasions - weddings,
parties, communions...

Closed Sun and Weds
Adjacent free parking

f : Sam's Salon Coiffure | **04 68 29 78 74**
30 av Jean-Jaurès, 66330 CABESTANY

www.tpm66.com

www.tpm66.com

TPM

Piscines Services

lucien@tpm66.com
info@tpm66.com

- > POOL RENOVATION AND REPAIR
- > POOL LEAK DETECTION
- > LINERS & PVC MEMBRANES

START THE SEASON EARLY AND MAKE IT LAST LONGER!
• Heat pumps / Bubble covers

WHEN CLEANING BECOMES A PLEASURE!
• Robots / Automatic treatment systems

SAFETY FIRST!
• Security & winter covers / Automatic shutter covers

OTHER ACCESSORIES!
• Solar shower / cleaning equipments / access ramps / ladders, etc...

TEL: 06 78 64 22 62
06 75 46 93 65

HOME SECURITY

SME, www.alarme-sme.com 04 68 89 87 98
Alarms, interphones, caméras, home automation...

INSURANCE

AXA Céret 04 68 87 62 64
Le Boulou 04 68 30 04 05

FOR ALL YOUR
INSURANCE
AND
INVESTMENT
NEEDS!

12 rue Jacques Souquet
66400 Céret
+33 (0)4 68 87 62 64
agence.sspceret@axa.fr

84 Avdu Gén de Gaulle
66140 Le Boulou
+33 (0)4 68 39 04 05
agence.sspleboulou@axa.fr

ORIAS: 07 012 448 / 120 48 358 / 220 06 210



AXA FRANCE
Assurance - Banque - Epargne



English spoken

AXA C6 St Génis 04 68 89 72 75

LAWYERS & NOTAIRES

Slatkin & Blanc, English-speaking Lawyers 04 68 09 76 75
Perpignan Espace Méditerranée contact@slatkin.fr

LOCKSMITH

Sécuriclé, 04 68 21 86 26
English spoken 06 23 69 26 81

MUSIC AND CULTURE

Argelès Heritage & Culture 04 68 81 42 74
Guided walks in English, 2 museums, art gallery
..... www.ardeles-sur-mer.com.uk

Collection François Desnoyer, St Cyp Village 04 68 21 06 96
Rue Emile Zola www.collectionsdesaintcyprien.com

Musée d'Art Hyacinthe Rigaud, Perpignan... 04 68 66 19 83
21 rue Maillay www.musee-rigaud.fr

Musée d'Art Moderne de Céret, Céret 04 68 87 27 76
8 bd Maréchal Joffre www.musee-ceret.com

MuSIC Musée des Instruments, Céret 04 68 87 40 40
14 rue Pierre Rameil www.music-ceret.com

Musiques et Voix en Pays Catalans www.amuvall.org

ENGLISH SPEAKING SERVICES

PERPIGNAN MUSEUMS

Musée Casa Pairal Le Castillet 04 68 35 42 05
Place de Verdun casa.pairal@mairie-perpignan.com

Muséum d'histoire naturelle 04 68 66 33 68
12 rue Fontaine neuve museum@mairie-perpignan.com

Musée des monnaies et médailles Joseph Puig 04 68 62 37 64
42 Avenue de Grande-Bretagne musee-puig@mairie-perpignan.com

Centre d'Art Contemporain 04 68 66 33 18
Place du Pont d'en Vestit perpignan.culture@mairie-perpignan.com

Théâtre de l'Archipel, Perpignan 04 68 62 62 00
Avenue Général Leclerc www.theatredelarchipel.org

Théâtre de l'Etang, Saint Estève 04 68 38 34 95
6 allée des Arts et des Lettres www.theatredeletang.com

And also FNAC, Perpignan - www.fnac.com

OPTICAL & HEARING SERVICES

AUDITION CONSEIL, 66160 Le Boulou 04 30 44 43 59
16 Carrer d'en Cavailles leboulou@auditionconseil66.fr

VOS OPTICIENNES DE CÉRET 04.68.87.03.95
Eye tests & eye health screening erre.eurl@wanadoo.fr

**EYE TESTS & EYE HEALTH SCREENING
GLASSES & FRAMES WITH GUARANTEE
CONTACT LENSES** erre.eurl@wanadoo.fr

VOS OPTICIENNES DE CÉRET

25 rue St Ferréol 66400 CERET - Tel: 04 68 87 03 95
Open Tues - Fri from 9h - 12h and 15h - 19h (Sat 09h30 à 12h30)

OUT FOR THE DAY

BALADA'DEUCHE 06 42 97 93 2
Original, unique, 2CV adventure www.baladadeuche.com

Caves Byrrh 04 68 53 45 86
Guided tours www.caves-byrrh.fr

Domaine de Falgos, (Golf) 04 68 39 51 42
Saint-Laurent-de-Cerdans www.falgos.com

Enserune Oppidum www.ensurune.fr
Centre des monuments nationaux

Forteresse de Salses www.forteresse-salses.fr
Centre des monuments nationaux

Grotte de Fontrabouise 04 68 30 95 55
..... www.grotte-de-fontrabouise.com

Kap'oupa Kap 06 88 48 06 45
Outdoor adventures sarl.kapoupakap@live.fr

La Vallée des Tortues 04 68 95 50 50
Zoological Park www.lavalleecestortues.fr

TERRASSOUS WINE & WALK

Terrats 04 68 53 02 50 26 - Av. des Corbières

Céret 04 68 09 71 07 18 - Av. des Aspres

Fourques 04 68 38 89 65 - 1 Bis Rue des Taste Vins

Thuir 04 68 53 34 10 1063 - Av. de la Méditerranée

Tropique du Papillon 04 68 37 83 77
Open every day June-Sept. www.tropique-du-papillon.com

PLUMBERS & ELECTRICIANS

Philip Gibbs Electrical, Céret 06 41 10 27 69
gibbselec66@gmail.com www.gibbselec.com

Robert Morley 04 68 37 96 50
www.morleyrenovation.eu 06 80 34 45 17

Morley Rénovation
Specialising in all aspects of
Internal Renovations
throughout the PO since 2001

Fully Qualified, Registered and
Insured Plumber and Electrician

33 Chemin de Vives, 04 68 37 96 50
66400 CERET 06 80 34 45 17
www.morleyrenovation.eu

Testimonials
see what people say...
<< Visit our website
SIRET : 440 200 830 00055

VN Elec, throughout the P-O. 06 13 24 87 47
Electricity, air-con, plumbing, emergencies contact@vnelec.fr

PROPERTY & PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Eve Solutions Port-Vendres 06 70 70 62 10

TOURIST OFFICES

Argelès Tourist Office, Argelès-sur-Mer 04 68 81 15 85
Place de l'Europe www.argeles-sur-mer.com

Aspres-Thuir Tourist Office 04 68 53 45 86
..... www.aspres-thuir.com

Canet Tourist Office, Canet Plage 04 68 86 72 00
49 avenue de la Méditerranée www.ot-canet.fr

Céret Tourist Office, 5 rue St Ferréol 04 68 87 00 53
http://www.vallespir-tourisme.fr/

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

Les Angles Tourist Office, 2 avenue de l'Aude, Les Angles
www.lesangles.com f: LesAnglesSki 04 68 04 32 76

Port Barcarès Tourist Office 04 68 86 16 56
Place de la République (Village) www.portbarcares.com

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

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

TV, COMPUTERS, PRINTERS & COMMUNICATION

demaiteasant +34 636 461 384
Graphic design & Communication estudi@demaiteasant.com

JJTV 07 80 26 76 20
UK, Irish, American TV channels jjtv6666@gmail.com

JJTV

Winter Offer
exclusive to P-O Life readers
Give your loved ones (or yourself)
the gift of great TV!

- Live TV, movies, series, sports
- 24/7 catch up
- IT support, network & wifi advice
- Supports all smart devices incl. Amazon

BUY ONE 12 MONTH CONNECTION and receive 50% OFF a second connection
(additional room or TV)

UK, Irish, American (and more) TV channels
No VPN needed, up to 75K VOD

FREE 12 HOUR TRIAL

jjtv6666@gmail.com
07 80 26 76 20

Mayday 06 82 26 31 54
Computer support & UK/Irish/International TV
maydaymayday@orange.fr www.mayday.support

mayday

UK & Irish TV
Right here in France!!!

- Live TV - UK and foreign languages - 14 days catchup - movies - TV series - Sports
- IT support for PC, MAC, Smart devices, and Networks
- WiFi advice - design - installation

Always happy to help!

+33 682 26 31 54
maydaymayday@orange.fr
www.mayday.support

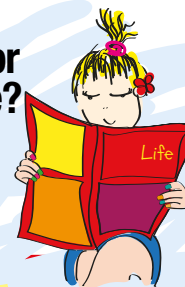
Oscar Rey-Tajes 06 82 71 95 54
Web solution, web design & e-commerce orey@pictau.com

P-O Life

Classified Ads!

**Selling your car,
your bike, your
partner?**

**Looking for
a new one?**



Offering garden tidy, cleaning, B&B, home made pies and pasties, spam fritters, lift to the airport....?

You can **advertise free on Facebook** (search PO Life Sell Buy Swap Free) if you really want to, but remember it rolls down quickly and disappears.

A better option would be to contact us on info@anglophone-direct.com to advertise in our new and exciting (well, exciting for us!) classified section, either **here in the mag or online at www.anglophone-direct.com**. It won't cost 'la peau du cul' and it will help us to pay expensive printing costs and keep us old girls in gin, wine, and wild nights out in the P-O.

IF YOU CAN DREAM IT,
WE CAN CREATE IT

SARL Plateaux Acryliques



From his workshop in Villelongue-del-Mont, unique in the region for its precision machinery, Joe Parker of Plateaux Acryliques creates high quality bespoke kitchens



Working alongside a team of hand-picked tradespeople carefully selected for their craftsmanship, Plateaux Acryliques cover all aspects of internal and external renovation.



A design service second to none, Joe will offer guidance, recommendations, and clever storage solutions to create and optimise space available, with regular feedback throughout the project.



Super modern or timeless classic? Conception and creation from new or renovation of your present kitchen? Made-to-measure or off the shelf?

Kitchens designed, built and tailored to your lifestyle and budget.

FALL BACK IN LOVE WITH YOUR KITCHEN

06 42 57 99 47

Plateauxacryliques@icloud.com

Carrero del Gremi- 66740 Villelongue-dels-Monts

Bespoke Worktops

CORIAN® FABRICATOR

IMMOTech

Now more than ever

agence-immotech.com

Mrs B moved back to the UK.
We sorted out house sale
without her having to make any
return visits.

Mr C made an offer on a house
from America; we organised his
offer and arranged architect's
visits leading to eventual
purchase.

Mrs D wanted her second home
let long-term. We found tenants
and now look after property.

IMMOTECH INTERNATIONAL

Celebrate with us the launch of Immotech International, featuring Hannelore, native Dutch speaker and Ian, native English speaker, both long term residents in the Vallespir...supported by the 4 agencies of the Immotech team and the Gl66 network, premier agency network across the Pyrenees Orientales.

SELLING?

We advertise your property throughout our network, and organise all the legal and logistical steps required.

BUYING?

We find properties to fit your requirements and budget, or even manage an online purchase if you can't get here.

RENTALS, HOUSE CHECKS AND ORGANISATION AND SUPERVISION OF WORKS

Yes, we do all that too.

We're here for you if you can't be here yourself!

Get in touch!

Visit our Facebook page and website:

www.immotechinternational.com

Buy/Sell

Rent

Management

Expertise



TEL. 04 68 39 84 87

contact@agence-immotech.com

hannelore busquet,
native Dutch speaker

Tel.: 06 02 51 96 17

hannelore.busquet@agence-immotech.com

Ian Stephens,
native English speaker living in Amélie

Tel.: 06 24 65 00 15

ian.stephens@agence-immotech.com