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**YOUR GUIDE TO
FREELANCING
IN FRANCE** PAGE 18



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In this issue ...

The Insider

I HAVE a confession to make. Turns out I am obsessed with jellyfish.

This is a monumental admission on my part because up until today I was convinced I was merely terrified of these gelatinous blobs in the Med.

But this morning, out for my daily dip, it hit me: I am a jellarazzi. From the moment I put my head underwater, I am baiting them; stroke, stroke, breathe ... stroke, stroke, wait ... is that a jelly? ... no, it's a plastic bag.

I'm stalking these marine animals so I can publish my observations. That's right, I've become (at least in my own mind) *Madame Méduse*, local expert. I've gained street cred with the old-timers as I had an encounter with an invasion in March, early for this region; now these veteran year-round swimmers nod cautiously as I indulge my seawater tales, like how jellies squirt water from their mouths to propel themselves forward.

I take my civic responsibility of jellyfish surveillance seriously. After each swim, I report on *meduse.acri.fr*, which includes species, sea conditions

and comments (my favourite part). If no jellies were seen, you can tick that box, too. Your input immediately appears at the approximate location along the coastal map in the form of either a red jelly or, if all clear, a green flag.

Here's the embarrassing part. Inexplicably, I check this map five, six, seven times a day, as if from one moment to the next, I may miss a new red jelly posting. And so what if I do? It's only a one-dimensional icon, kind of like watching Pac-Man on pause.

This is when a second realisation struck me. I am a hypocrite. As I'm terribly anti-social media, for personal use that is (I am not signed up on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram), I fear I've been a tad judgemental as to why users feel the need to constantly check, say, their Facebook page.

Look at me, addicted to my virtual jellyfish community. Does this mean that I'm going to create a FB account? No, but it doesn't mean we can't Like each other.

Happy swimming.

Nancy Heslin, Editor

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Cover: Cannes © Christophe Bois.



A DAY AWAY Page 40

riviera reportage



YOGA-TTA TRY IT!

IN September 2014, the UN adopted the resolution to recognise June 21st as the International Day of Yoga, essentially accepting the practice as being beneficial to physical and mental health.

This is the first time in the UN's history that a resolution of this nature was adopted in less than 90 days and supported by 175 countries.

In the spirit of mass yoga gatherings as seen in New York's Times Square and the Grand Palais in Paris, Kellie Delkeskamp

(pictured on page 3) launched "Breathe as One", a day to bring together yoga enthusiasts on the Côte d'Azur under the guidance of an internationally renowned teacher – for free.

The first edition was held in Monaco (above) last June with over 500 attendees. This year Nice will host the second Breathe as One event at the Parc de la Colline du Château on June 21st, starting at 9 am, with Nico Luce (pictured) teaching.

"The Negresco, Yogi Tea and Marchand Bio are our sponsors this year," Kellie, 52, tells us, "and there'll be live music, a DJ, an opera singer, free massages as well as free coconut water. We welcome all ages and all

levels, and you can stay and picnic afterwards. It promises to be a really great day."

Kellie herself is a certified yoga instructor and experienced entrepreneur. The Los Angeleno created and sold two well-known clothing labels (Grass Jeans and Fever Jeans) in the US before settling in France. She then combined her branding and marketing skills with her love for yoga and well-being to start up The Collective Om (thecollectiveom.com), which specializes in wellness events. She hopes to export her Breathe as One urban mass brand to several cities in France and Europe.

The yoga day is free but Kellie asks that you register online at breatheasone.eu

le FLASH



#1

ARE WE THERE YET?

A NEW loveholidays.com survey shows children under the age of 14 say France is their favourite holiday destination. Perhaps it was no surprise that France, home to Disneyland Paris, was picked as the top spot, considering 80% of the 2,000 kids surveyed were from the UK.

Top 10 Picks

1. France
2. US
3. Spain
4. Italy
5. England
6. Australia
7. Greece
8. Canada
9. India
10. Turkey

#2

#SHOW-OFFS ACCORDING to an *Elite* *Rencontre*

questionnaire of some 195,000 singles, Nice ranks the second most popular city in France for the sexiest singles. And while Lyon may have won gold in the vote, Nice's *célibataires* come out on top for being the biggest show-offs. Singles in Limoges, Le Mans, Le Havre or Amiens were found least seductive.



TAKEOVER APPROACH

#3

THE annual poll of travel experts by the private jet charter PrivateFly.com for the most stunning airport landing sees Nice-Côte d'Azur airport descend from first to third position. With over 3,000 votes involving 147 airports, Nice taxis behind Queenstown, New Zealand, and Las Vegas in the US.

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**FRANCE IN THE NEWS***...in partnership with The Local***Drunk French dad gets son, 12, to drive home**

A DRUNK father in central France has landed his 12-year-old son in trouble with the law after he enlisted him to drive him home following a boozy fishing trip.

The actions of one Frenchman means he is unlikely to win any father of the year awards any time soon. (A reminder Father's Day is Sunday June 19th.)

Realising he was too drunk to drive, the 41-year-old father thought the next best option to getting behind the wheel himself would be to ask his 12-year-old son to drive him home.

The police pulled over his vehicle on the night of Saturday May 16th in the Loiret departement in central France, reported the *Nice-Matin* newspaper.

Inside, they found a 12-year-old boy behind the wheel accompanied by his worse-for-wear father slumped in the passenger seat.

The father admitted that he had called

in the family favour after realising he had had too much to drink, with police measuring his blood/alcohol content at almost 0.2 percent – meaning he was almost four times over the legal driving limit. France's legal blood alcohol content for driving is 0.05 percent.

The son is under investigation on the suspicion of driving without a licence and his father for various driving offences.

The police noted, on the plus side, that the boy appeared to have mastered the finer points of driving, and had even indicated correctly when pulling over to the side of the road.

It's official: women do bulk of housework in France

WOMEN in France still do the bulk of the housework and most men wouldn't know a duster if it tickled them on the nose, a new study shows.

French women spend two and a half times as much time as men looking after their children, according to

research on how couples divide their time carried out by Credoc for the French Family Benefits Fund, *la CAF*.

And when it comes to household chores, women also do the lion's share,

the study said. And then they do a second lion's share while they're waiting.

Asked what jobs they had done the previous week, the differences between men and women were striking. In fact it's maybe a surprise that women aren't striking, given these statistics.

Did you do the cleaning? Yes, say 93% of women compared to 40% of men.

What about the ironing? 73% of women answered in the affirmative while just nine percent of men had let off some steam on their clothes.

A whopping 93% of women did some cooking, while half of all men gave food-making duties a wide berth.

Surely men at least did most of the grocery shopping? Not so. 85% of women ensured the cupboards were stocked while just 64% of men hit the stores.

Men who had grown up with a single

mother were more likely to share household chores, the study found.

Once children arrived on the scene, women assumed more responsibility for housekeeping than before.

Couples were also more likely to pool their resources once they had children. Half of the couples without children



FRANCE NEWS, FROM PAGE 5

had joint accounts, compared to 85% of the respondents with two children.

Frenchman injured by exploding e-cigarette

AUTHORITIES have opened an investigation after a 21-year-old man from western France was left with burns when his e-cigarette blew up.

Police are looking into the exact causes of the accident that left the man, named Brice, with burns to his hand, the regional newspaper *Ouest France* reported.

According to those reports, the device, which was one made in China, is believed to have exploded due to a faulty battery.

However some have suggested that it may have been due to the user tampering with the battery in a bid to make it more powerful.

One e-cigarette seller told AFP that a trend has developed, mainly among young people, of users trying to increase the power of the e-cigarette batteries to boost the amount of vapour they produce.

The victim told BFM-TV that “he could have been disfigured if he had had the device in his mouth at the time”.

“I took it away from my mouth and a split second later it exploded. It was like a grenade,” he told French media.

The man who works as a DJ said he was furious and said he doesn’t yet know if he’ll be able to mix in future. He has vowed to launch legal action against the device’s makers.

The use of e-cigarettes in France has taken off in recent years, but thankfully cases of exploding devices remain rare.

Last September, a pensioner was left with burns to his leg when an e-cig exploded in his trouser pocket. He later lodged an official complaint with police.

In March this year a Texas man said he was suing the makers of his e-cigarette after it exploded in his pocket leaving him with burns to his thighs and scrotum.

It happened as he was kicking a ball around at his daughter’s birthday party. ■

FRENCH SCHOOL REFORMS: Why the almighty fuss?



THE French government’s planned education reforms – aimed at making the French middle school or *collège* system (11 to 15 year-olds) more equal and pupils’ chances of success less dependent on their backgrounds – have prompted outrage among powerful teaching unions, as well as France’s right-wing opposition parties.

Around 230 MPs have signed a petition demanding the government withdraw the bill and it was backed up by 20,000 signatures from members of the public.

It’s been described as a “baptism of fire” for France’s fairly new education minister, Najat Vallaud-Belkacem, seen as a rising star of the Socialist government.

President François Hollande and his PM Manuel Valls have been forced to defend the bill, currently in a period of consultation.

“This high school reform is being carried out for the sake of equality,” said Valls. “And to ensure that birth and social background do not dictate the fate of the children,” the PM Valls wrote in *Libération* newspaper.

Hollande, Valls and Vallaud-Belkacem want to tackle the rising inequality in the French school system, a worrying trend that was highlighted by an OECD report in 2013.

“In France, if you belong to a disadvantaged background you are clearly less likely to succeed today than in 2003,” the report said.

Most of France’s teaching unions, however, say the reforms – including a move to introduce Practical Interdisciplinary Teaching (EPI) through teachers working together rather than the traditional system of one teacher-one discipline, and for Latin and Greek to be replaced with an interdisciplinary class on Ancient Languages and Cultures – are

not the answer and could even lead to greater inequality as parents may be encouraged to put their children in private schools.

End of “European/bilingual classes”

THE minister wants to ditch so-called *classes bilangues*, the learning of a second language from the sixth grade (ages 11/12). This option is normally taken up by high-achieving pupils (or those with parents who want them to be high achievers) – around 200,000 pupils each year. But the minister deems them to be too elitist by being only appropriate for the most gifted students.

Opponents say this will lead to less language learning, particularly German, which prompted Berlin’s ambassador to France to raise concerns.

Vallaud-Belkacem has insisted the reform will not mean the progressive end of German teaching in French schools and has even announced her intention to appoint someone in the ministry to be in charge of promoting German teaching.

Although the option of *classes bilangues* will disappear from the sixth grade, the reforms will make it compulsory for all pupils to learn a second “living” language one year later, in the fifth grade (ages 12/13).

Changes to history teaching

THE changes to the way history is taught is not actually part of Vallaud-Belkacem’s reform, but from the ministry’s review of the curriculum. The move suggests bringing in both obligatory and optional subjects that teachers can include as part of the course, with the main controversy surrounding which themes should indeed be obligatory.

The right and the extreme-right in France complained that the history of Christianity would lose out to the teaching of the history of Islam.

Freedom for teachers

THE government also wants to boost independence for each middle school to allow each establishment to determine 20% of the curriculum. But teachers fear this will leave too much power in the hands of head teachers.

“The school system in France is so micromanaged that any change is going to be screamed at,” said British author Peter Gumbel, who has written books on the elitism and the French education system. “What they need to do is give teachers a long list of subjects they can teach, show them how the pupils will be marked on it and tell them to go away and teach it.” ■

French news: fast and fresh



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France's news in English

THE LOCAL



YOUR IN-FLIGHT ENTERTAINMENT



AS foreign media pick up on the increasing number of British press reports of loutish behaviour at home and abroad, decent British expats are left feeling shame and irritation.

Airlines regularly have to deal with yobbery by a loud minority of Brits travelling to or from their holiday destinations. Half of the culprits on Skyscanner's worldwide list of the 10 Worst Passenger Incidents involve Brits.

In-flight misbehaviour can easily result in prosecution for endangering an aircraft and most airlines operate a zero tolerance policy, but this doesn't discourage everyone. In April, two British men were offloaded in Bermuda for their threatening behaviour on a Thomson Airways flight to Mexico.

In May, six British men were arrested in Spain after "shocking behaviour while drunk" on board a 7am Ryanair flight from Glasgow Prestwick Airport to Palma, Mallorca. Ryanair has since banned passengers from bringing booze onto some of their flights between Britain and Spanish destinations.

Housewife Carmel Beer from Somerset was jailed for 18 months for aggressing cabin crew on a flight from Montreal to London but it's usually men who are to blame. On a New York to London flight, 31-year-old Briton Thomas

Joyce had to be handcuffed to his seat when he became drunk and violent with crew. He was subsequently jailed for nine months. In May, easyJet removed a Welsh passenger from a Bristol to Mallorca flight for "foul, abusive and threatening language".

A former American flight attendant has started a website and Facebook page where crew and passengers can anonymously post photos of unruly behaviour on commercial aircraft. Many of the photos are of British passengers. Have a look at passengershaming.com

Young Britons are notorious for public drunkenness as testified by Saturday night behaviour in many a town centre but top prize must surely go to a few British

holidaymakers in hot destinations where cheap and plentiful booze is the main attraction. Popular prime time British television shows such as "Sun, Sex and Suspicious Parents", "Magaluf Weekender", "What Happens In Kavos", "Sun, Sea and A&E" and "Brits Behaving Badly" are based entirely on the drunken antics of many a low-cost sun-dried pommey on cheap binges to Spain or Greece.

The Costa del Slob might well deserve its nickname but loutish behaviour isn't unique to the great unwashed. A few years ago an employee of the now defunct Trusthouse Forte Hotels told us that room minibars were to be discontinued because executive level British yuppies had been opening the drinks to urinate in them before putting them back. At Nice airport, one member of counter staff was spit on because she couldn't come up with the free copy of the *Financial Times* a passenger felt he had a right to. Police were called but the middle-aged man's justification that "my taxes are paying her salary" didn't wash and he was carted off. The tax dodge was a rather ludicrous claim when the Briton in question was – and perhaps still is – a resident of Monaco.

Most of us shouldn't be painted with the same unseemly brush but what is it that makes abhorrent behaviour overseas a trait that seems more often the doing of Britons than of any other nationality? The French or Italians just don't act that way.

WE GOT HIM!

IF you've been a regular *Reporter* reader in recent years, the name Andrew Gradon should mean something. He was the British conman whose sob story fooled unwary travellers at airports around Europe, including Nice. Many handed him cash, which he promised to repay, but never did. We first exposed him in 2009 and by 2010 our web forum featured a stream of comments posted by his many victims. He openly taunted them and this magazine with posts such



as "you got ripped off and can't handle it" or "mike meade is a idiot and could not catch a snail" (sic). The BBC's "Inside Out" programme invited Publishing Director Meade to report live on air on two occasions, sending a crew to Nice for one of the interviews, but Gradon remained uncatchable. Each fraud was too petty to merit much police

attention and he moved continuously from country to country, thanks to considerable gains from his swindles.

Our online thread disappeared when we revamped the *Reporter* website but we had archived the text which became

useful when we worked with the *Sunday Telegraph's* Robert Mendick for his report on Gradon's German conviction for fraud in early May.

Gradon is currently serving a 10-month sentence. He claims to be a reformed man who will go to work for his brother's agricultural business when he is released – a claim flatly denied by the brother. Their father told the *Telegraph* that Gradon "deserves" his prison term.

Helping to nab the Durham scammer wasn't quite as newsworthy as the capture of Saddam Hussein but we do take some pleasure in repeating the words of Paul Bremer, then Head of US Occupation in Iraq, "Ladies and Gentlemen: We got him!"

CLOCKING OUT

THE newly elected Tory government is looking for ways to put a stop to unwanted immigration and the measures they are beginning to put in place will also collaterally affect British expats.

Until now, illegal entry into the island nation hasn't been easy but thousands have managed it as stowaways on ferries or lorries and a few (very few) are thought to have succeeded by walking through the Channel tunnel. A much easier method has been for people to enter the country legally as a tourist or student and simply remain once their visa had expired. British border police clocked arrivals but not departures except for those by air so there was no way of knowing how many entrants really left when they should have. The loophole was considerable but it won't be for much longer. Travellers of all nationalities will now be clocked both in and out of Britain including those that travel by rail, car or sea.

So, apart from slightly longer delays for passport control at train and ferry terminals, what might be the consequences for British expats? An important one will be the need to pay more attention to how many days you are effectively present in France or Britain in order to establish resident or non-resident status. Under proposed legislation, UK non-residents would lose capital gains tax (CGT) exemption on UK residential property unless the non-resident owner stays in the property for at least 90 midnights each tax year. It will no longer be easy to fiddle the dates of one's comings and goings and it will be much more difficult to claim residence "nowhere". Your best advisors are competent financial experts such as Blevins Franks (see ad on page 15).

Another consequence directly affected by your place of residence will be healthcare. Until April 1st of this year, early retirees living in Europe enjoyed access to free local healthcare services overseas and underwritten by the NHS. Now expats below retirement age and not covered by employment will need to cover themselves because European states will no longer be reimbursed by the NHS for treatment of non-working Brits below the pensionable age.

So where you *really* reside has become an important criterion and the new British border controls make establishing your true situation easier than it has ever been for HMRC and other authorities. Plan ahead and manage your situation to avoid problems.

MUCH ADO ABOUT DRIVING

AS part of the purge on red tape, from June 8th the DVLA is scrapping the paper counterpart issued with UK licences. It didn't take long for the newspapers and automobile associations to predict "Chaos!" for Britons when trying to rent a car abroad this summer. Funny claim that, because many countries haven't issued paper counterparts since plastic photo card licences became the norm and we doubt it's stopped anyone from renting a car.

DVLA will now keep records of penalty points and traffic violations online only. So if your licence is British and you expect to rent a car abroad, it should be sufficient to just ask DVLA for the access code to print out your licence details, which will allow car hire companies to access your driving record. The code remains valid for 72 hours and access might involve a cost that hire companies will pass on to the driver. Happy holidays! ■



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MONACO US ECONOMIC FORUM

HEALING ALL WOUNDS

BY PJ HESLIN



FANTASTIC FORUM (L-R): The Monaco US collaborative team of Dr Jim Yanney, Susan Feaster, Mike Yanney and Mike Powers.

AFTER a year of planning, the inaugural Monaco US Economic Forum will become a reality next month from June 8th to 12th, taking place under the High Patronage of H.S.H. Prince Albert, in the hopes of promoting "The Importance of Sustained Dialogue Between the Western and Eastern Worlds: A Public Peace Process".

I spoke with Dr Jim Yanney from his home in Charleston, South Carolina, the man who came up with the idea for this year's international think tank.

Dr Yanney received his Doctor of Dental Sciences (D.D.S.) degree from the University of Nebraska in 1980 and went on to attain his M.D. from Creighton University in 1986 graduating with honors. He completed a fellowship in Craniofacial Surgery at Harvard University, serving in residencies in General Surgery as well as Head and Neck Reconstructive Surgery. In 2000, he decided to return to private practice to focus on patients with severe and end-stage reconstructive surgical/medical needs and over the last 21 years has provided care between Charleston, SC and Portland, Oregon, with national and worldwide referrals.

After taking stock of today's changing American and global political landscapes, Dr Yanney felt that communication

and education were vital in improving international relations. Working closely with Susan Feaster, co-founder with Mike Powers of the Monaco US Business Roundtable in 2014, together they formed what will become June's Forum. "Susan is a very bright woman and I was very impressed with her family and business accomplishments. The more we talked, the more I realized we shared a similar spirit and faith."

After a conversation with Susan, Jim knew that the missing link was his older cousin Mike Yanney (see *Reporter* 166). Jim introduced the pair because he believed Mike, founder of America First Companies, one of the largest private investment banking firms in the Midwest with total assets in excess of \$3.6 billion and 9,000 employees, had the business background to make the Forum relevant, as well as defining its needs on a global scale. "Communication is vital and I believe there is a critical need right now for dialogue between different economies and cultures."

Over the past year, Jim has been able to formulate guidelines for the June event.

"The Forum aims to increase the dialogue between countries to affect economies and world peace."

"The principles of the Forum are based on taking people from different walks of life in education and business and increasing the communication between countries to affect economies and world peace."

As for the Monaco location, it was suggested by Susan, who had first worked with Mike Powers to revitalise the Monte Carlo Open as part of an initiative

for Ryder Cup France 2018 to promote golf in the South of France. Susan's success working with the private and public sector of Monaco has been largely due to Mike Powers' previous accomplishments in the Principality as a true Ambassador for the US. "Thanks to Mike, Americans are warmly received in Monaco from the leadership in the Palace, the Parliament and the international business community. It's easy to do business in such a gracious and hospitable environment," says Susan. Jim agreed also that it was geographically convenient for European and Russian leaders and can be seen as a neutral zone.

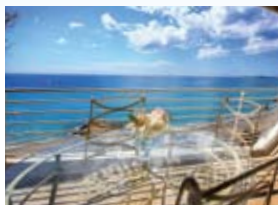
Using the Dartmouth Conferences, per Mike Yanney's suggestion, as a template, Jim wanted to create a gathering where world leaders could come and discuss

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THE US

business, security and peace initiatives. Held between American and Soviet intellectuals at Dartmouth College in October 1960, at the height of the Cold War, it was designed to lessen tensions between the two nuclear superpowers. Jim believes, with Mike Yanney's strong concurrence, that currently this type of dialogue is missing at the highest levels. The Monaco US Economic Forum will feature several meetings in which experts will talk about their backgrounds so that they can educate future leaders. The emphasis on these talks will be on leadership and leadership skills.

Of particular note is cybersecurity. Jim informed me that almost all of the computer hardware that American defense and businesses use is made abroad and has malicious code in it. "Since 2009 we have known that 'certain entities' have had the ability to access important data. This is a huge vulnerability in our system and one of the topics that will be discussed at the Forum." One such tactic, according to Jim, is to develop hardware that can encrypt large packets of data at incredible speeds. That way, the "certain entities" can steal as much data as they can handle but will not be able to read any of it. Two top black hat hackers – those who "violate computer security for little reason beyond maliciousness or for personal gain" – have been hired for the roundtable to show CIOs, CTOs and CEOs through many major national conferences, as well as in the classified world, how vulnerable all of our digital appliances and systems are to continual and massive data theft.

But it's more than just the issue of

cybersecurity. Jim sees the forum as a nexus for business and government to find solutions in everything from education to health care. "The exciting part of the Forum is intersection of private and public partnerships like health care. Private enterprises bring funds into these types of programs. This synergy between public and private spheres will help build and find solutions for the infrastructure of our country."

Jim describes his childhood in Sioux City, Iowa, as blessed. "My mother and father instilled in me the importance of education, belief and a work ethic. I was brought up to believe that the more you are given, the more is expected of you."

He has tried to pass these lessons on to his four children, each of whom is pursuing a different path: Hayes runs the family horse farm; James is in his last semester of law school at the University of Texas; Ferris is a University of Georgia graduate with her eye on a future Olympics in dressage; and the operatic Ramsey is in West Palm Beach pursuing her dreams on the big stage.

"The values I have taught my children," Jim explains, "are that trust is everything – one should have a sense of integrity of the highest level – the importance of faith and also how to gain fulfillment from service and leadership."

As Treasurer of the Wounded Warriors Corps (woundedwarriorcorps.org), it is clear that Jim is still practicing what he preaches. The Wounded Warrior Corps

(not to be confused with the Wounded Warrior Project) works with educational facilities, businesses and veterans to meet the vocational and employment needs of American veterans. "Doug Benefield, the President of the Corps and former fighter pilot, told me that 45% of our veterans are unemployed and that over 80 vets a day commit suicide. I thought these numbers were shameful and inexcusable and had to be addressed." One problem that the Wounded Warriors Corps was able to identify and find a solution for was in

45% of American veterans are unemployed and every day more than 80 commit suicide.

transport cargo. Thanks to his business connections, Jim became aware of the labor shortage in the trucking industry, not only with drivers but also older trucks needing to be refurbished. In fact, there is a severe deficiency of those knowledgeable in trucking schematics. Working with community colleges and the trucking industry, the Wounded Warriors Corps has been able to not only find jobs in the trucking industry for veterans but also provide funding for colleges to start training programs in schematics and mechanics. "I find my work with the Wounded Warriors Corps not just rewarding but exciting."

Jim hopes that the lessons for success that he has learned through his family, volunteer and professional life can be infused into the Forum. "Connecting, communicating and education are vital, especially in today's climate." ■

For more on the June 8th-12th Economic Forum, contact President Susan Feaster at MonacoUS.BRT@gmail.com

AS A MATTER OF FATCA

BY GEORGE DONNELLY



A RECORD 1,335 Americans renounced their passports in the first three months of 2015. According to official US data, this staggering figure is close to 40% of the 3,415 Americans who gave up citizenship last year. A defiant act that for many stems from new banking laws tied into FATCA, which requires foreign banks to report to the IRS all accounts held by Americans.

In a step towards clamping down on those who evade US taxation by investing overseas, the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act – or FATCA – was enacted in the US on March 18th, 2010, with an effective date of July 1st, 2014. The controversial bank account reporting requirements initially met with resistance from many governments overseas. But the Treasury Department has negotiated a series of intergovernmental agreements with the tax authorities of other countries, such as France, Germany, Spain, Italy, Switzerland, Austria, Sweden, Denmark, and Norway, allowing them to act as intermediaries before the information is forwarded to the US government agency responsible for the collection and enforcement of taxes.

There are two parts to FATCA: US taxpayers reporting of foreign assets and income on Form 8938 and the reporting of accounts by a non-US financial institution, otherwise known as a Foreign Financial Institution, or FFI.

Having been around since the 2011 tax year, the new Form 8938, Statement of Specified Foreign Financial Assets, requires disclosure of certain foreign assets and financial accounts. This is filed with the

federal tax return. Although Form 8938 resembles the dreaded FBAR – the Foreign Bank Account Reporting, which looks only at bank account information – certain other non-account assets, such as business arrangements, are disclosed on the FACTA form. Other requirements differ as well.

Form 8938 must be included in the tax filing if the total value of your foreign assets exceeds certain thresholds, which for those of us who live outside the US and Puerto Rico are as follows:

- More than \$200,000 for single filers (or married, filing separately) or \$300,000 for joint filers at the end of the year, or
- More than \$400,000 for single filers (or married, filing separately) or \$600,000 for joint filers at any time during the year.

If you don't otherwise need to file a tax return, then you are not required to file a Form 8938. But it is the second part of the form involving bank reporting that is resulting in a letter being sent to suspected US account holders requesting US taxpayer identification from FFIs.

FATCA generally requires an FFI to identify certain US account holders and report their accounts to the IRS. The US and France have reached an agreement whereby account holders would be reported to their country of citizenship. US persons having accounts with French FFIs would be reported to the US, as French nationals with accounts in the USA would be reported to France.

If an FFI does not enter into an agreement with the IRS, all relevant US-sourced payments, such as dividends and interest paid by US corporations, will be

subject to a 30% withholding tax. The same 30% withholding tax will also apply to gross sale proceeds from the sale of relevant US property.

Certain FFIs have taken the route of certifying with the IRS that they have no American customers, and thereby do not need to comply with FATCA's expensive and laborious reporting requirements. It is these financial institutions that have asked their US customers to go elsewhere, much to the shock of Americans living abroad.

It could be worse: your foreign bank accounts could be frozen. See box.

In the meanwhile, FATCA has become a model for other countries. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is establishing the Common Reporting Standard (CRS) for international account disclosure. Some 44 OECD member states will begin to implement the CRS on January 1st, 2016, with reporting commencing in 2017. ■

American Tax Consultant George Donnelly (donnelly-cpa.com – 06 79 27 92 60) is a Member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, Licensed by the State of California. See ad page 35.

THERE'S NO ESCAPE

AMERICAN-born Johnathan Weiss hasn't lived in the US for 25 years.

"I'd been living in Switzerland for ten years, and then out of the blue I got a letter from my bank, saying that since I am an American citizen I had to file some extra paperwork. Two weeks later my bank account was frozen," Weiss told *The Local* in Paris. "I had no idea what to do."

With the help of tax professionals, it took three weeks to file the necessary paper work and provide the bank with a letter of certification to have his account unfrozen.

Now that Weiss understands the laws and what is expected of him, he says he's not resentful of the new regulations. But he does wish he had known earlier.

"It was scary," he says. "People should be aware of FATCA and deal with it proactively so they don't have to go through what I did."

G. H. Q.
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FRANCE, *February 28, 1919*

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As an individual, your part in the world war has been an important one in the sum total of our achievements. Whether keeping lonely vigil in the trenches, or gallantly storming the enemy's stronghold; whether enduring monotonous drudgery at the rear, or sustaining the fighting line at the front, each has bravely and efficiently played his part. By willing sacrifice of personal rights; by cheerful endurance of hardship and privation; by vigor, strength and indomitable will, made effective through organization and cordial co-operation, you inspired the war-worn Allies with new life and turned the tide of threatened defeat into overwhelming victory.

With a consecrated devotion to duty and a will to conquer, you have loyally served your country. By your exemplary conduct a standard has been established and maintained never before attained by any army. With mind and body as clean and strong as the decisive blows you delivered against the foe, you are soon **to return to the pursuits of peace**. In leaving the scenes of your victories, may I ask that you carry home your high ideals and continue to live as you have served—an honor to the principles for which you have fought and to the fallen comrades you leave behind.

It is with pride in our success that I extend to you my sincere thanks for your splendid service to the army and the nation.

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IN MODERN TIMES

BY MOLLY BROWN



Designed by Patrick Jouin and Sanjit Manku, the new Louis XV restaurant evokes the Riviera's art de vivre, where contemporary design harmonizes with Alain Ducasse cuisine. Photo: ©Pierre Monetta.

THE cherry trees in the Princess Grace Japanese garden heralded spring with Easter bonnets of a thousand white blossoms. Panama hats at the Country Club, a flying car at Top Marques and car crazy fans arrived for Monaco's first Formula E for the ePrix and the one race every driver dreams of winning, the Monaco Grand Prix. Many regular Hôtel de Paris guests were welcomed in the same grand style into the imposing foyer with its

exquisite floral arrangement, but found their normal room with a view gone forever and their favourite Alain Ducasse restaurant changed into an elegantly modern Louis XV (above). The original ceiling paintings survived the 2-month embellishment, but it seems chandeliers are now "retro". The world renowned Alain Ducasse moves with the times.

In the spotlight

YARDS of red carpet, cheering

fans and clicking cameras ... actors, directors and producers under the spotlight ... not in Cannes, but in Monaco for the 55th Television Festival (June 13th-18h), where over 50 TV programmes from 30 countries compete for the prestigious Golden Nymph award. Created by Prince Rainier in 1961, the festival has become a very successful international market for the industry and its prodigious Nymph d'Or award as valued as an Oscar. Entries are reviewed by a jury of experts from the film and TV industry, headed this year by renowned actor Ron Perlman, and Patrick Duffy, star of "Dallas". Honorary President of the Festival, H.S.H. Prince Albert II, will officially open the festival and is an enthusiastic participant, awarding the coveted Prince Rainier III Special Prize at the closing ceremony.

Les Ballets de Monte-Carlo won three Golden Masks, the Russian award for theatre and dance: Jean-Christophe Maillot for his *Taming of the Shrew* for the Bolshoi Ballet and principal dancers, Ekaterina Krysanova and Vladislav Lantratov. Their summer programme begins July 3rd with Bejart Ballet Lausanne, the Tokyo Ballet, followed by Maillot's *Cendrillon* (July 23rd-26th) after delighting audiences with *Romeo & Juliette* at the London Coliseum in April.

Also at the Grimaldi Forum, which celebrates its 15th anniversary, the summer exhibition features Russian artists *From Chagall to Malevich, the revolution of the avant-garde* ... with works from museums in St Petersburg and the Pushkin and State Gallery in Moscow (July 12th-Sept 6th).

Ten glorious years

PRINCE Rainier III was fondly known as the Builder Prince and Monaco owes a great deal to his lifelong dedication and service to his country, ensuring its stability, prosperity and future independence as a respected democratic state, a member of the United Nations and the Council of Europe.

Prince Albert has continued the development of this small city state and now a warren of underground tunnels have relieved much of the traffic congestion, electric transport has reduced air pollution and, despite a severe recession, the economy has survived and grown under his guidance; an ambitious new land extension is planned in the near future, ensuring the growth of both the Principality and its economy.

The main event in July will be the tenth anniversary of Prince Albert II's coronation as Sovereign Prince ... a Monaco Jubilee. This joyful occasion will be celebrated in traditional style with a grand party: music, fireworks, and a special concert, starring Robbie Williams for Monegasque citizens and residents, who will gather in the Place du Palais to salute a very popular Prince and show their affection and respect for his many achievements and his worldwide recognition as a fighter for the preservation and future of the planet.

The Monte-Carlo Philharmonic Orchestra will celebrate the occasion with six spectacular concerts in the courtyard of the Palace with six internationally renowned orchestra conductors and the Sporting d'Été, Europe's most glamorous night club, will offer a jubilee of international stars for everyone's entertainment. ■

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Rallying for education

THE second edition of the Ladies' Rally Vintage Car Charity Event takes place Sept 20th. Created by Martine Ackermann as a glamorous and entertaining women-only fundraiser, last year's inaugural ride sold out in only one day with 70 ladies driving fabulous vintage cars: AC Cobra, Rolls Royce, Porsche 356, MG ...

The route started from the Monte Carlo Beach Hotel, made a tour around Monaco, La Turbie, St Agnès ("one of France's most beautiful villages"), Eze, St Jean Cap Ferrat and then back for a finishing cocktail at the Monte Carlo Country Club. All the benefits went to Child CARE Monaco (childcaremonaco.com).

In 2012, Martine set up the association Child CARE Monaco with the objective to offer education to underprivileged

children all over the world. After several visits to India, they established the Sneh Girls School, which welcomes 90 girls every day on borrowed premises. But the facility has quickly proved too small as it also accommodates girls from villages nearby.

So in September 2015, Child CARE Monaco plans to build a school with a dispensary, two additional classrooms and a playground. Martine will visit in October to oversee the progress of the construction.

"People can help us," Martine tells the *Reporter*, "by sending a donation or sponsoring a child for €149 per year, which covers 1 school year, 2 meals per day, basic medical needs and the school uniform."

For ladies looking to participate in this year's "White Glam" charity rally, which Martine promises "will be full of surprises",

there are three options (prices per person):

- The Classic: Like last year, you will have a vintage car. Limited places available. €330.
- My Own: As some of you requested, you can BYOVC (Bring Your Own Vintage Car). Contact Martine to provide details of your car. €290.
- The Royal: Driven like a queen, this option allows you to enjoy wine and champagne all day! €330.

Sign up before June 30th and receive a €30 discount. Places are limited so Martine asks that you email your inscriptions as soon as possible to: childcare@monaco.mc

"It was a big, fun event for a great cause," says one of last year's participants, "and we are proud to have helped those girls in the school." ■

MILLIONS MORE

BY MICHAEL HEALY



In the first two weeks of the 2015 mission, MOAS rescued migrants at sea in record numbers: more than 1,400 saved from inhumane conditions. Photos: ©Jason Florio/MOAS

LAST October, the *Reporter* was among the first to publicise the tragic plight of the African migrants embarking voluntarily on unseaworthy craft to escape unbearable oppression or seek a better life in Europe, as has been the custom for thousands of years. We highlighted the initiative of Malta residents Christopher and Regina Catrambone, who bought and fitted out the 40-metre vessel *Phoenix*, brilliantly equipping her with two Camcopter drones to locate migrant boats over a large sea area. They registered as a non-governmental charity called MOAS (Migrant Offshore Aid Station), working on-station under the direction of Italy's Marine Rescue Control Centre in Rome, and during her 60-day patrol last autumn *Phoenix* rescued 3000 poor souls from near-death or worse.

But the migrant picture is this year far worse – hundreds of thousands of Africans and Syrians now making the deadly desert journey to lawless Libya to seek out the smugglers who might be able to get them on a boat headed for Malta or Sicily or Lampedusa in Italy. UN figures reveal

that over 60,000 migrants have tried to cross the Malta Channel in the first four months of 2015 and at least 1800 have died in the attempt, compared to 96 in the same period of 2014. European Union navies have now stepped up patrolling, and

the Royal Navy flagship *HMS Bulwark* is on task there with her helicopters, large landing craft, troop spaces and medical facilities. Before her arrival, it was the small Icelandic coastguard vessel *Tyr* to the rescue. And

the *Phoenix* with improved drones, now partnered with MSF (*Médecins Sans Frontières*), sailed on May 2nd and assisted 700 migrants in her first seven days of MOAS 2015, a program that should last six months. This is the only private search and rescue service in the Mediterranean – bravo! – and needing charitable support, by donations to moas.eu.

The game has changed, and now reflects the legal obligation binding all seafarers to save life at sea, however inconvenient, together with the insoluble problem of how to absorb the thousands of unwanted migrants who are rescued and brought ashore to the EU.

France has introduced a new number for distress at sea: 196.

Get shipwrecked first!

CANDIDATES for rescue have to be in actual danger in the patrolled areas, so the unsuitable craft that our TV shows us, packed with suffering humanity, are in fact ideal; and the organisers plan for them to sink, catch fire, break down, capsize, fall ill, starve or fight one another to the death, no doubt alerting Rome Rescue by satellite phone to an impending shipwreck “next Thursday afternoon”! Yet survival at sea is not the only necessity, because that could easily be achieved by sending several large car ferries to assure a safe and comfortable crossing for all comers. But then the candidates would not be landed as Distressed Seafarers, and would be refused entry to the Europe Union unless proven Refugees from Persecution. As it is, many EU countries including Britain – a generous Welfare State – seem reluctant to accept even more new beneficiaries, as there are fears that the necessary housing, education, healthcare, transport, power, water and food supplies would overwhelm social systems. It's humanity versus economics – an impossible dilemma. ■

VOLUNTEERING

You are not alone

MICHELE Fraser reminds us that Cancer Support Group 06 (CSG06), an affiliate to Cancer Support France (cancersupportfrance.org), exists not only to Anglophone cancer sufferers in the 06 region and the Var but for family and friends also.

"We offer a range of services to the expat community," Michele explains. "This currently consists of psychotherapy, sophrology, art therapy, a regular monthly gathering where people can meet and also talk to an oncology nurse and, more recently, a weekly mindful relaxation session."

Following a very generous donation from Cogs for Cancer (see *Reporter* 165), CSG06 is able to expand their resources and geographical reach with the aim of supporting more patients having or recovering from treatment, together with

their families and carers.

The group is in the process of creating a new website and Facebook page as they try to identify the local organisations they need to link with, for example, doctors and hospitals and other facilities which provide cancer services, so that they can inform their Anglophone patients about CSG06.

"We need to define a range of volunteer opportunities, so that we can make access to our services easier and that the needs of more people can be met. We're also looking at new services like nutritional advice and other therapies, but also practical services, such as taking someone to their appointments, doing their shopping or helping with translating."

For this to be successful the group will also need to expand its volunteer base.

The association is holding a drop-in open day themed "You are not alone" on Sat June 13th, from 10h to 16h, at the Grange in Mouans Sartoux (815 Chemin Gourettes), which was kindly made available by Sunnybank.

Michele explains: "The drop-in is aimed at both people with cancer and also people who are interested in donating their time. The day includes taster sessions and talks about counselling and other types of therapy, juicing and nutrition, well-being and mindful meditation. Plus there'll be refreshments and lunch. Thinking about volunteering? Come and find out more." ■

For more info, contact Michele Fraser on 06 70 52 12 44 or cancersupport06@gmail.com



Cancer Support France provides support for English-speaking people with cancer.

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JUMP, MAN, JUMP!

BY BARTH HULLEY



IF you're planning to try something new, like jump out of an aeroplane with a silk sheet tied to your back, then you'd be wise to seek a bit of advice on how to do it – before you do it. Now imagine your “jump coach”, the guy behind you on the plane, tells you just before he shoves you out the door that he's never actually done this himself. Then, as you're hurtling towards the ground, you realise you have no idea which strings to pull ... because you forgot to ask. Well, that's what it's like becoming self-employed in France.

France, it seems, is full of jump coaches ready to encourage your free enterprise. *Fonctionnaires*, accountants, politicians, bankers, more *fonctionnaires* ... but you can be sure that not one of them has ever been self-employed. They simply want to ensure that you pay your taxes and, hopefully, employ people who also pay their taxes but whether your business succeeds or ends in ruin is neither here nor there.

The advice I had before becoming a *Travailleur Indépendant* was nothing short of useless. Three years in, I came close to cancelling Christmas after receiving a shock stack of bills from the state demanding payment of some €9,000, which I was required to settle before Santa

had even packed his sleigh! The only surprise though, as far as my accountant was concerned, was that I hadn't expected this. And even though he had forgotten to tell me to expect it, this didn't result in a downward adjustment on his annual fee.

“Well you should allow for around 35% of your earnings to be deducted,” he crowed from inside his crisply ironed shirt.

“Fair enough,” I replied, trying not to sound too pathetic, “but I appear to be paying between 50 to 60%?”

“Ah yes, well.”

And then he gave me one of those famous disregarding Gallic shrugs, linguistically translated into English to mean “I'm glad I'm not you”.

Festive celebrations that year were understandably low-key. Soon after the children had un-wrapped their Yuletide lumps of coal and gorged themselves on beans-on-toast with all the trimmings, I was forced to visit the bank manager to plead for that very un-French of financial facilities: credit. Yes, I was going to have to borrow money just to pay my taxes!

How was this possible? I wasn't lacking in clients or turnover. I was being paid by a client to commute from my home in Strasbourg to the UK every month. In any other Western economy this would have assured my survival but, in France, the sudden devalued pound coupled with a drop in earnings was going to result in a net outflow of cash from me to *Monsieur le Président* until the end of the year; leaving me, and my family, with practically nothing to live on.

The underlying issue to my predicament was the *Travailleur Indépendant* system. Although to describe it as a “system” would suggest it hadn't been conceived by someone with a sub-zero IQ and a dark sense of humour, because, under this harebrained scheme, you're required to pay your dues before what you owe has even been determined.

It's not unlike paying your electricity

bill by direct-debit three months before you receive the bill, only to find that it's been wildly over-estimated. Unlike EDF payments however, earning estimates cannot be corrected before the end of the following financial year. Meaning the state gets to hold on to your money for up to two years while you struggle to survive.

I soon worked out that only with a guaranteed stable or growing monthly income was I going to make it work; and once I'd realised this was impossible – I shut up shop.

Today, I have five successful years under my belt working as a *Portage Salarial*; the self-employed scheme that my jump coach should have recommended all those years ago, but didn't. And therein lies the problem: **there are sixteen recognised ways to work for yourself in France** but no one seems motivated to help you choose the right set up.

Since moving to the Alsace region in 2006, I've plied my trade as a translator, teacher, actor, writer, webmaster and communications consultant, and over the years I've shared my ordeals with many other equally exasperated entrepreneurs. Consequently, it seems that my experiences have made me something of an expert on France's self-employed culture. Indeed, I'm asked on an almost daily basis which statute I think someone should choose for

a particular business. So knowing how complex things are, and the disaster that can unfold if you are given bad advice, I decided to write an easy-to-follow guidebook to share my knowledge with the world. It's imaginatively entitled *Freelance in France* and whether you're an artist, teacher, web guru or entrepreneur in the true sense of the word – it should allow you to make the jump with confidence.

Let me know how you get on. ■

Freelance in France 2015 by Barth Hulley is available to buy on lulu.com or in Kindle format on Amazon. Visit freelanceinfrance.fr for more information.





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PARDON MY FRENCH

One for the books



BY ELODIE PEYRANO

LET'S be honest, between social networking and apps, it seems like people are spending more time crushing candies and less time reading. But don't despair; VendrediLecture (VL) has come along to remind us that reading is still cool.

This wonderful idea began in 2011 by two French bloggers and book lovers, Marion and Sabbio. They had heard about #FridayReads, which launched in the US via social networks – mainly Facebook and Twitter – inviting people to use this special hashtag to share what they're reading.

Marion and Sabbio participated but soon faced a problem. Most of the books discussed weren't available in France. Their immediate reaction was to adapt the concept but in a much more engaging way. Instead of a weekly hashtag, they launched a French association named VendrediLecture (vendredilecture.com).

"The goal was to create an online community of readers without being a book club," Nathalie Manceau, the current VL president, explains. "There are so many websites and forums where people can give their opinions, we wanted something more

interactive and more direct." And as Nathalie points out, "Unlike a forum, you don't need to create an extra account. It touches a much more general audience."

And it's working, VL has become France's leading literary event on social media.

A quick glance at some of the users shows how diverse VL has become. Children, teenagers, adults, fans of *Twilight* or Victor Hugo addicts ... everyone is talking about what they read or their favourite writers.

#VendrediLecture trended three consecutive weeks and it has more than 12,000 followers on Twitter and Facebook. Even *l'Education Nationale* and *La Chaîne Parlementaire* are tweeting VendrediLecture; publishing houses have partnered to offer books.

Unlike the Anglo-Saxon #FridayReads, VL organises light-hearted online activities to get you talking, without being too serious. "It would be a bit boring to be active only on Fridays," Nathalie says.

"Creating interaction is a good way to earn the loyalty of our followers and to remind them that reading is a pleasure."

Monday is "*La Petite Question du Lundi*", asking things like "What would you like to do?" I replied that I'd have killed Bella in the first chapter of *Twilight*. Considering how

many people liked my answer, I think Bella was quite lucky we didn't write the saga.

Tuesday is for "advice" –

#MardiConseil – to recommend a book, although not necessarily the last one you read. Recently, I shared one of my favourite plays, *The Glass Menagerie* by Tennessee Williams. Despite the popular adaptations of his *Streetcar Named Desire* and *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, Williams is not a popular playwright in France. I received tweets thanking me for the suggestion.

Friday, naturally, is the most important day of the week. VL's team of 16 organises two activities: a special quiz, which can have a news theme or be general knowledge – yes, you can use Google to find the answers – and the superstar #VendrediLecture for which you can win a prize.

"Some readers have a sort of inferiority complex," Nathalie tells us. "They think because they read chick-lit or only one book per month that they're a poor reader. This is simply not true. The important thing is that you read ... and share." ■

Americanophile Elodie Peyrano is a graduate of Nice's École du Journalisme. This is her first English-language series.



Sirens of the South

BY DELANA NELSEN

Fifteen years ago, American writer Elizabeth Bard had lunch with a handsome Frenchman ... the meal never quite ended.

THE author of the New York Times Bestseller *Lunch in Paris* moved to the Alpes-de-Haute-Provence department in 2009. She lives with her husband Gwendal Auffret, a cinema buff with a PhD in Computer Science, and their five-year-old son in the Provençal village of Céreste, population 1300. And not just in any old house, but the very one René Char, poet and leader of the Resistance, lived in during World War II.

In 2013, Elizabeth and Gwendal founded Scaramouche, an artisan ice cream company named after one of Gwendal's favourite films. Within a year, Trip Advisor's Top Ten Ice Cream Parlours in France ranked Scaramouche at #5, and yet Elizabeth (elizabethbard.com) still found time to write a follow-up memoir/cookbook, the newly released *Picnic in Provence*.

BREATHTAKING VIEW: Walking up the hill to the tiny village of Montjustin, about 20km west of Manosque. On a clear day, you can see the Alps.

UPSCALE DINING: With running our new ice cream business, we don't get out much at the moment – but everyone around here is raving about Le Bistro de Lagarde, in Lagarde-d'Apt, which just got its first Michelin star. See lebistrotdelegarde.free.fr/lacuisine.html



HIKING HEAVEN:

We always send friends to the magnificent ochre trails in Roussillon or Rustrel.

FAVE FRENCH FLICK:

The 1996 costume drama, "Ridicule" is a battle of wits and wits that I could watch again and again. In recent French cinema, I was blown away by Jacques Audiard's Prison Drama "Un Prophète" (2009).

CHOSEN

BEVERAGE: Pastis Henri Bardouin from Forcalquier.



ESSENTIAL SIGHTSEEING:

I take friends to the Saturday morning market in Apt. It fans out across the entire old town. You can buy lavender oil, organic vegetables, oozy cheese, and my favourite pork sausages. Weighed down with groceries, we usually pick up containers of fresh-made paella for lunch.

PERFUME PREFERENCE:

I don't wear perfume in Provence. The mosquitos love me as it is.

BEST DISCOVERY:

Truffle hunting and tasting at Les Pastras in Cadenet (lespastras.com).

NOT-TO-BE MISSED:

I love the autumn *Foire Agricole* in Reillanne – it's really old school with animals, a lavender distilling machine and lots of local products to taste and buy. I also enjoy the roving flea markets (*vide greniers*) that take place most summer weekends in the region. I'm always on the hunt for unusual silver serving pieces and mismatched saucers for our ice cream shop. See vide-grenier.net to find one near you. The observatory in St Michel l'Observatoire does a cinema and stargazing all-nighter every summer. As soon as our son is

old enough – I'm there! See saintmichellobservatoire.com

NECESSARY EXTRAVAGANCE:

Le Creuset cookware. Go Big Red!



IDEAL PEOPLE-WATCHING:

After a Saturday morning at the Apt market, it's essential to pull up a chair on a sunny terrace, sip a café crème, and watch the world go by.

BON APP:

The New Yorker and NPR News – a little piece of home.



Photo: Etienne Baudon

HIDDEN GEM:

The Chemin de Croix in Lurs (pictured), near Forcalquier. Just outside the village is a winding path up to a small chapel with a gorgeous view of the surrounding countryside. Inside the village, lunch at the lovely little *Bistrot de Pays* called La Terrace de Lurs.

CASUAL DINING:

L'Ecole Buissonniere in Montjustin (ecolebuissonniere-montjustin.over-blog.com). Tucked away at the top of a tiny hilltop hamlet, it's not exactly a restaurant, more like a collective. They serve a *menu unique* – only one choice each day – made with fresh local products. They have quirky concerts. Two hours on their sunny terrace is like a mini-vacation.

TO-DO LIST:

Learn how to make my own jam. Finally get my driver's license. And I'm determined to see the roses in June at the Abbaye de Valsaintes in Simiane la Rotonde (below), which I'm told are not to be missed!



Photo: Alpes de Haute-Provence

GUILTY PLEASURE:

Anything involving fried dough – like the traditional Provençal *bugnes* – sweet fritters flavoured with orange flower water – made for Mardi Gras.

LOVELY LEVRÈS:

Burt's Bees tinted replenishing lip balm with pomegranate oil.



INSIDE SCOOP:

At Scaramouche, I'm partial to our Strawberries and Cream Ice Cream, maybe because I had to fight for it. Turns out there are cultural differences, even in ice cream.



When we were coming up with the flavours for the opening, we had an argument about the strawberry. The French like strawberry sorbet – hot pink, non-dairy, pure fruit. I wanted the kind of strawberry ice cream I grew up with – rich and creamy, pale pink, with big chunks of ruby-red strawberry. So we came to a diplomatic solution – so essential in intercultural marriage – we made both! ■



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Health and well-being one plate at a time

BY SCOTT BELL



Clockwise L-R: Fresh and Crunchy Red Cabbage Salad from Naomi's Kitchen; Super Green Juice by Wheatgrass and Wine; The Clever Kitchen's Beetroot Hummus.



IN 400 BC, give or take a year, Hippocrates coined the expression "Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food", and ever since we've been aware of the link between proper eating and good health.

Unfortunately, in our modern Western societies, this message has gotten lost in digestion and for that we are paying a heavy price. Processed food, whether in supermarkets or fast-food restaurants, has become the norm while wholesome, home-cooked meals with locally procured and pesticide-free produce are now the exception.

We talked last issue about the growing popularity of organic foods and where to

find them in our region. In recognising that a healthy mind and body have a great deal to do with the food we eat, more and more the average consumer is insisting on healthier options while rediscovering a process of cooking that can be enriching, educational and enjoyable.

But without basic knowledge of what foods are out there and how to prepare them in a way that is compatible with you and your personal situation, then what is an otherwise pleasurable experience can turn into an overwhelming ordeal.

We read all the time that maintaining a healthful life is about eating a balanced diet, keeping stress in check, following

a moderate exercise plan, getting a good night's sleep, staying properly hydrated and ensuring reasonable exposure to sunlight.

Yet with the daily pressures from work, family, travel and social life, it's easy to understand why we so often end up overweight, undernourished, fatigued and unhappy.

Fortunately, within our own Riviera community there are fantastic resources and individuals making a difference by bringing quality food and nutrition services, along with education, literally to our doorsteps.

In Monaco, Naomi Buff, founder of Naomi's Kitchen (naomiskitchen.com),



ORGANIC



has been leading the nutritional bandwagon since 2011. Naomi is a health coach, superfood chef and

kitchen consultant. Naomi (above) works with individuals, provides recipe development to some of Monaco's top restaurants and holds a monthly cooking workshop focused on teaching moms to cook delicious and more nutritious food for their families. The events are hosted at the Monte Carlo Munchkin Club in the heart of Monaco, near the Rond Point du Portier. As Naomi reminds us, "Be kind to your body it's the only place you have to live."

The Clever Kitchen (thecleverkitchen.com) run by Susan Tomassini and Melanie Gulliver (pictured) is also based in Monaco but they have extended their nutritional workshops throughout the 06 department. In addition to delicious recipes, step-by-step instruction and nutritional counselling, they also have a range of "superfoods" – those nutrient-rich foods considered to be especially beneficial for health (although there is no standard for monitoring superfood status) – that can be purchased at the end of their events.



And if you ever need help getting great tasting, locally grown organic produce, definitely check out the offering from Johanna Rossi at Live a Nourishing Life (liveanourishinglife.com). Johanna (right) offers the highest quality produce and prepared meals around Monaco, delivered to your door with a passion that can't be matched. "We make healthy living easier," Johanna tells us. "From seed to stove, we track your local organic and seasonal produce, collect it and deliver it to your door. We'll then show you how to store, prepare and cook it, while providing you with a wealth of information about embracing a whole foods lifestyle."

Heading towards Nice, Frédérique Chataigner, nutritionist and author of *Maigrir et être en bonne santé, ça s'apprend* (Learn how to lose weight and be healthy), teaches individual and group courses for regaining control of your health through education and changing your eating habits. She's also a certified hypnotist and a psychological nutritional counsellor. You can find her at poidsdubonheur.com.

For experts in juicing, we found Barbara and Nicolas Basalgete, cofounders of BeJuice (bejuice.fr), who create a personalised one or two-week juice detox for summer slimming or more specific healing. They run their juicing



services out of their vegan café-resto Nice Life International (nicelifelifeinternational.com), near the old port of Nice.

In the Cannes/Valbonne area, Jessica Verity and Christine Kjeldberg (below) have teamed up to offer a full range of nutrition-based workshops, from dietary consulting to detox

programs and from juicing and cooking to nutritionally-balanced homemade meals.

Christine is a certified nutritional therapist and pilates instructor. She can provide individual dietary counselling and group workshops and detox programs.



Jessica, from the Healthy Gourmet (wheatgrassandwine.com), is committed to helping people make food that is wholesome and pleasurable. As a young mother she fully understands the challenges of balancing a professional and family life. "Wheatgrass and Wine is about finding balance in the kitchen," Jessica, a talented chef, explains. "A lot of good and a little naughty make for a healthy body and a happy soul."

So hats off to these courageous and hardworking neighbours for making it a bit easier to adopt new food habits that can help us lead a more healthful and balanced lifestyle. ■

For more on Scott, see pureflowcoco.com



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TANZANIA:

The greatest show on earth

BY CAREN TRAFFORD



The annual migration of more than a million gnus across northern Tanzania and Kenya is one of the most glorious wonders of the natural world.

HOW do you find a birthday present for a man who has everything and has been everywhere? It took months of planning but as our pilot began the descent towards the small sandy runway, a strip across the African bush, I knew I had found the answer.

The gift? A week's safari at Serian Serengeti North. The camp is located in the Mara area of the Serengeti in

northern Tanzania, and is owned and operated by the capable guide and wonderful host, Alex Walker. This is a mobile camp, and its location is governed by the annual migration of the wildebeest. From mid-June to mid-November, along with 1.6 million gnus, the camp is situated in the far north of the Serengeti plains, just to the south of Kenya. The camp is set two kilometres

back from the Mara River, making it the best campsite from which to experience the mighty crossings of the wildebeest.

The Serengeti is truly one of the most spectacular places on the planet. It covers an enormous portion of northern Tanzania and the majestic Mara River, which snakes south from Kenya running through it. This river is famous for its staging of the unbelievable spectacle of the wildebeest



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TRAVEL

river-crossings. The scenery is spectacular. Think vast expanses of wide-open spaces, a million acres of sky, and mega-herds that have to be seen to be believed.

We flew from Arusha to the Kogatende airstrip with Coastal Aviation. As our plane bounced to a stop, Alex Walker ran towards the craft. Never have I seen bags unloaded and then reloaded into a transport vehicle so quickly.

Alex brimmed with enthusiasm. He started up the jeep before we'd even pulled closed the doors. "I know you've had a long journey but, if you're up for it, the wildebeest have started their crossing, so we'll take a detour to watch them before we head for the camp, OK?"

We nodded, spellbound.

This is why we had come to the middle of the African bush. After watching the David Attenborough filming of one of the ultimate wonders of the world – the magnificent migration of the African wildebeest – we were now going to see it firsthand.

Wildebeest – or gnus – spend their lives on the move, travelling 30,000 kilometres in their lifetime, across the huge plains of the Serengeti, and for a few short months a year they have to cross the Mara River in their quest for fresh green grass. Their route follows the African rains in a huge circle through Tanzania and Kenya.

Alex raced the jeep out of the airport compound, calling to the other vehicles on his radio to try and pinpoint the actual spot of the crossing. It seemed that the wildebeest herd had broken into two columns, both of which were looking for

good points to cross the river. The rains started again. We held onto our seats as the car bounced over several rocky river beds to gain access to the main river system and then we stopped suddenly. In front of the jeep, three male leopards peered out from a shrubby bush. What a wonderful dilemma.

Do we stay and take photos of the lazing leopards, or aim for the riverbanks to witness "the greatest show on earth". Well, this was Africa. And in Africa there was time to do both.

And so it was, our introduction to the amazing Serian Camp of Alex Walker.

Leopards, zebra, wildebeest trying to escape from the jaws of crocodiles, cheetah, elephants, giraffe, lions and hippos. We saw them all. Over the next five days we enjoyed the hospitality of the camp, the experience of watching the animals in their natural habitat and the enormity of the African bush. Some of the time we explored the surroundings in our jeep and some of the time on foot. And in the evenings, with a drink around the communal campfire, we exchanged stories of the day with our fellow travellers. As darkness fell, the

whole camp came together for a shared dinner, with the background music of the bush, all under a huge canopy of stars.

On the evening of my husband's birthday, we returned to camp a little earlier than usual so that he could enjoy a private bath, set up in the middle of

the bush (left).

Armed with a gin and tonic he sat in his copper bathtub, in front of a campfire and the setting sun.

It was an experience that will stay with us always, made all the more special by the people and the animals that helped to create it. ■

Getting There:

From Nice, we flew Air France/KLM

to Amsterdam and then onto Mount Kilimanjaro via Nairobi. We had a one night stopover in a lovely hotel Onsea House and Cottages (onseahouse.com), and were driven 50km to Arusha airport.

Exploring: Alex Walker's Serian: serian.com/we-call-it-home/serengeti-tanzania

Caren Trafford writes environmental books for kids – see planetkids.biz – and lives in Provence.





SHE is a true artist, and hides behind the exotic name of Ziva. After eight creative and rewarding years living in a stunning Mougins villa, this international woman of mystery is ready to move on, and her home is for sale.

Her fantasy-like paintings will be moving with her, intensely personal works that she has so far refused to exhibit or sell.

So what do we know of Ziva, who, when asked of the influences on her work, answers simply “Everything. Everybody.”? She was born in Toronto in 1976, and studied at the St Andrew’s art school in that great city. She experimented with several painting techniques and different styles before reaching her true artistic essence.

In the past Ziva has painted only for herself and a close circle of friends,

but there are hints that she may soon reveal all to the general public.

“Dreams shape my art, and make it limitless,” says Ziva, who, as well as being a Mougins resident, has called London her home. “My art encompasses all human situations, feelings and experiences. My inspiration lies far beyond this world.”

Mougins has been Ziva’s principal home in recent years, as she adores the wonderful climate, sea and paysage of the French Riviera.

“I will miss the villa because I have been held captive by its romantic style, the fountains and a landscaped garden with scented and colourful flowers and shrubs. It has a unique atmosphere that is both serene and inspirational. Special things have happened here.

“It has a wonderful setting, with views

of the woodlands and Cannes Mougins Golf Club. Mougins itself is a proper old French village of immense charm.”

Ziva is not just an artist and dreamer. Her practical side came to the fore when she remodelled her home completely, redecorated, changed all the bathrooms and designed and landscaped the garden, moulding it to her artistic vision.

She planted 15 olive trees and hundreds of bushes, roses and flowers. Fountains and paving were added to give a final touch of magic to an impressive and beautiful home.

Although Ziva plans to spend most of her time in London, she cannot resist the thought of keeping a patch of the Côte d’Azur for her own enjoyment, and is casting her artistic eye over a seafront property.

The artist’s villa is approached along the



gated lane of an exclusive domaine, the driveway sweeping up to the house. Once inside, the hallway opens into a large lobby and wide, curving stairs, which lead up to several of the bedrooms, all en suite.

From the double height lobby we can proceed into the dining room and on to the spacious veranda, which allows enjoyment of the spectacular gardens in all weather at all hours of the day. Nestling in the gardens is the fine pool and pool house.

A corridor leads to a grand salon with fireplace, with terraces beyond.

There is also a library and several bedrooms on the ground floor, one of which is now used as an office.

The main house has 4/5 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, a sitting room, dining room/conservatory, library and an office. It also features a 50m² apartment for the *garden*. There is also a permit to build an additional house of 500m² in the spacious grounds. ■

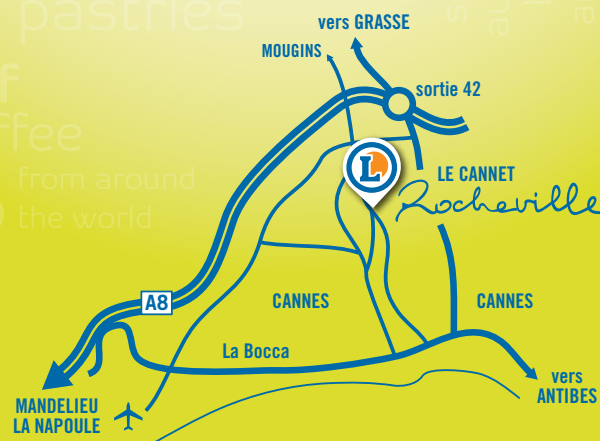
For more details about this splendid property, on the market now for a whisker over €4 million, contact Suzanna de Boer at Leggett Immobilier on 07 54 06 27 34 or email suzanna@leggett.fr.

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A PLACE TO CALL HOME

Photo: TA, Düsseldorf, Germany

BY TIM CLARK

LAST issue we looked at defining your search for your dream property in France and how to make an offer. This time, we walk you through those final steps of becoming a home owner.

Once your offer has been accepted, the agency, in coordination with the French *notaire*, will begin to draw up the legal purchase contract known as the *Compromis de Vente*.

This document will include all of the relevant information about the property you intend to purchase and is presented with various annexes. There will also be a full breakdown of all associated costs of your purchase (often called the *notaire's fees*) including stamp duty taxes, legal fees, land registry and any agency fees.

It's important to note in the first contract that the *notaire's fee* may be provisional as until date of completion the exact figure for the fee is unknown. This scenario means most *notaires* slightly overestimate the charges shown in the first contract and any over-payment made would be returned at the date of completion.

Compromis de Vente: **Initial document signing**

THIS is a legally binding contract and it is essential that you understand it fully prior to signing it.

If you have any conditions to your offer (such as getting a mortgage to fund the purchase) these conditions can be written into the *Compromis de Vente*. Writing in these types of clauses can protect you from having to forfeit your deposit if you are unable to complete your purchase.

The annexes mentioned earlier include diagnostic reports on various elements of the property. It must be noted these are advisory reports, not structural surveys, and rarely is there any obligation to do anything as they are intended more for buyer's information.

You will also receive full details of the *Copropriété* if you are buying an apartment or *domaine* property, which belongs to an owners association.

The following items will be tested for according to age of property and location: Lead in Paint (*plomb*), Asbestos (*amiante*), fixed gas installation, electrical installation, termites, natural and technological risks, Energy efficiency (*DPE*), smoke alarms, pool security, and septic tanks (*fosse septiques*).

There are a couple of exceptions to the advisory above. If the property has a septic tank installed and the diagnostic report states it does not conform to current norms, then a buyer needs to be aware they may be liable to bring the system up to norms inside one year of completion of the purchase. Secondly, if a property diagnostic reveals the presence of termites (test not required in all areas), then the vendor is obliged to rectify this prior to completion.

By having these diagnostics carried out at the beginning, it gives a buyer security in the knowledge of any unforeseen costs implied before they commit to signing the first contract.

Cooling off period

AFTER both parties have signed the *Compromis de Vente*, buyers will be sent notification of their right to change their minds. This is a 7-day period commencing the day after receipt of this written notice. It is seven full days and includes weekends, bank holidays etc.

If you wish to retract at this stage you need to send a letter by recorded delivery to your agent or *notaire*. I also advise you discuss the issue with either party before you take this action as often concerns can be resolved easily.

You would need to lodge your holding deposit at this stage too, and this may be with your agent or, as we prefer, with the *notaire*.

It is important to note that at the end of this period, you are legally

bound to purchase the property and cannot withdraw without being liable to pay damages equating to 10% of the property price (if you have paid your 10% deposit, your deposit will cover this.) You may also have to pay a portion of the estate agency fee.

Acte de Vente: Final document signing
USUALLY around three or four months after the signing of the *Compromis de Vente*, the *notaire* will have undertaken all of the necessary work and you will have agreed on a date for the final signing of the *Acte de Vente*. This will usually take place in France, at the *notaire's* office. Once this final document is signed, you will be the owner of the property and from the meeting will take the keys away with you.

Before this meeting, you will need to ensure that the balance of funds to complete the purchase of your property is in the *notaire's* bank account, this includes any funds that are being paid by a mortgage company. You will not be able to pay on the day with either a cheque or cash, due to money laundering laws. If you are using a currency exchange company to transfer funds being paid by yourself, they will work with you to ensure that this money arrives on time.

You also need to ensure that you have insurance on the property before you take ownership on the day of signing. It is also advisable to have in place a French bank account by this point, too.

Congratulations – you did it!

NOW it's time to sit back, open a bottle of something and enjoy your new purchase. France is a wonderful country to spend time in, and if you are anything like us here at Leggett Immobilier, you will fall in love with it all over again once you own property here. ■

Contact local expert Tim Clark of Leggett Immobilier at tim@leggett.fr

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EILEEN GRAY:

A long life and a short dream

BY MAUREEN EMERSON



Eileen Gray and Jean Badovici, villa E1027
"Maison en Bord de Mer" ©Manuel Bougot

AFTER what many agree have been far too many years of neglect, the iconic Modernist villa E1027 at Roquebrune-Cap-Martin has been restored and opened to the public as of May 3rd. Built by the designer Eileen Gray in the late 1920s, it

was one of the very few modern villas on the Côte d'Azur at that time and its design is of great importance in the heritage of architecture. In addition to its streamlined beauty, the villa's own story is full of drama.

The lovely Sentier des Douaniers, which

follows the coastline of Roquebrune-Cap-Martin, also bears the name of Promenade Le Corbusier and with reason – for it was below here on the terraces of limestone rock that Le Corbusier became obsessed with a stunning Modernist



E1027's main room, far left, with copies of furniture including Bibendum Chair and carpets designed by Eileen Gray, and mural by Le Corbusier.

©Manuel Bougot - FLC/ADAGP. Master bedroom (left)
©Tim Benton - FLC/ADAGP.

villa, wrought revenge and eventually met his death.

Le Corbusier, whose real name was Charles-Edouard Jeanneret-Gris, was born in Switzerland in 1887. In 1917 he moved to Paris where he studied architecture and design and soon adopted his more striking pseudonym. He is now known for his villas, urban planning, workers' housing and the wide use of reinforced concrete – many of his designs being controversial. But it was one villa in particular, designed by another architect, which would become his obsession.

It was in Paris that Le Corbusier first met the young Irish-Scots designer, Eileen Gray. Eileen was born Kathleen Eileen Moray Smith in County Wexford in August 1878, the youngest of five children. She changed her surname when her mother became Baroness Gray through inheritance. Her father, James MacLaren Smith, was a landscape painter. When her parents split up, Eileen was 11 and she and her mother moved to Kensington in London, where Eileen studied at the renowned Slade School of Fine Art. In spite of her reserved personality, thanks to family money she was fiercely independent, and was probably already aware of her bisexuality when she moved to Paris in 1903 and bought the elegant apartment at 21 rue Bonaparte in Saint-Germain-des-Prés, which she would use until the end of her life. Here she ceased to be an Edwardian Irish-Scots girl, bobbed her hair and ordered the most fashionable clothes, moving among well-heeled Paris expatriates. She was now free to work and indulge her preferences. Among her lovers was the nightclub singer Marisa Damia. They were very much of their time, driving around Paris with Marisa's pet panther on the back seat of Gray's sports car.

But art and the creation of beautiful objects were Eileen's driving force. It was her lacquer work, learnt from a Japanese craftsman, that brought her to international attention. Her painstaking creations in the form of stunning high-gloss screens in glowing colours would eventually lead on to groundbreaking Art Deco designs for furniture. When war broke out in 1914, she became an ambulance driver for the French Army but seemed to tire of this fairly quickly, and returned to her design work.

Once the war was over Eileen opened the Galerie Jean Désert on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré, selling stylish modern pieces to the cognoscenti. Now launching into interior design, her work became noticed as she continued to produce her lacquered screens and created for a private client such pieces as her famous chubby Bibendum Chair, her red lacquer serpent chair and the burnished Pirogue boat-bed. Art Deco furniture was the privilege of the rich. She collaborated on carpet design with her friend Evelyn Wyld, an architect and designer, with whom she had made research trips into the Sahara. Evelyn Wyld, with Elizabeth Eyre de Lanux (another architect and associate of Le Corbusier), then opened a carpet shop called "Deco" in Cannes, which would fail during the Depression, as did Eileen's Paris gallery. She was now beginning to be respected by other avant-garde designers and was asked to exhibit her work at the Salon des Artistes Décorateurs in Paris in 1923. In the world of Art Deco design, Eileen had arrived.

She now took as her lover a clever Romanian, Jean Badovici, editor of an important avant-garde

A LONG LIFE, PAGE 32



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L'Etoile de Mer and terraced garden. Below: terrace and bar by Thomas Rebutato (1949). ©Manuel Bougot – FLC/ADAGP.



A LONG LIFE, FROM PAGE 31

magazine *L'Architecture Vivante*. It was through Badovici that Eileen first met Le Corbusier, as Badovici was both his friend and promoter. In the early years of the 1920s, on what was then called the Riviera by an ever-growing number of young, glamorous, sun-loving expatriates, Badovici decided he wanted a holiday home on the sea near Menton and that she should design it. A devoted Eileen set out to find a suitable site, eventually deciding on narrow terraces high above the Mediterranean, overlooking the bay of Roquebrune-Cap-Martin and below the railway line which runs along the coast. The house she built there, the *maison en bord de mer*, among the wild myrtle, lavender and rosemary, was her first attempt at architecture and would be Modernist rather than Art Deco.

Up to that point the most important Modernist villa on the coast had been the Villa Noailles, above Hyères, in the Var, designed by the French architect Robert Mallet-Stevens for Charles and Marie-Laure de Noailles. Evelyn's design, built

between 1926 and 1929 and worked on with Badovici, would take Modernism a step further, embracing Le Corbusier's idea of "New Beauty", a free-flowing plan. Instead of supporting walls she used pilotis, or reinforced concrete columns. The open plan living area, on a raised floor, is in the central part of the house, with screen partitions that could be moved to create alternative spaces. There are two bedrooms, with all rooms having access to a balcony. A spiral staircase of glass and metal rises through the centre of the house to that obligatory element of modernism, a flat roof or solarium. The kitchen is at one side, away from the main space and simple in the extreme. In this L-shaped house, floor to ceiling windows embrace the sun and the sparkling sea beneath. For her Mediterranean home Eileen designed eminently functional, yet stylish, furniture and fittings. Drawers and tables extended, tucked in or folded out as needed, so as to be flexible and moveable. It was for E1027 she designed the celebrated Transat Chair, an elegant lounge designed to be used as a deckchair. She felt that "human

needs" should guide the designer.

The name of the house, E1027, became a symbol of her relationship with Badovici at that time: E for Eileen, 10 and 2 representing Badovici's initials as they come in the alphabet, 7 for Gray.

Covered in crisp white stucco, with its balconies and terraces edged with slim metal handrails, the whole villa had the shape of a small ship sailing along its narrow terrace above the sea. She wished all to be calm and quiet, stencilling on the walls such requests as *entrez lentement* and *défense de rire*.

She spent several summers at the villa but the idyll of E1027 came to a conclusion when Eileen and Badovici ended their relationship, although they would remain friends of sorts. By 1932 she had left to build herself another Modernist house, allowing Badovici to continue to use E1027. On a plot near the village of Castallar high above Menton and adjoining an old farmhouse it was, like her Roquebrune house, modern, simple, space saving and light-embracing. She called it *Tempe à Pailla*. During the years of the Second World War, Eileen, as an enemy alien and like so many others in her situation, was sent away from Castallar further into the countryside. Later, in 1956, she would sell *Tempe à Pailla* to the British artist Graham Sutherland.

It was in 1937 that Corbusier arrived for a first visit and his admiration for the villa developed into the obsession which would haunt him until the end of his days.

With Badovici's permission, and the streak of eccentricity that was so much part of his character, in 1938 he began to paint eight large, mainly lewd, coloured frescoes on the stark, white interior walls of the house (below). Photographs show him, adding insult to injury, by painting in the nude displaying his badge of honour – the scar of a shark bite on his bare thigh. When Eileen heard of the murals she



E1027's guest bedroom; mural by Le Corbusier ©Manuel Bougot – FLC/ADAGP.

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was distressed, calling them “a violation” and “an act of vandalism”. She demanded that Badovici write to Le Corbusier threatening to remove them. This was never done. Already feeling estranged from the villa, Eileen would not return.

In 1952, still bewitched by Eileen’s villa, Le Corbusier built a small timber cabin, less than 4 square meters, above E1027 on land given to him by Thomas Rebutato. This was Le Cabanon, which became famous in its own right. Rebutato owned a small *guinguette* nearby – L’Étoile de Mer – and had become close friends with Le Corbusier, who had decorated the *guinguette* with paintings and coloured panels. When Badovici died in 1956, Le Corbusier added a rather rickety,

painted two-storey holiday hostel next to the *guinguette*. Seen from the sea this construction, looming above E1027 as it does, demeans the purity of the villa below.

In 1960 he persuaded a friend, Madame Marie-Louise Schelbert of Zurich, to buy E1027 as a holiday home, himself becoming involved with its care and contents. Thus began a spell of twenty-two years when the villa was, to a certain degree, looked after. During this time Le Corbusier would never acknowledge Eileen as the architect, letting it be assumed that E1027 was his own creation. In August 1965 he went down to the coast below for his daily swim and there, scrambling out of the water onto the rocks, he died, probably as a result of a heart attack.

Above him E1027 gazed down passively.

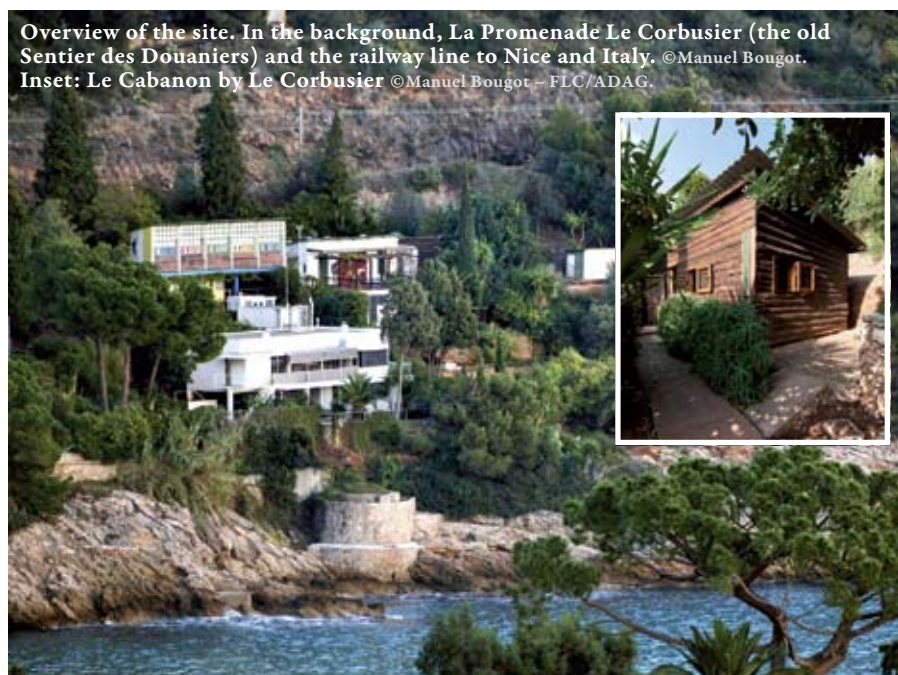
The true decline began when Madame Schelbert died in 1982 and she left the villa to her doctor, Peter Kagi, who removed the furniture to Switzerland, selling it ten years later in Monaco. In 1996 Kagi was murdered, in a dispute over money, by one of the many itinerant labourers he would bring to the house.

E1027 deteriorated quickly, vandalised by squatters, neither the French nor Irish governments showing any interest in its preservation. It was not until 1999 that benevolent groups, one in New York, the Conservatoire du Littoral, backed by the town of Roquebrune-Cap-Martin and the French government began to realise to what extent Eileen’s villa was worth restoring for posterity. The fact that, at this time, her talent was being rediscovered and celebrated could only have encouraged the project. Eileen had retired to her elegant Paris apartment many years previously. Here she led a reclusive life, still producing new ideas and projects and quietly amused at the revived interest in her work. In 1978 she died, aged 98, and her ashes were buried in Père Lachaise cemetery. Now, at auction, her creations command the highest prices for Art Deco furniture in the world. Perhaps this too would have amused her. ■

Open until Oct 31st, visit Villa E1027 just as Eileen Gray left it. By reservation only; tickets €15/person. Contact Cap Moderne, the organisation which has taken E1027 under its wing: capmoderne.com

©Maureen Emerson, author of *Escape to Provence* and the forthcoming *Living and Loving on the Riviera*.

Overview of the site. In the background, La Promenade Le Corbusier (the old Sentier des Douaniers) and the railway line to Nice and Italy. ©Manuel Bougot. Inset: Le Cabanon by Le Corbusier ©Manuel Bougot – FLC/ADAG.





The cats of La Romieu

BY MARGO LESTZ



ONE of the main tourist attractions in the medieval village of La Romieu in southwest France, with its population of 500 (not including cats), is the abundance of felines. They sun themselves on ledges or peer out from windows, charming those who pass by; they are always well behaved, never causing any problems, and remain in the same place because ... they are made of stone.

These not-so-furry felines are the work of artist, Maurice Serreau who retired in this quiet village in the Midi-Pyrenees region. One day in the early 1990s, he decided to sculpt a cat. Then he made another and another. He made a cat for the butcher, the baker, and if there was a candlestick maker, I'm sure he got one too. Monsieur Serreau just

couldn't stop himself from making cats and soon they were appearing all around the village. When people began to ask why the town had so many cat sculptures, he explained that he had been inspired when he overheard a grandmother telling her grandchildren about a legend. It was the legend of Angeline and her cats that saved the village, and it goes something like this ...

In 1338, a little girl called Angeline was born in La Romieu. While she was still very young, both her parents died suddenly and a kind couple that lived nearby adopted her. As Angeline grew, so did her love for cats and there were always a few that followed her wherever she went.

During this time, two years of severe weather caused a famine and the townspeople



Photos: La Romieu Office of Tourism

were hungry. They searched everywhere for anything that was edible. Soon the village cats started to disappear as the starving villagers resorted to eating cat stew. Angeline was horrified and begged her adoptive parents to let her hide a couple of cats in the attic. They couldn't say no to the poor child. She had already lost her parents and they didn't want her to suffer the loss of her beloved cats as well, so they agreed. Since Angeline hid one male and one female, her kitten collection increased steadily.

Finally, to everyone's relief, the weather improved, crops flourished, and food was again plentiful. But because there hadn't been any cats to patrol the village streets, the rats had overrun the town and were ravaging the crops. The residents held a meeting to try to find a solution and everyone was surprised but delighted when Angeline announced that she had twenty cats (as the cat population in her attic had increased tenfold) and they would be more than happy to help with the rat

problem. All were in agreement and the cats were let loose in the village. The rats soon disappeared and the crops were no longer threatened.

Village life returned to normal and Angeline went back to helping her adoptive parents work in the fields, always surrounded by her cats. But as she grew older, something very strange happened to Angeline: people say her face began to take on a feline appearance – even her ears transformed into pointed cat ears. A bust of Angeline (inset), looking very puss-like, can be seen on one of the buildings in the village.

Like Angeline's kitties of long ago, it's Serreau's cats that are helping La Romieu today. His cat sculptures have become a popular tourist attraction – La Romieu is part of the Camino de Santiago routes – bringing in much needed revenue to the village coffers. ■

"The Legend of the Cats" is property of the Tourist Office of La Romieu (la-romieu.com) and is used with permission. For more, see curiousrambler.com

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DANS LE CADRE

ART



AT the Musée International d'Art Naïf in Nice, lurking in lush gardens on the hill behind the Radisson Hotel, the big free-hanging canvas painting *Tempête à Nice* by local artist Jonathon Brown has become one of the public's favourites. So now that the City of Nice is set on the long, slightly unlikely, campaign towards persuading UNESCO to list the Promenade des Anglais and the Baie des Anges as a World Heritage Site, it's maybe not surprising

that they have asked the Scotsman back to contribute to various events focussed on the city's most famous aspect.

Jonathon created *Tempête à Nice* (left) while he was artist-in-residence at the museum in 2010, and was inspired partly by the terrible storms at that time and by Matisse's picture of the same name.

This time his residency, which began on May 13th, involves the creation of two vast murals in the upstairs gallery – each about twenty metres long, to be devoted to a theme celebrating the Prom and the bay. Work will progress until June 12th when there will be a *vernissage* in the evening and a viewing of the special exhibition elsewhere in the museum, on the same theme. Jonathon told the *Reporter* earlier in the month: “I haven't yet decided quite what to do. Frédéric Lanovsky is doing

some colourful sculpted Promenaders, so I'm going to work in black-and-white, which I love. The two walls face each other, rather the way the Prom faces the sea, so there's an idea there. And I can sense that there's some sort of confrontation of the materialistic Prom and the natural beauty of the bay. Negresco meets Neptune? I'll probably gaze at the walls for two days before starting – but I have to start by May 16th, because that's the *Nuit européenne des Musées*. People will mill around and not be too happy with all that blank space.”

Even more extraordinary is the fate of this “happening”: the exhibition ends on October 4th and the murals, protected by a special enduis, will be painted over, never to be seen again till some curious curator decides to reveal them afresh. “It all feels like a Sixties happening, really,” added Jonathon. “Ephemeral, like the light glancing on the sea. But then in October I have another plan for the gardens of the museum, where I shall build a sculpture of the Prom. Watch that space!” ■

For more see villaparasol.com/mdan

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FRINGE BENEFITS

BY JAMIE IVEY

NORMALLY I have my hair cut by a *pompier*. My wife says you can pretty much tell by the end result. By this she means it's evident that I have been attacked by someone more used to cutting people out of crashed cars with industrial machinery than ensuring an even fringe. I'm not a demanding client and quite appreciate that as a volunteer *pompier*, my hairdresser often has other things on her mind, so I keep going back.

A week ago my regular flymo was scheduled for the same time as a guest appearance from a touring Beaulieu-sur-Mer stylist. As usual, the tiny hairdressers was full. It was 9:45am, the moment of the blow dry for the shopkeepers of the village. One by one they traipsed in, flicking through magazines, impatiently looking at their mobiles, in short, letting everyone know that for once in Provence, time was money. The visiting stylist might be from the Riviera, but he was also late. Graciously I ceded my place in the queue to three hard-pressed, hard-nosed shopkeepers who barely acknowledged my act of kindness.

Hence I was the only one still waiting when Beaulieu-sur-Mer's finest arrived. And what an entrance. A chair came spinning through the door first, an enormous reclining leather contraption,

with straps, armrests and headrests springing out at unusual angles. Next the entourage, for Serge (as we will call him to protect his identity) did not travel alone. Instead he had three young, very pretty female acolytes to carry his bags, personal effects, and collection of miracle hair cures. Then there was Serge's pet, a miniature pig. With a squeal and caper, the animal cantered in on his diamond studded lead, nosing up to the salon's moggy cat. On the other end of the lead was first a cloud of overpowering aftershave, and then Serge, skintight white jeans, all year tan, big jewels and air kisses.

"*Mes amis*," he announced in a camp voice to the assembled ladies and me, "Who is first?"

The summer season had just begun in the village. Streets which had been empty all winter were beginning to flow with a constant stream of tourists. Expensive cars purred past on the road outside. The shopkeepers could smell money in the air, and even a chance to sample Serge's 3-month straight hair serum wasn't going to keep them any longer in the salon. Instead there was me, the sacrificial lamb, presented to this God of Hairdressing to do with as he pleased.

Serge looked me up and down, noting the Gap jeans, soiled from work in the garden, and my old, frayed-at-the-collar shirt, dating from the previous decade when I used to work as a lawyer in London. He'd been told that our village was the St Tropez of inland Provence, a land of plenty, where an enterprising stylist could make a fortune in a day. The pig squealed in sympathy and, for a moment, I thought

Serge and entourage were about to turn on their heels.

"Your first proper appointment is not for 10 minutes," lied the *pompier*, "but Jamie's keen to see what you can do." She gave me an imploring look and I nodded.

Serge gestured to the seat, and it began. "A head massage, sir?" said acolyte Number 1.

"Nails sir?" said Number 2.

"Why not?" I agreed as I was simultaneously buffed and shiatsued. This part I have to admit was heavenly.

Number 3 then did the hair washing, before Number 1 took over for the cut, a very neat efficient little trim. Serge meanwhile stood outside the salon, smoking a cigarette and talking on his mobile. I assumed I was beneath him. I couldn't have been more wrong. Instead he was taking an artistic pause and working himself up for the big moment – the blow dry.

Now Serge does a very special kind of blow-drying. He doesn't believe in chairs. Instead, his clients assume a position on all fours, whilst Serge leaps around them with an industrial strength blower, shouting a series of climatic, and finally orgasmic, self-congratulating phrases: "*Mais oui*, it so beautiful, yes, yes, oh yes."

And so there I was, squat on the floor with the firm hands of Serge pushing my face increasingly closer to the slavering nose of a miniature pig. Meanwhile, the three ever-attentive, short-skirted, long-legged acolytes took up prostrate positions on either side of me, to study Serge at work. People somewhere, I reflected, surely paid good money for this type of perversion. After ten minutes, of preening, petting and blowing, it was over. The pig licked my face, Serge climaxed, the acolytes quivered with appreciation and I made an instant resolution to stick to women in uniforms.

A decision reinforced moments later by the bill. ■

Jamie Ivey is the author of Ten Trees and a Truffle Dog and runs the website provenceguru.com



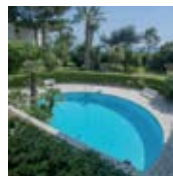
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APRÈS CANNES

CÔTE CULTURE

BY DAN SEEGER

FILM: The creeping menace of artificial intelligence has been the handy fodder for cinematic science fiction at least as far back as that time HAL and Dave got into an argument about whether or not it was a good idea to open the pod bay doors. Besides the ready-made examination of the myriad of impacts from the exponential growth of technology, futuristic storytelling that stabs at artificial intelligence also gets at what it means to be human, best evidenced by Spike Jonze's recent stunner "Her". The directorial debut of novelist and screenwriter Alex Garland, "Ex Machina", is another worthy contribution to the ongoing onscreen debate.

The film, which opens in France June 3rd, begins with a corporate drone (Domhnall Gleeson) who wins an in-house contest to spend a week with his company's reclusive genius owner (Oscar Isaac, proving his excellent performance in the Coen brothers' "Inside Llewyn Davis" was no fluke). As it turns out, there's more to the reward than a stretch in the head honcho's pad. He's there to test the verisimilitude of the A.I. built into a comely robot (Alicia Vikander, with an assist from some slick CGI – computer-generated imagery). Garland builds the script with a novelist's sensibility for gradually built characters and nicely concealed plot turns, and his visual sense apes the crisp, clean

chilliness of Stanley Kubrick without ever seeming derivative. The ending drifts a bit, which winds up further highlighting some late storytelling chinks, but overall it's a winning first film for Garland as a director, infusing a hooky science fiction premise with gratifying reserves of intelligence.

BOOKS: A Nice resident who was born in Johannesburg, South Africa, author Adam Cruise (below) turns his



attention to a specific history of World War I for his second book (and first that expands beyond memoir). *Louis Botha's War* traces the leadership of the first prime minister of the Union of South Africa as he compelled the country's military to ally with the British against Germany while simultaneously dealing with heated insurrection mounted by his own

countrymen. "The war to end all wars" is well-covered territory, but Cruise has found an intriguing avenue to expand the parameters of a historic story everyone thinks they already know.

ART: For some years now, a group of friends and artists, locally based but from diverse and global backgrounds, have put together *L'Art du Coeur* exhibition – sculpture, painting, ceramic, photography, inspiration – in the beautiful 12th-century Chapelle des Penitents Blancs in Callian, in the Var.

Visit free from June 22nd to June 26th, 11h-18h, and you'll find this edition slightly distinct as four young local artists have been invited to join in the expo, bringing a freshness and a certain spirit of Renaissance of new talent.

There's a free afternoon workshop called "l'Expressions de L'Art" on June 24th for artists of all ages; and musical evenings, as varied as the works of art, include a jazz/opera concert June 23rd, 19h (tickets €5).

The stonewalls of the Chapelle des Penitents Blancs lend depth and richness to the collection of paintings and sculptures, and the musical evenings benefit from its wonderful acoustic qualities. The magical medieval village itself is perched high above the surrounding Provençal landscape and its winding streets offer the visitor many charms.

For more information email Molly Holt: lamdfall.molly@icloud.com or contact Sebastian Smith on 06 11 93 87 37. ■

A rosé by any other name

BY ALEX IGNATIEFF



THE Cannes Film Festival and Monaco Grand Prix, having graced us with their ever-exhausting whirl, remind us that it's time to watch the temperature rise and relax with a restorative glass of our region's most famous, important and delicious world beater – a glass of Provence rosé.

It was with these moments in

mind that I braved this year's *Salon des Vins de Provence* in search of the perfect glass for your summer. But, of course, nothing is ever that simple.

In a region that stretches from Marseille to Nice and the coast to the foothills of the Alps, clearly there will be climatic and geological difference to leave their

effect on the wines. The palette of grape varieties is equally diverse. Our classic five – Carignan, Cinsaut, Grenache, Mourvèdre and Tibouren – have been joined by Syrah, Cabernet and even Merlot. With some 600 winegrowers for whom 87.4% of their production is rosé, opinions on style and production methods are strong and varied. So no, there really is no such thing as a Provence rosé!

But all is not lost; I've highlighted a few of our favourites and their particular strengths.

Our quintessential “fluffy pink” is, oddly, the baby of two Grandees of Burgundy. Jacques Seysses and Aubert de Villaine took up the challenge of a southern vineyard in the late Eighties, and the result is Triennes in Nans-les-Pins, at the heart of Provence. To borrow their words, they make their wines the way we like to drink them. With rosé, their search is for freshness and aromas. Triennes rosé is a wonderfully fresh expression of Cinsaut (with a few friends) and perfect by the pool on hot summer's day.

By contrast Domaine Tempier in Bandol has always been the understated flag bearer of all things good and right in this most special terroir. Renowned for their very serious reds, their rosé is a wine of stature but shows a delicacy of touch and understanding that only reinforces their reputation. Mourvèdre and the Bandol soils are the secret here.

Working along the Coast, the trio of Château Sainte Marguerite, Château du Galoupet and Domaines Ott's Clos Mireille bear witness to the powerful influence of a cooling sea breeze. Spikes in temperature are moderated and this gentle respite allows a more delicate maturation encouraging cooler flavours and complexity.

A new find at the tradeshow was the organic estate of Domaine Le Loup Bleu in the shadow of Mont Sainte-Victoire. Marc and Sylvie Dubois ply their craft in the brilliant red soils under the striking swirling grey limestone monolith.



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Their Croix du Sud is a blend of Grenache and Carignan that is all fresh *argrumes* and very pleasant. The star is their Grenache Syrah blend Vol de Nuit that is softer and that bit more complex. They raise their wines on fine lees, which adds a creamy softness. In a region of stars, this is a fine representative.

To finish, the wines of three innovators. Firstly, Mirabeau is the product of a young Englishman, Stephen Cronk. Some six years ago Stephen packed up his baby blue *deux chevaux* van and moved his very understanding family south to Cotignac to make rosé. What else could he be expected to do with a homesick baby blue 2CV? Pure is his latest release and pure is what it is. Fresh strawberries leap from the glass and it evolves through a gamut of berries.

Sacha Lichine comes from the noblest of winemaking families. At the Château d'Esclans, he has rewritten the book on Provence rosé with his wood-aged Garrus, more reminiscent of a fine white Burgundy than a poolside quaffer. Using all the latest winemaking toys he not only bunch selects but with an optical sorter views every grape he picks. Whispering Angel is his more



orthodox take on a Provence rosé and of all the big boys I tasted at the wine show it stood out. Grenache brings weight and depth, Cinsault freshness and Rolle, the local white grape, just that little extra focus. A fine offering from a deservedly acclaimed property.

Finally, we couldn't talk about Provence without mentioning the Ott family. Now very tall poppies, with all that entails, they singlehandedly put Provence on the global map. And tasting their current offering at the opera in Aix, with François Ott the current mantle bearer, this is not without reason. But most importantly they sum up the diversity that is Provence. They are Domaines Ott precisely because they have three properties, the Château Romassan

in Bandol, Clos Mireille on the coast at La Londe-les-Maures and Château de Selle in Taradeau. Three *terroirs*, three different styles, but one pair of hands.

Cheers to the summer! ■

At L'Emporium du Vin we have compiled two offers to introduce the highlighted wines or explore the three sides of Domaines Ott. Visit emporiumduvin.com or call 04 93 49 27 01 for details.



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JULY

Fri 3 **LE LAVANDOU, MONACO (SWITZERLAND)**
Fri 4 **CAGNES SUR MER (HIPPODROME)**
Mon 6 **PORT FRÉJUS**
Thurs 9 **MARINES DE COGOLIN**
Fri 10 **LE LAVANDOU**
Sat 11 **CAGNES SUR MER (HIPPODROME)**
Sun 12 **BOULOURIS**
Mon 13 **AGAY, ANTIBES, BEAULIEU, BORMES-LES-MIMOSAS, CAGNES-SUR-MER, LA FIGUEIRETTE, GOLFE-JUAN, PORT FRÉJUS, ROQUEBRUNE CAP MARTIN, ST JEAN CAP FERRAT, ST LAURENT DU VAR, VILLEFRANCHE**
Tues 14 **CANNES (AZERBAIJAN), CAVALAIRE, JUAN-LES-PINS, MENTON, NICE, STE MAXIME ST RAPHAEL, ST TROPEZ**
Wed 15 **PORT GRIMAUD**
Fri 17 **LE LAVANDOU**
Sat 18 **CAGNES HIPPODROME, MONACO (BELGIUM),**
Mon 20 **PORT FRÉJUS**
Tues 21 **CAGNES HIPPODROME, CANNES (POLAND)**
Fri 24 **LE LAVANDOU**
Sat 25 **CAGNES HIPPODROME**
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Fri 31 **CAGNES HIPPODROME, LE LAVANDOU**

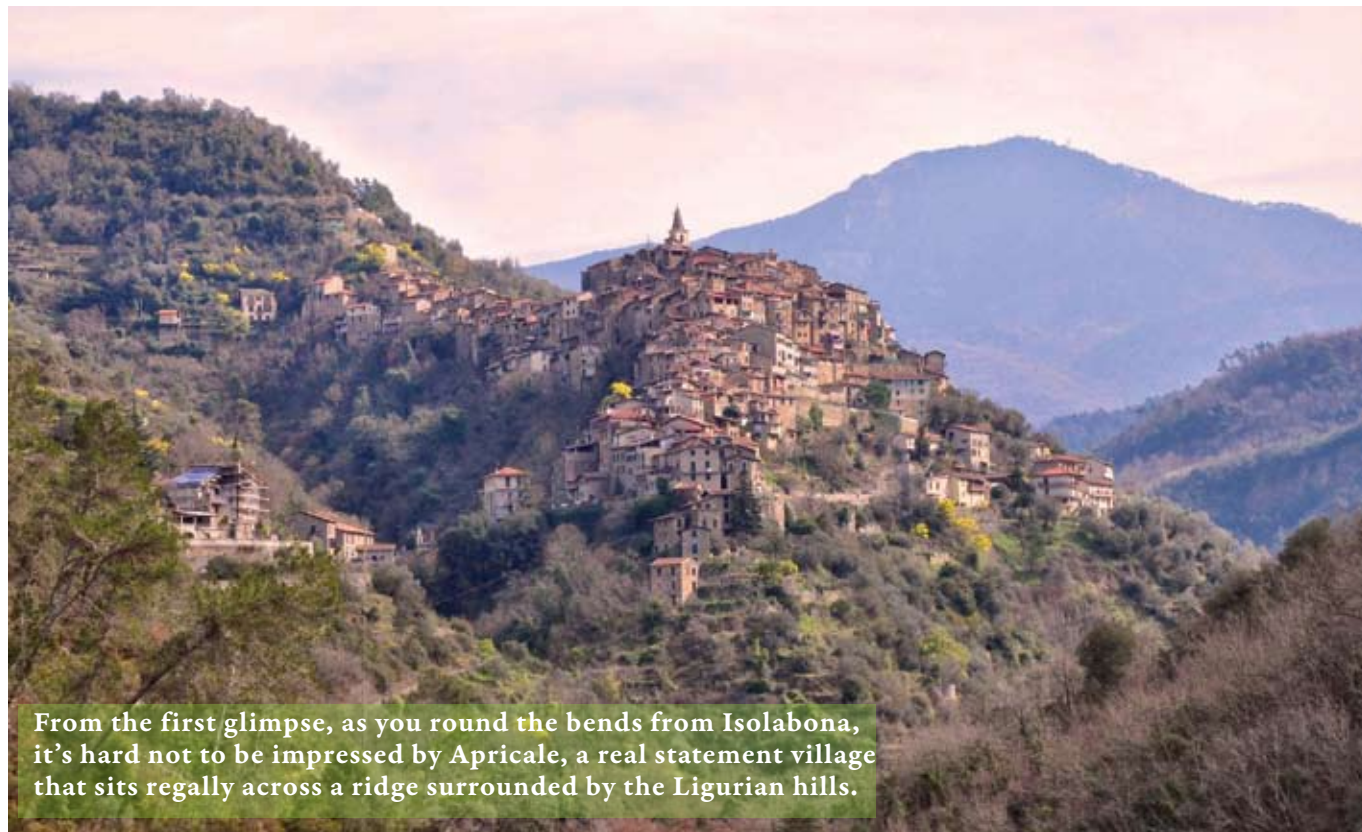
AUGUST

Sat 1 **MONACO (ITALY)**
Sun 2 **ST RAPHAEL**
Mon 3 **PORT FRÉJUS**
Thurs 6 **JUAN LES PINS**
Fri 7 **CANNES (UK), LE LAVANDOU**
Sat 8 **MONACO (SLOVAKIA), ST JEAN CAP FERRAT (NUIT VÉNÉTIENNE),**
Mon 10 **PORT FRÉJUS**
Fri 14 **AGAY, CAGNES-SUR-MER, LE LAVANDOU, ROQUEBRUNE CAP MARTIN, SAN REMO**
Sat 15 **CANNES (ARGENTINA), CAVALAIRE, JUAN-LES-PINS, MARINES DE COGOLIN, MENTON, NICE, STE MAXIME ST RAPHAEL, ST TROPEZ, THÉOULE**
Sun 16 **DRAMONT, EZE-BORD-DE-MER**
Mon 17 **PORT FRÉJUS**
Thurs 20 **JUAN LES PINS**
Fri 21 **LE LAVANDOU**
Sat 22 **CAGNES HIPPODROME**
Mon 24 **ANTIBES (SIESTA PLAGE), CANNES (FRANCE),**
Fri 28 **PORT FRÉJUS**
Mon 31 **LE LAVANDOU**

Plus many "private" fireworks whose details are kept secret, notably on Cap Ferrat. Errors and Omissions excepted – no liability taken for disappointments; check locally! Michael Healy ©Riviera Reporter. Reproduction authorized with credit: "Riviera Reporter".

LIGURIA LIKE A LOCAL: APRICALE

BY CHRISSIE MCCLATCHIE



From the first glimpse, as you round the bends from Isolabona, it's hard not to be impressed by Apricale, a real statement village that sits regally across a ridge surrounded by the Ligurian hills.

FOR this next instalment (see *Reporter* 167 and our website) in my series on the wonderful villages hidden in the hills of Liguria, I enlisted the help of my trusty partner in crime – and fellow Italophile – Michaela, who can always be relied upon to join in on a voyage of discovery across the border, especially when food and wine are involved. It's easy to see why we're such good friends! We didn't have to go very far.

Where is it?

Classified as one of Italy's most beautiful villages (*I Borghi più belli d'Italia*), the

medieval Apricale is a further 5 kilometres inland from Dolceacqua, along the SP63, the rather windy road which links Isolabona with Barjardo in the western Ligurian hinterland.

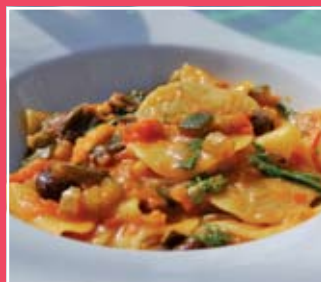
Why I love it

Overflowing with history, the commune was founded in the Bronze Age and boasts buildings dating back to the ninth century. The name Apricale is taken from the Latin word *Apricus*, which translates to something along the lines of "sun-drenched", a more than apt name as on

this particularly glorious afternoon we were able to enjoy an al fresco meal on a village terrace bathed spring sun.

Eat

I've heard lots of good things about the home cooking at La Favorita (lafavoritaapricale.com), which is just before the village itself when arriving on the road from Isolabona. We preferred to soak up some of the atmosphere inside the pedestrian streets of Apricale on this occasion, however, and were easily seduced by the setting at Apricale da



A mere €23 for a 3-course meal: artichoke and potato flan, pasta with a ragù of fresh veggies and a Michete di Dolceacqua tart, with a delicate mandarin and white chocolate sauce. Plus, there's a decent local wine list.

Delio (ristoranteapricale.it). It was quintessential Liguria, with a terrace overlooking the mountains down through the valley towards the coast.

Luckily the food lived up to the standard set by the location. The menu, despite being on the pricey side for Italy (€23 for three courses), was less than what we would have paid if we'd sat down for an equivalent meal in Nice. Local food, done to perfection using fresh ingredients; an artichoke and potato flan, pasta with a ragù of fresh veggies and a divine Michete di Dolceacqua tart, with a delicate mandarin and white chocolate sauce.

And of course there's an extensive local wine selection.

Look out for *pansarole*, a local specialty – and equivalent to the donutsque *ganses* you'd find in Nice during carnival: dough fried in olive oil and dusted in icing sugar, except here it's accompanied by a generous serving of zabaglione, a foamy egg-yolk custard combined with Marsala wine and sugar.

Drink

The Ligurian favourite, Rossese di Dolceacqua, is an appellation that includes the valleys surrounding Apricale. Local exponents to seek out include Danila Pisano (danilapisano.com), who established an organic farm in 1990. Today she produces both a Rossese wine from vineyards located across the valley towards the ridge-top village of Perinaldo and a pure olive oil made from the highly regarded indigenous variety, Taggiasca. Visit her inside the village at 64 Via Martiri.

Sadly, Apricale's rather novel microbrewery, Piccolo Birrifico, which you still find many references to, is no longer in operation.

Explore

Leave enough time to wander the maze-like alleys of the village leading to and from the sun-drenched piazza and

nearby ancient castle. Not only to discover the brightly painted doors and mosaics adorning the medieval walls, but also to work off your meal! Even in spring the streets are crowded with French day-trippers, so I can only imagine a weekend afternoon come mid-July.

Save the date

As with most Ligurian villages, Apricale plays host to a selection of traditional festivals throughout the year. The highlight of which is from September 8th -10th, for the annual Apricale Festival (apricale.org), when celebrating the pansarole takes centre stage.

Getting there

Car: Apricale is just over 50 kilometres from Nice, a scenic hour's drive. As with Dolceacqua, take the Ventimiglia exit on the A8, then cross through Ventimiglia town centre along Via Cavour to the coastal road to Bordighera. Follow the signposts inland to Dolceacqua along the Strada Provinciale 64 and continue straight through, direction Isolabona. From there, take the Strada Provinciale 63 to the right towards Apricale. The village itself is completely pedestrianised; however, there is ample parking outside.

Public Transport: You could always catch the train to Ventimiglia and then hail a taxi, but you'd be looking at the price of lunch (or more) in fares each way. Buses between Liguria's hillside villages are fairly irregular. If your Italian is better than mine, you can try to navigate the maze of timetables that is the Riviera Transporti website (rivieratransporti.it/ShowOrari.asp). ■

Chrissie McClatchie is an Australian wine specialist who has been living in Nice for the past seven years. You can follow her travels at rivieragrapevine.com or on Twitter @RivieraGrape

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we've got mail...



Photos: ©Jason Florio/MOAS

MESSAGE FROM MOAS

ON May 2nd, MOAS (Migrant Offshore Aid Station) launched its Search & Rescue mission to save migrants in the Mediterranean for this summer. In just three days, we were able to save 473 men, women and children.

On the Sunday afternoon the 20-strong crew aboard the *Phoenix*, including Camcopter operators, search and rescue professionals and medics, engaged in the first rescue. Less than 24 hours after leaving the Maltese harbour, we were able to assist 369 migrants, mainly from Eritrea. Among those rescued were pregnant women and more than 40 children, even babies. Early Monday morning, an additional 104 people were rescued with the assistance of the *Phoenix*.

Happily, we are not alone in this.

This year, the MOAS Search & Rescue vessel *Phoenix* runs in partnership with Médecins Sans Frontières/Doctors Without Borders (MSF) and people all over the world are contributing time, money and know-how to support the mission.

Anyone wishing to help can make a gift that saves lives: moas.eu/donate or you can also help to spread the word through the crowdfunding platform GivenGain. Please become an activist for MOAS: moas.givengain.org
Sasha Gainullin, MOAS Donor Relations

For more on MOAS, see page 16.

URINARY RETRACTION

I HAVE enjoyed reading *Riviera Reporter* once in a while when I come from Paris to Fayence. I am still shocked by your disgusting article about “bidons” [issue 168, page 34]. It is completely inappropriate.

Paul Berçot, Paris & Fayence

BBC WORLDWIDE... EXCEPT IN THE UK

CAN anyone explain this? When I am in France or anywhere else outside the UK I can consult the BBC worldwide website online. But when I am in Britain my access to the site is blocked and a message says, “This site is not accessible from the UK and is not funded by the licence fee.”

That makes no sense at all because it means that only those who do NOT pay the licence fee are allowed to access the site. Sometimes I despair!

Sarah Cummings, Aups, by email

BETTER SAT

OUR 80cm satellite dish would no longer cut it but the 1-metre plus high gain dish we had installed by HASEurope is working really well and others say it works wonderfully for them too. The signal from the satellite continues to go up and down but we still get excellent reception all the time.

J.K. Bird, Mouans Sartoux

BURIED “UP THERE”

WITH reference to your last cover photo, the Irish poet W.B. Yeats died at the Hotel Idéal Séjour in Menton on January 28, 1939, but in accordance with his wishes he was initially buried “up there” at Roquebrune-Cap-Martin. His remains were later transferred to County Sligo in Ireland in 1948 despite attempts by Roquebrune not to have them removed from the ossuary because by that time it was unsure that the transferred remains were indeed his.

Yeats was not the only literary figure to show a fondness for Roquebrune. The famous French author Romain Gary also lived there with his wife, the British author Lesley Blanch.

Marcel Wallais, by email

Star
letter

WHY VILLEFRANCHE?

IN your last issue you mentioned that the new cruise ship *Britannia* is expected to visit Villefranche regularly. It is a small town, so why there?

Hazel Eames, Golfe Juan

The bay of Villefranche is one of the world's deepest and is well sheltered. As the “superliner” *Britannia* is too big to berth quayside in most Riviera harbours, it is important for her to moor where passengers will not be not trapped onboard or on shore by bad weather.

As Villefranche is part way between Monaco and Nice, another selling point is that passengers can conveniently tour by train or bus in either direction. The landing quay has its own dedicated customs office, making entrance formalities much quicker and more convenient than in the busier ports. The views from the ship are very attractive also. RR

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LETTERS

GIVE ME A SIGN

I HEREBY submit two photos of genuine French village name signs. You couldn't make it up!
 Greg Elliott, by email



DOES IT FIGURE?

I TAKE issue with your claim that there are only 160,000 Brits living in France (issue 168, page 8). There are most certainly many more.

The subject was illustrated by a quick poll at a friend's barbecue not long ago. We were nine expats present but only three would have figured on any official statistics. I am self-employed in France, so my wife and myself were two of the three, as was her brother. The other 6 spend all or most of their time in France but for various reasons (pension considerations, tax, family priorities, property in the UK, detached jobs) still officially claim to be British residents. Everyone present knew more unofficial expat residents than official ones.

It is in the interest of any British resident below retirement age and not working in France to remain a British resident on paper for healthcare purposes because they do not have an automatic right to the French *Sécu* until they retire. That mounts up to a lot of people.

Official statistics for demographics any-

where are notoriously inaccurate because they can only count the readily visible. The numbers you quoted cannot be right.

James Wilton, Biot

The numbers are indeed the official ones given by the French National Statistics Institute (INSEE) and they are probably somewhat inaccurate but they also represent the number of expat residents that can be easily verified. The report claims 11, 976 live in the PACA region.

For marketing purposes, we have always had to resort to an educated guess. Based on experience, for the Côte d'Azur between Menton and Marseille and inland, we estimate 80-100,000 permanent English-speaking expats and a further 40-60,000 semi-permanent residents. That would put the national figure very much higher than INSEE quotes. Spain is a similar situation. Based on property ownership alone, the official Spanish figures for British expats can be multiplied by a factor of at least three. RR

BRITAIN MORE LIKE FRANCE? OH NO!

BEFORE the general election George Osborne warned that Britain would become
LETTERS, PAGE 46

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LETTERS, FROM PAGE 45

like France if we voted Labour rather than Conservative. He could have picked a better argument. As residents we all know that France is far from perfect – but neither is Britain. Let's compare what Britain becoming more like France could mean.

Young people would leave university without the massive debt that weighs upon so many British students for years or even decades after graduation. University tuition fees would be 64 times lower thereby providing university education for the brightest as opposed to only those who could pay.

An average family food shop would cost less – £119 in France compared with £137 in Britain for a supermarket trolley of similar items. Most other consumer items would cost less too, as would rent.

Job prospects would be worse because British unemployment is indeed lower – at least statistically. But if we factor in the 800,000 “zero hours contracts” the figures appear much closer. Some Britons in employment work two low-paid jobs just to meet their essential bills but this is very rare in France. The term “working poor” would become almost meaningless if Britain was more like France. There are poor in France but they are the unemployed, not the ones with jobs.

Unemployment would be higher but the minimum wage and unemployment benefits would be higher also.

Child poverty would no longer be one of the worst in the industrialised world. School meals would be much healthier. Childcare would be 2.5 times less expensive.

Instead of waiting days or weeks, people could see their GP much more quickly – sometimes even the same day. When

admitted to hospital they would not be forced to endure the indignity of mixed wards along with dozens of other patients, some of whom die in public view while being cared for by staff that often don't speak their language. Patients would wait only weeks for common operations such as hip replacements that the British currently wait months or even years for surgery. Cancer and coronary illness death rates would be measurably lower.

The British public would be healthier. Two Britons in three are overweight or obese – the figure is one in two for France.

The workweek would be shorter and Britons would have more leisure time. They would enjoy proper lunch breaks rather than wolfing down a quick snack in a few minutes before returning to work. They would have 8 more days off annually to enjoy with their family. Few would need to work into very old age. Life expectancy would be longer and retirement would come four years earlier while death would come two years later.

If Britain was more like France most roads would be in much better condition and there would be no road tax. Public transport would be half the price and function much more efficiently.

Everything isn't better in France as we all know. Traffic deaths are higher, customer service is worse, there is far too much needless bureaucracy and more business tax.

On a flippant note, there are eight times fewer Starbucks in France than in Britain and Six Nations Rugby wins are also far fewer. Britain does better there at least.

Mr Osborne feels that Britons should not want to be more like the French. A look at the two lifestyles makes me question why?
Keith Rowell, St Raphael, by email.

SEAT OF YOUR PANTS

YOU have quite adequately explained in previous issues the considerable disadvantages for many British businesses and for expats if Britain were to leave the EU.

Following the general election results it would be judicious to look at some hard facts relative to the political choices made by the electorate on May 7th.

In order to help win the election, the Prime Minister was manoeuvred into promising a EU referendum which he did not wish but is now obliged to hold, thereby making our futures as expats somewhat uncertain in the interim. Yet the ruling Conservative Party was not the choice of the majority of the British electorate. If the number of seats in the House of Commons was proportional to the number of votes cast for each party, the Conservatives would still hold more seats than any other single party but would not hold anything like a majority.

The British electoral system is perverse and this has served different parties well at different times. In Scotland only half the votes cast on May 7th went to the SNP, yet the Scottish Nationalists hold all but three of the 56 Scottish seats in Westminster. UKIP got 4 million votes in England and Wales but have only one MP. The Greens obtained more than a million votes but also have only one MP. So with more than 12% of the popular vote, UKIP holds only of 0.15% of the seats, as does the Green party. Is that how “the mother of democracy” should work?

The fact is that almost 2 voters in 3 (64%) did not vote Conservative yet it's the elected 36% that will decide our future in Europe. Mr Cameron remains in Downing Street legitimately but against popular opinion thanks to an archaic non-proportional electoral system that resembles that of only one other major nation. Ironically, that nation is France where a president elected by a majority can find himself toothless faced, with a hostile Chamber of Deputies which might hold power thanks to a similarly skewed system.
Graham H. Willis, Nice, by email

WRITE TO US: Letters to the Editor can be sent by post (see page 50) or email: info@rivierareporter.com. Unless specifically marked “not for publication”, letters may be published in our Letters pages and may also be added to our website forum. Names are withheld when requested but please note anonymous letters will not be considered.

june

AMIAc

Tues June 2: Carlton Hotel beach buffet. Reservation obligatory, forms from secretary Doug Attwood 04 92 97 50 72. For more info, see amiac.org

POLITICAL WINE

Wed June 3, 18h30-20h30: Riviera Chapter of Democrats Abroad's monthly event at La Canne à Sucre, (11 Promenade des Anglais, Nice). All Americans are invited to join us as we listen to a brief presentation by one of our members before engaging in thoughtful discussions. No formal cost but we ask that you support our host by ordering at least one drink during the event. Please RSVP (even "maybe") to dafrance.riviera@gmail.com. We hope to see you there!

SUNNY BANK OPEN HOUSE

Thurs June 4 & Thurs July 2: Books, bric-a-brac, posh paraphernalia and light lunch. Sat June 20 & Sat July 18: Books, bric-a-brac, posh paraphernalia and 2-course lunch. At the Grange (815 chem Gourettes, Mouans-Sartoux). And of course the library is open EVERY Thursday as usual (bric-a-brac and books). Tel: 04 93 47 94 20 - sunny-bank.org

RIVIERA INTERNATIONAL SINGERS

Fri June 6 & Sat June 7; 20h: Say it with a song! For your entertainment, Riviera International Singers present their summer concerts at Mougins School (615 Ave du Maurice Donat). A little light opera, some Gershwin and classic favourites from a well-known musical to liven your evening. Entrance: Adults €10 (includes a free glass of wine); children under-12 €5. Part of the proceeds from the concerts will be donated to a charitable organization. For more information, please contact Astrid on tel. 06 17 81 15 08 or email astrid.najar@wanadoo.fr. See riviera-international-singers.com

ROSE GARDEN CONCERTS, NICE



July 15-Aug 14, 21h: The Académie Internationale d'été de Nice offers 13 concerts in the magical setting of the cloister and the rose garden of Cimiez. Entry €29-40. Highlights;

Sat July 15: Opening concert with the Orchestre Régional de Cannes Provence Alpes Côte d'Azur.

Fri July 24: 100% Women.

Wed July 25: Gala & Elegance.

Sat Aug 1: Simply Mozart.

Fri Aug 7 Celtic Evening.

Wed Aug 14: Final Français.

See academie-internationale-ete-nice.com

INTERNATIONS

Fri June 7, 19h: InterNations Event at The Ellington Hotel
Thurs June 18, 19h: InterNations Event at the Rooftop of AC Marriott. Resident DJ and tapas later. See: InterNations.org

INAUGURAL MONACO US ECONOMIC FORUM

Mon June 8-Fri June 12: The Monaco US Business Roundtable, co-founded by Mike Powers and Susan Feaster, aims to build stronger relations between the fields of culture, education, government, business and sport. The forum, under the High Patronage of H.S.H. Prince Albert, hopes to promote "The Importance of Sustained Dialogue Between the Western and Eastern Worlds: A Public Peace Process". For more information, contact President Susan Feaster at MonacoUS.BRT@gmail.com

BA VAR

Tues June 9: Summer Soirée and boules competition at La Motte.
Fri June 12: Vendange lunch, Lorgues. See baofthevar.com or call 06 33 01 03 48.

BASEBALL & BBQ

Thurs June 11, 18h-20h: MonacoUSA & the Riviera Business Club welcome special guests Monaco Us Business Roundtable for an evening of baseball & BBQ on the Stardeck at Starsnbars Monaco. Happy hour Baseball-themed games and prizes, special mixed grill plate €16, (restaurant menu also available), DJ and dancing. Networking event, random seating. All nationalities welcome. No entrance fee. See starsnbars.com

FILM SCREENING

Fri June 12, 18h30-21h: Hosted by the Riviera Chapter of Democrats Abroad at Le Comptoir de l'imaginaire, 10 rue Biscarra, Nice, the screening of "California State of Mind: The Legacy of Pat Brown." This will follow our annual election of DAF Riviera chapter officers. Please RSVP to dafrance.riviera@gmail.com. See democratsabroad.org/group/france-riviera

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY TEA

Fri June 12, 16h: The Association France-Grande-Bretagne Cannes hosts their celebration of the Queen's official birthday with tea and cakes plus a toast with champagne at the prestigious Hotel Carlton on the Croisette Cannes (valet service available). Tickets €23. Reservations 04 93 97 86 32 or 04 93 49 37 01.

MAKING GARDENS: A ROMP THROUGH HISTORY

Fri June 12, 19h30: "Making Gardens: A Romp Through History ... An Examination of the Contemporary and a Peek at the Future of Garden Design" presented by Diarmuid Gavin, Garden Designer at the Princess Grace Irish Library, 1st floor, 9 rue Princesse Marie-de-Lorraine, Monaco. Entry: €10/person. Reservations (obligatory): Tel +377 93 50 12 25 or pglib@monaco.mc. See pglib@monaco.mc

THE GOD PARTICLE

Sat June 13: 9:30-13h: "The God Particle" at Holy Trinity Cannes. A half-day seminar of the Higgs Boson discovery. Looking at the background, how it fits into the Standard Model of Particle Physics and how that shows us that the Higgs is indeed aptly named, as it points us towards an intelligent designer – God. The seminar will be geared towards non-specialists who know little or nothing about the particles that make up the world around us and how they fit together. Lunch provided. Contact 04 93 94 54 61 to reserve.

RENOIR & THE AMERICAN CLUB OF THE RIVIERA

Sat June 13: A guided visit of Renoir's last house & its gardens in Cagnes-sur-Mer, conducted by the author of *The French Riviera and Its Artists*, followed by a book-signing. Reception and gourmet lunch nearby at the port of Cros de Cagnes. For further information please see americanclubriviera.com or contact Burton Gintell on 06 20 40 11 28.

CANCER SUPPORT GROUP 06 OPEN DAY

Sat June 13, 10h-16h: "You are not alone" at The Grange in Mouans Sartoux (815 Chemin Gourettes), which has kindly been made available by Sunnybank. Come and find out about our range of services. The day includes taster sessions and talks about counselling, psychotherapy, art therapy, juicing and nutrition, sophrology and mindful meditation. Plus refreshments and lunch. Thinking about volunteering? Come and find out more. More on Cancer Support 06 on page 17. Contact Michele Fraser at cancersupport06@gmail.com or 06 70 52 12 44.

ENSEMBLE VOCAL SYRINX CONCERT

Sat June 13, 20h30: The Ensemble Vocal Syrinx (EVS) together with celebrated organist Stéphane Eliot. Programme includes an original selection of Choral and Brass music rarely presented together: Giovanni Gabrieli: *Sacrae Symphoniae*; Anton Bruckner: *Mass in E Minor*; Ralph Vaughn Williams: *Fantasia* on a theme by Thomas Tallis; Bob Chilcott – *A Little Jazz Mass*. EVS was established in 1992 and is made up of around 40 experienced choristers of different nationalities. Musical direction provided by Francesca Tosi; Organist Stéphane Eliot received gold medals in Organ and in Improvisation at the conservatoires of Marseille and Paris.

5TH LES FEMMES DE L'ECONOMIE AWARDS

Tues June 16: With Patricia Ricard as Godmother at the Novotel in Monaco. These awards are an excellent opportunity of visibility for any women in business. See femmes-economie.com

VISIT VILLA LES CAMÉLIAS

Fri June 19: Visit the Villa Les Camélias at Cap d'Ail with the Commonwealth Club of the Riviera. Details on commonwealthclubriviera.com

2ND EDITION LADIES' RALLY VINTAGE CAR CHARITY EVENT

Sun Sept 20: Created by Martine Ackermann as a glamorous and entertaining women-only fundraiser, last year's inaugural ride sold out in only one day with 70 ladies driving fabulous vintage cars. All the benefits go to Child CARE Monaco (childcaremonaco.com); see page 15 for more information.

For this year's "White Glam" rally, which Martine says "will be full of surprises", there are three options to sign up (price are per person):

The Classic: Like last year, you will have a vintage car. Limited places available. €330.

My Own: As some of you requested, you can BYOVC (Bring Your Own Vintage Car). Please contact Martine soonest to provide details of your car. €290.

The Royal: Driven like a queen, this option allows you to enjoy wine and champagne during the day! €330.

Sign up before June 30 and get a €30 discount. Places are limited so Martine asks you to email your inscriptions as soon as possible to: childcare@monaco.mc

INTERNATIONAL CLUB OF THE RIVIERA

Sat June 20: Summer Solstice Party. For more details see internationalclub.fr

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF YOGA

Thurs June 21, 9h: "Breathe As One" at the Parc de la Colline du Château in Nice (see page 4 for details) with Nico Luce teaching. We welcome all ages and all levels, and you can stay and picnic afterwards. It promises to be a really great day with live music, a DJ, an opera singer, free massages as well as free coconut water. Register online at breatheasone.eu

L'ART DU COEUR 2015

Mon June 22-Fri June 26, 11h-18h: A free exhibition of sculpture, painting, ceramic, photography, inspiration in the beautiful 12th-century Chapelle des Penitents Blancs in Callian, in the Var, put together by a group of friends and artists, locally based but from diverse and global backgrounds. This edition welcomes four young local artists, bringing a freshness and a certain spirit of Renaissance of new talent. There's a free afternoon workshop called "l'Expressions de l'Art" on June 24th to which artists of any age are welcome. And musical evenings, as varied as the works of art, ranging from classical to jazz to rock, are on the program including a jazz/opera concert June 23rd, 19h (tickets €5). For more email Molly Holt: lamdfall.molly@icloud.com or contact Sebastian Smith on 06 11 93 87 37.

july**LES NUITS GUITARES - BEAULIEU SUR MER**

Thurs July 2 to Sat July 4, 19h30: "Les Nuits Guitares" is a not-to-be-missed event for guitar lovers. Since the festival was created in 2000, it has hosted nationally and internationally renowned artists in the delightful setting of the Jardin de l'Olivier (rue Jean Bracco). See lesnuitsguitares.com

FREE CONCERT NICE

Thurs July 2, 18h30: Free concert Gracenotes Choir (Ireland) at Holy Trinity, Nice (11 rue de la Buffa). See anglican-nice.com

INTERNATIONS

Fri July 3, 19h: InterNations Event. See: InterNations.org

AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE DAY STREET PARTY

Sat July 4, from 18h: Celebrate at Starsnbars Monaco. See starsnbars.com

INDEPENDENCE DAY & THE AMERICAN CLUB OF THE RIVIERA

Sat July 4: A celebration of American Independence Day. A fun and musical American Cook-Out in a private villa overlooking the bay of Villefranche. For further information please see americanclubriviera.com or contact Vaughn Duck on 06 12 30 41 28.

COMMONWEALTH CLUB OF THE RIVIERA

Wed July 8: Picnic on the beach at Cannes. Details on commonwealthclubriviera.com

AMIAc

Wed July 8: Venue to be decided. Please contact Doug Attwood 04 92 97 50 72 for details. For more info, see amiac.org

INTERNATIONAL CLUB OF THE RIVIERA

Thurs July 9: Golf Club/ Dinner Outing. For details see internationalclub.fr

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