

# THE RIVIERA REPORTER

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# FESTIVAL SUP NIGHT



## CANNES

### 1<sup>ST</sup> NIGHT SUP RELAY RACE IN THE WORLD

100 KM ALONG THE FAMOUS CROISSETTE, FROM THE PALAIS DES FESTIVALS TO GRAND HYATT CANNES HOTEL MARTINEZ  
ARRIVAL IN THE MIDDLE OF THE VIEUX PORT AMONG THE BIGGEST YACHTS

**FRIDAY 11<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER**

**DEPARTURE 7:00 PM**

**ARRIVAL SATURDAY 12<sup>TH</sup> 10:00 AM**

**INSCRIPTION TEAM OR SOLO**

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Conception graphique Rami Balair © Studio PRK - Photo : © J. Kelagayan/Abrocadabra studio



## In this issue ...

# The Insider

I LONG to be the person who flies by the seat of her pants, who goes with the flow and gets a Carpe Diem tattoo on her forearm, a visual reminder to live life to the fullest and leave the worrying to others.

I can be this person (minus the body ink) for like an hour, and then I'm exhausted, fretting that I'll lose my organisational skills as the minutes of my newly-mindful life tick by.

Is there a secret to being laid-back or making the most of your days on earth?

I look at this issue and see some remarkable expats who maximize their time in their adopted country.

Trixie Buckel (page 16) is resident at Victoria, the retirement home in Mouans-Sartoux that has close affiliation with Sunny Bank. Trixie, iPad in tow, teaches English to the French staff at Victoria. She's 97.

Ivar O'Brien founded the Riviera Cricket Club 25 years ago (page 18). With their own field at St-Vallier-de-Thiery, sponsors like Bluewater Yachting and membership on the up, this club has provided a community for many expats, all

because O'Brien took the initiative.

Beryl Arnould started the Riviera International Singers 27 years ago, forming the first English choir on the Coast. Now there are six different vocal groups, real pools of international voices and talent (page 20).

Fenella Holt recently welcomed actress and novice writer Celia Imrie to Antibes Books (page 23). Fenella, who had worked for Heidi Lee for some time, took a leap of faith to continue to offer an English bookshop when Heidi closed her doors after 25 years.

Every club and association we include on our events calendar (pages 47-48) is led by individuals who give their time to organise outings and work behind the scenes so that you can just show up for a game of pétanque with the Commonwealth Club or an evening of dancing at the Belles Rives with the American Club of the Riviera.

I can't be certain that all these people are stress-free, but they are definitely seizing the Riviera day. *Nancy Heslin, Editor*

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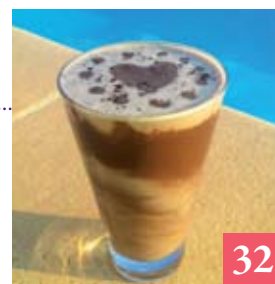
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Cover: Monaco ©Jilly Bennett/jillybennett.com  
Below: Sestri Levante/Jiuguang Wang

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# riviera reportage

## MOTHER NATURE'S SPORTS DRINK



WHAT drink is low in calories, fat-free, cholesterol-free and has more potassium than four bananas? The answer: coconut water (not to be confused, of course, with its fattier cousin coconut milk!). With its easily absorbed carbohydrates in the form of sugar, electrolytes and

minerals, like magnesium, which are lost in sweat, coconut water has become the natural alternative to sports drinks.

American sportsman John Isner credits it with keeping him on his feet during the longest match in tennis history, his epic 11-hour Wimbledon win in 2010. "It is super hydrating and has kept me going in long matches and prevented me from cramping even in the hottest and most humid conditions," Isner said.

But this trendy beverage is not just for athletes. According to "Business Insider", coconut water has "taken on the status of a 'super-hydrating' miracle drink" and enjoys celebrity endorsements from the likes of Rihanna and Madonna.

Responding to a quickly developing market in France,

Scott Bell (pictured) started Pure Flow Naturals to bring a range of nutritious, organic and sustainable coconut products to the Riviera.

"I have discovered and researched the world of coconuts over the last eight years surfing and travelling the globe," said the Bostonian, who has lived in Cannes for nearly 20 years.

Scott adds: "As a matter of deep and unwavering principal, we only practice fair trade and supply products from sustainable sources. The essence of Pure Flow Naturals is our commitment to protecting the people and places from which the products originate."

You can find Scott at the Bio Coop in Mouans-Sartoux, parapharmacies in Cap3000 and Monaco, as well as the SuperU in Beaulieu and the Bubble Café in Valbonne. See: [pureflowcoco.com](http://pureflowcoco.com) for other locations or to order online.

**In the tropics, coconut water – which comes from the young, green variety – has long been the only true hangover remedy. And per 100 ml, there's only 15 kcal vs 48kcal in orange juice or 42 kcal in Cola.**

## le FLASH ... TOMORROW'S BREAKING NEWS

STARTUP Weekend is a nonprofit organisation founded in 2007 by Andrew Hyde. More than 2,500 companies have been created worldwide over the last 5 years through this initiative and global sponsors include Google and Microsoft.

In April of this year, members of the Junior Chamber of Monaco ([jcemonaco.mc](http://jcemonaco.mc)) organised a Startup Weekend, bringing strangers together to create a product from scratch over 54 hours in the Principality.

Following this phenomenon, the European Innovation Academy in Nice – the World's Largest Extreme Accelerator Focused on IT Innovations – kicked off on July 6th, bringing together 600 students, who, with the help of 100 mentors, came up with an idea and developed it into a fully-fledged app, service, website or whatever else they wanted to make in just 15 days.

Irishman Jamie McDonnell (pictured second from right) and his multinational team, ages 21 to 26, came up with the Hawk app.

They only met on the first day of the program and were mentored by Silicon Valley tech entrepreneur, investor and author, Vitaly M. Golomb.

Hawk presents unbiased coverage of breaking news on a map, allowing users to see instantly the biggest stories happening in the world and in their region.

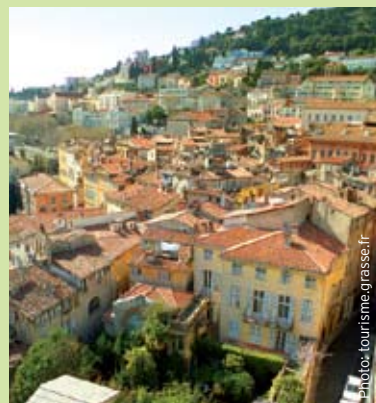
"I've never experienced anything like this," Jamie, 23, told us. "You get more work done here in an hour that you get done in a day at home. Everyone works hard but at the same time enjoy themselves. The location is great as well, we get all this practice and knowledge all while in Nice."

Hawk nabbed an exclusive Reddit AMA on July 22nd. You can Follow @Hawknews on Twitter and Facebook.



**TEAM HAWK:** From L-R: Ameli Gottstein (German); Julien Ferrère (French); Brian McCabe (Irish); Jamie McDonnell (Irish); Hans Fredrik Vestneshagen (Norwegian).

## GRASSE IS ALWAYS GREENER ...



GRASSE was voted "most pleasant medium-sized city of France" winning the Top City Award 2015.

From June 16th to July 7th, the reservations website, Hotel Info, asked its users, apart from the most popular tourist destinations, what is the best city in France with less than 50,000 inhabitants.

Some 29 mid-sized cities were shortlisted and the perfume capital beat out Albi, 85km northeast of Toulouse, which was tipped to win.



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**FRANCE IN THE NEWS***...in partnership with The Local*

# Buckle up ...and put down that sandwich!



Photo: Leigh Wolf

LIFE slightly changed in France as of July 1st, with everything from driving rules, dodgy parking and family allowance payments affected. Here's what you need to know.

**Road safety**

ACCORDING to the Interior Ministry, in 2014 the number of deaths on French roads rose by 3.7% – to a total of 3,388 people, including 503 pedestrians (8%+) and 158 cyclists (7%+). The year 2013 saw

the least fatalities from car accidents since 1948; prior to 2014, deaths on French roads have been in near decline (except for 2001) since 1978, when some 18,000 people were victims of traffic accidents.

Many of the most important changes are in the area of road safety as the government is resolute in meeting the target of less than 2,000 deaths per year.

For a start, headphones and other wireless earpieces are now forbidden when driving.

The measure also applies to scooters

and cyclists, who are no longer allowed to stick their phones under their helmets, as many are prone to do.

Basically if you want to talk on the phone while driving, you'll have to use the car speakers via Bluetooth or put the phone on loudspeaker. Anyone who doesn't respect the new rules faces a €135 fine.

The latest measures also include a ban on eating sandwiches at the wheel, putting on make-up or listening to loud music, which could result in a €75 fine. It's all designed to allow drivers in France to improve their concentration levels, which can't be a bad thing.

**No drink-driving for new drivers**

FRANCE continues to crack down on drink-driving, especially among youngsters. July 1st saw the alcohol limit for young drivers cut to 0.2g/l. Basically meaning they can't have a drink at all before getting behind the wheel.

Anyone who does and gets caught will get six points on their licence. The measure concerns those who have been driving for less than three years.

**Parking charges and fines**

THE cost of parking your car is no longer charged on an hourly basis. Parking machines are now set so that tariffs go up every quarter of an hour. Don't expect parking to get any cheaper however, as many providers have simply

FRANCE NEWS, PAGE 6



### FRANCE NEWS, FROM PAGE 5

bumped up their rates. Lots of people complain about French drivers parking anywhere and the government is trying to crack down. Those caught leaving their cars on pavements or in cycle lanes or pedestrian crossings now face a €135 fine, that's an increase of €100.

### No smoking with kids in car

IT'S now against the law to smoke in a car where a child younger than 12 years of age is present. If you do, you face a €68 fine. Smoking in outdoor play areas for children is also now banned.

### Family allowances cut for the most well-off

THOSE couples with two children who earn more than €6,000 a month net will see their family allowances (*Allocations familiales*) cut in two, to around €65 from €129. Those who earn €8,000 a month net will see the allowance cut by three quarters. Around 485,000 families will be affected, though they won't notice the cut till their payment arrives in August.

### Gas prices to be cut by 1.3%

ANOTHER cut in gas prices is good news for customers of provider Engie (formerly GDF Suez).

### Foods to carry allergy warnings

FROM now on prepackaged foods must carry warnings for 14 different substances that could provoke a reaction for consumers who are either allergic or intolerant. Restaurants will also have to warn clients of the products either on the menus or clearly within the premises.

### Asbestos limits lowered

LEGAL limits for the amount of asbestos that construction workers are exposed to in old buildings have been cut tenfold in a bid to reduce the number of diseases it causes each year in France – estimated to be around 5,000.

### Self-testing kits for Aids

YOU can now carry out a test for the Aids virus without having to go to a clinic, with kits available in pharmacies.

### Prices for pills

THE labels on medication and pills have been altered so that the prices are much clearer, as well as how the cost of each medication is reimbursed, either by the state or the *mutuelle*. ■

## Saudi royals grab Riviera beach for themselves



WHEN members of the Saudi royal family come to town, security will always be tight.

So tight, in fact, that they want the beach of Mirandole, in the town of Vallauris – where they own a property – all to themselves.

The royals were at the centre of a storm mid-July after infuriating local residents, when they began illegal construction work on the public beach to lay down a huge concrete slab in the sand.

King Salman was expected to arrive during the week of July 20th and the Saudi royal has asked French authorities to give his family exclusive access to the beach, which is normally only accessible via a tunnel under the train line.

But to make it easier for the royals to descend from their mansion to the sea, they asked for an elevator to be installed. Local authorities ordered the work to be stopped but have since given the elevator the green light. The only condition is that it is dismantled and all traces of it are to be taken away when the royals leave.

Needless to say, local beachgoers weren't impressed with the construction.

"Last Friday between midday and 2pm they laid down a concrete slab by the tunnel and put barriers around it," one resident told "Nice-Matin". "We can't enjoy an idyllic place like this with all this dust and noise."

When the mayor of Vallauris, Michelle Salucki, found out about the works she called the police who were sent to stop the construction and make sure that access through the tunnel was open.

Local authorities did confirm that the beach will remain closed to the public during the impending visit of the Saudi royals.

Philippe Castanet, the sub-prefect in Grasse, told "Nice Matin" that the work had started prematurely while talks were still taking place over how best to ensure security was tight for the visit of the royals.

Castanet, however, said that security had to be tight for the upcoming visit, and that meant "the public beach should be totally closed off to the public for the entire stay of the family".

He added that the beach would be given back to the public as soon as possible.

Nevertheless, locals are still furious that

they will be denied access to the beach and have set up a petition on *Change.org*

A local group called Together for Vallauris Golfe-Juan has demanded the French president keep the beach open.

"We remind you that this a natural area, like any public maritime domain ... We ask the government to respect the fundamental principle of equality of citizens before the law."

## France: 43% say no to daily shower

OVER 40% of French people don't take a shower every day, according to a new poll that took a closer look at French people's habits with all things water.

A poll carried out by BVA and published by regional paper "Presse-Ocean" has revealed that only 27% of the French shower every day.

A further 24% responded that they shower once every two days, while 11% said they showered once every three days. That leaves 8% who – *eww-la-la* – shower once every four days (or less).

Poor personal hygiene, incidentally, is a serious issue in France. A report from last year found that it costs French companies a staggering €14.5 billion per year – with the majority of the lost cash due to the time employees spent mopping up after others or searching for clean toilets, instead of doing their jobs.

## Man falls from third floor trying to spit on cops

A 27-year-old from eastern France was left regretting his actions early one morning when he tried to impress his friends by spitting (*cracher*) on police from his balcony, but ended up falling to the ground three stories below.

He had invited his friends round to his house in the town of Colmar, in the Alsace region, to celebrate France's national day.

According to reports in the French media, the man was standing on his balcony at around 2am when he spotted a police car coming down the street.

He leaned back preparing to unleash a volley of phlegm onto the cops below, but as he lurched forward he went over the balcony railings and fell, luckily landing in some bushes.

He was rushed to hospital suffering from a serious head injury and multiple fractures.

In another strange twist, when police questioned the shocked friends up on the balcony, officers realised that one of them had been on the run for several months.

He was arrested and hauled off to prison. ■



# French news: fast and fresh



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France's news in English

# THE LOCAL





# A HARD (FRENCH) HABIT TO BREAK



FOR all our *différences culturelles*, France has always held a special attractiveness for Brits. The very things they criticise are also secretly admired – long lunches, small-time corruption that simplifies village life, days off a-plenty, laid back attitudes and the “Sunday closed” or “22 à Asnières”, which formed the basis for Fernand Raynaud’s stand-up comedy routines of a few years ago, mocking the inconsistency of admin at postal and telephone companies.

In more recent years, a weak sterling and an artificially propped-up euro had managed to put a damper on the British enthusiasm for French property. Real estate investment by foreigners saw a drop of 13% in 2012 and 2013, according to a study by the BNP Paribas banking group. An upturn started late in 2014 and continued with a 53% rise in property sales for the first five months of 2015. France is back.

The “BNP Paribas International Buyers Report” attributes 75% of the overall rise to British buyers and puts Britons firmly on top of the list for property investments by foreigners. A strong UK economy, rising British property prices meaning that more can be bought for less in France, better travel links and low interest rates all fuel the upward movement.

On average, Brits spend more on their

French property than the locals. The average price Britons paid is €710,000 in Paris and €589,000 on the Côte d’Azur. Buyers can get little more than a tiny one-room walk-up for prices like that in London these days. Even some garages have been sold for more. Sunshine and world-class health care aren’t included either.

The time to buy French property is now (see page 27).

## French are happier than Brits

IF numerous previous studies and surveys are to be believed, the French are a morose bunch suffering from a “collective depression”. But a new study suggests the French may have been misunderstood, as reported by TheLocal.fr.

Finally a happiness ranking that gives the French reason to be happy.

The country regularly scores pretty badly in happiness rankings, given the standard of living, but perhaps things aren’t that bad after all.

A new study that looks at “well-being equality” has calculated how equally happiness levels in European countries are spread and France, for all the perceived negativity regarding the economy, does better than many of its neighbours including the UK and Germany.

“We must move beyond addressing inequality from a purely economic perspective. The aim of this index is not to belittle the importance of economic equality, but to shed light on an overlooked dimension of inequality: well-being,” reads the study.

In the happiness equality index the French are ranked ninth, ahead of their British cousins, who came in 14th place, a study from the Happiness Research Institute has found.

The French were also found to have more equality in well-being than the Germans, who came in at tenth place, but came in just below the traditionally highly ranked Swedes.

“France does quite badly in terms of happiness rankings when we look at average levels, but the good news is that in France, happiness is more equally spread,” said Meik Wiking, CEO of the Happiness Research Institute. “And it’s more equally distributed than in the UK.”

“This could of course be linked to general income inequality which is greater in the UK. We know that income matters when people evaluate their levels of happiness, particularly when they compare how much money they earn compared to their peers,” said Wiking.

France has been commended for its relatively low levels of inequality compared to other countries. A recent OECD study noted France’s “enviable standard of living”, “high productivity” and “only average income inequality that hasn’t worsened despite the crisis”.

“What we can say is that in general happy countries are on average more equal countries,” says Wiking. “We know that inequality leads to crime and social problems.”

The study was based on respondents’ answer to the question: “All in all, would you say that you are happy?”

The findings put the results of previous studies in a new light.

In April, the 2015 World Happiness Report published by the United Nations ranked France in 29th place, behind Germany, which came in at 26th. Switzerland topped the ranking, usurping

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Denmark, which was ranked first in the previous list, and demoted to third.

In order to rate happiness levels in different countries, academics identified such variables as real GDP per capita, healthy life expectancy, having someone to count on, perceived freedom to make life choices, freedom from corruption and generosity.

A similar report in 2013 also made grim reading for France; a survey conducted by Viavoice and communications agency W&Cie found two-thirds of French people believing that France was in "decline".

### What's on your plate?

PERSONALISED licence plates are a typically British thing (see issue 159). The fad is a source of revenue for some, not least of all the DVLA licencing authority, which regularly auctions off the most desirable numbers. So dynamic is the market that collectors will pay dearly for coveted "vanity" plates. Amstrad founder Lord Sugar owns AMS1 and the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge acquired JU5T WED in time for their wedding. Last November, Ferrari dealer John Collins paid £518,000 for the number "25 O" which is destined for a 250 SWB Ferrari raising its resale value to £10 million. Collins claims that the right number plate can add as much as £1m to the value of some cars.

The number plate craze is leading to abuse and it's a trend that the DVLA wants to stop. Error related numbers such as J14 HAD are forbidden but the DVLA's latest 49-page list of banned numbers seems rather arbitrary. ORG45M or PEN15 are permitted but not VA61ANA or OR63ASM. The prefix A55 is also on

the barred list. Religious references are usually banned so KO12 AAN, 15 LAM, MU55 LEM and JE\*\* SUS are forbidden as is any combination containing JEW.

H8 GAY has been banned at the insistence of gay rights groups and while you may be a BU63GER who talks BU14SHT, you can't say so on your number plate.

The question is why anyone would want to.

### French speed cameras trap 4.5m foreign drivers ... but will Brits pay up?

SPEED cameras in France have caught foreign motorists a staggering 4.5 million times in just one year, that's an incredible 123,287 per day or 5,139 per hour. British drivers are far from the worst offenders.

Figures obtained by TheLocal.fr show just how prolific these *radars*, as they're called in French, are at catching foreign drivers who speed or drive through a red light.

The government organisation Sécurité Routière (Road Safety) released data revealing that 3.5 million foreign cars were flashed by speed cameras in 2014.

But the organisation said the overall figure is more likely to be 4.5 million

given that a quarter of the offences are not recorded because registrations plates are not clearly identified – although it is certain they are from abroad.

That figure represents around 21% of the 21 million offences caught on camera on French roads throughout the year.

When it came to the most flashed offenders, the Belgians took the top spot, having been caught speeding or going through red lights a whopping 420,000 times.

Next came the Spanish who clocked up 412,000 offences, while Germans committed 411,000 and the Italians 400,000, which were all caught on camera.

As for the Brits, drivers were snared 165,000 times throughout the year, but unlike the Germans, Spanish and Belgians, the British don't have to pay up, or at least for the moment.

A European directive dating back to 2011 allows certain EU member states to share information on drivers caught committing offences on the roads, which will be rolled out on a staggered basis.

However, Denmark, the UK and Ireland opted out of signing up to the agreement. ■

## UK NEWS

### Who you gonna call? 17!



DEPARTMENTAL police remind the public to call 17 in case of a break-in. They also advise:  
... Do not touch anything or put things back in place. Call 17 and wait for the police to arrive and secure the crime scene.

... Tell the police anything that could advance the investigation, like a suspicious person seen the day before, or a strange phone call.

... Install an alarm or CCTV.

... Take pictures of any jewellery of value and keep them in a safe deposit box at the bank, not in your own safe. Robbers take the entire safe if they can't open it.



# GREECING THE WHEELS

BY PJ HESLIN



IN 1793, Japan was ruled by a Shogun, China by an emperor and a Sultan still controlled vast portions of the Middle East and the Balkan Peninsula. France was in the middle of a Republican revolution, which in itself would end with an emperor crowning himself and a war that would consume all of Europe. What was left of the habitable world was carved up amongst the European powers into colonies. America and France were the only two countries in the entire world attempting a new form of government where men with property were responsible for ruling the country. Few thought the great American experiment would work.

In that same year of 1793, construction began on the United States Capitol Building. In this seat to Congress, democracy as the world now knows it would be built. At the time, most European powers were sure this chaotic union of states in North America would crumble and all jockeyed for position to get the biggest crumbs when that day occurred.

Even though they had lost the Revolutionary War, Britain still owned a gigantic colony to the north of America

(British North America, aka Canada) where they thought they could wait it out and retake what was once theirs. It wouldn't be until the War of 1812 that Britain would give up on its American dreams for good.

In America itself, the future of the union was uncertain. Citizens and politicians both wondered what their new political landscape meant. Was it one country or an alliance of thirteen small countries? A common language unified them but that was about it. In fact, the political and geographical landscape of those thirteen colonies mimics many of the European differences in the EU today. Banking and business were important in the north while agriculture was the main source of wealth in the south. More and more immigrants were coming every day with different cultures and religions than the established colonists, and each state argued over water rights, trade, taxes and their own responsibilities in this new unification.

This union was so tenuous that in 1786 a rebellion within the country was led not by a rival European power but by a man who had battled for the independence of America from Britain

during the Revolution. Daniel Shays started fighting for the Patriot cause as a Sergeant and by the end of the war had been promoted to the rank of Captain. After the war, Shays returned to farming in Massachusetts but taxes, lack of compensation for military services and the demands of eastern bankers and businesses threatened to land Shays and thousands of others in debtors' prison.

Shays organized an armed rebellion amongst his fellow veterans and countrymen and marched throughout Massachusetts shutting down courthouses and engaging federal troops. Eventually the revolt was suppressed and when it was over, 4000 people signed confessions to their active participation in the uprising. Shays himself was eventually pardoned and later died in poverty and obscurity in Upstate New York.

In January 1790, the first United States Secretary of the Treasury, Alexander Hamilton came up with a two-prong assault to battle the troubled economy. The first was that the federal government agreed to assume all of the states' debt from the Revolutionary War and pay off all foreign and domestic national debts. The second was to create a Bank of the United States that was underwritten by both public and private stockholders. This federal banking system created stability domestically and confidence internationally in the American banking system.

In other words, America was a mess when it started and far from being a sure bet that its union of thirteen disparate colonies would eventually become a world superpower in the generations to come. So when I hear people talk about the troubles with Greece and the fiscal problems facing the European Union in general, I take all the talk of dissolution of the EU with a grain of salt. While it is true that there are more dissimilarities with the EU in 2015 than there are similarities with the United States of America in 1790, the argument for the continuance of the European Union is stronger than the reality of a breakup.

Let's start with how far Europe has come with regards to simply not trying

to kill one another. Yes, the greatest period of peace in European history so far was from about 1814 to 1914, but during that century the groundwork was being laid for eventual hostilities. Growing nationalization, militarization, alliances and competition for colonies were not bringing Europe closer despite the peace. Consequentially, one could argue that this peace was just a smokescreen so that all the European powers could build up their armies and alliances until each thought they were strong enough to conquer the other.

Since the end of World War II, Europe has decided that the best way to deal with problems within Europe is not with an army but with a union. The fact that the EU exists at all and that warfare hasn't broke out in Europe in the past seventy years is a major success. The difficulties that Europe is facing now would have been solved with armies instead of loans and budgets one hundred years ago.

The basis for all of this doom and gloom for the EU is based on the present economic failures of Europe. The EU was created to improve trade and European economies and that just is not happening for everybody. Greece lied about its economic health when it applied for EU membership and EU regulators turned a blind eye to what they knew were false numbers. It wasn't just Greece but other European countries as well that treated access to easy credit the same way a drunken college student reacts with their first credit card.

Now we are dealing with the fallout with the great debate being between austerity programs versus government spending and Germany chastising Greece for not being more responsible and Greeks demanding that Germans be

more reasonable. But it's not only Greece questioning the trustworthiness of Chancellor Angela Merkel and her administration as Captain of the EU's sinking ship. Thomas Piketty commented on the hypocrisy of it all telling "Die Zeit" that "the Germans are only in the strong economic position they are today because they benefited from the forgiveness of their neighbors after World War II."

Even Steven Erlanger wrote recently in "The New York Times": "Germany displayed its national interest more nakedly than in the past and made it clear there are limits to its willingness to put European unity first."

I foresee that in the years to come, the southern economies will learn to be more responsible while the northern economies will become more laid back. In other words, countries like Germany are going to become a little more Greek and countries like Greece are going to become a little more German. To both those countries, that may seem blasphemous and impossible but, seventy years ago could anybody have imagined that the only Germans stationed in France today would be overweight tourists in Speedos?

We Americans love to chastise European economies for their high taxes, state pensions and enforced lunch hours. We expect Europe to be more like us and express frustration when it doesn't work like "home" because many Americans are just a couple of generations removed from Europe. However, just because Europe functions differently doesn't mean the EU is going to break apart. Every marriage has its fair share of bumps in the beginning, but the EU, just like the original thirteen colonies, is in it for the long haul. ■



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# THE PRINCESS AND THE SEA



Since the Princess Charlene of Monaco Foundation was established in 2012, more than 50,000 people worldwide have benefited from “Learn to Swim” and “Water Safety” programmes. Princess Charlene was in Porto-Vecchio, Corsica, in June to participate along with 90 students aged 7 to 11 in a “Water Safety Day”. Photo: ©Frédéric Nebinger/Palais Princier.

BY MOLLY BROWN

THIS year the Principality not only celebrates the tenth year of Prince Albert's reign but also 800 years since the Château de Monaco (Palais Princier) was first built in 1215 by the Genoese, whose territory included Monaco at the time. Now a fast-growing metropolis, land commands high prices and other less historic buildings are deemed an unaffordable luxury, so the iconic Sporting d'Hiver has been demolished and construction of 450 parking spaces and seven large buildings in the Place du Casino has begun, to the consternation of tourists.

Société des Bains de Mer are struggling to finance their contentious €650 million project to “modernise” Monte Carlo, due to a fall in revenue in both the hotel and gaming sectors over the past several years and have reported a deficit for the year ending March 31st, 2015, of €31.5 million against an €11.8 million shortfall the previous year and net sales of €452.4 million against €472.5 million in 2013-14. SBM have reportedly obtained €220 million by selling 9% of SBM shares to the LVMH Group and Galaxy Entertainment, a Chinese luxury hotel and casino group in Macao; 6.39% of shares have already been sold to a subsidiary of Qatari Diar Real Estate Investment, the government retaining the majority share of 69.9%

Monaco doubles its population daily as

workers flow into the Principality and is certainly providing work for the building trade. If the crane is the national bird, the national song is set to the music of the power drill and new projects are the main gossip topic at coffee mornings, as higher buildings mean someone loses their sea view. Even the port is now threatened, with a proposed project to build on the promenade. So why not a ship with a view? September's main event is the Monaco Yacht Show, and for this 25th edition, there will be 115 huge 25-100 metre superyachts to choose from (Sept 23-26). To get in a nautical mood, the Monaco Yacht Club's renowned Classic Week (Sept 9-13) is the year's greatest gathering of true sailors and lovers of the sea. The Naval Museum is also showing an amazing collection of models of ships of the Russian navy from Peter the Great to the present until the end of September.

## Fish and fashion

THE International School will overflow temporarily into the old Yacht Club premises from September until its new school is built. ISM has a waiting list of students as new families arrive weekly, for Monaco's residents not only benefit from tax-free income and a safe environment but, according to the recent CIA World Factbook, they have the longest life expectancy at birth in the world at 89.57.

The Princess Grace Irish Library up on

the rock is always a cool, quiet retreat and celebrated its 30th anniversary this year. Chosen by Prince Rainier to preserve Princess Grace's collection of books and songs, the library owns the largest collection of English books in the Principality and is a valued research centre for the Alpes-Maritimes. It hosts scholars in residence twice a year; they take part in the monthly lectures about anything Irish ... from literature to Irish music, to whiskey to silverware, and speakers as varied as Oscar Wilde's grandson Merlin Holland and BBC garden designer Diarmuid Gavin.

The summer exhibition of Russian art at Grimaldi Forum is almost chilly, the Cinema des Beaux Arts has air-conditioning and films at the Open Air Cinema begin after sundown. The coolest place is Monaco's most popular museum, the Oceanographic Museum, home of sharks, whales, tropical fish, sea creatures and the treasured collection of Prince Albert I. The demise of the Sporting d'Hiver took Monaco's Fashion Week there this year. Monaco's favourite couturier, Elizabeth Wessel's stylish collection was fit for a princess, and many young designers from the area proved that black is not the only colour for winter elegance. In fact, Monaco is a pretty cool place: music by moonlight at the Palace, dancing till dawn at Jimmy's, ships and sailing at the Yacht Club, fish and fashion at the Oceanographic ... how cool is that! ■

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# A TAXING SYSTEM

**BUSINESS**

BY PETER JOHNSON

IN previous articles we've seen how UK second homeowners have won the battle against having to pay social taxes (*prélèvements sociaux*) on their rental income in France, based on the grounds that they are no burden to the French health-care system. (See page 44.)

Local tax offices have, by and large, seen the logic of this and over the last 12 months many of my clients have been reimbursed, not – I should add – without a fight and numerous registered letters and threats of legal action.

On February 26th the European Court of Justice also ruled that the 15.5% social tax should not apply to residents of France, as long as they can demonstrate

that they are (as above) no burden to the French health service. This ruling applies to any passive income, such as gains on *assurance vie*, bank interest, dividends, annuities, rental income etc.

Effectively, therefore, anyone with an S1 form from another EU country should be exempted from the 15.5% social tax. An S1 form is a Europe-wide form that shows that a person's health care is funded by their country of origin, normally because they have reached State retirement age and are in receipt of a State pension. However, this can also apply to non-retirees, such as employees with worldwide (ie not strictly French) job responsibilities.

The French government has been

– naturally – slow to respond to this ruling, especially as this will drain their already depleted coffers even more at a time of economic crisis. I await a few “test” cases over the next few months and will report accordingly.

As a precaution, already S1 expats were advised to make it very clear on their French tax return this year that they enjoyed this special status, either by attaching their CPAM *attestation* showing S1 entitlement, or by making a comment on their electronic submission.

On this latter point, we were amused to see that the French tax office's campaign to drive people towards electronic filing failed miserably. Last year, out of 35 million tax declarations, only 13 million were online and the intent this year was to almost coerce people to file this way: first by bringing forward the filing deadlines and only leaving open the tiniest window for filing, either by paper or online. Secondly, by threatening harsher penalties for late filing.

However, the number of electronic declarations at [Impots.gouv.fr](http://Impots.gouv.fr) barely crept over the 14 million mark. Even for relatively simple returns, and even if you were fluent in French, it was still just too darn complicated to fathom out and the average person in the street was terrified of making a mistake. And what happens then? Revert to good old paper. The French love it! ■





# FLIPPING OUT

Demonstrators go beneath the surface at Marineland Antibes



BY ELODIE PEYRANO

IT'S about 30°C in the shade (if you can find any) and this unbearable summer heat continues to be a topic of conversation for locals and tourists alike. Imagine how the two polar bears that live in Antibes feel; yet even in these high temps, people pay to see them.

True, visitors to Marineland Antibes can enjoy a great show of mammals in captivity with the sea just a few metres away, but these tanks are like human-sized closets. Visitors can't be blamed; the captives can't complain.

But people can. This is why, on July 12th, 500 demonstrators were outside Marineland's park with only one demand: "Empty the tanks." Coming from all around the world, protestors stayed all day with flyers and signs, urging the park to free the animals imprisoned inside. This demonstration wasn't unique; protests happen worldwide several times per month. Another is planned again in Antibes on August 15th and will probably have even more people join the cause, proof of social change, about what is acceptable and what is not. In 2015 can we still tolerate the idea of imprisoning animals just to entertain us? Case in point, this year's philosophy baccalaureate question related to this very subject.

People are speaking out, making it harder to ignore the subject ... key figures

like distinguished dolphin trainer Ric O'Barry, who attended the Marineland manifestation in July. O'Barry started out capturing and training dolphins for the American TV series "Flipper" in the Sixties, until the day one of his dolphins died in front of him in such a way that it looked like a suicide. He suddenly realised that the female cetacean may not have been happy and started to process what he had done. He founded the Dolphin Project, and continues the fight to protect dolphins worldwide. More recently, he was involved in the 2009 Oscar-winning documentary "The Cove".

You also have "Blackfish", the 2013 documentary that includes former SeaWorld trainers and their heartbreaking testimonies. The documentary caught the public's attention at the Sundance Film Festival because it tells the story of Tilikum, the famous orca at SeaWorld of San Diego. It tries to understand how the wild killer whale, supposedly harmless to humans, suddenly attacked and killed his trainer. The answer? When he was not dancing for the audience, he was stressed, sad and also bullied by other orcas ... all this driving him to madness.

Even fiction touches on this issue. In the film "Rust and Bone", Marion Cotillard's character is attacked for no reason by the orca she trains. Ironically, Marineland permitted some scenes to be shot in the park but the script had to be

changed, reportedly after an incident at Florida SeaWorld Orlando left a whale trainer dead. As Cotillard wasn't then permitted to swim with the animals, her accident was rewritten so that the whale came out of the pool to attack her, instead of her being on its nose.

Cotillard recounted her first conversation with her trainer at Marineland to "The Hollywood Reporter": "I hate animals in captivity. I don't understand how human beings can take these magnificent animals out of their environment and put them in swimming pools and play with them like Muppets."

One of those "Muppets" was Freya, who died on June 6th at Marineland Antibes. And she is the reason why the recent protest had a particular feeling. Freya was captured in 1982 when she was just one-year-old. She had been taken away from her family, like Tilikum, and spent the rest of her short life in a tank where many young kids met her without being told how dangerous she could be.

The park defends itself to its critics, explaining it offers a crucial educational tool, especially for young kids. Thus its label as an "amusement park"! Maybe it also explains why tickets are so cheap: only €32 per child (in Disneyland Paris you pay €40 but at least you can have a free picture with Mickey). It may also clarify why the official stores sell hundreds of toys, cups, T-shirts and hats, and just a couple of books that aren't that "educational".

Meanwhile Freya died at the age of 33; she would've likely lived till at least 50 if she had been in the wild.

Her death was the result of "a long illness" and in a press release Marineland Antibes stated: "The team [of] trainers, veterinarians and experts have devoted their efforts for several months to [help her] heal. They made sure she had no pain ..."

We won't have to teach kids that Freya's partially-collapsed dorsal fin wasn't cool but an abnormality caused by her captivity. – one they weren't able to cure or hide.

In the end, it doesn't seem so clear and beautiful beneath the surface. ■

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



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# Monaco: the Alpha & the Omega

BY MICHAEL HEALY

**YACHTING**



Photo: © MC Clic

THE most important event in the megayacht world takes place September 23rd-26th – the celebrated Monaco Yacht Show ([monacoyachtshow.com](http://monacoyachtshow.com)). This is its Jubilee year, the 25th edition, and it will be bigger than ever with berthing space (stern-to is the usual way in the Med) for 120 spectacular superyachts in the heart of Monaco's Port Hercule. One key factor in the MYS's success is that all the berths are publicly owned so it is easy for Monaco Ports to clear vessels out to make room for those to be shown. This is rarely possible in the private marinas along the Coast, where shareholders "own" their berth.

Though in 1991 the show started with just 30 "large" yachts on Quai Kennedy, which was badly exposed to the SE swell before the arrival of the big new floating breakwater, it has now reached new records. The combined length of the megayachts on display will be over 5 kilometres, longer than Monaco's famous

listed British multinational publishing and events company: Informa, one of whose component units being the famous shipping journal "Lloyds List", founded in London in 1734. With over 10,000 other shows per year worldwide, Informa has been wise enough to keep the MYS local management in place, who deserve much credit for the continuing success of this event.

Monaco really is the alpha and omega for this flourishing luxury nautical world: yachts tend to arrive in the Med in time to dazzle at Monaco's Grand Prix races in May; and the motor yachts close their season with this late-September Monaco show before (often) leaving for winter fun in the Caribbean. The sailing yachts pause to compete in the annual Voiles de St Tropez, this year starting September 26th, before tackling the Atlantic crossing.

If you are a potential buyer, get your broker to arrange some on-board viewings;

F1 Grand Prix circuit. The quays will be full of tents for exhibitors offering the latest designs, water-toys, services, and indeed hospitality. A superb network of free water taxis and electric golf carts makes circulating very easy.

It is pleasing to note that the MYS is owned by a

if not, entry is a hefty €150/day per person. And will there be any drones on offer, hovering above the submarines? Drones are the latest must-have utility toys, as demonstrated by the MOAS ship *Phoenix* ([moas.eu](http://moas.eu)) for finding and rescuing over 8560 migrants (so far) in the Malta Channel (see "Reporter" 165).

## Death of the Mooring Tax

THE view from my garden over to St Hospice on Cap Ferrat is magnificent, dotted with superyachts lying peacefully at anchor. But they would not have been so tranquil if the proposed 2016 *taxe de mouillage*, taxing yachts over 24-metres at €20 per metre, had come into force! In the name of Freedom of Navigation for yachts – a powerful lobby – the government abandoned the whole bill on July 2nd.

The idea was to preserve the seabed from the damage inflicted by anchoring on the weed-beds so vital for the health of the oceans. But legislators in inland capitals like Paris never understand the marine environment, and in particular the mobility of yachts. Taxing buildings is easy – they don't move. Yachts just sail away to less oppressive cruising grounds. To help the posidonia to flourish, extra yellow buoys have been laid in suitable areas to keep the big yachts and their anchors outside the 30-metre contour. We must anyway all approach when weighing our anchor, so as not to drag it through the grass but rather lift it vertically. Easy ... and no tax need apply! ■



# A REAL MOMENT FOR SENIORS

BY BARRY HIBBITT

**Trixie Buckel, 97, proudly shares her congratulatory card from the Queen on the occasion of her 70th wedding anniversary.**



A NEW prince in the name and shape of Albert is arising to give home, security and succour to senior citizens downsizing on the Cote d'Azur. Albert was, of course, the much loved husband of Queen Victoria and now his princely presence is taking root in a residential complex for seniors in Mouans-Sartoux, virtually next door to the *maison de retrait* known as Victoria, which is managed by Emera.

Work on the 33-apartment block – officially known as Emerys Albert – is due to be completed early in the New Year and Albert has enhanced his reputation with several renters already signed up. Yes, folks, you read that correctly, paying guests. The Sunny Bank Association and the commercial partners Emerys and Emera will take care of all your worries in return for a monthly rental. Albert will give its guests an air of great independence and a four-star state of comfort. All the rooms are airy and delightfully

## THE QUEEN AT VICTORIA

THE walls of her sitting room are lined with paintings drawn by her husband, Commander Kenneth Buckel RN, and despite her failing sight, widow Trixie, 97, looks at them every day. For such are the wonderful memories of the 70-plus years they shared with each other. Yet this indomitable lady, loving and effervescent, does not live in the past. She is currently *de facto* Queen of Victoria, as sharp as a knife, witty, clearly spoken and anxious to meet new friends from Albert. She shows me the card (pictured) from the *other* Queen, sending warm congratulations on her Platinum Wedding, and her face lightens with sheer happiness to have been remembered by Her Royal Highness.

But Trixie's achievements before and since Kenneth died, have been great. She is teaching English to French staff at the Victoria retirement home and is full of praise for them. Trixie says that she gets her pupils to write in big block letters so she can see them and uses the magnifier on her iPad. Sunny Bank certificates are given to staff that pass language tests, and I am sure encouragement is always on her lips. She says she loves teaching and, clearly, her students love her. Trixie has two grown up children and obviously even at her stage of life, loves living and having friends around her. She sets a fine example to others that age has no limitations. Mrs Trixie Buckel is a gem, a highly polished one at that.

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## RETIREMENT

fitted out with the very latest equipment. Renters can bring their own furniture and pets; there is a communal laundry and a spa. Services include a Monday to Friday concierge, and the restaurant offers half-board to full-board, and even those special occasions can be catered for.

The district of Mouans-Sartoux offers a great shopping opportunity, specially for the ladies, while the local cinema and many very good restaurants are also close by. You can get groceries virtually at home by merely stepping across the road to the Casino supermarket.

Albert's welcoming staff will be taught English (in addition to French, of course) and are very aware of the huge decision made by guests in giving up a much loved home. They are determined, as their leaflets boast, to help renters enjoy

their new lifestyle in a secure and, they say quite rightly, tranquil environment.

Oxford Historian, financial journalist and man about Mougins, Russel Taylor and his actress wife Nora, think Albert is the bee's knees, and already signed up for a two-bedroom apartment some time ago, yet were still most enthusiastic when the "Reporter" spoke to them late July. Russel in particular was in ecstasy, comparing Albert with the harsher environment he found after a long spell of hospitalisation. "We booked rooms at the top of the building and the views are just wonderful. But, for us, the main joy is that moving to Albert will 'give us independence'. We spent a long time talking it through and Nora and I came to the conclusion that we could not care for each other if we become older and infirm."

Nora added, "You have to give up a large amount of your life by making a move like this but, in exchange, you are getting wonderful amenities and a great style of living."

They feel that Sunny Bank and Emerys have left no stone unturned in their quest for perfection. Russel furthered, "We both think that this is the best move we have ever made. We really are looking forward to living in our new home ... Albert suits us down to the ground." ■

*To find out more about 1-bedroom apartments at Albert, contact Alex Toledo: [atoledo@senioremerys.fr](mailto:atoledo@senioremerys.fr) – 06 34 45 06 90. See also ad on page 27. The charity, Sunny Bank, provides financial and social support to the Anglophone elderly in the southeast of France. Visit [sunny-bank.org](http://sunny-bank.org) or drop by every Thursday and 3rd Saturday.*

**Victoria retirement home in Mouans-Sartoux, run by Emera, offers flexibility in the length of stays, 24 hour security and hotel-standard comfort with a variety of leisure activities. Next door you'll find "The Grange", Sunny Bank's Charity Centre in close support of residents.**





# 25 NOT OUT

BY JONATHON BROWN

QUITE apart from the respectable theory that cricket may have originated in northern France in the 13th century, cricket on the Côte d'Azur has an odd enough history; amidst all this summer's razzmatazz surrounding the Promenade des Anglais (see "Dans le cadre" last issue), we rue the fact that in Victorian days the Anglican Church had a cricket ground on the Prom – imagine if they hadn't sold that off! — and that the little fishing harbour by the rock in Monte Carlo, now submerged under Carrefour-Fontvieille, was where the gents played their cricket in those days too. But that was long ago, and now is now.

So, it was a great thing to be up at St-Vallier-de-Thiery on July 11th to celebrate the quarter century of the Riviera Cricket Club at their field just outside the town. The club started in Cabris all those years ago, with a sackcloth mat unfurled from a rusty gold-coloured Honda on the village green. What with the pub on the corner and the shade of trees all round, it had a charming villagey feel to it, but occasionally native villagers got a feel of the ball as they walked the dog, and a safer more secluded spot had to be found. Hence the field at St-Vallier.

As with all clubs there have been good times and difficult times, but, like some great Test innings that builds and builds, the club has a rosier future now than at almost any other time. The internet has helped chivvy people up efficiently, whereas in the old days it was a spatchcock catalogue of landlines and faxes, and the club is now properly sponsored by Bluewater Yachting and Ace of Spades garden services. A new mat wicket has all but

removed the horrific capricious bounce of yesteryear and the presence of Colgan's draught ale from Mouans-Sartoux at the celebration day gave the perfect froth to the reunions.

The reunions were touching: the passage of time and the idea of age were on everyone's mind as there was so much talk of Roger Federer's "age" as a possible obstacle to his eighth Wimbledon title – as indeed the next day it proved. But there was the cricket club's founder, Ivar O'Brien, nearer three times Federer's age and happy to clutch a pint rather than a tennis trophy. We missed the likes of Daevid Fortune, also a founder when then a figurehead on Riviera Radio and now a sponsor of the club, but old familiar faces reappeared (one even from London) and the call was heard to have such an event annually. That's why one chants "Many Happy Returns", after all.

The current President, Brian Ranger, is upbeat, "The future of Riviera Cricket Club is assured. Membership is on the up and, while we're always looking for new members young or old, we're able to put out a good team. Our current sponsorship has allowed us to renew the pitch, build a storeroom at the ground, purchase a motor-mower and buy new kit. There is continuing interest from UK cricket clubs to come on tour to us and we have close links with our neighbouring cricket clubs in Beausoleil and Entrecasteaux. We hold weekly net practice during the season, which helps members improve their performance. But above all, there is a friendly and lively fellowship within the club that assures its future. We have fun, that's the thing." ■

See [rivieracricket.com](http://rivieracricket.com)



**LEFT:** RCC founder, Ivar O'Brien, with club President Brian Ranger.



**BELOW:** three generations enjoying a match at St-Vallier-de-Thiery.

# FULL LIFE OF LORD

OBIT



GRAHAM Lord, who boasted a journalistic career spanning 60 years and wrote 19 novels, plus newspaper articles too numerous to count, died on July 13th, 2015, at the age of 72.

Lord, who split his time between St Cézaire-sur-Siagne, London and the Caribbean, was born in Southern Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe, to Harold Lord and Ida McDowall, expats from Essex, who ran shipping agencies across southern Africa. By the age of 12, at his “very English” prep school, Lord was writing a daily newspaper reproduced on the headmaster’s Banda copying machine every morning; by the time he went to read History at Churchill College, Cambridge, he had joined the student newspaper, “Varsity”.

By 1968, he was literary editor at “Sunday Express”. Lord later wrote: “I was 26 and could barely believe that after just four years in Fleet Street I’d more than quadrupled my salary, landed a dream job that allowed me to read and keep the pick of the 200-400 new books that arrived for review every week ...”

In an anti-Booker sentiment, Lord set up the “Sunday Express Book of the Year Award”, from 1987 to 1993, which came with a £20,000 prize.

His employment at the “Express” was his longest. He was Literary Editor for 23 years and in his biography, “Lord of the Files”, he describes an idyllic

existence of expense accounts that would cough up for foreign travel to interview literary figures anywhere in the world. Even the UK writers were generally interviewed in Cannes or New York, although Lord made an exception for the tyro thriller writer Douglas Hurd MP, who had an

office in 10 Downing Street.

He met Graham Greene in Antibes, Robin Maugham in Capri, Nicholas Monsarrat in Malta, Muriel Spark in Rome; the only reason to go back to the “Express” offices was the occasional tempting PR girl.

Lord left the “Express” to pursue a more individual writing career – and this started disastrously.

He found himself being sued by John le Carré – not for something he had written, but for something he was considering writing. The legal fees almost derailed his new life, but Fleet Street friends commissioned some opinion pieces that helped him keep his head above water for the next four years.

An advance from Headline Books to write the biography of James Herriot allowed him to pursue his dream of living in the South of France; his following biographies on Dick Francis, Arthur Lowe, David Niven, John Mortimer and Joan Collins were commercially successful.

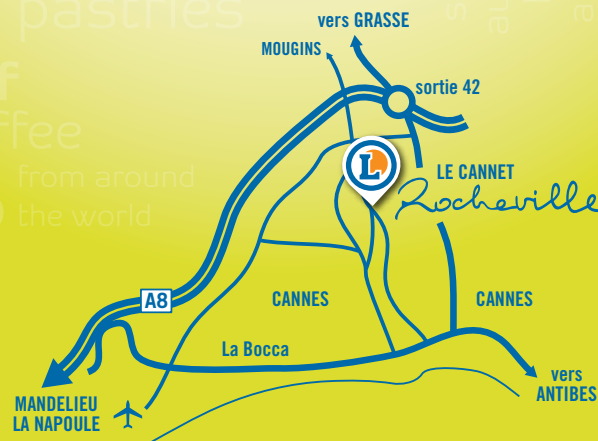
After being diagnosed with liver cancer, Lord wrote to fellow novelist Joseph Connolly: “I’ve been incredibly lucky. I’m 71 and have never had a day’s real illness. I’ve had a great life and I’ve had 26 years with a wonderfully luminous woman, so what do I have to complain about?” ■

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# Finding your voice on the Riviera

BY AUDREY STUART



*From classical music to jazz, barbershop, gospel and pop, any keen singers wanting to join a choir on the Riviera should find it easy to choose the right group for them and share their love of music.*

MOST French villages in our region have their own local choir and larger towns such as Grasse boast more than one to choose from.

But if you've just arrived or nervous your French isn't good enough to join a choir just yet, there is a great selection of English-speaking choirs who will make you feel welcome.

The Riviera International Singers (RIS; [riviera-international-singers.com](http://riviera-international-singers.com)) choir features first as they are the longest-running English choir in the region after being set-up 27 years ago by Beryl Arnould in the front room of her home.

Today, the thirty-so members are still singing sweetly, though they now rehearse in more spacious surroundings

in Mougins School on Thursday evenings in term-time from 20h-22h, followed by refreshments and chats!

The choir's repertoire covers a wide variety of music styles from classical to jazz and popular to gospel, and the singers give well-attended concerts twice a year at Christmas and in the summer, with part of the proceeds going to local charities.

With a Dutch President, Astrid Najar, a German choir director, Yann Nolle, and six different nationalities singing in the choir from Sweden, UK, France, Holland and USA, the RIS embodies its international image.

Najar is keen to recruit new members who have team spirit and a musical ear: "Being able to read music is

not an obligation though it is a big advantage as the choir's repertoire is mostly in English," she noted.

One French RIS member said her singing, as well as her English, improved hugely after joining the choir. And another explained: "I sing with the choir because I'm always discovering new songs from different eras, from classical to jazz, that I couldn't have found by myself."

Like all the choirs featured here, the RIS sing in the four-voice harmony parts of soprano, alto, tenor and bass. So most choir directors provide MP3 tracks of the different voice parts of the songs their singers are working on to help them learn their music.

And all the choirs bar one – Big Blaze Chorus – ask new members to take a short voice test after they've sung with the choir for a few weeks though choir directors stressed this is more to ensure they are singing with the voice group that's best for them.

Big Blaze Chorus ([bigblazechorus.com](http://bigblazechorus.com)) is also the newest amateur choir



The Riviera International Singers have been crooning the classics, as well as jazz and popular music, for 27 years.

on the local scene.

Set-up by Lizzy Parks just over a year ago, it now has 25 international singers who rehearse during term-time on Tuesday evenings from 20h-21h30 at the bilingual Montessori School “Les Colibris” in Sophia Antipolis.

Lizzy, a recording artist in England before she moved to France said, “I saw there was a need for a really easy, non-professional, non-pressured environment where normal people who have busy weeks could enjoy making music and doing something creative.

“We perform mostly original tailor-made arrangements by myself of popular music from the 60s onwards from a diverse range of artists from the Beach Boys to Frank Sinatra and One Direction!” Lizzy pointed out, adding that the main emphasis is about being enthusiastic, social and having fun.

Putting the “F” into fun and the social side is important for Big Blaze members. One singer commented: “It’s what I perceive a choir should be. It’s got to be fun with a

bit of seriousness and more than just learning songs,” noting that many of members meet up in a nearby English-style pub after the choir.

Other well-established English-speaking choirs in the 06 include Harmonie Toot Sweet ([facebook.com/harmonietootsweet](https://www.facebook.com/harmonietootsweet)), who rehearse in Chateaufort de Grasse on Mondays from 20h30-22h30.

Led by Gideon Levingston, the speciality of this 25-to-30-strong choir (pictured opposite page) is singing American close vocal harmony barbershop-style songs dressed in their striking traditional outfits of striped waistcoats and straw boater hats.

Although the choir’s members are predominantly French at the moment, they sing in English as well as including some Italian numbers.

“I’ve also introduced a little bit more jazz and a little bit of light classical,” Levingston expressed.

“Anyone wanting to try out for Harmonie Toot Sweet

*FINDING YOUR VOICE, PAGE 22*



New kids on the block Big Blaze Chorus perform mostly original arrangements by founder Lizzy Parks.

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**TWO CHOIRS, ONE BATON:** Under the direction of Errol Girdlesotne, the Ensemble Vocal Syrinx performs classical and contemporary music while the Ristretto Choir and Orchestra (below right) perform a variety of challenging works. **BELOW:** The Sagesse Gospel Singers started six years ago and well-known British vocal coach, Mark De-Lisser, who works with the hit BBC programme, “The Voice” leads their very popular weekend master classes.

#### FINDING YOUR VOICE, FROM PAGE 21

doesn't have to read music but they must learn the music off by heart as that makes a big impact on the stage,” he stressed.

Residents looking to combine spirituality with music might consider joining The Sagesse Gospel Singers ([facebook.com/SagesseGospelSingers](https://www.facebook.com/SagesseGospelSingers)).

Started six years ago by English-born Shirley de Jonk, the choir now has between 50 and 80 members who practise on Tuesdays from 18h30-20h at the Eglise St Paul de Nations in Sophia Antipolis and sing predominantly in English.

She has also brought over to France well-known British vocal coach, Mark De-Lisser, who works with the hit BBC programme, “The Voice”, to lead very popular weekend master classes.

Shirley emphasised that her choir is open to anyone who wants to engage for a year and experience singing Gospel in a Christian context: “We propose, without any obligation, a journey for people to take towards God through Gospel music that can transform daily life.”

One choir member commented that: “Having sung in choirs as a child into early adulthood, I missed singing. Five years on, the choir has become a living, faith-based community which provides laughter and support that goes far beyond simple singing.”

On a different note, the Ensemble Vocal Syrinx (EVS; [ensemblevocalsyrinx.com](http://ensemblevocalsyrinx.com)) has been entertaining audiences with top-level interpretations of both classical and contemporary music, since Errol Girdlestone started the choir in 1992.

Most recently, the 40-strong ensemble, comprising a number of different nationalities, has been singing a lot of sacred music though its repertoire includes many jazz pieces, some folk music and, of course, classical music.

“The Ensemble is made up mostly of people with a strong musical background. All read music and many have studied music professionally or semi-professionally in the past,” Syrinx President, David Melville, mentioned, adding that “this enables us to put together concerts with professional orchestral accompaniment and maintain the high quality of performance our public has become used to over the years.”

“What I really like about singing with the EVS is their professionalism and the effort that everyone in the choir puts in to getting it right. I also love singing with an orchestral accompaniment, which we do about once or twice a year and is really an amazing experience,” asserted Melville.

He said the choir is always looking for



new members who can read music as they need to learn the music relatively quickly and, like most choirs, he mentioned, “We are looking for men to join our ranks ... especially tenors!”

Lastly, but certainly not least, an exciting new musical ensemble and summer school for serious amateur and professional musicians has been set up under the aegis of well-respected local musician Errol Girdlestone.

The Ristretto Choir and Orchestra ([ristrettovoices.com](http://ristrettovoices.com)), formed in 2009, has a pool of some 30 top amateur and professional British and French singers and instrumentalists to choose from and works in a more intense way on a variety of challenging works.

Ristretto's Kate Cobb explained, “We are very, very different because we don't rehearse on a regular night every week. We rehearse once we've got a concert. It's really a chamber choir, which means it is small and works in a more intense way on different pieces.”

Ristretto, along with many of the local choirs featured here, can be hired to play and sing at special events such as weddings.

“We are definitely for hire, as we aren't funded,” Kate Cobb stressed, adding: “What is nice about this area is that there seems to be a choir for about every level of voice.” ■

Formerly a correspondent for Reuters and AFP, Audrey Stuart is now a freelance journalist and English-language coach. She can be contacted at [audreyjstuart@gmail.com](mailto:audreyjstuart@gmail.com)





# Celia Imrie: NOT QUITE NICE



Actress and author Celia Imrie signs copies of her new release at Antibes Books. Below, with owner Fenella Holt. Photos: Ed Holt Photography

ANTIBES Books was absolutely thrilled to welcome one of the UK's best loved actresses, Celia Imrie – star of “Acorn Antiques”, “Calendar Girls”, “Nanny McPhee” and, of course the hugely popular “The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel” – to the shop on the evening of May 27th to sign copies of her fabulous first novel “Not Quite Nice”. As the title suggests, the story is set in a charming village close to Nice called Bellevue-sur-Mer, and is a light-hearted, humorous tale of a diverse bunch of expatriates and the mishaps and adventures that befall them.

Celia is an accomplished writer, with a wicked sense of humour and an evident grasp of what life might be like for those who have chosen to make the French Riviera their home. She clearly loves the time

she spends here herself, and thoroughly enjoys the treats of daily life on the Côte d’Azur, such as going to buy a baguette, or sitting in the sun enjoying a cup of coffee or a glass of wine.

There is a distinctly “Marigold Hotel” feel to the eccentric cast of characters, which is a delight, and not altogether surprising, given that Celia told me very enthusiastically how privileged she felt to have been part of the “Best Exotic Marigold” phenomenon. She also revealed that she is already well into the writing of the second book in what we all hope will become a best-selling series, and, if sales of “Not Quite Nice” at Antibes Books so far are anything to go by, Celia’s success as an author is already most certainly assured! ■ Fenella Holt

*For more summer reading, see pages 34-35.*



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# Sirens of the South

BY DELANA NELSEN

**Jazz singer Denia Ridley, fell in love with the hexagon in 1995 when she went to Paris to visit the only person she knew in France. From the moment she stepped off the plane, Denia felt she to be a part of this ...**

AFTER many subsequent visits, a whole lot of French lessons and fourteen years later, Denia started her new life on the Côte d'Azur.

"It was now or never. I didn't want to get to the age of 65 and be full of regrets. Of course, I told my father it was only going to be for a year or he would have resisted, but I knew I wanted to live here."

Denia studied film and literature at the University of Texas in Austin, but makes her living as a full-time singer. As she says, she didn't choose music as a career; it chose her.

"I grew up in a house filled with music. I remember at the age of three, sitting under the piano as my grandfather gave lessons. My mother had a beautiful soprano voice and I'm sure she sang to us even in the womb. There was music in our house from morning till night."

A musician's life is not always easy or certain but this Panamanian American, self-described "army brat" and "language buff" is owning it. She co-writes a comic strip in a regional quarterly jazz magazine called "Le Jazzophone" with Märta Wydler and is hoping to get into the studio and record her next CD in New York City this year.

You can see Denia on August 7th at Shapko bar in Nice (check out her schedule on her Facebook page) or you may find her kicking up her feet at a local salsa bar or eating cheese wherever she can find it.

## BIGGEST FRENCH-LANGUAGE FAUX PAS?

Oops! I've said *cul* instead of *cou*, as have most Anglophones. I know at some point it really shouldn't be that difficult to discern between the two ... but alas. I've managed to avoid the worst one of all, which is using *baiser* properly. Frankly though, just forget that one and use a synonym. Trust me.



## YOU LIVE IN A FABULOUS PLACE AND WE ALL KNOW THAT MEANS ENDLESS VISITORS. WHERE DO YOU TAKE YOURS?

Endless is right! In Nice, a lazy seaside stroll along the Promenade des Anglais from the Hôtel Negresco to the Port; Cimiez for a view of the Roman ruins, museum, and monastery; the Colline du

Château – walk or take the elevator to the top of the Hill for a great view (spoiler alert: there is no château, only its ruins). If you walk up, have your picture taken by the waterfall. Nice has many, many wonderful

museums; so many influential artists called it home. You can check out the Chagall and Matisse museums for starters, as well as the Museum of Photography and MAMAC – the Museum of Modern Art.

In Monaco: The "Rock" for the Oceanographic Museum, Prince's Palace, beautiful gardens and wonderful panorama. Then we would head to the Casino de Monaco and the lobby of the

Hôtel de Paris. In the summer, we check out La Note Bleue on Plage Larvatto for dining and jazz.

In Antibes: I take all my friends to the Old Town; the Picasso Museum; and the Absinthe Museum! There's also a Musée de la Carte Postale.

The environs: I try to get out of the cities and visit the smaller communities whenever I can. Everyone knows Èze, but further inland, *l'arrière pays*, there are many more to choose from, such as the charming village of Gilette, perched on the promontory where the rivers Var and Estéron meet; or St-Paul-de-Vence where expat James Baldwin lived and one can find the beautiful Fondation Maeght; and finally there's Gourdon, voted one of the "Most beautiful Villages of France".

## FAV FRENCH EXPRESSION? YOU KNOW, THE ONE THAT WORKS BETTER IN FRENCH THAN IN ENGLISH?

They aren't nice by any means, but *N'importe quoi!* and *Ta gueule!* do it for me. The closest we get to them is "nonsense/rubbish" and "Put a muzzle on it or Shut your trap!" Not nearly as poetic.

## LIVE MUSIC VENUE TO RELAX WITH A COCKTAIL?

Oh, that's an easy one: the Shapko Bar at 5 rue Rossetti in Nice. It was a jazz club for years and the new owner is adding other genres as well. I've performed there with Sébastien Chaumont's talented trio (Olivier Slama, Seb Lamine Max Miguel) as well as many of the other local musicians. It's a friendly, lively place in the Old Town.



### CAN'T-DO-WITHOUT?

Huile Prodigieuse by Nuxe. A Swedish friend gave me some and I'm hooked. A dry oil that works on hair, skin ... awesomeness in a bottle.



### UPSCALE DINING:

I perform a lot (and I do mean a lot) in restaurants and I may get into trouble for choosing. But I will anyway!

My favourite truly upscale gourmet restaurant is Parours Live in the small, perched village of Falicon. The young chef, Frédéric Galland, has created a very modern and imaginative menu and the décor reflects that as well. Everything prepared in the kitchen is filmed live and shown in the dining room. Another thing, other than the incredible, original, delectable dishes, is that the views are also breathtakingly beautiful



(above). So you'll want to have your camera. A little pricey, but what a view!

My other pick is Maître Renard in Cannes. It's more casual and less pricey with a nice convivial atmosphere. Think vintage Paris. The fresh flowers, red leather banquettes and warm lighting add to the charming, cosy ambiance. The chef, Philippe Renaud, was Jacques Costeau's chef on the *Calypto* and the menu reflects his many travels ... all with a definite French twist. I sing there with the wonderful pianist Éric Alberti, helping to add to that lovely Montmartre feeling. I may be just a little biased ...

### GIVE IT UP! GUILTY PLEASURE?

Glacé, gelato, evil-in-a-cup or cone, call it what you like.

I call it Heaven. Every year, starting just after the Cannes Film Festival, it's ice cream everyday of the week for me. This never gets old!

### ESSENTIAL EXERCISE

I am not athletic at all; I eat cheese and drink wine every day, both at the same time if possible. I prefer my "exercise" in the form of yoga at the École des Arts Martiaux Patrick Delarue, where they offer traditional martial arts as well as Krav Maga.

### BON APP:

That's easy, Duolingo. After music, my second love is languages. This app helps me keep up with my three other languages – French, Spanish and Italian – and is very user-friendly. It's the bomb, really.

### EATING OUT:

Since I'm in Nice, I tend to lean towards the local cuisine: *pissaladière*, *pan bagnat* and *salad niçoise*, which I can get at the beach or from street vendors.

When friends come to visit, I either take them to Chez Pipo, a very family-friendly restaurant near the port, where you can order traditional socca and then watch them make it in the wood-fired oven, or we go to Lou Balico, a typical *niçois* restaurant centrally located near the Museum of Modern Art. This place is an institution. Try the *soup au pistou*! Both are where the locals go for "the real deal".

### FRENCH ARTIST PRÉFÉRÉ?

Voltaire, Camus, Cocteau, Cézanne, Truffaut, Piaf. But if I had to pick one it would be Josephine Baker: French, American, singer, actress, dancer, spy for the Resistance, civil rights activist, mother of 12 orphaned children, and obviously awesome. ■

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# RESTORING THE SPIRITS

HERE'S a special property that's been beautifully restored using recycled materials and lashings of tender loving care.

The owners aimed to create a home that as well as being easy on the eye has a very special vibe to it that promotes a deep sense of well-being – and they have succeeded.

Standing on a small hill or collet near Ampus in the Var, the house is approached up a flowery path towards a well-crafted and imposing iron gate.

The house is endowed with a large

terrace that leads towards the swimming pool, from where the panoramic views over the surrounding countryside open out.

Solar power has been harnessed to make the property as eco-friendly as possible, and old olive terracing has been preserved to create that special Provençal atmosphere.

The grounds are enhanced with numerous special features, including a fountain and a 12-hole miniature golf course. Up here on the hill, the property

is not overlooked and guests can enjoy the privacy and solitude of an ideal country location – the perfect place to unwind or practice your artistic or culinary skills.

Nearby, the spectacular Gorges du Verdon provides endless opportunities for hiking, rafting and a host of other outdoor pursuits.

The property is made up of three independent apartments, each fully equipped. It is a perfect model for a bijou business, for instance running a residential art or cookery course. Or simply for renting out to adventurous explorers who wish to discover more about this beautiful and sometimes wild region.

The first apartment has a terrace overlooking the pool, a dining room with wood-burning stove, four snug





bedrooms, two shower rooms, two separate toilets, and an ancient cellar for keeping your wine in tip-top condition.

Below the terrace a huge utility room opens out. A summer kitchen area is equipped with sink, toilet, shower room, office, living room and a direct access to the balneo pool and hammam.

The second apartment, which faces west, was once a pigeon house. It features a living room, kitchen, a bedroom and shower room, and an office.

The third apartment has a living room, a bedroom plus shower room.

The whole package, with seven bedrooms and more than 27,000 square metres of grounds, adds up to the sort of unique property that should attract buyers who want something that as well as a home can provide a business opportunity.

The property is available through Leggett Immobilier for €1,890,000. ■

*For more details on this property, contact Tim Clark at Leggett Immobilier on 06 76 59 25 88.*



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# BURSTING YOUR PROPERTY BUBBLE

BY TIM CLARK

## REAL ESTATE



**"We're looking for a home with 4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, swimming pool and a large green yard with unicorns and rainbows."**

PHEW what a scorcher! What an amazing summer we've been having on the Côte d'Azur so far.

I hope this month's article can give you more to cheer about from the usual doom and gloom anytime real estate is mentioned in combination with the eurozone

While you are all enjoying the heat and holiday season, if you haven't noticed, the euro has been taking a bit of a kicking from a number of currencies, not least the sterling and US dollar. This has led to an incredible increase in demand from potential buyers from the UK and the States, not to mention other non-eurozone countries. A fact backed up by official statistics released in June 2015.

Our own experience shows an increase in sales in the first six months

of 2015 of 40%; this coming off the back of a record year in 2014.

BNP Paribas statistics show overall sales to nonresident buyers last year of 13,823 across France, a 1.5% increase year on year. A staggering one-third of these sales were to buyers from the British Isles, a 33% year on year increase.

This is even more important to vendors in the region as the largest number of sales to nonresidents anywhere in France is on the Côte d'Azur.

This continuing increase is being brought on by a once-in-a-decade confluence of lower prices, a weak euro, with the added bonus of cheap financing thrown in.

While British buyers are leading the way, we've also seen an increase in buyers from the US, Asia and Australia, all taking

advantage of the current currency rates.

I would like to put on record that our agents at Leggett Immobilier are always aware that we are privileged to be offered the listings we have for sale and that without the goodwill of our vendors we have no business or stock to sell from; however, I refer back to the point made in the last paragraph regarding pricing.

Anyone selling their house today needs to bring their property to market at a price which reflects the known falls over the last three years in values. Our experience tells us that those who market at the correct price will sell while those that insist on living on past glories of Cote d'Azur prestige values may struggle to find a buyer. If you have been on the market for over six months without an offer or even a visit, I implore you to consider your price. I can assure you that a good agent isn't sitting around hoping for the best; they are actively trying to find buyers for you, but equally the buyers are educated to current market conditions and will not pay a perceived over-inflated value, however lovely the property is.

While it could be argued, with a potential increase in buyers, that market values will begin to pick up, and historically they do, but they will pick up from today's lower values, not from a price stated two years ago.

I am optimistic, though, for across the board improvements and the love affair of foreigners to invest in this wonderful region of France is still well and truly alive.

I leave you with the following words of wisdom:

*A man walked into a bar with his alligator and asked the bartender, "Do you serve estate agents here?"*

*"Sure do," replied the bartender.*

*"Good," said the man. "Give me a beer, and I'll have an estate agent for my 'gator." ■*

Contact local expert Tim Clark of Leggett Immobilier at [tim@leggett.fr](mailto:tim@leggett.fr)



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# Sweet Alabama takes a shine to Provence

BY CAREN TRAFFORD



The Antique Diva interior designers from Alabama (inset) couldn't recall the last time they stopped for lunch. They certainly found time to do so in Provence while searching for the perfect door.

THE splendour of Provence has been enhanced this summer by the unbridled enthusiasm and joyfulness of two interior designers who hailed from their hometown, Montgomery, Alabama for an Antiques Diva tour. Their gusto for this corner of the world was infectious and their appreciation and wonder of all things French made their three-day antiques foray into the south a delight for vendors and clients alike.

I am always a little nervous when visitors come on buying tours to Provence, given the relaxed way of life here. It is the smaller, simpler things that matter. People in general are not interested in the trappings of wealth. They are far more interested in what they will be having for lunch, which wine will be a good accompaniment, what their neighbours are up to and

what ailments their dogs have.

And so with antiques, my concerns vary from, for example, whether the clients understand that the French break two hours for lunch, come what may, or if another client happens to be with the vendor that we have driven 100 kilometres to meet, we must wait our turn; if there is someone in front of us, we will be completely ignored until it is our turn. But these ladies took to the French way of life like ducks to water.

When was the last time, you actually stopped for lunch back home? I asked them. They couldn't remember. Sometime before the children were born, one of them thought.

We spent three days exploring Provence. We found antique doors that had once adorned the very fashionable Royal Hotel in Vichy before the Second

World War. The door seller still had 68 of them left. His father, who had inherited the business from his father before him, had bought every door in the hotel. My clients bought 24 of them. This doorway is like a museum. While rummaging, we came across a door from the 1600s that was once a cell door in the prison in Draguignan. The door was so heavy, and had been located so deep in the dungeon, that it took two men and a great deal of rope to bring it up to the surface.

Don't be fooled. Although the majority of antiques here hail from Provence, the sellers scour the French countryside as far as Normandy and Brittany, as well as the neighbouring countries of Italy and Spain, so there is a wonderful choice of items to be had here. Everything from the typical provincial furniture, with wonderful



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## ANTIQUES



The best-known destination to indulge one's antique fancies is Isle-sur-la-Sorgue, the third largest *brocante* in Europe. It boasts more than 300 antique outlets and for many pilgrims who arrive here, the anticipation of the hunt for a new item is almost overwhelming, especially during the biannual *Grand Déballage* – the “Great Unpacking” – held four days around Easter and mid-August (this year the 99th edition runs from the 13th to 16th). See [foire-islesurlasorgue.com](http://foire-islesurlasorgue.com).

Photos: C. Ayme/Mercantour



patinas, to fountains and chimney places. And the *brocante* markets offer a wealth of smaller treasures.

Smelling the lavender or tasting the wine? There is no contest. As far as I'm concerned, antiquing is the nicest possible way to spend the day in Provence. There's so much history in all the wonderful treasures you can find and unlike a museum, you can touch, you can learn about the history and you can buy. And in Provence, the vistas, the food and the choice of antiques cannot be surpassed anywhere else.

Just ask my clients.

By the end of the tour, their lives were changed. As one of them so aptly put it. “I'm spending all my summers here from now on. Where can the kids go to take French classes? How easy is it to rent a house for the summer? Should we rent by the beach or in the hills? My husband doesn't know it yet ... but it won't be long before we're back.” ■

*Caren Trafford is our Antique Diva for Provence. She also writes children's books (planetkids.biz) and lives with her two dogs and husband in a mas covered with bougainvillea that overlooks the azure blue waters of the Mediterranean.*





# SMOOTHIE OPERATOR

Local juicers on going green ... or crimson ... or fuchsia



BY SCOTT BELL

THERE'S been lots of press over recent months touting the nutritional value of fruit and veg smoothies so it's no surprise to learn that in 2013 the juice and smoothies market in the US was valued at \$23 billion, while in the UK sales rose 2.1% to £1.5 billion. Following the trend, juice bars now popping up across the Riviera are quickly becoming hot spots. I met up with several superfood experts in the region to get some tips for making healthy drinks that are right for you, your lifestyle and your budget.

## Does it really matter what we drink?

Well, according to the European Food Safety Authority ([efsa.europa.eu](http://efsa.europa.eu)), with most health and fitness experts agreeing, the recommended daily requirement of water is 2 litres for women and 2.5 litres for men. But with summer in full swing

– and no end in sight of those high temps and humidity – we are reminded to drink even more water. So fresh water – economically and ecologically filtered from the tap – should be the base of our daily intake. And there are no added calories to worry about.

Of course, the well-marketed ready-to-drink beverages like many fruit juices and fizzy drinks are convenient, omnipresent and can be pretty darn thirst quenching ... but are they good for us? A recent online article titled "Fruit Juice is Just as Unhealthy as a Sugary Drink" by Kris Gunnars at Authority Nutrition indicates a resounding "No!" The majority of these drinks are largely industrial products with excessive amounts of added sugar, preservatives, artificial colourings, flavours and virtually no nutritional value. That said, some are better quality than others, so if you are going to reach for a

## Tips from Naomi

- **Be realistic with your goals.** If only one juice on the weekend is all you have time for, start with that.
- **Drink it fresh.** Don't make a big batch and keep it in the fridge. The juice will oxidize quickly and lose much of its nutritional value.
- **Choose a non-dairy base** (filtered water, organic coconut water or almond milk).
- **You need to add fat** (not just skimmed milk and a banana!) so that the body can absorb the vitamins.
- **Add greens to improve nutrient content** (kale, spinach, fennel, cucumber, celery) and the occasional superfood like spirulina, maca powder or wheatgrass.
- **Add a bit of sweeter** if needed (apples, pears and carrots are good to start with) but focus on getting as quickly as possible to 80% green vegetables.
- **Increase Omega-3** and healthy fats by adding nuts, avocados and seeds or coconut oil.
- **Drink slowly or even chew** it to utilise the entire digestive process that starts in the mouth with chewing.
- **Fresh and organic ingredients are a must.** And take the time to appreciate the goodness of what you created.





## ORGANIC

prepackaged drink, look for those with naturally low sugar, like organic coconut water, or teas free of chemical additives.

And even when it comes to making your own juice, low sugar is the key. Homemade smoothies can be highly caloric, so opt for a 20% fruit-80% vegetable blend to avoid having a sugar crash in an hour.

### What the in crowd has to say

IN Juan-les-Pins, Angelika Furstler of Vegan.Super.Yacht (*vegansuperyacht.com*) tells me, “I was fed up with eating salad where the chef simply had left out the chicken when I was a guest on yachts or at private parties. I could not believe that there was luxury all around and yet I had to go and ‘look for food’ that I could actually eat being vegan/raw vegan. I decided to go for it and make a change by providing VIP services and chef training.”

Angelika (pictured, page 3) emphasises that while both a smoothie and juice can be highly nutritious and refreshing, the fundamental difference is that smoothies are “blended” and retain the natural pulp or fibre while juices are generally pressed and so discard the fibre, which affects the nutritional impact of each drink.

Over in Monaco at the Clever Kitchen (*theclever.kitchen*), licensed nutritionist (BSc Hons) Susan Tomassini says that we should look at smoothies as essentially a meal.

Although a big fruit juice smoothie can taste delicious and be energising, don’t be afraid to experiment by adding even more nutrition to it. If you have some mint growing in the garden or you come across some fresh ginger in your produce section, pick it and give it a try in your smoothie. Your body will thank you.

“The nice thing about smoothies is that they can be made in a standard blender found in most every household,” she explains. “They are easy to make and also a fun way to get your children involved in developing a real food awareness.”

For juicing, Susan adds that it’s essential to recognise the huge distinction between the processed food juices that one finds

in supermarkets and the juice you can create with a proper juicer at home.

Also, as Angelika points out, juicing removes all the fibre from the fruits or vegetables that you put through your extractor. This can be a real benefit for those with compromised digestion, because fresh juices retain most of their nutrients and yet are highly absorbable and easily digestible. The down side, particularly when juicing with fruit and carrots, is that there is a very high level of sugar and corresponding calories causing weight gain and upsetting blood sugar levels.

The objective with juicing should be to reach 80% of the juice from nutrient-rich green vegetables like fennel, cucumber, spinach, celery, ginger, etc.

From a health stand point, green juices are one of the best ways to obtain a super nutrient boost.



Barbara Baselgate (above) from the BeJuice company (*bejuice.fr*) in Nice further stresses that since you are getting such an intensive package of nutrients which are readily assimilated by your

body, that it is very important to use as much organic produce as possible.

Barbara – who from September offers “Juicy Hours”, the healthy *apéro* on the French Riviera from 17h-20h every Friday – points out the biggest benefit for juicing is to simply give your digestive system a break. Even if it’s for only one meal a day or 3 meals during the week, the time is important for your system to repair and rejuvenate. Of course, always speak to your doctor before tackling any new change in diet.

Naomi Buff of Monaco’s Naomi’s Kitchen (*naomis.kitchen*) underlines the importance of finding a juicing regime that is compatible with your budget and lifestyle. The type of machine that you purchase can range in price from €100 for a basic centrifuge juice extractor to €300 and above for a cold press juicer – also known as masticating juicers – which keep more of the nutrients intact by crushing and pressing at cooler temps. Even more expensive is the quieter twin gear juicer, with its low-speed motor that eliminates oxidation and preserves enzymes.

If you are still feeling a bit intimidated by it all, take the time to contact one of your local health professionals mentioned in this article or visit their websites, where you can find some delicious recipes and useful information to help you enjoy a more healthful summer on the Riviera. ■

For more on Scott, see Reportage on page 4 or [pureflowcoco.com](http://pureflowcoco.com)

## PEDAL POWER

AUSSIE Leena van Raay was a full-time medical scientist researching stroke and epilepsy in Melbourne hospitals before she left her job to set up Bike n’ Blend. “Our blender bikes have been specially designed for making smoothies and cocktails,” Leena tells us.

At kids events and conferences in Australia and now New Zealand, Leena and her team, using ethical and sustainable practices, inspire others to live a healthier lifestyle in a fun and quirky way to prevent rather than cure disease ... one smoothie at a time.





# Pages à la Plage

AH the summer, when the Riviera is awash with tourists, the traffic is horrendous and the patios, terraces and streets sizzle with heat. A respite in the shade for an afternoon siesta can be a lot more rewarding with a good book in hand. Here are some titles, new and old, suggested by fellow expats.

## **Picnic in Provence: A Memoir with Recipes** by Elizabeth Bard

THIS is an elegantly told story of an American living in Provence with her French husband and first-born son. The New York Times bestselling author is whimsical without forcing the issue, as she touches upon all aspects of expat life in France, from food and parenthood to guests and citizenship, all with heartfelt insights to the childhood that led her to here, and the opening of her artisanal ice cream parlour. Elizabeth's recipes are as genuine as it gets. (Little, Brown and Company; 356 pages).

## **Not Quite Nice** by Celia Imrie

APPEARING at Antibes Books end of May (too late for the last "Reporter"), "The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel" actress Celia Imrie signed copies of her first novel "Not Quite Nice". As the title suggests, the story is set in a charming village close to Nice called Bellevue-sur-Mer, and is a light-hearted, humorous

tale of a diverse bunch of expatriates and the mishaps and adventures that befall them.

Celia is an accomplished writer, with a wicked sense of humour and an evident grasp of what life might be like for those who have chosen to make the French Riviera their home. (Bloomsbury; 336 pages). For more see page 23.

## **Riviera Revelations: The real story behind the walls of the grand villas on the French Riviera** by Isabella Roberts

WHEN Paul Martin's garage is ruined, he has no choice to cope with the loss of his pleasant life in East Yorkshire. It's time for him and his wife, Suzanne, to maybe start a new life. What about becoming a resident caretaker at a prestigious villa in Cannes? Away from their family, the couple discovers the surprises and downsides of living in a foreign country. An entertaining read to slip away during the summer. (Self-published, Kindle; 151 pages).

## **Intoxicating Southern France** by PJ Adams

AUTHOR and licensed family therapist living in Southern California, PJ Adams spent ten years covering some 1,500 kilometres – broken

down into five chapters: The French Riviera, Provence, Languedoc, Dordogne and Bordeaux – to indulge in the region in all its glory: the villages and vineyards, the people and their history, food and wine. It's a guide for those visiting the area or who "dream of doing so one day." (Meandering Trail Media; 279 pages)

## **Bonjour Tristesse** by Françoise Sagan

THIS short novel of maybe 30,000 words – described by "The Times" as "Funny, thoroughly immoral and thoroughly French" – is a story told by Cécile, a 17-year-old girl holidaying on the Côte d'Azur with her widowed father, who has brought along his young girlfriend. The daughter is exploring her own first sentimental adventure, a swiftly consummated romance with a handsome law student, when the unexpected arrival of an older woman, a friend of her late mother, disrupts the self-indulgent haze of high summer. (Pocket; 160 pages)

## **The Blessing** by Nancy Mitford

OVER 256 pages, you'll uncover a very amusing story that challenges whether love can survive the clash of cultures. It is a study of England meeting France in the middle of the 20th century with many autobiographical elements as Mitford herself fell in love with a Frenchman and moved here. (Penguin)

## **Daughter of the Desert: The Extraordinary Life of Gertrude Bell** by Georgina Howell

THE biopic "Queen of the Desert" starring Nicole Kidman and due for release in September is based on this 560-page book. Scholar, orientalist, explorer, spy, Bell was considered the female Laurence of Arabia and was "at one time the most powerful woman in the British Empire and driving force behind the creation of modern-day Iraq". A gripping story of a woman not limited to the times she lived in and the legacy she left behind. (Pan)



## A Spool of Blue Thread by Anne Tyler

THE Whitshanks are one of those families that radiate togetherness: an indefinable, enviable kind of specialness. But they are also like all families, in that the stories they tell themselves reveal only part of the picture.

Brimming with all the insight, humour, and generosity of spirit that are the hallmarks of Anne Tyler's work ("Accidental Tourist"), "A Spool" tells a poignant yet unsentimental story in praise of family in all its emotional complexity. It's a novel to cherish – 368 pages in hardcover. (Chatto & Windus; 368 pages)

## Time to Remember by Gemma O'Connor

IN 1944, in war-torn Europe, a 15-year-old boy watches as his village is razed to the ground. From his hiding place high in a tree, he also witnesses the brutal murder of his childhood sweetheart by a soldier not much older than himself. Decades later his terrible memories are revived again when by chance he recognises the soldier.

At 348 pages, it's a page-turner with an historic background in our own time but ... it may be hard to find a copy. (Bantam Books) ■

Pick up copies at *Antibes Books* (antibesbooks.com) and *English Book Centre* in Valbonne (englishbookcentre.com).

A STUDY by the Washington-based National Endowment for the Arts revealed that people who read for pleasure are much more likely to visit museums and attend concerts than those who do not, and almost three times as likely to perform volunteer and charity work. The research suggests that those who read are active participants in the world around them, critical to individual and social well-being.

This, of course, is nothing new. Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, more familiarly known as Lewis Carroll, the prominent author, mathematician and logician, also had strong beliefs about what it takes to cultivate a healthy mind. In his 1973 essay "How to Learn", Carroll commented on reading:

*Begin at the beginning, and do not allow yourself to gratify a mere idle curiosity by dipping into the book, here and there.*

*This Rule (of not dipping) is very desirable with ... novels, for instance, where you may easily spoil much of the enjoyment you would otherwise get from the story, by dipping into it further on, so that what the author meant to be a pleasant surprise comes to you as a matter of course.*

*Some people, I know, make a practice of looking into Vol. III first, just to see how the story ends: and perhaps it is as well just to know that all ends happily – that the much-persecuted lovers do marry after all, that he is proved to be quite innocent of the murder, that the wicked cousin is completely foiled in his plot and gets the punishment he deserves, and that the rich uncle in India (Qu. Why in India? Ans. Because, somehow, uncles never can get rich anywhere else) dies at exactly the right moment before taking the trouble to read Vol. I.*



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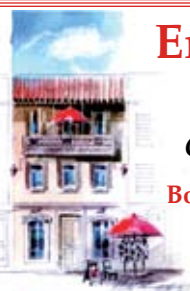
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# Paradise lost

BY JAMIE IVEY



I RECENTLY overheard a row in our village square. I'll set the scene: beautiful sunny day, around about that time in late afternoon when the shadows are getting longer and one's mind turns to having a drink. The trees are throbbing with cicadas, and the café terraces are full. Young children chase around the central fountain and a dog stirs lazily to swat a fly away with its paw.

A loud chorus of "Happy Birthday to you" echoes out in English.

The row begins. A thin gentleman in overly tight jeans wearing the ubiquitous Panama hat of the summer visitor loses his temper and rises from his chair: "Will you shut-up, you're the worst kind of tourists, you think you own Provence, can't you see that people are trying to enjoy the place?" he gestures around him to tables seething with pink-faced drinkers. His accent is American.

"You see my mother is a little deaf, so we have to sing loudly," stammers a red-faced English gentleman also rising to his feet.

"Don't you get passive aggressive with me," retorts the American.

"I'm not being passive aggressive, just aggressive," hits back the Englishman with impressive wit.

"I've taken down bigger than you, don't test me," says the Yank shoving his face into that of the Englishman.

The kids stop their game and stand staring. The dog sniffs the air anticipating blood. Only the cicadas continue as before.

The Englishman backs down, his mum's birthday celebrations ruined. The American returns to his iPad.

Now this scene can simply be interpreted as an over-stressed and out of place Yank overstepping the mark, but the accusation of ownership of Provence was revealing. For many, Provence sits on a pedestal as a form of earthly paradise. A reputation that has been bestowed on it by a rich literary and artistic heritage.

Each generation of writers has updated the utopia until, for Anglophones at least, we have arrived at what may be described as the Maylean consensus. In Peter Mayle's and his imitators' books the locals are charming, a little too partial to wine, and prone to take the odd liberty with work on foreigners' houses but they are essentially harmless and account for the wonderful vibrancy of the place. Provence is a benign sun-kissed environment.

The modern art movement and its contemporary successor – Metamodernism – has propagated the same myth. In art gallery after art gallery, fields blaze and blur into each other in swathes of colour, shapes are suggested, tangible lines avoided, the landscape laid open to possession by the individual imagination. When people are depicted, they are the rounded jolly figures of the naïve art movement, who bounce through life impregnable to all damage.

I've been writing about Provence for ten years now and only gradually come to realise how much this artistic and literary heritage frames what's published and what people expect to read. Overstep the mark with an article and shatter somebody's personal image of the place, and the response can be

swift and aggressive. "This trash is not worthy of your website" is a response I had recently to an article by a journalist for my site *provenceguru.com*. His offence was being honest about his experience of moving his family to Provence.

Book publishers act as the guardians of the fantasy of the Provençal paradise. My first editor, an eminent figure in the London publishing industry, told me, "Don't be afraid to make it all up for the sake of creating the right feeling," and ever since I've largely complied. To my shame, whenever I've suggested a book closer to the truth of life in Provence I've quickly been dissuaded from continuing with a project.

Artistic and literary representations of Provence were, I believe, at the heart of the row I overheard in the square. They account for the American's firmly held belief that Provence is a place where people do not chant "Happy Birthday" loudly in English. Once the theatrical scenery has been hung by the writers and artists, utopia is moulded by each individual to suit his or her desires. In the modern world the lure of a haven, however fictional, is a powerful one. And Provence is the ultimate escapist retreat.

So my tip for this summer is to be careful how you behave. A misplaced word or deed might just bring somebody's personal vision of paradise on earth crashing down with potentially disproportionate consequences. ■

*Jamie Ivey is the author of Ten Trees and a Truffle Dog and runs the website [provenceguru.com](http://provenceguru.com)*

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# Going for gourd

**TRADITION**



BY MARGO LESTZ

THERE'S an old proverb that says, "A home without a gourd is like an empty nest." Well, for the *niçois*, who believe this hard-shelled inedible fruit brings good luck, a "gourdless" house is not a good thing.

The *cougourdon* is a variety of gourd that is completely intertwined with the *niçois* culture. Introduced to the region around the sixteenth century, it proved to be very useful because when dried it becomes wood-like and is water resistant. At first, *cougourdons* were used to make thermoses for water or wine, and then transformed into all sorts of kitchen utensils – eventually even musical instruments.

Then in the 1800s, this odd-shaped

plant started to be decorated and sold to the new wave of winter tourists who were starting to arrive in Nice; Queen Victoria is rumoured to have purchased a few. Now, thanks to one enterprising young man, the *niçois cougourdon* has found yet another function, one that is both useful and decorative: lamps.

Morgan Barbier is *niçois* by birth and was raised amidst the city's traditions and festivals. From his youth, he was fascinated by the *cougourdon* and its various shapes. Then one day a light went on, literally – why not make a *cougourdon* lamp? He made a few and they caught people's attention – especially the locals who appreciated a new use for their beloved squash-like fruit. In Nice, he started to

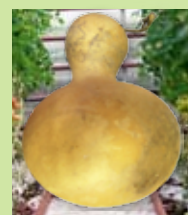
participate in the *Festin des cougourdons* – the local gourds festival that takes place every March – then the Christmas markets, and now, during the summer, he can be found at the Cours Saleya evening market.

The work of a true artisan, Morgan's lamp creations are called *Luminices*. He grows his own gourds organically, dries them (which can take up to five months), then creates the designs. Decorating one gourd can take from three to ten hours depending on the complexity of the design, and if you would like a personalized lamp, he can do that as well.

This self-taught artist is one of those lucky people who has been able to turn his passion into his profession. His zeal is evident when he tells visitors to his stand about the history of the plant and its importance in local customs. He also conducts workshops in schools to teach children about his beloved gourd.

So if your home is "gourdless" and you could you use a bit of good luck, visit Morgan for an updated version of a *niçois* classic. ■

Gourd (pictured) and squash are botanically defined as fruit because they are organs which contain seeds, but like tomatoes and cucumbers, they're commonly referred to as a vegetable.





# DOWN THE LINE:

## Art that'll stop you in your tracks

BY MARGO LESTZ



A FEW years ago, I took a course that required me to get up early and catch a bus to another town. Sometimes I would take the tram to the bus stop and I used to giggle every time I heard the breathlessly sexy voices announce the next tram *arrêt*. Little did I know that these announcements were part of the “Art in the City” (*L’art dans la ville avec le tramway*) project. Apparently these recordings are different depending on the time of day, day of week and season. They are intended to make our travel experience more agreeable, and I can personally attest to the effectiveness of the early morning ones.

When the city planners were designing the first tramway, which was inaugurated in 2007 and runs from Henri Sappia and Pont Michel, they decided that the journey should be not only about getting from one place to another, but about beauty and discovery along the

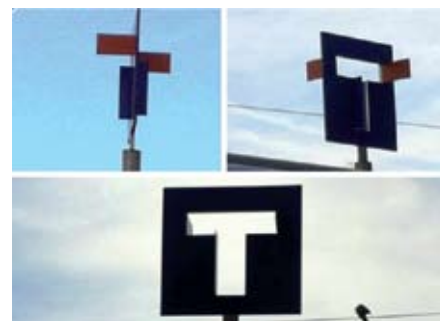
way. As part of the scheme, thirteen public art pieces were installed along the 8.7km of the Line 1 track, turning it into an open-air art gallery.

### TALKING HEADS

“CONVERSATIONS à Nice” by Spanish artist (pictured above), Jaume Plensa, found in Place Massena, is one of my favourite installations. The seven figures perched high above the plaza represent the continents. At night, they slowly change colours, symbolising a conversation taking place amongst them. Wouldn’t it be wonderful if all nations could exchange ideas in such a calm and beautiful way?

### T IS FOR TRAMWAY

THESE “totem poles”, which identify the tram stops, form a T when viewed from any angle. Sometimes, as you can see, they are rather abstract Ts, but Ts nonetheless.



They are done in shades of blue for the sea and red ochre for the traditional colour of *niçois* buildings. “Totems” were designed by Pierre di Sciuillo.

### BLUE MORSE CODE

THE lights in front of the Nice Etoile shopping centre shine like blue stars in the night sky. The strings of lights make a series of dots and dashes that spell out the names of the colour blue in Morse code. It is called “L’Amorse du bleu” by Yann Kersalé.



## ART



### THE FALSE DOOR

AS you approach this beautiful arched opening clad in gold and marble, you might not even notice the engraved words on the wall, which read “*porte fausse*” meaning false door or gate. Why is it a false gate? Well, when the old city was



surrounded by a large defensive wall, there was a small sort of hidden door here. It was designed to be discreet and unnoticed by the enemy. When they weren't under attack, the inhabitants used this gate, which was linked to the Old Town by a dark narrow corridor that passed through part of a building. In 1946, the owner of the building donated part of it to make the larger public opening that we see today.

This “false gate” was decorated as part of Art in the City. The artist, Sarkis, saw it as

a transitional space between the Old Town and the modern city and lavished it with gold and marble. On the landing, you can see a white marble block holding a black tray. It says *les postes restantes*, which means



post being held. The idea was that visitors and locals could write letters or postcards (to the city or to the inhabitants)

and leave them in the tray. As far as I know, this practice has never caught on because, unfortunately, the only thing I have ever seen in this tray is rubbish. (As you can see in the photo above the tray is empty.)

### BEN HAS HIS SAY

ALL along the tramway you will find the work of Benjamin Vautier, better known simply as Ben. He is renowned for his handwritten black and white messages.



The station names are written in his signature style along with various slogans such as “*repartir à zero*” (start over from scratch), “*le nouveau est vieux*” (the new is old), and occasionally you might see one in English such as “look elsewhere”. Found at 21 stops, these sayings give us something to ponder along our journey.

These are just six of the thirteen works that you can find along the tramway, so there is more for you to discover. There used to be a very interesting guided tour which has, sadly, been discontinued, but you can pick up a brochure in the tourist office and do the tour on your own. It is best to see the art in the evening as many of the installations are lit. Enjoy! ■

See more see [curiousrambler.com](http://curiousrambler.com)



AT an estimated cost of €770 million, Nice's controversial second tramway line – T2 – will link the port to the both airport terminals and the Prefecture by 2018.

The 11.3km of the East-West line will serve 20 stops, including 4 underground stations: Garibaldi, Square Durandy, Jean Médecin and Alsace Lorraine (Victor Hugo and Gambetta). Travelling at a speed of 25 km/h (against 14.5km/h for T1), it'll take 26 minutes to get to the airport from the port.

The project includes the construction of at least 4 relay-parks (Parcazur) with more than 1,250 parking spaces. Buying a tram ticket will allow you to park your car for free to get to the city centre. Probably your best bet as access to roads, like off Victor Hugo, is soon to be limited.

For more see [tramway.nice.fr](http://tramway.nice.fr)



# LIGURIA LIKE A LOCAL: SESTRI LEVANTE

Thello's new Cannes-Antibes-Nice-Genoa train service means you can leave the car at home to get to Sestre Levante's Baia del Silenzio – the Bay of Silence.

Photo: Jiuguang Wang

BY ELIZABETH GABAY

TO me, Liguria splits in two at Genoa. To the west, along the coastal stretch known as the Riviera Ligure di Ponente (the coast of the setting sun), it's an easily accessible day trip from Nice and comfortably familiar. Head east of Genoa, however, along the Riviera di Levante (the coast of the rising sun), towards La Spezia, and I'm on less familiar ground.

As a Master of Wine, I was recently invited to the village of Sestri Levante to taste a whole lot of wine (fabulous whatever side of Genoa you find yourself on!) and I discovered that there's a lot to love about this pretty coastal village.

## Where is it?

SESTRI Levante lies on a peninsula on the eastern end of Liguria, 50km south-east of Genoa and 50km northwest of La Spezia.

## Why I love it?

THIS once quiet fishing village is slowly turning into a tourist hotspot, developing an old and a new town. Lying along the flat promontory linking the mainland to the original island hill, it has two bays: the smaller, sheltered Baia delle Favole, (Bay of Fables) to the east, and the more open Baia del Silenzio, (Bay of Silence) to the west, with beaches and harbours.

For the moment, it still has a charming holiday atmosphere. At 4pm families promenade along the waterfront while others sit at a café watching the Italian fashion parade or go window shopping at the wonderfully stylish boutiques. The whole town exudes glamour while still remaining family friendly – especially outside of July and August.

## Eat

UNSURPRISINGLY, next to the sea, fish

features heavily on the menu. Il Morone, a type of bass with firm, white meat, is a speciality of the local seas. Anchovies, too, appear in many dishes as well as the trusty salt cod of the French and Italian Riviera and, of course, pasta with variations of pesto. Il Montebore is a local cheese made from cow, sheep and goat milks in a mould designed by Leonardo da Vinci so that each level ages differently.

Other food to look out for are the delicious ice creams of "Gelateria 100% Naturale" (Via XXV Aprile 126; [lnx.centopercentonaturale.it](http://lnx.centopercentonaturale.it)) made with olive oil, local wine and cheese – all delicious. Also in town the delightfully old-fashioned chocolate shops – such as Rossignotti ([rossignotti1840.it](http://rossignotti1840.it)), established in 1840, with its shelves lined with jars of loose chocolates and fruit jellies, as well as large hunks of chocolate, marzipan as well as its famous nougat – and gluten-free sweets.



The castle, located on the island hill and surrounded by a protected park, is now a hotel and restaurant, “ai Castelli” ([hoteldeicastelli.it](http://hoteldeicastelli.it)). A road meanders up the hill while pedestrians can walk through a tunnel carved into the hillside and then take a lift to the top. Head here for a chic dinner and watch the sunset over the Baia del Silenzio towards Portofino.

At the other end of the peninsula, another hill boasts the Hotel Vis à Vis ([hotelvisavis.com](http://hotelvisavis.com)) – also reached by lift inside the hill. A smart hotel with rooftop swimming pool and restaurant (a little staid with background music) commands views of Sestri Levante and the two bays. Enjoy a glass (or two) of Prosecco at the rooftop bar as white curtains billow in the breeze before returning to town for a lively dinner in one of the village restaurants.

## Drink

THIS is a white wine region with the DOCs Colli di Luni, Golfo del Tigullio-Portofino and Cinque Terre all nearby. Vermentino (the Rolle of Provence) is a very different wine, rich with dried fruit, spice and long, crisp acidity. Its close relative Pigato is leaner, more mineral and herby. The wines of Cinque Terre are made from Albarola, Bosco and Vermentino. Also look out for the rare, and expensive sweet wine Sciacchetrà. Other “oddities” include a white wine made with Çimixa and a lively light red, cherry fruit red made with Cilieggiolo.

## Explore

IN Roman times, Sestri Levante was known as Segesta Tigullorum (or Tigulliorum) or simply Segesta. It began to expand and, to protect itself from attacks from neighbouring barons, in the 12th century became part of the Republic of Genoa. The Genoese turned the abbey on the hilly end of the peninsula into a castle to defend the sea routes.

Inventor Guglielmo Marconi, famed for broadcasting the first transatlantic radio signal in 1901, practiced his experiments with shortwave and radar from the castle hill to posts on neighbouring hills and around the bay, working on improving navigation for boats.

It's worth popping into the foyer of the baroque Hotel Villa Balbi, an historic monument in itself, built in the second half of the 17th century, just to admire the decorations. In 1714, Elisabetta Farnese of Parma stayed here on her way to Spain, and her marriage to King Philip V. In the late 19th century the villa was restyled by the Coppedè brothers to create the wonderful reception rooms; the mansion was turned into a hotel in 1947.

The Baia delle Favole (Bay of Fables or Fairy Tales) was named in honour of Danish writer, Hans Christian Andersen, who lived in Sestri Levante for a short time in 1833. A statue of the Little Mermaid (a copy of the Danish statue) can be seen overlooking the bay.

## Getting there

UNLIKE some of the more remote Ligurian villages, Sestri Levante is easy to get to. Taking the new Thello train ([thello.com](http://thello.com)) – a very relaxing three hours from Nice to Genoa (great views of the coast and towns), a brief stop in Genoa, and then a slow hour down the coast towards La Spezia, stopping at every village and town along the way. It is a short walk from the station to the old town. The local coastal train runs hourly so that it is easy to explore the rest of the Cinque Terre region without a car. ■

*Article originally appeared as a guest post on Chrissie McClatchie's Riviera Grapevine ([rivieragrapevine.com](http://rivieragrapevine.com)). For more on Riviera resident Elizabeth Gabay, Master of Wine, see [elizabethgabay.com](http://elizabethgabay.com) or [belletwine.com](http://belletwine.com)*



Photo: Monaco Press Centre Photos

## Riviera Reporter Seaside Summer Fireworks 2015

For updates see [RivieraReporter.com](http://RivieraReporter.com)

### 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
Mon 27	PORT FRÉJUS
Wed 29	CANNES (FRANCE), CAGNES HIPPODROME
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
	PORT FRÉJUS

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”.





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# we've got mail...



Photo: Brendan Dennis

## DOUBLE FAULT

I AM outraged by the fact that the Murray brothers (and their whole team) disdain the Great Britain logo which they should be wearing on the back of their shirts as all teams do when playing the Davis Cup. Even James Ward with his horrible get-up had GB on the back on Friday and also as spectator of the first match Murray/Simon.

I don't know the facts but it seems obvious that Murray must have negotiated a "neutral" shirt – not wanting to bear "GREAT BRITAIN" on his back – and the team captain and/or the Federation dropped their pants and accepted it, knowing that they would have no chance of winning without him.

Andy Murray was awarded an OBE by the Queen, with all the symbols attached, which nobody – other than his ego – forced him to accept. Personally, I think that he should be stripped of his OBE and shown up as the hypocrite he is.

Because of this behaviour I hope Great Britain loses to France!

*Pauline Colombat, former Honorary Consul, Nice, by email*

## BURIED "UP WHERE"?

FURTHER to Marcel Wallais's letter on page 44 of your June/July issue, there has been new speculation about whether the remains transferred in 1948 from Roquebrune Cap Martin to Drumcliffe parish in County Sligo were really those of the poet and Nobel Laureate WB Yeats.

Correspondence between diplomats

involved in the transfer was recently found among the personal papers of the former French foreign ministry official, Jacques Camille Paris. These papers were given to the Irish Embassy in June. They suggest that Yeats's remains were "mixed pell-mell with other bones" and therefore couldn't have been properly identified.

Yeats's surviving relatives, including his granddaughter Caitriona Yeats, dismiss these recent claims and say the family is "satisfied beyond doubt" that the poet's remains do indeed lie in Drumcliffe cemetery where they have given rise to a world shrine ever since his state funeral was held there in 1948.

Many Roquebrunois had opposed the transfer in the first place. Perhaps, in a typical twist straight from the Provençal playwright Marcel Pagnol, they have now been stealthily vindicated?

*Roger K. Wiltshire, by email*

## TAX BACK ... BUT HOW?

IN an issue of the "Reporter" a few months back you had an article on claiming back the CSG and CRDS taxes on property rental that the EEC determined were unfair. I seem to recall that the article referred to a sample letter that could be sent to the Trésor Public. However I now can't find the magazine nor see it on your website.

I did send a letter to the Trésor Public a couple of months ago but have received no response (which could be due to them not understanding my poor French language skills!) and if you do still have your sample letter I feel it might be a better bet.

Kind regards and many thanks in advance.  
*Peter R, by email*

*The issue you refer to is number 168 (pg 16). With more than 2000 pages on our site the French text was indeed not that easy to find. We've added some keywords to help the search. Type "propertycsg" in the search box at rivierareporter.com. RR*

## POUND FOR POUND

THE fall in the value of euros against pounds has made living in France much more affordable for those of us on sterling pensions and/or other UK incomes. I

## BB WILL BE WATCHING YOU .. AND ME ... AND THEM ...

I AM not American but the article by George Donnelly on page 12 of your last issue is chilling nevertheless. It appears that Big Brother is alive and well and living in Washington. What is particularly worrying is that not only Americans will be scrutinised soon. The article's final statement says that 44 OCDE countries will implement a Common Reporting Standard from January 1st, 2016. How appropriate that this standard is known as "CRS" – the moniker of the French riot police!

*Wayne Hamble, by email*

**Star  
letter**

do, however, wonder if we are not at risk of becoming disliked by the locals, as are many foreign buyers of London properties. London and Home County properties are increasing in value very quickly as they are swept up by Asian and Russian buyers who have priced ordinary people like us out of the market. Last month, 90% of the 230 new flats in Maine Tower in Canary Wharf were sold within a day. We couldn't afford to move back to the UK even if we wanted to (but why would we want to?)  
*Geoffrey Randall, by email*

*See Tim Clark's property article (page 27) for more on the subject.*

## RUNAWAY HEADLINES

HOW fickle and nasty some people are – and so blind. I wonder what all the naysayers were thinking four years ago when Prince Albert II married Charlene Wittstock in Monaco. There was all that nonsense about a runaway bride,

## LETTERS

but look at them now! In America we made similar erroneous assumptions about the Clintons during the Monica Lewinski affair yet they've never seemed closer or happier than they are now.

Some people will repeat any unfounded rumour to create mischief or sell newspapers. It's disgusting.  
*Carla Langhorn,  
Cincinnati and Biot*

### SHAGALUF SAGA

IT'S strange how we seldom notice some things until they're brought to our attention for the first time. (I never noticed how many silver VW Golfs there are on the roads until we bought one!).

I was rather sceptical about your article regarding unruly behaviour by British air travellers on page 8 of your last issue. It's a phenomenon I have never witnessed but it has since been confirmed by several recent news reports I would previously have ignored. Airlines are now prosecuting the culprits, some of who end up in foreign jails but that doesn't seem to dampen everyone.

The Spanish have had enough and are policing "Shagaluf" with much greater vigour. It still hasn't stopped some revellers (Brits, always Brits) from drunken lewd behaviour and even fornicating in public as shown in lurid photographs in the British gutter press last month.

Road rage is also on the increase in the UK and becoming more violent. Discourteous driving that British drivers once merely grumbled about, more frequently results in assault, stabbings or even murder.

Whatever happened to the "flegme britannique" [stiff upper lip] the French admired us for during the last Great War?  
*Harold Durance, Golfe Juan*

### E1027: A HOUSE FOR LIVING IN ... ELSEWHERE

THE article about Eileen Gray by Maureen Emerson [issue 169, pg 30] is very interesting but to be honest I find the interior and exterior design of the "Maison en Bord de Mer" most unsuitable for the region. The Riviera is better suited to warm and rich tones, rustic stone and gentle shapes rather than the blockhouse style building shown in your photos. How appropriate that this cold and severe house is known by a number (E1027). It's a fascinating slice of history though and a very well-written article. It's just not interesting architecture for the region.

*Julian Chambers, Menton*

### EXISTING EXPATS EXEMPTED

BREXIT may or may not be advantageous to Britain as a nation but talk of a "disaster" for existing British expats in France and other EU countries is very much exaggerated. You have quoted Former Attorney General Dominic Grieve's claim that "EU exit would make 2 million Britons abroad illegal immigrants overnight." This statement is erroneous because it completely ignores the 1969 Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties that protects the acquired rights of individuals over time.

The Convention means that current French residents have nothing to worry about although they would probably require residents' permits, which could not be refused. After all, French citizens are required to have identity cards so it would be ludicrous if resident non-EU nationals were exempted from carrying official identification.

New arrivals would be somewhat more bothered though. As individuals, they would not have yet acquired the rights

**LETTERS, PAGE 46**



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## LETTERS, FROM PAGE 45

covered by the Vienna Convention. Health care on the national system would be a particular worry for them although France would probably enter into a bilateral health-care agreement with Britain. But it is doubtful that financially beleaguered countries such as Spain and Portugal would.

A potential Brexit is a long way off and even if it happened tomorrow, we have far less to worry about than many rumour-mongers suggest.

*J.W. Hall, Mons*

## YOU CAN BANK ON IT

WE are a Swiss-British couple and have just moved here from South Africa where we were also expats. Knowing how the French love red tape we were prepared for the worst when opening a local bank account, especially after the difficulties we encountered in SA, where my husband was posted for two years. By the time we were allowed an account, it was time to leave! Our Swiss and English credit and debit cards saved the day but at great cost in bank charges and unattractive exchange rates.

To our great surprise, we had no such problems in Nice. The Banque Populaire on Victor Hugo was able to give us a current account quickly and we had a chequebook and bank card within a few days. What a relief.

*Gemma H., by email*

## STANSTED STANDSTILL

I AM very angry at Stansted Airport to the point of not intending to use this destination again. Many will have had similar experiences I am sure but this is mine. Arrived 2.5 hours before departure having reluctantly paid £2.50 for the 1-minute drop off (this is a wicked rip off). The time spent doing the conga was close on 15 minutes leading to the bag security conveyor and scanner.

I passed the body scanner to meet a bustling crowd awaiting their hand baggage, there were quite a lot of raised voices when it became obvious every bag was being taken apart and searched. Thirty-five minutes later it was my turn, bag searched ... nothing ... returned through scanner ... again rejected and a further wait ... searched again ... seems that 2 pairs of contact lenses was the excuse ... another pass through scanner and rejected yet again, my voice joined the chorus of what the f\*\*k is going on? Numerous others were fretting and some would have missed their flight, I am certain.

It took me 1 hour and 10 minutes to get through security. Insane!

Then I fight my way through the equivalent of Cap3000 with shop assistants canvassing for business. It's a mad house. Flight gate already on the board, queue for the train shuttle. Luckily my flight was delayed otherwise I would have missed it.

I have one more flight booked

**WRITE TO US:** Letters to the Editor can be sent by post (see page 50) or email: [info@rivierareporter.com](mailto: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.

this year then stuff Stansted in the future but is Gatwick any better?

I'm looking at the TGV & Eurostar at the moment as an option for next year. I took it last year and found it pretty good. Crossing Paris was a pain but I understand Lille is a better option. "hands\_on", *Riviera Reporter web forum*

*Note that Luton also has a drop-off charge (which local taxi drivers are furious about.) You will probably find that TGV & Eurostar are much more expensive than flying.*

*At Heathrow with British Airways, there's no drop-off charge and you have the choice between two security halls at T5. London City airport is also an alternative to fly to from Nice. The spectacular approach over London is not to be missed, the airport itself is very user-friendly and the travel connections over land may prove easier, depending upon your final destination, there are daily NCE-LCY flights with BA. RR*

# Ending the school year on a high note



THE end of the Mougins School year was celebrated on July 3rd with a graduation ceremony marking both a departure from school life and the commencement of further education in such prestigious universities as McGill in Canada, Brown in the USA, King's College in London

and the Atelier Sèvres in Avignon. Amongst the awards presented to senior students, an exceptional one was offered this year. In memory of Roy King, husband of Hilary Lemaire (King), a music bursary was offered to Romy Poolman,

Hilary Lemaire collaborated with

Mougins School for many years, assisting with the organisation of drama festivals, bringing professional workshops and theatre to the school and participating in the International Schools Speech Competition. She has offered a generous bursary to the school for a talented student who is pursuing a musical career, to be used at the school's discretion. It is hoped that an equally impressive student will be "discovered" next year and receive the second half of the bursary. Guests at the ceremony were able to appreciate Romy's lyrical excellence when "Les Voix Crystales" interpreted "Nella Fortuna" at the end of graduation.

*For more on music, see "Finding your voice on the Riviera" on page 20. See Mougins School ad on page 11.*

## july

### 40TH MONTE CARLO SPORTING SUMMER FESTIVAL

Sat July 25: Sting. Sold out.  
Thurs July 30: Simple Minds.  
Tickets €180 (dinner) at 20h30 or €90 at 20h30.  
Mon Aug 3: The 100 Voices of Gospel World Tour 2015. Tickets €180 (dinner) at 20h30 or €90 at 20h30. Call +377 98 06 36 36 - [en.sportingsummerfestival.com](http://en.sportingsummerfestival.com)

### CINÉ PROM IN NICE

Mon July 27: The Rose  
Mon Aug 3: E.T.  
Mon Aug 10: Grand Budapest Hotel.  
Entry: €2; starts 19h30 (bring a blanket).  
04 97 13 51 16 - [tdv-nice.org](http://tdv-nice.org)

### 66TH FESTIVAL DE MUSIQUE, MENTON

Fri July 31-Thurs Aug 13: France's oldest classical music festival at Parvis Saint-Michel Archange and other locations. Tickets: €10-€50  
04 92 41 76 95. For more info see [festival-musique-menton.fr](http://festival-musique-menton.fr)

## august

### A MIDSUMMER NIGHT IN VILLEFRANCHE

Sat Aug 1, 19h: The International Club of the Riviera presents the signature event of our summer season. A superb summer buffet dinner will follow with typical summer favourites including cold meats, delicious salads and fresh seafood while our bar will be serving a selection of excellent wines from our region. The highlight of the evening will be just after dinner, the internationally acclaimed singing sensation, American soprano Amy Christianna Blake and French harpist Magali Pyka de Coster in concert with the theme "La Belle Epoque", a rich period spanning the end of the 19th Century and continuing until the First World War. Music and poetry mixed with energy and joy but also nostalgia and simplicity. Register at [internationalclub.fr](http://internationalclub.fr)

### CHARITY ART SHOW OF THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S CLUB



Mon Aug 31-Sun Sept 13, daily 11h-19h: Six artists from the International Women's Club will exhibit paintings, sculptures and photographs at the Salle du Couvent in Seillans, as part of the 10th anniversary celebration of the International Women's Club of Var. You are cordially invited to join us for a reception on Tues Sept at the Salle du Couvent at 17h30. All proceeds will be donated to charity. See [iwc-var.org](http://iwc-var.org)

### 11TH MUSIQUE CORDIALE INT'N FESTIVAL

Sat Aug 1-Sat Aug 15: An exciting summer festival of 27 concerts in 11 villages, including 9 free lunchtime concerts, 3 orchestral concerts, 3 outdoor opera performances, late night recitals and a dazzling line up of soloists including Michel & Sophie Tirabosco, Adam Green, Sophie Mather, Chiara Enderle and Charlotte King. For tickets, see [musique-cordiale.com](http://musique-cordiale.com)

### PWN NICE ROUND TABLE LUNCH

Mon Aug 3 & Mon Sept 7, 12h-14h: PWN Host and Facilitator: Deborah D'Alessandro. Cost: €20, incl. lunch, wine and coffee. Place: Hotel Villa la Tour, 4 Rue de la Tour, Nice (Old Town). Registration by invitation or on website: [www.pwnnice.net](http://www.pwnnice.net)

### 5TH LES NUITS DU CHÂTEAU DE LA MOUTTE À ST-TROPEZ

Tues Aug 4-Thurs Aug 13: A cultural summer staple in St-Tropez, prestigious concerts and shows with artists from the biggest international stage. This year features "Un Piano sur l'Eau" concert at Plage des Canebiers, and a show at Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel, "Hugo is Back" and a Jazz night. For tickets (€50-€60), call 04 94 96 96 94. See [lesnuitsduchateaudelamoutte.com](http://lesnuitsduchateaudelamoutte.com)

### MONACOUSA

Tues Aug 4, 18h: Save the date for our annual "Beach" event: Nikki Beach at the Fairmont. [info@starsnbars.com](mailto:info@starsnbars.com)

### AMIAc

Aug: No official event but an informal get together may be arranged, please contact John Bailey on 04 93 65 00 58 for details or see [amiac.org](http://amiac.org)

### 7TH INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL TANGO

Thurs Aug 6-Sun Aug 9: Courses and workshops at various locations across Nice. [verynicetangofestival.com](http://verynicetangofestival.com)

### POSH PARAPHERNALIA

Thurs Aug 6 & Thurs Sept 3: Books, bric-a-brac, posh paraphernalia and light lunch from 12h30.  
Sat Aug 15 & Sat Sept 19: Books, bric-a-brac, posh paraphernalia and 2-course lunch from 12h30.  
At the Grange (815 chem Gourettes, Mouans-Sartoux). And of course the library is open EVERY Thursday as usual 10h-15h (bric-a-brac and books). Library and bric-a-brac are open every Thursday. There is easy parking and pets are welcome. Sunny Bank supports the Anglophone elderly both socially and financially in our region. Help us to help them. Do you know someone who would like to come and needs a lift? Please let us know on 04 93 47 94 20, or just bring them along. [sunny-bank.org](http://sunny-bank.org)

### COMMONWEALTH CLUB OF THE RIVIERA

Fri Aug 7: Boat trip to view fireworks display in the Bay of Cannes. Details on website: [commonwealthclubriviera.com](http://commonwealthclubriviera.com)

### FIREWORKS & DINNER

Sat Aug 15: Firework concert and dinner on a central Cannes beach opposite the firework display, set to music. See the American Club of the Riviera website for full information: [americanclubriviera.com](http://americanclubriviera.com) or call Jackie on 06 98 12 89 00.

### JOHNNY MIRADOR LE SOSIE VOCAL CONCERT

Tues Aug 18: For more see [provencetatsunis.com](http://provencetatsunis.com)

## september

### A TASTE OF ASIA

Fri Sept 4: with Commonwealth Club of the Riviera. Details: [commonwealthclubriviera.com](http://commonwealthclubriviera.com)

### VIAC VISIT

Mon Sept 7-Tues Sept 8: visit to Les Baux de Provence. More details at [viac.fr](http://viac.fr)



## STOPOVERS AT THE END OF THE WORLD "TAFF" EXHIBITION

Sat Sept 8-Thurs Sept 27: French Southern and Antarctic Lands, the most unusual and exotic of the French overseas collectivities, by Bruno Marie and Stéphanie Légeron at the Grimaldi Forum in Monaco. Free entry. See [grimaldiforum.com](http://grimaldiforum.com)

## FESTIVAL DE LA PLAISANCE CANNES

Tues Sept 8-Sun Sept 13, 10h-19h (Fri until 22h; Sun until 18h): More than 550 boats bringing together exhibitors or visitors, owners or prospective buyers at Vieux Port & Port Pierre Canto. See [salonnautiquecannes.com](http://salonnautiquecannes.com)

## BEAULIEU CLASSIC FESTIVAL

Tues Sept 8-Sat Sept 19: A varying programme including Vainqueur des Piano Master de Monte Carlo (Casino de Beaulieu); Charlie Siem, Violon, Elzbieta Ziomek-Fringant, Piano (La Rotonde); Edgar Moreau, viola, Pierre-Yves Hodique, piano (Villa Kérylos); Richard Galliano, accordion; Orchestre de Cannes; Christian Morin Quartet. Concert €30; meal €65. See [beaulieusurmer.fr](http://beaulieusurmer.fr) or 04 93 01 02 21

## SWEDISH CLUB OF THE RIVIERA

Thurs Sept 10, 18h-20h: Swedish After Work at Hôtel Ellington, 25 blvd Dubouchage, Nice.

Thurs Sept 17, 16h-18h: Vernissage paintings by Tony Wahlander and Geneviève Nicol at Villa Ingeborg. Free entrance (exhibition until Oct 15).

Fri Sept 18, 18h: Sandviken Small Band, big band music and snacks at Villa Ingeborg. Price: €10. Call 04 92 13 15 34

Thurs Sept 24, 19h-21h: Swedish After Work at la Nacional, 61 Place Nationale, Antibes.

Sat Sept 26, 17h: Dancing at Villa Ingeborg. We meet to eat, talk and dance to live music, Villa Ingeborg. €25. Call 04 92 13 15 34.

Villa Ingeborg is at 40 ave de Verdun, Cagnes sur Mer. [www.rivieraklubben.com](http://www.rivieraklubben.com)

## EUROPEAN MASTERS GAMES OCT 1-11, 2015: VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



Nice will host the 2015 International Masters Games. The age of participating athletes range from 25 to 100, depending on the age limit of each sport as defined by the international federation's regulations. The Masters Games movement is all about "sport for all"

- 27 disciplines
- 40 venues across Nice
- 10,000 competitors
- 70% foreign participants
- 1200 volunteers

To volunteer, see [emg-nice2015.fr/participer/devenir-benevole](http://emg-nice2015.fr/participer/devenir-benevole)

## 1ST WORLDWIDE NIGHT SUP RACE

Fri Sept 11, 19h: The Yachting Festival's first stand-up paddle overnight relay. 15 hours to cover 100km. Professionals and amateurs will race solo or as a crew along the Croisette, starting at the Palais des Festivals and arriving at 10 Sat morning at the Vieux Port.

## BA OF THE VAR

Sat Sept 12, 13h: Vendange lunch Lorgues. See [baofthevar.com](http://baofthevar.com) or call 06 33 01 03 48.

## AMIAC

Tues Sept 15: Gourmet lunch in Vence, numbers limited so please contact John Bailey on 04 93 65 00 58 or see [amiac.org](http://amiac.org)

## "THE POWER OF COGNITIVE DIVERSITY FOR CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION IN 21ST CENTURY ORGANIZATIONS"

Sept (TBC), 18h30-21h30: Cost: €25 members; €35 non-members. Place: Sophia Antipolis. PWN Facilitator: Renata Kaminska, Associate Professor at SKEMA. Register at [pwnnice.net](http://pwnnice.net)

## A "SWELL-EGANT ELEGANT PARTY"

Fri Sept 18: A "Swell-egant Elegant Party" of dining and dancing at the beach club of the Belles Rives, Cap d'Antibes. More at the American Club of the Riviera website: [americanclubriviera.com](http://americanclubriviera.com) or call Jackie on 06 98 12 89 00.

## 10TH EDITION ETOILES DE MOUGINS

Fri Sept 18-Sun Sept 20: Gastronomy festival with chefs Sébastien Broda from Le Park 45 in Cannes and Lilian Bonnefoi (Eden Roc, Antibes). See [lesetoiledemougins.com](http://lesetoiledemougins.com)

## 32ND EUROPEAN HERITAGE DAYS

Sat Sept 19 & Sun Sept 20: Visit historical monuments and buildings usually closed to the public. For more info, see [journeesdupatrimoine.culture.fr](http://journeesdupatrimoine.culture.fr)

## ICR OPEN GOLF TOURNAMENT

Sat Sept 19: See [internationalclub.fr](http://internationalclub.fr)

## 2ND CHARITY LADIES' RALLY VINTAGE CARS

Sun Sept 20: Last year's inaugural ride sold out in only one day with 70 ladies driving fabulous vintage cars. All benefits go to Child CARE Monaco ([childcaremonaco.com](http://childcaremonaco.com)). For more on this year's "White Glam" rally, see Reporter 169.

## MONACO YACHT SHOW

Wed Sept 23-Sat Sept 26, 10h-18h30: The world's most prestigious boat show. Tickets €150/day per person. See [monacoyachtshow.com](http://monacoyachtshow.com)

## ENGLISH LIBRARY

Every Wed, 11h and Shepherd & Dog lunch at 12h30.  
Every Thurs, 10h: Keep Fit.  
Holy Trinity Church Cannes (ave Branly). [holyltrinitycannes.org](http://holyltrinitycannes.org)

## GRANDE BRADERIE JUAN-LES-PINS

Fri Sept 25-Mon Sept 28: Concerts entertainment and more than 100 shops unpack their bargains.

## VOILES DE ST-TROPEZ

Sat Sept 26-Sun Oct 4: 21 Classic yachts, of all sizes and styles. See: [lesvoilesdesaint-tropez.fr](http://lesvoilesdesaint-tropez.fr)

## SAGESSE GOSPEL SINGERS

Sun Sept 27, 16h30: at St Marie Madeleine church in Biot. 04 93 65 77 01 - [sdejonk24@yahoo.com](mailto:sdejonk24@yahoo.com)

## PÉTANQUE MATCH

Tues Sept 29: At Mandelieu bowling (*pétanque*) site with Commonwealth Club of the Riviera. Details on website: [commonwealthclubriviera.com](http://commonwealthclubriviera.com)

## VIAC

Wed Sept 30: Les Voiles de St Tropez. More details at [viac.fr](http://viac.fr)

## october

## BA CANNES

Fri Oct 2, 12h30: Referendum Debate at The Grange, Mouans-Sartoux. Come and join us for a Gourmet Lunch (€12 plus wine by the glass) followed by a debate. To book please call Giles on: 04 93 94 04 56 or email [mel@emporiumduvin.com](mailto:mel@emporiumduvin.com). See [britishassociationcannes.org](http://britishassociationcannes.org).

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[www.luxrentals.fr](http://www.luxrentals.fr)

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