

# Bulletin !

An informal look at life in this part of France and a selection of things to see and do.

## Thought for the month:

Why do eggs come in flimsy styrofoam cartons and batteries come in a package that only a chainsaw can open? 😊😊

Here are some *vide-greniers* (v-g), *brocantes* & *fêtes* in this area, but double-check beforehand, if possible, at [www.brocabrac.fr](http://www.brocabrac.fr) in case of any last-minute cancellations ['53' = area; ± = number of stalls expected]:

Sun 4 <sup>th</sup>	Montsûrs-Saint-Cénére (53)	v-g at 187 rue de Saint-Cénére, 8h-18h, ±150
“	Thorigné-en-Charnie (53)	v-g 'La Marabile', in the village all day, ±250
“	St Cyr du Bailleul (50)	v-g, 7h-18h, in the village, ± 50
“	Avranches (50)	monthly <i>brocante</i> , Place Valhubert, ±30
Thurs. 8 <sup>th</sup>	Granville (50)	<i>Marché d'antiquités / brocante</i> in Cour Jonville, ±30
Sun. 11 <sup>th</sup>	Bellou-en-Houlme (61)	v-g/ <i>brocante</i> at La Chevalerie, ±150
“	Bagnoles de l'Orne (61)	34 <sup>th</sup> <i>Foire aux antiquites, à la brocante et aux collections</i> (see page 2)
“	Villaines-la-Juhel (53)	v-g in 2 rue de Fromentin, 8h-18h, ±50
Thurs. 15 <sup>th</sup>	Rânes (61)	v-g in the Parc du Château, 6h-19h, ±300
Sun. 25 <sup>th</sup>	La Baroche-sous-Lucé (61)	v-g in <i>Fete St Louis</i> (see page 3)
“	Dol de Bretagne (35)	v-g in Foirail, 8h-18h, ±150

## Special date : public holiday

Thurs. 15<sup>th</sup> *Assomption* – the celebration of the Virgin Mary ascending bodily into Heaven. Traditional parades are held in France, often with dances and fireworks.

## Eating out - Pitaya Thai Street Food

'Pitaya' is located at 32 Rue de Sévigné in Fougères (35), near the Forum. It has a fresh, inviting interior, an open kitchen and friendly atmosphere. Open daily: 11h30-14h & 18h30-21h45 (Sundays just 18h30 to 21h45). [www.pitaya-thaistreetfood.com](http://www.pitaya-thaistreetfood.com)

## Something for all the family – Back to the Middle Ages

On the weekend of 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup>, 10h to 18h, at the Museum of the Château de Mayenne, on Place Juhel, you will come across knights, ladies and gentlemen in a medieval encampment in the château grounds. Let yourself be surprised by the spices, medieval medicines, leathercraft, weaponry and combat. There are workshops for the whole family (in French). You could even wear medieval costume! Entry: 5€. More info from the Mayenne Tourist Office (see page 5)

## Something for all the family – *La Fosse Arthour* (61)

You can enjoy great days out at this legendary site where King Arthur and Queen Guinevere are reputed to be buried. A lovely area and an optional gentle climb with a panoramic view from the top, and a peaceful lake and river at the bottom, where you can also enjoy a picnic. There is also a pretty *Auberge* by the car park where you can have a lovely lunch, or just a drink and maybe an ice cream! Look for signs to '*La Fosse Arthour*' from the village of St Georges de Rouelley (61, west of Domfront).

On Sun. 18<sup>th</sup> between 10h and 14h there will be a guided tour (in French) of the site.

## Donkey rides at the donkey farm

On Weds. 7<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup>, 11h-12h, at the *Asinerie du Bois Gamats* near Laval (53) children (ages 3 to 10) can take a donkey ride on the farm and in nearby woods lasting about an hour. (It is the accompanying adult who leads the donkey on the short trail, not the farm staff). The number of places is limited – reservation is required. Tickets 17€ for the hour's ride. More info at [www.asinerieduboisgamats.fr](http://www.asinerieduboisgamats.fr)

## *Foire aux antiquités, à la brocante et aux collections*

On Sun. 11<sup>th</sup> at 3b, Place du General de Gaulle in Bagnoles de l'Orne (61). 8h-19h. There will be around 70 stalls. €2,50 entry.

## *Le Jardin Bleuenn* in La Ferté-Macé (61)

This garden, at 35 rue Martin Luther King, was created in 1997. [*'bleuenn'* is the Celtic word for 'little flower']. The colours and lights are presented like a masterpiece - more than 500 varieties of plants and shrubs thrive on barely 1,000 sq m, and around 30 clematis plants climb the trees. Open to the public, by rendez-vous, between April and 31<sup>st</sup> October: 10h-12h & 14h-18h. Entry 2€. More info from the La Ferté-Macé Tourist Office

## Exhibition of paintings and sculptures in Pontmain (53)

Until 24<sup>th</sup> August will be this exhibition of local artists at the Tourist Information Point in Pontmain. Free entry. Open: Wed. to Sats., 11h–12h30 & 14h–17h (Aug. 15<sup>th</sup>: 14h–17h).

### *Fête St Louis in La Baroche-sous-Lucé (61)*

On Sun. 25<sup>th</sup> from 9h-18h, the village of La Baroche-sous-Lucé will be holding their *Fête St Louis*. There will be a *Salon de Thé* with an abundance of home made cakes and beverages, a craft market, a *vide-grenier*, a *buvette* with refreshments, games for children with a prize every time, *saucisse/frites* available all day from *Chez Mimi* and, to top it all, *LE TROU NORMANDE* will be giving displays of folk dancing from 14h onwards. There will also be the opportunity to win the '*panier pesé*', a basket filled with contributions from local businesses, if you correctly guess its weight! Why don't you go along and join in the fun?

### *Soirée de l'Astronome (Astronomy Evening)*

Fri. 2<sup>nd</sup>, 19h to 23h, in the Vallée des Grottes de Saulges, Chemin de la Roche-Brault, Thorigné-en-Charnie (53): discover today's starry sky in the valley, linked to that of the past. With the Laval Popular Observatory you can learn about astronomy (in French). From 19h to 21h: make and launch your water rocket and take part in a creative activity. Enter the Planetarium – set up on site to immerse ourselves in the sky of today and the past – and when night falls, observe the night sky with specialists equipped with telescopes: they will show you Saturn and other wonders of the starry sky in August (22h to 23h). Free. No reservation required. Take warm clothing and a torch.

### Leisure lake in La Ferté-Macé (61)

This *plan d'eau* is one of the largest in the Orne department with a total surface area of 65km, including 26ha of water with a beach and a 2,400m path round it, accessible all year. Offering a calm and green environment, it is dedicated to family and outdoor activities. Free access and parking.

Swimming is supervised in July and August, daily (not Mondays) 14h to 19h. The beach is located near the children's playground and beach volleyball court. The Beach Bar is open daily, 9h to 20h. There are many activities – swin-golf, a horse riding centre, pedal boats, archery, karts or pedal cars & mini-golf, and there are picnic areas with barbecues. Animals are welcome but must be kept on a leash, and there are special areas for dogs to swim in the lake, at the left side, near the dyke. More info from the Tourist Office.

### Cheese of the Month - *Valençay*

Named after a town in central France, Valençay is shaped like a pyramid with the top cut off. Originally the shape was perfectly pyramidal but Napoleon, visiting the Château de Valençay on his way back from a calamitous campaign in Egypt, saw the cheese and angrily chopped the top off with his sword! It is still made following the traditional method and when the cheese is firm enough it is covered with salted charcoal ash which allows Valençay to keep its flavour for a long time. As it matures in a ventilated cellar at 80% humidity, a natural blue mould covers the cheese. Moist and firm, it has a soft, delicate & nutty taste. Good on crackers, on a cheeseboard or even with jacket potatoes. Wines to go with it (white): Sancerre or Chablis.

## Entertainment & Concerts

Tues. 13<sup>th</sup>, 20h to 22h in the Parc de Vaux, Ambrières-les-Vallées (53): Emma Mory, singer-songwriter with a 20-year international career, sings beautiful French and international songs, with percussion and guitar. Food available on site (burgers, *frites*, pizzas – reservation required).

### Organ concert in Pontmain (53)

On Sun. 25<sup>th</sup> at 18h in the beautiful Basilica – a concert with organ and trumpet. Free, with retiring collection. [www.sanctuaire-pontmain.com](http://www.sanctuaire-pontmain.com)

### Outdoor concerts (*'sieste bucolique'*) in Domfront (61)

These concerts are free, starting at 16h in the Parc du Château in Domfront: Sun. 4<sup>th</sup>: meditative folk songs with Gaelle Alba; Sun. 11<sup>th</sup>: neo-classical music with Cécile Lacharme.

### Games in Saint-Mars-sur-la-Futaie (53)

On Fri. 2<sup>nd</sup> at 10h-12h at the Salle Communale, 21 rue de Bretagne in Saint-Mars-sur-la-Futaie: *'Jeux pour tous et info jeunes'* (games for all and youth info). Open to all ages - a free and fun opportunity around board games. Also the possibility of information (in French) on various themes (accommodation, travel, entertainment, etc). More info from the Msyenne Tourist Office.

### Cruises with commentary on the river Mayenne (53)

On Wed. 7<sup>th</sup> (11h-12h30), Sat. 17<sup>th</sup> (14h30-16h & 16h30-18h) and Sun. 25<sup>th</sup> (16h-17h30), the Mayenne Tourist Office offers the chance to sail aboard the boat *'La Meduana'* for a 1h30 trip on the river, upstream and passing through a lock. Reservation is recommended at the Mayenne Tourist Office (Quai Waiblingen, beside the river). Boarding is 15 minutes before departure. Tickets: 9,50€; 12-18s, disabled & students: 8,50€; 3-11s: 6,50€

### *Marché semi-nocturne à la Ferme de la Justais*

On Tues. 6<sup>th</sup> (and the following 2 Tuesdays), 17h30 to 20h, at the farm 'La Justais', Louvigné-du-Désert (35), the orchard becomes a market place for this semi-nocturne market. You can meet a dozen local *producteurs* and discover their produce in a friendly atmosphere.

Also, at 16h30 will be an optional short walk around the area. Catering and entertainment also on site. Free entry.

### *Fête de la Moisson* (Harvest Fête)

On Thurs. 15<sup>th</sup> from 11h, in Saint Denis de Gastines (53), 500 volunteers have been busy organising this retrospective of the harvest. Discover the great moments of peasant life in the past. Food is available on site, and from 21h there will be a dance with music from the 60s to 80s,. For more info contact the Mayenne Tourist Office (see page 5)

### *Fête de la Liberation*

Many towns and villages are celebrating the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Liberation with events and music. Domfront will have parades and concerts during the day on Sat. 3<sup>rd</sup>.

In Gorrion, on Wed. 7<sup>th</sup> at 19h30 in Place de la Mairie, there will be a guided walk (in French, but Eugène also speaks English) entitled “*Gorrion pendant la Seconde Guerre Mondiale*” (“Gorrion during the Second World War”) with many enlarged photographs taken at the time. Free. At 20h30 is a free musical picnic - plenty of chairs & tables for your picnic items, plus other food is available. There is an exhibition of items from that time in the windows of the shops and businesses in Gorrion. For more info see the posters around the town of Gorrion.

### Pony & trap rides

There are several venues for pony & trap rides around the villages: In Ambrières-les-Vallées (53): every Thursday 14h-18h, until 22<sup>nd</sup> August. In Gorrion (53): 14h–18h on Weds. 7<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup>, departing from Rue Corbeau Paris.

### *Les Jardins des Renaudies*

Near Colombiers-du-Plessis (53), these lovely gardens offer a delightful wander through with pretty flowers, shrubs and trees, also a museum showing how farming life was in the 1920s & 1930s, an exhibition of art and the ‘*labyrinthe de maïs*’ (‘maize maze’).

Sun. 18<sup>th</sup> – *Fête du miel et marché gourmand* (honey festival & food market) – discover bees, their care and learn about honey extraction. There will be a produce market and *workshops* for bee-keeping, and also pony rides. Entry 5€, ages 6-16s 3€, under 6s free. For more info and reservations go to [www.jardinsdesrenaudies.fr](http://www.jardinsdesrenaudies.fr)

New this year – you can order a picnic box prepared by the restaurant *Ô Village* in the nearby village of Colombiers-du-Plessis; reservations: 02 43 32 33 40 (for menu choices visit the *Jardins des Renaudies* website).

### Fougerolles-du-Plessis (53) fête

This popular fête takes place on the weekend of 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> at Place du Rassemblement. Meals are available on site: a *midi* at 12h, under canvas: 9€; an evening meal at 19h, under canvas: 14€, children 8€.

### Some Tourist Office contact details

Bagnoles de l’Orne (61)	02 33 37 85 66	<a href="http://www.bagnolesdelorne.com">www.bagnolesdelorne.com</a>
Domfront (61)	02 33 38 53 97	<a href="http://www.ot-domfront.com">www.ot-domfront.com</a>
Fougères (35)	02 99 94 12 20	<a href="http://www.ille-et-vilaine-tourisme.bzh">www.ille-et-vilaine-tourisme.bzh</a>
La Ferté-Macé (61)	0233 37 10 97	<a href="http://www.lafertemace.fr">www.lafertemace.fr</a>
Laval (53)	02 43 49 46 46	<a href="http://www.laval-tourisme.com">www.laval-tourisme.com</a>
Mayenne (53)	02 43 04 19 37	<a href="http://www.mayenne-tourisme.com">www.mayenne-tourisme.com</a>
Vire (50)	02 31 66 28 50	<a href="http://www.normandie-tourisme.fr">www.normandie-tourisme.fr</a>

## Sport & Leisure Activities

### *Randonnée de l'Été* (summer walk)

On Wed. 7<sup>th</sup> at 14h in Chailland (53), organised by the Mairie, this summer walk lets you discover another view of Chailland with the circuit of the Valley d'Authion. Depart from the Mairie (Town Hall) at 14h.

### *Soirées Rando d'Été* (summer evening walks)

Each Tuesday in August, 19h to 21h: different walks around Mayenne town and outskirts. Depart at 19h from near the Tourist Office (Quai Waiblingen, Halte Fluviale), Duration: 2 hours (12 km). Wear strong footwear and take water. Free. More info from the Tourist Office.

### A local swimming pool

*Le Centre Aquatique de Mayenne Communauté* announces the new opening times of 'La Vague' swimming pool (for more info go to [www.lavague.net](http://www.lavague.net)). However, it will be closed for its regular emptying and cleaning between 26<sup>th</sup> August and 6<sup>th</sup> September inclusive.



And finally:

If you see someone wearing camouflage, make sure to walk right into them so they know it's working! 😊😊



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## Events by the day (not including vide-greniers)

## August 2024

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Page</u>
Fri. 2nd	Astronomy evening	Thorigné-en-Charnie	3
“	Wooden board games	Domfront	4
W/e 3rd & 4th	Village fête	Fougerolles-du-Plessis	5
Sun. 4th	Outdoor concert	Domfront	4
Tues. 6th	Semi-nocturne market & hike	Louvigné-du-Désert	4
Wed. 7th	Donkey rides on the farm	Laval	2
“	Boat trip	Mayenne	4
“	Liberation: 80 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary	Gorron	5
“	Summer walk	Chailland	6
Sun. 11th	<i>Foire aux antiquités</i>	Bagnoles de l'Orne	2
“	Outdoor concert	Domfront	4
Tues. 13th	Emma Mory sings	Ambrières-les-Vallées	4
Thurs. 15th	Harvest Fête	St-Denis de Gastines	4
Sat. 17th	Boat trip	Mayenne	4
W/e 17th & 18th	Medieval encampment	Mayenne	2
Sun. 18th	Guided walk	La Fosse Arthour	2
“	<i>Fête du Miel</i>	Colombiers-du-Plessis	5
Wed. 21st	Donkey rides on the farm	Laval	2
Sun. 25th	<i>Fête Saint Louis</i>	La Baroche-sous-Lucé	3
“	Organ concert	Pontmain	4
“	Boat trip	Mayenne	4