

Bulletin !

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

Thought for the month:

Laugh and the world laughs with you;
cry and you get salt in your cocktail.

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

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| Sun. 1 st | St Jean-sur-Mayenne (53) | <i>bourse militaria</i> (sale of military items) in Salle de l'Aquarelle, 9h to 17h30, entry 2€, Food available on site. |
| “ | Dinard (35) | <i>brocante</i> in Esplanade de la Halle, ±50 |
| Sun. 8 th | Bellou-en-Houlme (61) | v-g/ <i>brocante</i> at La Chevalerie, 7h-18h, ±150 |
| “ | Sourdeval (50) | monthly v-g in ' <i>A La Belle Epoque</i> ', 7h-18h, food & drink available on site, ±70 |
| Sat. 28 th &) Sun. 29 th) | Dinard (35) | <i>Salon brocante antiquités</i> in Salle de Cosec, 9h – 18h, entry 3€, ±50 |

Vide-maisons (house clearances)

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|----------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Sun. 1 st | Mayenne (53) | at 111 Avenue Gutenberg, 9h-17h |
| “ | Montsûrs-Saint-Cénéri (53) | at 16 Grande Rue, 9h-18h |
| “ | Mortain (61) | at 62 rue Ferdinand Fouque, 9h-18h |
| Fri. 6 th | Saint-Malo (35) | at 6 rue de la Novette, 10h-18h |

Eating out

Traditionally I don't recommend a restaurant in December as I feel we may be doing enough eating?!! But I will continue them in January!

Christmas Open Day with crafts

A Christmas Open Day at 10 Impasse de Vieux Cimetière in Ceaucé (61) on Sun. 8th from 10h to 18h (organised by Marie-Claude, who holds Garden Open Days). There will be about 10 - 14 stalls with pottery, hand-made sewn items, etc. All proceeds will be going to a charity, as always.

Animation de Noël in Fougerolles-du-Plessis (53)

This will take place on Sun. 1st, 9h to 17h, in the Salle des Fêtes in Fougerolles-du-Plessis. There will be 30 stalls of Christmas cheer!

Grande Daze Animal Rescue Christmas Sale

On Sun 1st, 10h to 16h, this Christmas Sale will take place in the Salle des Fêtes in Saint-Aubin-fosse-Louvain (53)

Guided visit (in French) of the Laval Christmas lights

On each Fri. & Sat. until 4th January, 18h15 to 19h30, explore the Christmas lights around this historic town. At the end, a glass of *vin chaud* or apple juice will be served at *La Cave du Château*. Meet in front of the *Hotel de Ville* (Town Hall)

Towns and villages near Domfront - Christmas lights circuit

Each year several towns and villages in this area are specially lit up at Christmas. The main ones nearby are: Mantilly, St Mars d'Egrenne, St-Roch-sur-Egrenne, Rouellé, Ceaucé, La Sauvagère, Beauchêne. Ask at the Domfront Tourist Office (info@ot-domfront.com, 02 33 38 53 97) and for details of a possible guided coach trip near you.

To watch the Christmas lights being switched on in Gorron (53): go to the front of the *Mairie* by 18h on Fri. 6th. You will also see *Père Noël* and his little *lutins* (elves), and the children will form a lantern-lit procession along the streets of the town. To find out when your village will be switching on their lights, you can ask at your *Mairie*.

Parade de Noël "l'Envol" ("The Flight")

On Fri. 6th, 19h30 to 21h, in Place Clemenceau, Mayenne (53) the town of Mayenne invites you to an unusual experience – to take a new look at their streets, organised by the *Remue Menage* Company. There will be a wonderful procession – an imaginary world unfolds with a cortège of crazy costumes and birds. They carry us away with their aerial dance and vitality. Free.

Randonnée pedestre (Walk)

Tues. 3rd at 14h – an interesting circuit of the town of Fougerolles-du-Plessis (53). Meet outside the church at 14h. 1€ for non- members of this walking club.

Some *Marchés de Noël* (Christmas markets)

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|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| Sun. 1 st | Oisseau (53) | 10h to 18h in the Salle des Fêtes, 61 rue Ambroise de Loré & nearby. ± 30 stalls |
| “ | Lassay-les-Châteaux (53) | 10h to 17h30 in the Salle Omnisports, Place Victor Hugo; tombola; 48 stands. |
| “ | Hercé (53) | 10h to 17h30 at <i>Le Pepinière des Prés</i> . There will be <i>Père Noël</i> , hot chocolate, sales of Xmas trees & decorations, also local produce. |
| “ | Champéon (53) | 10h to 18h in the Château de Fresne, you can buy Christmas presents, trees, tasty treats & drinks. More info: <i>chateaufresne.org</i> |
| Fri. 6 th | Juvigné (53) | from 18h30 to 23h, in Place de l’Eglise, an evening <i>Marché de Noël</i> , with the switching on of the lights & musical entertainment. Food available on site. |
| Sat. 7 th | Fougères (35) | <i>Emmaus Grande Vente de Noël</i> at <i>Ferme du Paron</i> , 10h-17h. |
| “ | St Berthevin-la-Tannière (53) | 16h to 23h, in the Salle des Fêtes, horse & buggy rides, entertainment, many stalls. |
| Sat. 14 th | La Haie-Traversaine (53) | 16h to 20h, a covered Christmas market. Many stalls, children’s make-up & tattooing. |
| 14 th & 15 th | Bagnoles de l’Orne (61) | In this town adorned with 1,000 lights – <i>Père Noël</i> , wooden games, pony rides, 40-45 stands. |

Something for all the family

On Wed. 4th, 15h to 16h, in the *Salle d’Honneur* in the *Mairie*, 6 Place de la Mairie in Gorrion (53) – a free Christmas show by *Cirque Venissa*. This will be a lively, fun stage show. Reservations advised as seating is limited: 02 43 03 31 70 or ask at the *Mairie*.

Illuminated Dinner Cruises in Laval (53)

On Wednesday & Thursdays, 4th & 5th; 11th & 12th; 18th & 19th, you can enjoy this *Diner Croisière des Lumières*’ while sailing past the Laval Christmas illuminations on the Vallis Guidonis, 20h to 22h15. Tickets (from the Laval Tourist Office: 02 43 49 45 26): 58€ which includes a 4-course meal, a glass of wine with the meal and sparkling wine on arrival. You can also ask at the Tourist Office for more cruises along the river.

Quiz Night at ‘The Vintage Bar’ in Perrou (61)

Sat. 7th at 19h (7pm), this quiz is in English and French (each team comprises 2 French and 2 English). A welcome drink and 2-course meal is included in the price of 16€ per person. For enquiries & reservations contact Michelle Dupin (06 88 74 14 43) or Lorraine Hunt (06 02 20 58 03). Payment in advance please. Entries are limited so don’t delay.

Entertainment & Concerts

Fri. 13th at 20h30 in Espace Mayenne, 2 rue Josephine Baker in Laval (53): “*Gospel pour 100 voix* : The Tour for Peace”. (“Gospel for 100 Voices). For more info go to www.espace-mayenne.fr

Vivace Chorale Christmas concerts

Vivace Chorale will be giving 4 Christmas concerts in December:

- * Sun. 8th at 15h (3pm) in the church in Mantilly (61)
- * Fri. 13th at 19h (7pm) in the church in Notre-Dame du Touchet (50)
- * Sat. 14th at 20h (8pm) in the church in St Jean de Corail (50)
- * Sun. 15th at 15h (3pm) in the church in Domfront (61)

Orthodox Polyphonic Sacred Songs

On Sun. 1st from 14h30, in the Monastery de Bois Salair, RD 104 in Fontaine-Daniel (53): located in the forest of Bois Salair, this concert is given by the choir *Saint Syméon le Myroblite*. It highlights the beauty of Orthodox vocal traditions offering a moment of deep spirituality through sacred music in this lovely setting. Entry: 15€ (students & unemployed 10€), which will go towards the upkeep of the frescoes in the chapel of the Monastery. Reservation is required as places are limited (02 43 04 68 35).

Chorale ‘Voix d’Eté

The choir ‘*Voix d’Eté*’ will be giving its annual Christmas Concert at the Salle Normand in Dompierre (61) at 16h on Friday 6th. This is a free concert but there will be a voluntary collection for charity. There will be light refreshments afterwards. Music will include well known French and British carols and also lesser known choir pieces with a Christmas flavour.

Voix d’Eté and other choirs from the La Ferté-Macé area are joining forces to give a Carol Concert in Notre Dame de l’Assomption in La Ferté-Macé (61) on Sunday 8th at 15h. The combined choirs will sing a few short Christmas pieces but the emphasis will be on the public joining in singing traditional well-known British and French carols, including ‘Silent Night’, ‘O Come All Ye Faithful’, ‘*Il Est Né Le Devin Enfant*’. This promises to be a good way to start celebrating Christmas, so get your voices ready for a good sing.

L’Eglise Saint-Martin in Gorron (53)

The distinctive white bell tower of the church now appears and seems to pierce the skies over Gorron. Throughout the summer, 58 tonnes of scaffolding was raised to allow work to be done on the steeple, stage by stage, and the work has taken over a year resulting in the building gradually revealing its elegance. It is easy to forget that white was the original colour of the church. This whiteness is from the limestone re-covered by a harmonising patina constituting a mix of chalk and water.

English films in Gorrion (53) cinema

The first English (VO) films in Gorrion cinema in December will be:

Monday 2nd : Juror No. 2

by Clint Eastwood, with Nicholas Hoult, J K Simmons, Kiefer Sutherland

Monday 9th : HERE (French title: '*Les Plus Belles Années de Notre Vie*')

by Robert Zemeckis, with Tom Hanks, Robin Wright, Paul Bethany

The films start at 20h (8pm) and tickets (5,50€) are available at the cinema (beside the church) from 19h30 (7.30pm) on the night. As always, the '*Bar de la Mairie*' at the bottom of the hill serves pre-film refreshments, including a platter of cheese and/or meat with a glass of wine/beer, for 8€. [It might be advisable to check on www.gorrion-cinemas.fr before setting off in case of any last-minute changes].

English films in Ernée (53) CinéMajestic

Thurs. 5th at 20h30: Juror No.2, directed by Clint Eastwood (see above)

Thurs. 19th at 20h30: Anora (winner of *Palme d'Or* 2024).

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And finally,

Reporter to The Pope: "How many people work at the Vatican?"

The Pope: "About half."

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That's all for this month. A lot of Christmas events in here including illuminations, markets & concerts. You will also find more information at any Tourist Office. Have a wonderful time during this festive season.

Judy Skinner

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Events by the day (not including vide-greniers)

December 2024

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Event</u> | <u>Location</u> | <u>Page</u> |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------|
| Sun. 1 st | Christmas Fair | Fougerolles-du-Plessis | 2 |
| “ | Grande Daze Christmas Sale | Saint-Aubin-fosse-Louvain | 2 |
| “ | Polyphonic Sacred Songs | Fontaine-Daniel | 4 |
| Mon. 2 nd | English (VO) film: ‘Juror No. 2’ | Gorron | 5 |
| Tues. 3 rd | Walk around the area | Fougerolles-du-Plessis | 2 |
| Wed. 4 th | Show by <i>Cirque Venissa</i> | Gorron | 3 |
| Thurs. 5 th | English (VO) film: ‘Juror No. 2’ | Ernée | 5 |
| Fri. 6 th | <i>Voix d’Eté</i> Christmas concert | Dompierre | 4 |
| “ | Switching on of Xmas lights | Gorron | 2 |
| “ | Christmas parade | Mayenne | 2 |
| Sat. 7 th | Quiz at ‘The Vintage Bar’ | Perrou | 3 |
| Sun. 8 th | <i>Vivace</i> Christmas concert | Mantilly | 4 |
| “ | Christmas Open Day | Ceaucé | 2 |
| “ | <i>Voix d’Eté</i> Christmas concert | La Ferté-Macé | 4 |
| Mon. 9 th | English (VO) film: ‘HERE’ | Gorron | 5 |
| Fri. 13 th | <i>Vivace</i> Christmas concert | Notre-Dame du Touchet | 4 |
| “ | Gospel for 100 Voices | Laval | 4 |
| Sat. 14 th | <i>Vivace</i> Christmas concert | St Jean-du-Corail | 4 |
| Sun. 15 th | <i>Vivace</i> Christmas concert | Domfront | 4 |
| Thurs. 19 th | English (VO) film: ‘Anora’ | Ernée | 5 |