

Bulletin !

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

Thought for the month:

If your outgoings exceed your income,
then your upkeep will be your downfall!

Here are some *vide-greniers* (v-g), *brocantes* & *fêtes* in this area, but double-check beforehand, if possible, at www.brocabrac.fr in case of any last-minute cancellations ['35' = area; ± = number of stalls expected]:

Suns. 6 th & 20 th	Dinard (35)	<i>brocante</i> in Place Crolard, 7h30 to 17h30, ±70
Sun. 6 th	Dol-de-Bretagne (35)	v-g on <i>terrain de pétanque</i> , 8h-18h, ±70
“	Neuilly-le-Vendin (53)	v-g on <i>terrain de football</i> , rue de Normandie, 8h-17h30, ±50
“	Saint-James (50)	v-g in Fête de la Saint-Pierre, in the <i>Stade de Foot</i> , 8h -18h, ±70
“	Sourdeval (50)	monthly <i>brocante</i> at Le Moulin Foulon, 8h-18h, ±50

Vide-maisons (house clearances)

1 st to 4 th	Perrou (61) – <i>vide-maison</i> & garden, at 6 rue des Andaines, 10h-17h
W/e 5 th & 6 th	Ambrières-les-Vallées (53) – at 39 rue des Acacias, 10h-18h
Sun. 20 th	Epinay-le-Comte (61) – at La Rosaire, 1238 route Philippe Hurepel, 8h-18h

Special dates:

Monday 14th *Fête Nationale* ('*Pris de la Bastille 1789*')

Towns and villages celebrate with music and fireworks. Your *Mairie* or the nearest Tourist Office will let you know what events are taking place near you.

Eating out : *Le Continental*

'*Le Continental*' is a family-style restaurant in the heart of Mayenne town, at 13 rue Veille des Halles, 1 place Georges Clemenceau. Good service, atmosphere and value for money. They are open for lunch, dinner and drinks – daily, 8h30 to 23h, but closed on Sundays. [Voted 7th out of 34 restaurants in Mayenne]. 02 43 00 48 82.

Les Jardins des Renaudies

At this lovely 3.5 ha floral park at Les Mézerais, Colombiers-du-Plessis (53), as well as 350 hydrangeas and 133 varieties of roses, there are hundreds of varieties of flowering plants along pretty walkways. There is a museum showing life on a farm in the 1920s and vintage farm equipment. Plenty of areas for a picnic. Dogs are welcome on a lead.

On Mon. 14th will be entertainment and games with *Ô Village: "Guinguette & Games"*. On Wednesdays 16th, 23rd and 30th there will be activities in the gardens with the theme "*Petites bêtes amies du jardinier*" ("Insects, friends of the gardener"). Also, from 14th July until 13th Oct., the 10,000 m² *labyrinthe de maïs* (maize maze) will be open. Entry to the gardens is 6€, children ages 5 to 16: 3€, under 5s free. For more info and reservations go to jardinsdesrenaudies.fr

Vélo-rail in the evening

On Saturdays 5th, 12th, 19th & 26th, from 20h to 22h30, you can enjoy a beautiful summer evening on a rail-bike trip – 2 to 5 people per *draisine* (rail-bike) – and you can have some friendly time (and exercise!). The trees form a covered path on a 5km disused rail route on the edge of the Andaines forest. Departing from the Bagnoles de l'Orne racecourse, behind the stands, tickets are 8€ (under 12s: 4€) available from the Tourist Office before 18h on the evening.

The '*Tour de France*' will be passing through Flers (61)

On Thurs. 10th the town of Flers welcomes the passing through of the *Tour de France* cyclists, with the expected arrival time of 13h15. The town will have a festive atmosphere in and around the *Centre Socioculturel* and there will be entertainment through the town during the day.

'Les Vendredis de l'Été'

A flagship event in Bagnoles de l'Orne (61) since 1997, these free events celebrate the 'Summer Fridays' showcasing street arts. The artists make us dream, laugh, reflect and react around a colourful theatrical performance. From 21h to 22h.

🎵 4th July, the company '*La Folle Allure*' presents an amazing show of dexterity and daring! In the Parc du Château. 🎵 11th July: 'Absurd and Amusing' - a surreal and musical investigation of the mysterious fall of a delivery man. 2 federal police officers try to discover who killed him - or is he even dead?! Minimum age 4 years. In the parc du Château; 🎵 18th July, a 3D Spectacle Without Glasses: "A Bone in the Cosmos". Minimum age 8 years. In Place de la Gare.

Beach Soccer tournament

This will be held at the *plan d'eau* (lake) in La Ferté-Macé (61) on Wed. 9th between 10h & 18h. Organised by the *Ligue de Football de Normandie*, it is free and open to all. For more information and registration ask at a Tourist Office (see a listing below).

Dancing beside the lake on Friday evening

The popular '*guinguette au bord de l'eau*' takes place every Friday evening in July, 18h to 23h, beside the lake in Saint-Fraimbault (61). Live music (usually an accordion) will be playing anything - tango, paso-doble, waltz – you name it! Drinks and snacks (frites, crêpes, ice creams) are available on site. Tickets are 7€.

Siestas bucoliques

On Sundays 20th and 27th, 16h to 17h, this is an opportunity to discover shows at unusual locations throughout the medieval town of Domfront and nearby, with music and song outdoors in an intimate and contemporary atmosphere. Free. For more info ask at your nearest Tourist Office.

'Cars & Coffee' : exhibition of vintage vehicles

On Sun. 27th, 9h30 to 12h30, at Place du Marché Couvert in Bagnoles de l'Orne (61, by the Tourist Office) organised by *l'Assoc. Bagnoles Moteurs Classiques*: 'Cars & Coffee' presents a gathering of vintage, classic, sports and exceptional vehicles. You can admire the beautiful bodywork, mechanics and chat with passionate enthusiasts, Free entry.

Mistletoe and thistle

A seasonal reminder that the removal and destruction of mistletoe (*le gui*) from all poplars and fruit trees is compulsory. Also, all landowners, especially those absent for part of the year, must remove - and/or arrange to have destroyed - any thistle (*le chardon*) on their land before it flowers, including any in the areas along the borders.

Beach Basketball tournament

On Wed. 23rd at the *base de loisirs* (lake) in La Ferté-Macé (61) this is free and open to all. Organised by the *Ligue Régionale de Normandie Basketball*. For more information, ask at a Tourist Office.

Some local Tourist Offices

Bagnoles de l'Orne (61):	02 33 37 85 66	bagnolesdelorne.com
Domfront (61):	02 33 38 53 97	ot-domfront.com
La Ferté-Macé (61):	02 33 37 10 97	lafertemace.fr
Mayenne (53):	02 43 04 10 37	mayenne-tourisme.com

The Tourist Offices will have listings of weekly markets near you also.

Entertainment & Concerts

Sat. 5th at 20h in the Eglise Notre-Dame in La Ferté-Macé (61): the Chorale '*Oh les Choeurs*', with the theme of 'Flowers and Trees'. Programme includes music by John Rutter, Ola Gjello, Saint-Saëns and Brahms. Free, with a retiring collection.

Chorale Vivace concerts

There will be 2 concerts by this popular choir in July. They will be singing at the Benedictine Abbaye Notre-Dame in Lonlay l'Abbaye (61) on Sat. 5th at 20h. Also, at the Eglise Saint-Julien in Domfront (61) on Sat. 19th at 20h. The concerts are free, with a retiring collection for local charities.

'Les Clés de Bagnoles'

In Bagnoles de l'Orne (61) in July & August there are free open-air concerts on Sundays from 17h to 18h in the *Jardins du Lac*. Reservation is recommended as places are limited. Info & reservations from the Tourist Office: 02 33 37 85 66.

♪ 6th July – A lively tribute to celebrate the legacy of one of the greatest poets and singers of French songs: Jacques Brel. A unique and delicate interpretation with piano and accordion;
♪ 13th July – 'The Crooked Nails' - a double bass, a lumpy guitar, a harmonica - plus chains, pieces of wood & metal in a rare formula. A mix of Native American, African and European music;
♪ 20th July – 'Gangstar Fanfare': an original show of 4 musicians and professional jugglers. A festive and varied repertoire with a little swing, a little ska, a little song and salsa.

Organ recitals in Bagnoles de l'Orne (61)

Organised by *Les Amis de l'Orgue de Sainte-Madeleine de Bagnoles de l'Orne*, these recitals are at in the church at 9 Place de l'Eglise in Bagnoles de l'Orne. Free with a retiring collection.

♪ Wed. 9th at 17h to 18h15 – an organ and clarinette recital with Mickaël Durand (head organist at the Cathedral Saint-Pierre in Nantes) and Cyrille Ortola on clarinet, with works by Bach, Mozart, Saint-Saëns, Fauré.

♪ Wed. 30th at 17h to 18h15 – a recital by organist Emmanuel Hocdé with Christophe Hocdé on violin. Programme includes: Bach, Handel, Massenet, Elgar.

Telephone numbers

I have been asked to repeat, for people who have newly arrived in France, the following advice. When giving your phone number, the figures should be divided into blocks of 2 (for example: 02 43 60 17 77) and it is very important to pause between the numbers to avoid ambiguity. Without the pause, 60 followed by 17 could be understood to be *soixante-dix-sept*, which is 77. So, when dictating the number 02 54 60 17 77 you would say: *zero deux* [pause] *cinquante-quatre* [pause] *soixante* [pause] *dix-sept* [pause] *soixante-dix-sept*.

Guided walk of the medieval town of Domfront (61)

These guided visits (in French, but the guide usually speaks some English) are on Fridays (4th & 11th) and Tuesdays (8th & 15th) from 15h30 to 16h30. You will be taken around this historic town – along ancient byways, past wooden-fronted houses, secret courtyards, the neo-Byzantine-style church of Saint-Julien, and you will enjoy wonderful views over the valley and hear some well-kept secrets! About 1km of walking, so comfortable shoes are advised and suitable clothing in the event of rain. [Note: there will be very few seats along the route]. Tickets are 4€ (students & unemployed 3,50€) and can be purchased at the Tourist Office at 12 Place de la Roirie (near the château entrance).

Also, at 17h on the same days you can be taken up to the church bell-tower for a 360° view of the town and area surrounding Domfront. A very rare occasion. Note: there are about 200 steps to climb so sensible shoes must be worn (heels are forbidden). Minimum age: 10 years. Tickets: 4€.

Cheese of the Month - *Coulommiers*

Pronounced ‘koo-lom-yay’ and named after the town of the same name, it belongs to the Brie family and is said to be the ancestor of all Brie cheeses, but it has a nuttier taste and thicker crust, an extra rich & creamy body, with a sweet and melting taste. It has a white rind with some red stains and is best eaten at room temperature. A great *hors d'oeuvre* cheese, or great with apples, pears or fresh berries. Recommended accompanying wines: a red wine from *Bordeaux*, *Côtes de Rhone* or *Languedoc* – or white: a *Sauvignon blanc*.

Something you didn't know you didn't know . . .

For practice using all the letters of the alphabet, an English typist uses “the quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog”. In French they use: “*Allez porter ce vieux whisky au juge blond qui fume un havane*” (“Take this aged whisky to the blond judge who is smoking a cigar”).

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And finally:

A priest, a rabbit and a minister walk into a bar. The bartender asks the rabbit “what’ll you have?”. The rabbit says “I dunno. I’m only here because of Autocorrect”!

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That’s all for this month. There are many more outdoor events organised around the area and a chance to discover some historical places, so do go and check out the Tourist Offices. Have fun!

Judy Skinner

e-mail: judithsk@free.fr

Events by the day (not including vide-greniers)

July 2025

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Page</u>
Fri. 4 th	' <i>La Folle Allure</i> ' show	Bagnoles de l'Orne	2
Sat. 5 th	' <i>Vivace Chorale</i> ' concert in the Abbey	Lonlay-l'Abbaye	4
Sun. 6 th	Open-air concert: Tribute to Jacques Brel	Bagnoles de l'Orne	4
Wed. 9 th	Beach Soccer tournament	La Ferté-Macé	3
“	Organ & clarinet recital	Bagnoles de l'Orne	4
Thurs. 10 th	<i>Tour de France</i> comes through	Flers	2
Fri. 11 th	'Absurd & Amusing' show	Bagnoles de l'Orne	2
Sun. 13 th	Open-air music with 'The Crooked Nails'	Bagnoles de l'Orne	4
Mon. 14 th	<i>Guinguette & Games</i>	Colombiers-du-Plessis	2
Fri. 18 th	'A Bone in the Cosmos' show	Bagnoles de l'Orne	2
Sat. 19 th `	' <i>Vivace Chorale</i> ' concert	Domfront	4
Sun. 30 th	Open-air concert 'Gangstar Fanfare'	Bagnoles de l'Orne	4
Wed. 23 rd	Beach Basketball tournament	La Ferté-Macé	3
Sun. 27 th	'Cars and Coffee'	Bagnoles de l'Orne	3
Wed. 30 th	Organ and violin recital	Bagnoles de l'Orne	4

Multiple dates :

Fri. 4 th & 11 th	Guided tour of the town	Domfront	5
Tue. 8 th & 15 th	Visit to the church bell-tower	Domfront	5