

Bulletin !

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

Thought for the month:

Do you remember back to when “a new hip joint” meant someplace we wanted to go on a Friday night!

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

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| Sun. 3 rd | Montsûrs (53) | v-g in the <i>champ de foire</i> (fair ground), 30 rue de Saint-Cénére, 8h-18h, ±250 |
| “ | St Cyr-du-Bailleul (50) | annual v-g in Place Baptiste Joubin, 7h-18h, ±70 |
| Thurs. 7 th | Granville (50) | <i>Marché antiquités-brocante</i> in Cours Jonville |
| Sun. 10 th | Bagnoles-de-l’Orne (61) | <i>Foire à la brocante et aux antiquités</i> , in Avenue Docteur Paul Lemuët, 9h-19h30; entry 2,50€, ±70 |
| “ | Villaines-la-Juhel (53) | v-g in rues Fromentin, des Glycines & des Merisiers, 8h30-18h, ±50 |
| Fri. 15 th | Rânes (61) | Grand v-g in the Parc du Château, 8h-18h, ±300. Refreshments on site. |
| Sun. 24 th | Saint-James (50) | v-g during the <i>fête communale</i> , in the Salle des Fêtes car park, 16 rue du Pavé, 8h-18h, ±70 |
| Sun. 31 st | Villaines-la-Juhel (53) | v-g in rue de la Colombe, 8h-18h |

Vide-maisons (house clearances)

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| Sat. 2 nd | Laval (53) | at 35 rue Faidherbe, 9h-19h |
| Sun. 3 rd | La Ferrière-aux-Etangs (61) | <i>vide-maison</i> and <i>vide-cave</i> at 14 rue des Ecoles, 8h-18h |

Special date : public holiday

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| Fri. 15 th | <i>Assomption</i> – the celebration of the Virgin Mary ascending bodily into Heaven. Traditional parades are held in France, often with dances and fireworks. |
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Eating out - *Le Moulin de Beslay*

This country restaurant and shop, at 13 rue du Bocage near Cigné (53, on the road towards Ambrières-les-Vallées) recently re-opened and the new owners offer a warm welcome and a well-cooked, simple home-made meal. They offer a 3- or 4-course lunch, wine/cider/soft drink included, for 13,50€. A single menu is offered but other options may be available on request. Open daily for lunches, closed weekends. For reservations: 02 43 03 48 43.

Flories d'Antan (floral fête) in Saint-Fraimbault (61)

On Fri. 15th, 9h to 19h, this popular annual event gives a journey through time, with demonstrations of ancient trades, a local market and rural skills (butter-making, threshing, woodworking, potato harvesting) and some farm animals. There will be a procession of vintage vehicles and tractors. Food is available on site and for this 30th anniversary there will be fireworks by the lake. Entry 6€ (under 12s free). Parking nearby (follow the signs).

Country Days at the Aerodrome

On the weekend of Sat. 30th & Sun. 31st, 9h to 19h, at Bruyères Aerodrome near Rives d'Andaines (61), you are invited to discover the planes on the ground and flying by. You may be able to take a first flight in a plane or glider during this unforgettable weekend. There is a free bus service from Bagnoles de l'Orne to the aerodrome (ask at the Bagnoles de l'Orne Tourist Office). Food is available on site. For more info: aeroclubdandaines.com

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. 1st – 19h to 23h: *Les Jardins du soir* (the Gardens in the evening). You may know the gardens by day, you can now go and discover them in the evening, when the shadows emphasise the greatness of the trees and bushes – and also the *labyrinthe de maïs* (maize maze) at night. You can take a picnic and enjoy the peace of the summer evening at the Jardins. There will be entertainment for the children. Take a torch or headlamp and good shoes.

Sun. 31st – *Fête du miel et marché gourmand* (honey festival & food market) – discover bees, their care and learn about honey extraction from the hives around the gardens. There will be a produce market and demonstrations of bread baked in the old bread oven, and also pony rides. Entry 6€, ages 5-16s 3€, under 5s free. For more info and reservations go to jardinsdesrenaudies.fr

Exhibition of vintage vehicles and *vide-grenier*

The 24th edition of this event takes place on Sun. 3rd, 6h30 to 18h in Javron-les-Chapelles (53, on RD218, route de Madré). There will also be a tombola – with a car as the first prize! Refreshments on site. Entry 1,50€, children under 14 free.

Something for all the family

‘Tiger Woods of the Frisbee!’ On Tuesdays 5th and 26th, 15h to 16h, at the *Pas de Tri* (shooting range) behind the *Complexe Tennistique*, avenue de la Ferté-Macé in Bagnoles de l’Orne (61), this fun activity derived from golf is sure to win you over. No clubs needed – a frisbee for a ball, a basket for a hole. Your goal is simple – to reach the target with as few throws as possible but instead of a ball you’ll use discs. No need for weird hats or special shoes, just good humour and a little skill! From ages 9 to 99. Duration: 1 hour. More info from the Tourist Office (*bagnolesdelorne.com*; 02 33 37 85 66).

And also:

Learning about wool at the Asinerie du Bois Gamats

On Thurs. 7th (14h) and Tues. 26th (15h) this workshop, at the Chemin du Château du Bois Gamats, Laval (53), is open to children aged 5 and over but adults can also take part. After getting to know the Angora goats you’ll get to discover wool and its many facets. You’ll learn how to create your own “*ojo de dios*” lucky charm (a colourful little weaving made from wool yarn) and you’ll discover needle felting to create a volume decoration that you can take home with you at the end. (In case of bad weather this activity can take place entirely indoors). Booking essential: *asinerieduboisgamats.fr*

Dancing beside the lake on Friday evening

The final popular ‘*guinguette au bord de l’eau*’ of the year takes place on Fri. 1st August, 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*, sausages, ice creams) are available on site. Tickets are 7€.

Creativity Day in Bagnoles de l’Orne

Fri. 15th: Bagnoles de l’Orne (61) explodes with creativity – parades, brass bands, trot racing, Freestyle Football demonstrations, jugglers . . . and at 22h45 a pyromelodic firework display. Free.

The *Mediévaux* de Domfront

This medieval festival takes place on Fri. 1st to Sun. 3rd. There will be a craft market, street shows, entertainment at the château medieval encampment, demonstrations of medieval engineering and a tournament. Almost 60 performers will be present this weekend. For more info ask at the Domfront Tourist Office (02 33 38 53 97)

Mardi Rando (Tuesday Walk)

Discover the trails of the Pays de Tinchebray. On Tues. 26th at 18h30 will be a 6km walk near Saint-Cornier-des-Landes (61) – the *chemin des cloutiers* (the nail-makers’ path). Meet at the Place de l’Eglise at 18h30.

Remember to take a small bottle of water, good shoes and walking stick if needed.

La Fête de St Louis in La Baroche-sous-Luce.

On Sun. 24th, 9h to 18h, in La Baroche-sous-Luce (61) will be a free *vide-grenier* (for registrations for a table please ring either 06 50 57 94 01 or 06 85 81 99 49). Food will be available from Le Bar'Oche, a *Salon de Thé*, close to the church, offering hot drinks, wine and beer, together with a selection of home-made cakes, buns and biscuits. A guitarist and singer will be present to entertain you; a number of children's games, with a prize every time, will be available nearby. After lunch *Amlos Country Danse* troupe will give a display and instruction to those who wish to try their hand. You could also win our *Panier Pesée* with donations from our nearby commerce. Go along for a fun day out – they've even ordered decent weather

Guided tours of historical monuments

(in French, but some English may be spoken)

Chateau of Laval, Place de la Tremoille, Laval (53)

An emblematic monument of the town, the château reveals its many facets, from the exceptional framework of its Keep to its mysterious Romanesque crypt chapel. A dive into 1,000 years of history and architecture. Daily in August, between 11h and 17h15.

Guided tours of the Keep: 11h, 14h15 and 16h30. Tickets: 3€

Guided tour of the Château at 15h. Tickets 6€, free for children and the disabled.

For more info: patrimoine.laval.fr or the Laval Tourist Office (02 43 49 46 46)

The *Basilique* in Pontmain (53)

Every day until 24th August, at 14h30, there will be a guided tour of this amazing Basilica “in the footsteps of the visionaries”. Organised by the Pontmain Shrine. Meet at 14h30 by the Apparition column in front of the Basilica. Free.

The town of Lassay-les-Châteaux (53)

On Thurs. 21st at 15h you can discover the picturesque streets of this ‘*Petite Cité de Caractère*’ from the ramparts of the fortified château, to the 19th century church of Saint-Fraimbault, via the Notre-Dame-du-Rocher chapel dating from the Middle Ages, and the medieval-inspired garden and magnificent Roseraie (rose garden). This guided tour combines nature and history. Tickets 5€, from the Tourist Office. Meet at the Place de la Mairie at 15h.

The medieval town of Domfront (61) in 60 minutes!

1,000 years of history in a nutshell – but not a crumb will escape you, thanks to the talent and passion of the guide! Between winding alleys and secret backyards, you can explore this labyrinthine town that was fortified in the 13th century.

A 1hr tour on every Tuesday and Friday in August., 15h30 to 16h30. Tickets 4€, available from the Domfront Tourist Office, 12 Place de la Roirie (02 33 38 53 97)

3-day fête in Fougerolles-du-Plessis (53)

On Sat. 2nd, Sun. 3rd & Mon. 4th. Prog.: on Sat. 2nd: at 13h30: a pétanque competition; at 15h30 a village ramble; at 19h a meal in the marquee (reservations: 06 32 82 01 27 or 06 02 28 95 28); at 23h: lantern procession to fireworks by the lake. On Sun. 3rd: at 9h30: running races for all ages; 12h: mid-day meal (spit roast – reservations as before). On Mon. 4th: in the morning a cycle race (Prix Roger Lestas); a'noon: The Mayenne Challenge Cycle Race.

Entertainment & Concerts

Mon. 4th, 20h to 22h30: '*Soirée Dansante*' (dance party) to 80s-90s music at the campsite snack bar at the Parc de Vaux, 35 rue des Colverts, Ambrières-les-Vallées (53) Free and open to all. More info: parcdevaux.com

'Les Clés de Bagnoles'

In Bagnoles de l'Orne (61) in 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.

♪ Sun. 3rd: 'Fab 1&1', singer and composer of New Caledonia with reggae and a tribute to Bob Marley by Soja, Kimany Marley, Raging Fyah; ♫ Sun. 10th: 'Swing to Swing' – gypsy jazz with Dorothee and Willfried: a guitar duo and double base, with the passion of Django Reinhardt - a warm and immersive atmosphere. ♫ Sun. 17th: 'Tram', a Balkan group; ♫ Sun. 24th: Rakia, an American singer and songwriter with 'happy' music/

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. 20th, 17h to 18h15: François Moreau, head organist at l'Eglise Saint-Pierre de Coutances. Prog.: 'Europe in the 17th Century', to include Tomkins, Sweelinck, Correa da Auroxo, Scheidemann.

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And finally:

His wife suggested they spice things up a bit and play 'Doctors and Nurses'. So he put her on a trolley in the hall and ignored her for 48 hours.

Judy Skinner

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Events by the day (not including vide-greniers)

August 2025

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Event</u> | <u>Location</u> | <u>Page</u> |
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| Fri. 1 st | Gardens in the evening | Colombiers du Plessis | 2 |
| “ | Dancing by the lake | Saint-Fraimbault | 3 |
| 1 st to 3 rd | <i>Mediévales</i> of Domfront | Domfront | 3 |
| 2 nd , 3 rd & 4 th | 3-day Fête | Fougerolles-du-Plessis | 5 |
| Sun. 3 rd | Exhibition of vintage vehicles | Javron-les-Chapelles | 2 |
| “ | Music in the gardens by the lake | Bagnoles de l'Orne | 5 |
| Mon. 4 th | Dance Party, 80s / 90s music | Ambrières-les-Vallées | 5 |
| Tues. 5 th | Golf-like frisbee game | Bagnoles de l'Orne | 3 |
| Thurs. 7 th | Learning about wool | Laval | 3 |
| Sun. 10 th | Music in the gardens by the lake | Bagnoles de l'Orne | 5 |
| Fri. 15 th | <i>Flories d'Antan</i> (floral fête) | Saint-Fraimbault | 2 |
| “ | Creativity Day | Bagnoles de l'Orne | 3 |
| Sun. 17 th | Music in the gardens by the lake | Bagnoles de l'Orne | 5 |
| Wed. 20 th | Organ recital | Bagnoles de l'Orne | 5 |
| Thurs. 21 st | Guided tour of the town | Lassay-les-Châteaux | 4 |
| Sun. 24 th | Music in the gardens by the lake | Bagnoles de l'Orne | 5 |
| “ | <i>Fête de Saint Louis</i> | La Baroche-sous-Luce | 4 |
| Tues. 26 th | Golf-like frisbee game | Bagnoles de l'Orne | 3 |
| “ | Learning about wool | Laval | 3 |
| “ | Tuesday Walk | Saint-Cornier-des-Landes | 3 |
| W/e 30 th & 31 st | Country days at the Aerodrome | Rives d'Andaines | 2 |
| Sun. 31 st | <i>Fête du miel</i> & food market | Colombiers-du-Plessis | 2 |