

Bulletin !

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

Thought for the month:

"Life is what happens when you are busy making other plans

Here are some *vide-greniers* (v-g) & *fêtes* 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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|-----------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| Fri. 1 st | Le Pas (53) | v-g in the village, 8h–18h (6h start for people with stalls reserved: 7 for 5 metres (Sylvain: 06 03 29 16 97). Food available on site |
| Sun. 3 rd | Montigné-le-Brillant (53) | v-g de la Mayenne, 8h–17h30 on Impasse de l'Eglise. ±300. Food & drink available on site |
| “ | Montsûrs-St-Cénére (53) | v-g in car park facing the Mairie, Place du Champ de Foire, 8h–17h, ±70 |
| “ | Saint Fraimbault (61) | v-g around the lake, 8h–18h, snacks on site; ±50 |
| “ | St Fraimbault-de-Prières (53) | v-g de l'APE, 8h–17h, ±70 |
| “ | Bellou-en-Houlme (61) | v-g/ <i>brocante</i> at La Chevalerie, ±150 |
| “ | St-Geo.-de-Rouelley (50) | v-g in the <i>Fête Communale</i> , Salle Louis Hamel, 8h–19h, ±70 |
| Fri. 8 th | Rives d'Andaine (61) | v-g in the Salle Roland Fléchar, La Chapelle d'Andaine, 8h–18h |
| Sat. 16 th |) Bagnoles de l'Orne (61) | v-g in the <i>Foire des Andaines</i> . The Big One! 2,000 |
| Sun. 17 th |) “ | stalls along 3kms! On Route de St. Michel |

Special dates / public holidays:

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|-------------------------|---|
| Thurs. 1 st | <i>Fête du Muguet</i> (see page 2), also <i>Fête du Travail</i> |
| Thurs. 8 th | <i>Victoire 1945</i> (Armistice Day) |
| Thurs. 14 th | <i>Ascension</i> |

Eating out - '*Au Normandie*'

'*Au Normandie*' at 2 rue Beauregard in Le Teilleul (50, on the main crossroads) has been open for many years and is still excellent value for money. They serve a very good 4-course lunch – buffet starter, a choice from 4 main dishes, cheese, buffet dessert - for 15€ which includes a glass of wine or cider. Cheerful and very efficient service in a lovely airy room that seats about 60 people. It is popular and gets very full so arrival at around 12 noon is a good idea! There is parking at the side but otherwise spaces nearby. *Midi* 12h–14h30 from Mon. to Fri. only. Tel: 02 33 59 40 11. Take-away available.

Fête du Muguet (Lily of the Valley)

On 1st May it is traditional to offer friends and family *le muguet* to bring luck and joy. This tradition was started in 1561 by King Charles IX – but some say only the sprigs which have 13 flowers bring the best luck! *Le muguet* came to France from Japan in the Middle Ages.

May 1st is the only day when people are allowed to sell *le muguet* in the streets without having the authority to operate as a business.

Vide-maison (house clearance)

Sat. 2nd & Sun. 3rd in Chatillon-sur-Colmont (53) at 10 chemin des Friches, inside and outside. 9h–19h each day.

Open Gardens near Lassay-les-Châteaux (53)

These gardens near Lassay-les-Châteaux, at 3, Les Baries and the adjoining garden, and also Len and Jacky's garden in Loré, are open to the public to raise money for worthy causes, mainly to support ill or disabled children. On Sun. 31st from 10h to 18h the 3 gardens will be open, and as usual there will be a Tea Room with delicious cakes, plants for sale, etc. Entry: 5€ for the 3 gardens. The Open Gardens website is opengardens.eu and there are a few other gardens open in the Mayenne area and many more over France.

Mayenn' Bière Festival No. 6

On Sat. 2nd from 11h to 20h in St. Jean-sur-Mayenne (53, south of Mayenne) you can taste the local produce and their craft beers. There will be great music and activities for children. Entry: 1€. Food will be available on site.

Re-opening of *Les Jardins des Renaudies*

After being closed recently, these lovely gardens in Les Mézerais, Colombiers-du-Plessis (53) will be re-opening from 8th May and you can enjoy the vibrant colours of the rhododendrons, azaleas, viburnums and also the emerging acers, visit the *ecomusée* (a look at country life of years ago), see an exhibition of paintings and you can even take a picnic to eat on the lawns. Dogs are welcome but must be kept on the lead. Entry: 6€; ages 5 to 16: 3€, under 5s free. For more information of the year's events and opening hours go to jardinsdesrenaudies.fr

3rd Annual Plant & Seed Swap

On Sat. 2nd, 12h to 16h at 'The Red Lion' in Désertines (53) you can bring, swap, donate, take seeds, seedlings or plants. There will be cakes and drinks available, a plant raffle and sale of garden related items. All donations and raffle money will go towards the Grande Daze Animal Charity.

Fishing day ticket at *Etang de Launay*

Anglers looking for a decent coarse-fishing day ticket will be pleased to know about the *Etang de Launay*, which is situated on the D5 between Gorrion (53) and Chatillon-sur-Colmont (53) and is easily visible from the D5. The lake contains carp to 20lbs+, tench, pike & roach, is not deep and the carp respond really well to sweetcorn fished over depth on the bottom.

The fishery is open daily from 8h to 20h and a day ticket is 5€ per rod (4€ per rod for children under 12 – who must be accompanied by an adult). A half-day ticket is 4€ per rod. Tickets are available at the lakeside from the Fishery owner, who will be there several times during the day. Fishing must be by rod & line with a single barb-less hook. Spinners, lures and treble hooks are not permitted. Further information is available from the Fishery owner, Jack PetitHomme, on 06 81 69 88 22 (please note: Jack does not speak English).

Festive day with "*Ya d'la Joie*" ('There is Joy')

Fri. 8th at 10h in Lassay-les-Châteaux (53) this is a festive day to celebrate Spring and the joy of being together. There will be an exhibition of tractors and vintage cars with a *défile* (procession). Also, entertainment, games, sale of local products and a craft market. Food will be available at several locations.

Exhibition of paintings by Lydia Cricelli

On Sat. 2nd & Sun. 3rd in the Place des Halles (old railway station) in Bagnoles de l'Orne (61) is an exhibition of paintings with the theme '*Jardins et lumieres*' ('Gardens and lights'). Through figurative paintings with Impressionist overtones, Lydia Cricelli explores light, nature and scenes of everyday life. Free entrance. www.lydia-cricelli.fr

Croisière promenade (Sightseeing cruise)

You can embark on a scenic cruise along the Mayenne river in Laval on Sat. 16th & 17th, 16h-18h. On the boat '*Vallis Guidonis*' you will discover the charm of the Mayenne valley. Tickets are 12,50€ (students, unemployed and disabled: 10€). Board at Quai André Pinçon (near the Laval Cinéville). More info at the Laval Tourist Office: laval-tourisme.com

Change of ownership for a shop in Gorrion (53)

The '*Coccimarket*' at 10 rue de Bretagne in Gorrion has new owners – 2 brothers now run it and it is now called '*La Superette Gorronnaise*'. The shop has been reorganised and the owners are very friendly (and speak some English!). They are open 6 days a week (yes, including Sundays - closed on Mondays) from 8h to 13h & 14h30 to 20h.

Entertainment & Concerts

Sun. 17th, 17h–18h15 in l’Eglise Sainte-Madeleine, 9 Place de l’Eglise in Bagnoles de l’Orne (61) a concert with organ and instruments. Organised by *Les Amis de l’Orgue de Saint-Madeleine* there will be works by Corette, Handel, Schickhardt, Buxtehude & Duruflé. Free.

Italian Recital - 'Anima Mia'

On Thurs. 7th, 20h–21h45, in l’Eglise St Julian, Place du Commerce in Domfront (61): a voice and piano duo transports you with Italian pieces (classical to modern) for a moment of authentic beauty. Elisa Fiasca, with Patrick Pernet on piano. Free.

They will also be on Sun. 10th from 16h–17h30 at l’Eglise Sacré-Coeur in Bagnoles de l’Orne (61).

Concert : Highland Symphony

On Tues. 19th at 20h in *l’Espace Colmont* in Gorron (53) with the Mayenne Instrumental Ensemble. A land of mists and mysteries – the Scottish Highlands were a dream destination for many composers. 18 musicians play a program that includes Mendelssohn (Symphony No.3: ‘The Hebrides’) and Vaughan Williams (‘Lark Ascending’). Tickets: 10€ available at the venue.

English films in Gorron (53) cinema

Here is the first English (VO) film in Gorron cinema in May. [It might be advisable to check on www.gorron-cinemas.fr before setting off in case of any last-minute changes].

Mon. 4th: ‘I Swear’ with Robert Aramayo, Maxine Peake, Shirley Henderson.

For the next Monday films this month, go to www.gorron.fr

The film starts 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€.

‘Cars & Coffee’ : exhibition of vintage vehicles

On Sun. 24th, 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 prestigious vehicles. You can admire the beautiful bodywork, fine mechanics and chat with passionate enthusiasts. Free entry.

New rules for dog walkers

Dog owners in France are being reminded of rules that require dogs to be on a lead in forested areas between 15th April and 30th June. This is designed to minimise the impact of dogs on forest wildlife, including birds (many nesting on the ground) and newborn animals. Also, wild boar with young can be quite dangerous if confronted by a dog. Pet owners who ignore these rules may incur a fine of 750€.

Anne's Secluded Garden in Bagnoles de l'Orne (61)

On Thurs. 21st, 10h–11h30 and 15h–16h30, at *le Jardin Retiré*, 14 Avenue Robert Buron in Bagnoles de l'Orne, during this guided visit (in French, but some English may be spoken) you can discover the secret of an intimate and poetic garden conceived as a natural choreography. Designed over 20 years ago by Anne, a former dance teacher, the space is enhanced by arches, fountains and statues arranged in a subtle choreography. Duration: 2 hours. Registration required at the Bagnoles de l'Orne Tourist Office: www.bagnolesdelorne.com or 02 33 37 85 66 (some English spoken): for the morning visit: before 18h the day before, and before 11h30 on the day for the afternoon visit. Sorry, no pets allowed.

Color Run in Domfront (61)

Sat. 16th, 15h30–19h30, this second edition of the Color Run is more than a race – it's an explosion of colours, laughter and good cheer! A simple and festive concept! The principal of the Color Run is easy to understand: a course accessible to all, punctuated by bursts of biodegradable coloured powder. With each pass, participants are adorned with new colours, creating a spectacular and friendly visual atmosphere. You move at your own pace – you laugh, you chat and you enjoy a moment in a relaxed and festive atmosphere. Open to all – aimed at families as well as groups of friends or someone just wanting some exercise! Each route through the town is 1.7km, and can be run twice if you wish! Wear white if possible! The 'warm up' is from 15h30 outside the *Mairie*. There were 800 participants last year! Tickets: 12€, under 10s: 6€. Music, entertainment and encouragement accompany participants from start to finish!. For more info google 'Color Run Domfront'.

Weekly markets in *Ille et Vilaine* (Brittany, 35)

Day of the week	Location
Mondays	Combours, Vitré
Tuesdays	Antrain, Dinard
Wednesdays	Tinténiac
Thursdays	Bazouges-la-Pérouse, Dinard
Fridays	Pleurtuit, St Malo (Intra-Muros)
Saturdays	Dinard, Dol de Bretagne, Fougères
Sundays	Cancale, La Richardais

(It is wise to double check before going, as these can change without notice).

Sport & Leisure Activities

Randonnée Fraicheur (Refreshing walk) in La Dorée

Thurs. 21st at 20h: depart from La Dorée church for this 8km walk along the trails of La Dorée (53). [2€ will be requested for non-members of the *Randonneurs du Bocage 53* association]. In case of any change (weather, etc) go to randobocage.blogspot.com.

Randonnées des Mardis (Tuesday walks)

On Tues. 5th, 14h-17h, in Bonvouloir, Juvigny-Val-d'Andaine (61, on the D976, 10km SE of Domfront). Walk, discover, breathe! These walks are your nature rendez-vous with the Orne and its treasures. Depart at 14h from the Equestrian Centre car park. You will also see the *Tour de Bonvouloir* – the remains of the Bonvouloir Manor built in the 15th century. It includes the 26m-high old seigneurial watchtower '*Le Phare de Bonvouloir*' and has been listed as a '*Monument Historique*' since 1995.

Pétanque competitions

Relaxation, precision and good humour guaranteed! On Mondays 4th and 18th [and every other Monday until September] at the *La Bagnolaise Pétanque*, Boulevard Lemuet (behind the tennis courts) in Bagnoles de l'Orne (61): Mixed Doubles & Senior Doubles tournaments. Open to all. Registration from 13h30 to 14h25, 1st throw: 14h30

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And finally – 'Out of the Mouths of Babes':

Teacher: Harold, your essay on 'My Dog' is exactly the same as your brother's. Did you copy his?

Harold: No, sir, it's the same dog!

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That's all for this month. Plenty of outdoors activities this month so let's hope the weather is good to us! Enjoy May!

Judy Skinner

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Events by the day (not including vide-greniers)

May 2026

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2nd & 3rd	Exhibition of Paintings	Bagnoles de l’Orne	3
Mon. 4th	Pétanque competitions	Bagnoles de l’Orne	6
“	English film: ‘I Swear’	Gorron	4
Tues. 5th	Tuesday walk	Juvigny-Val-d’Andaine	6
Thurs. 7th	Concert: piano and voice	Domfront	4
Fri . 8th	Festive day	Lassay-les-Châteaux	2
Sun. 10th	Concert: piano and voice	Bagnoles de l’Orne	4
16th & 17th	Sightseeing cruise	Laval	2
Sat. 16th	Color Run	Domfront	5
Sun. 17th	Organ concert	Bagnoles de l’Orne	4
Mon. 18th	Pétanque competitions	Bagnoles de l’Orne	6
Tues. 19th	Concert: Highland Symphony	Gorron	4
Thurs. 21st	8km Refreshing Walk	La Dorée	6
“	Anne’s Secluded Garden	Bagnoles de l’Orne	5
Sun. 24th	‘Cars & Coffee’	Bagnoles de l’Orne	4
Sun. 31st	Open Gardens	Lassay-les-Châteaux	2