

Bulletin !

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

Thought for the month:

Holidays are nature's way of telling us
to eat more cake!

Here are some *vide-greniers* (v-g), *brocantes* & *fêtes* in this area [traditionally, not many at this time of the year due to holidays], but double-check beforehand, if possible, at www.brocabrac.fr in case of any last-minute cancellations ['50' = area; $\pm$ = number of stalls expected]:

Sun. 5 th	Avranches (50)	<i>brocante</i> in Place Valhubert, 2 rue du Général de Gaulle, 8h-16h, ± 50
“	Dol de Bretagne (35)	v-g in rue de Docteur Gringoire, 7 rue des Ponts, 8h-18h, ± 70 . Food available on site
“	Le Horps (53)	v-g in rue des Moulins, 8h-18h. ± 150 . Food on site.
“	Neuilly-le-Vendin (53)	v-g in Fête Champêtre (country fête), 7h30 to 17h30 in the Stade de Football, rue de Normandie. ± 50
Sun. 12 th	Placé (53)	v-g in the football stadium. Also wooden games. 7h to 17h30

Special dates:

Tuesday 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. For example:

(1) there will be a fireworks display on Mon. 13th at 23h on Quai Waiblingen, beside the river in Mayenne town (near the Tourist Office) after an evening of music. Free.

(2) Tues. 14th, 15h-23h in Bagnoles de l'Orne (61): entertainment and horse racing (a festive day for the whole family) with fireworks at 2am on Rue des Casinos. More info from the Bagnoles de l'Orne Tourist Office or www.signebocage.com. Free.

Eating out - *l'Etrier*

The restaurant *l'Etrier* (in English: 'the Stirrup') is at 9 Place de Bergwedel in Domfront (61). A black and red decor, a nod to the horse (as it is near the old stables) and the town of Domfront. The menu is on the slate (no set *midi*) and it is very good with locally sourced ingredients. (Meat is the main ingredient, so not so good for vegetarians). They are open Tues. to Sats., 9h-15h & 18h-23h30; Suns. & Mons.: 9h-15h only. There is a lovely terrace and a garden. Tel: 02 33 64 70 20.

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 Wednesdays 15th, 22nd and 29th 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 Sun. 23rd August, the 10,000 sq.m *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 go to jardinsdesrenaudies.fr

Plantes en fête in St Denis de Gastines (53)

On the weekend of 4th & 5th, 10h to 22h is a travelling eco-responsible festival in Mayenne with films, concerts, 7 shows, organic meals; 4 walks to observe, listen & study the countryside. Activities for children: making wicker objects, pony rides, a hay pool, wooden games, etc. Over 100 exhibitors specialising in sustainable construction, renewable energy, healthy living, mobility, re-use and more. More info: plantesenfete.civanbio53.fr

La Cale de Mayenne (beside the river)

This riverside area, between the bridge and the Mayenne Tourist Office, enables everyone to enjoy free music events and dancing most evenings in July and August. For the programme: go to: La-Cale-2026-programme.pdf.

Exhibition: *l'Art de la Musique* (The Art of Music)

Until Fri. 10th at Café Corbeau, 1 rue Corbeau-Paris in Gorron (53) this is an exhibition by local artists on the theme of music, where sound & music inspire visual expression. Free entry.

Fête de la Poiré in Mantilly (61)

On 18th & 29th, this traditional Poiré festival returns. On Sat. (8pm to 1am): a dinner dance under a marquee (reservation required). On Sun. (2pm to 7pm): at 12h a meal served under a marquee, followed by a concert, with various exhibitions and artisans showcasing local products. With wooden games and bouncy-castle for children. More info from the Domfront Tourist Office (contact details on page 7).

Something for all the family

At 15h at the *Base de Loisirs de la Haie Traversaine*, Le Bas Lozé (53, near Mayenne) there are many activities through the summer. On Sat. 4th at 15h is Witbit (floating river structure) access for large groups of friends or large families. Registration on site before 13h30 on the day. More info from the Mayenne Tourist Office (see page 7).

Les Vendredis de l'Eté'

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. For the programme go to : www.bagnolesdelorne.com or 02 33 37 85 66

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 or near the *Jardins du Lac*. Reservation is recommended as places are limited. Info & reservations from the Tourist Office: 02 33 37 85 66.

Croisière '1000 ans d'histoire' ('1,000 years of history' cruise)

Fri. 10th, 16h30 to 18h, in Laval – the Mayenne river is central to the 1,000 year history of the town. Numerous monuments still lining the town bear witness to the strong bond, forged over time, between the town and its waterway. Join French guide and lecturer Antoine Barré, to discover this connection and history while enjoying a fresh perspective on Laval's rich heritage. Tickets 15€, available from the Laval Tourist Office (laval-tourisme.com.) Depart from Quai Andre Pinçon (in front of the cinema).

A fun day beside the river in Laval

Sat. 4th & Sun. 5th, 16h to 18h is "Ofnijek" ("Unidentified Floating Objects") a unique raft race run by the local Junior Chamber of Commerce, which mobilises teams from local businesses and associations each year. Large crowds are expected on the banks of the river Mayenne to enjoy the creations and entertainment offered throughout the weekend. Free. More info from the Laval Tourist Office.

'Flower Power' in Saint-Fraimbault (61)

On Wed. 8th, 10h to 12h, you can visit the '*jardin du partage et emotion*' ('garden of sharing and emotion') in Saint-Fraimbault with head gardener Arnaud, and explore the secrets and beauties of this flowery village (in French, but some English might be spoken). This tour will immerse you in a world where nature and creativity reign supreme. Tickets: 6€, can be booked at a Tourist Office (contact details on page 7). Duration: approx. 2 hours. Meet in front of the church by 10h.

Entertainment & Concerts

On Fri. 3rd, 20h to 23h30, the Manoir de Durcet (Dorcet Manor, near Bagnoles de l'Orne) they invite you to an evening of Celtic rock music by the band 'Highland Safari', featuring bagpipes and other instruments. There will be a food truck on site serving duck burgers and sausage galettes, with cider, beer and cocktails. 2€ per adult, under 12s free.

Fri. 3rd at 20h to 22h30 in the Camping du Gué Saint-Léonard, 818 rue Saint-Léonard in Mayenne (53): duo 'Caroll Macsana' – musical entertainment and concert. Every Friday evening entertainment at the campsite is open to campers and the public. Free admission. Food available on site.

Concert - Chorale Vivace

Come and join Chorale Vivace's final concert of the summer season in the magnificent Eglise Saint-Julien in Domfront 61700 on Wed. 8th at 8pm to 9h30, featuring pieces in several languages from sacred to secular, traditional to contemporary.

This concert celebrates the joy of singing across cultures and the friendships that music creates! Entrance is free with a collection for the continued restoration of the church. For more information contact Lesley Thomson at les.paul@wanadoo.fr.

💖🎵 Sing from the Heart 🎵💖

Mantras, Chants and Songs from Around the World : a live acoustic performance on Fri. 10th at 14h at Galerie Phénix, upstairs at Café Corbeau, 1 rue Corbeau Paris, Gorron (53). Join Ema (voice & harmonium) and Peter (voice & guitar) from HeartSong, together with a few invited musical friends, for an intimate live acoustic performance of mantras, chants and songs from spiritual and musical traditions around the world. A gentle, calm listening space to slow down, unwind and enjoy the peace and stillness this music can bring. Free entry – please confirm your place by emailing helloheartsong@gmail.com

"Mantras help us attain inner peace by calming the fluctuations of the mind. The sound of the mantra soothes the mind and body, bringing us a sense of deep relaxation."
– Thich Nhat Hanh

Why not make an afternoon of it? Enjoy a delicious lunch & drink downstairs at Café Corbeau, then join them upstairs at Galérie Phénix for the performance.

Voix d'Eté concerts

Their next summer concerts are on: Sat. 4th at 4pm in l'Eglise Saint-Pierre in Dompierre (61), and Sun. 5th at 4pm in l'Eglise Saint-Patrice in Saint-Patrice-du-Désert (61). The concerts will be in 2 parts: the first part will be "Gems of Classical Music" including pieces by Byrd, Rachmaninov, Fauré and many others. The second part will be "Folk and National Music" including very early music from England, Spain and France, as well as folk-based songs from many countries. For more info please contact françoise.brison@icloud.com, tel: 06 41 39 89 43

Fête des Pompiers (Fire-fighters Festival) in Mayenne (53)

Sat. 4th, 10h30 to 02h30 at the Mayenne Fire Station, rue du Terras in Mayenne, there will be entertainment, competitions & demonstrations of their firefighter activities, with a musical evening from 18h30 to 20h30. Food available on site. No reservation required. Free.

The group Karpatt in concert

On Sun. 5th at the *Brasserie La Renaissance*, 21 Place Georges Clemenceau in Mayenne town (53): Fred and Hervé (with guitar and double-bass) have many years' experience singing in bars and clubs in France, with French song, jazz manouche, rock & South American rhythms.

Championnat de France en Double de Swin Golf

On 3rd, 4th & 5th from 10h, the French Swin Golf Doubles Championship takes place on Parcours Jean Renault, Impasse de Brihault in Gorron (53). Swin Golf takes centre stage during 3 days of competitions. Gorron has been selected to host the French Doubles Championship - this national event will bring together athletes from all over France for 3 days of competitions and camaraderie around this accessible, technical and friendly sport. Also during the 3 days in the Parc de la Colmont: open-air dance exhibitions, stalls, food & refreshments, tree-top adventure course, paint-ball, laser-tag & many artisan demonstrations (basketry, flowers & fashion, bonsai pruning, concrete garden decorations, etc). On Sunday will be the awards ceremony. Free entry. See local posters for more information.

La Festid'Al in Gorron

On 10th to 12th at the Espace Colmont, Les Besnardières (near the Parc de la Colmont) in Gorron (53) this 17th edition plunges into a fastastical universe, populated by amazing creatures and imaginary landscapes. For the programme of events on each day & admission prices, see posters around the town of Gorron, or google Festid'Al.

Sacred music concert

On Sun. 26th, 18h to 19h30, the voices of the Domfront Lyric Academy resonate in the Saint-Julien Church, rue du Commerce in Domfront (61) with a program mixing masterpieces and varieties, with works by Charpentier, Bach, Vivaldi, Mendelssohn. Free with a departing collection in support of the on-going restoration of the church.

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*.

International Festival of Folklore in Domfront (61)

Between Norman traditions and world cultures, experience a festive week focussed on sharing and conviviality. From 1st to 7th at 20h, the Domfront folk group '*Le Trou Normond*' provides a colourful event entitled "Domfront: crossroads of the world". For the programme: www.le-trou-normand.fr. Also, shows in Ceaucé on Sat. 4th at 21h in the Salle Omnisports (4€), and Champsecret on Tues. 7th at 20h in the Mairie.

Guinguettes au bord de l'eau

Every Friday evening in July, 18h to 23h, accompanied by live music you can dance under the stars beside the lake in Saint-Fraimbault (61). Tickets are 7€, which includes a bowl of cider and a crêpe.

EURATHLON No.8

On 18th & 19th in Saint-Denis de Gastines (53) this popular event is back! The Endurathlon involves covering the greatest possible distance, solo or in a relay team, by combining running and mountain biking, over a 24-hour period. Throughout this event you can enjoy a vibrant village with entertainment and food options. Open to everyone. For information and registration: www.endurathlon.fr

Fête de la Madeleine in Mayenne (53)

On Fri. 17th to Sun. 19th in the Parc des Expositions, rue Volney in Mayenne, these are 3 evenings to liven up the town: funfair, trade fair, CIMA 53 – and top entertainment for a great atmosphere. Food is available on site. Free.

Visit to a Cider-making farm

On Tuesday 7th & Thurs. 9th 16h to 17h, (and every Tuesday and Thursday until 20th August) at the Cidrerie on route de Loré Melleray, Lassay-les-Châteaux (61), cider producers Aurore and Josselin invite you to visit this production area of their estate. The tour includes the orchard, distillery, cider press and ageing cellars. Open to all, free of charge and no reservation required. More info: www.museeducidre53.fr

1,000 years of Domfront history in a nutshell!

Every Thursday from 2nd July until 20th August (3.30 to 4.30 pm) and every Tuesday from 7th July to 25th August (3.30 to 4.30pm) you can explore this labyrinthine town, fortified in the 1st century, through winding alleyways and secret courtyards, with this guided visit (in French, but some English may be spoken). In just one hour, discover the essentials of this medieval town – narrow streets, neo-Byzantine church, half-timbered houses and breathtaking views of the valley. Approx. 1km of walking (but a warning: opportunities to sit are limited). Tickets - 4€ - are available at the Domfront Tourist Office (12 Place de la Roirie in Domfront). Meet at the Tourist Office 10 minutes before the tour.

Sport & Leisure Activities

Randonnée fraîcheur (refreshing walk) in Saint-Mars-sur-la-Futaie (53) on Thurs. 2nd at 20h. This is a 9km evening walk along the trails of Saint-Mars-sur-la-Futaie. Depart from the lake at 20h. A participation fee of 2€ is requested for non-members.

Randonnée du Mercredi (Wednesday Walk): on Wed. 15th at 9h to 12h30, leaving from the car park of the Manoir du Lys in Bagnoles de l'Orne (61). For more info go to: www.randonneursdomfrontais.sportsregions.fr

Some Tourist Office contact details:-

Bagnoles de l'Orne (61)	www.bagnolesdelorne.com	02 33 37 85 66
Domfront (61):	www.ot-domfront.com	02 33 38 53 97
La Ferté-Macé (61)	www.lafertemace.fr	02 33 37 10 97
Laval (53)	www.laval-tourisme.com	02 43 49 46 46

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And finally:

Sign on the back of a septic tank cleaning truck: "Caution: this truck is full of Political Promises"

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That's all for this month. A lot of outside events – but as I always say, do go to (or contact) a Tourist Office for other, and more detailed, information. Have a great July.

Judy Skinner

e-mail: judithsk@free.fr

Events by the day (not including vide-greniers)

July 2026

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Page</u>
Thurs. 2nd	Refreshing evening walk	St Mars-sur-la-Futaie	7
Fri. 3rd	Highland Safari: Celtic rock music	Durcet, Bagnoles de l'Orne	4
“	Duo Caroll Macsana concert	Mayenne	4
3rd/4th/5th	Swin golf Championships	Gorron	5
Sat. 4th	Witbit at the Leisure Park	La Haie-Traversaine	3
“	<i>Voix d'Eté</i> concert	Dompierre	4
“	<i>Fête des Pompiers</i>	Mayenne	5
“	International Festival of Folklore	Ceaucé	6
W/e 4th & 5th	<i>Plantes en Fête</i>	St Denis de Gastines	2
“	Unique raft race	Laval	3
Sun. 5th	Karpatt in concert	Mayenne	5
“	<i>Voix d'Eté</i> concert	St Patrice du Désert	4
Tues. 7th	International Festival of Folklore	Champsecret	6
“	Visit to a Cider-making farm	Lassay-les-Châteaux	6
Wed. 8th	<i>Chorale Vivace</i> concert	Domfront	4
Thurs. 9th	Visit to a Cider-making farm	Lassay-les-Châteaux	6
Fri. 10th	Cruise down the river Mayenne	Laval	3
“	Live accoustic performance	Gorron	4
10th to 12th	Festid'Al	Gorron	5
Tues. 14th ` `	<i>Fête Nationale</i> (public holiday)	All over France	1
Wed. 15th	<i>Les Jardins des Renaudies</i>	Colombiers-du-Plessis	2
“	Wednesday Walk	Bagnoles de l'Orne	7
Fri. 17th	<i>Fête de la Madeleine</i>	Mayenne	6
W/e 18th & 19th	<i>Fête de la Poiré</i>	Mantilly	2
“	Eurathlon No.8	St Denis de Gastines	6
Wed 22nd	<i>Les Jardins des Renaudies</i>	Colombiers-du-Plessis	2
Sun. 26th	Sacred music concert	Domfront	5
Wed. 29th	<i>Les Jardins des Renaudies</i>	Colombiers-du-Plessis	2