

Focus France



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Franco-Maltese relationships – moving forward

French Ambassador Béatrice Le Fraper du Hellen, in her third year leading the Embassy of France in Malta, meets up with Charles Xuereb just a few days before France's national day, *le 14 Juillet*.

With both administrations starting a new legislature in their respective country after impressive wins at recent elections, how does the Ambassador of France judge the current state of diplomatic relations between the two countries?

"I believe that the strongest evolution between Malta and France really happened in 2013 when Premier Joseph Muscat decided to make his first trip abroad to my country," French Ambassador Béatrice Le Fraper du Hellen said.

"I feel the relationship between our two countries has been building up upon this since then. When I arrived 30 months ago I knew that our recent modern relationship had been shaped by this groundbreaking visit. Ever since the relationship has been moving forward."

Madame Le Fraper du Hellen explained that as Malta last year was getting closer to its first EU presidency, a lot of opportunities arose to concretely reinforce this relationship.

"During my tenure here, the French *École Nationale d'Administration* (ENA) trained as many as 500 Maltese public officials in preparation for this EU challenge. At the time the director of ENA, Nathalie Loiseau visited Malta and met the Prime Minister; and now she is the new French Minister for European Affairs."

A new Malta-France diplomatic agreement

"As Malta assumed the presidency, it performed with a result-oriented mindset; as many have observed, the organisation was fantastic during these past six months, the level of preparation amazing," she said.

"I must also add that throughout this period France and Malta have made a habit of systematic bilateral information-sharing, consultation and exchange of ideas on issues like the environment and energy in advance of EU meetings.

"We also meet in Mediterranean groupings. We had three visits by President François Hollande to Malta in the space of 14 months: we share fundamental views, like the need to have an open dialogue with African countries, the strategic importance of the Mediterranean and our European commitment. The result of such a positive atmosphere is a new diplomatic agreement that is being finalised and I



France President Emmanuel Macron.
PHOTO: SOAZIG DE LA MOISSONNIÈRE

hope it will be signed by the new Maltese Minister for Foreign Affairs and his new French counterpart after summer recess.

"This is great news as France and Malta have not signed a comprehensive cooperation agreement since their bilateral cultural agreement in 1968."

Economic relations and diplomatic missions

What are the current priorities of serving French ambassadors in their respective foreign country?

"Fostering economic relations has become a priority mission. We are not alone: it is interesting to note the new Maltese Ministry for Foreign Affairs is, for the first time, taking trade under its wings. Malta and France have done a lot to consolidate the economic relationship that already existed. Through the continuous efforts of the Maltese-French Chamber of Commerce, we entered into a collaborative process to the advantage of both French and Maltese entrepreneurs.

"I commend the chamber and its President Joseph Bugeja who have been so pro-

active: the French economic agency, Business France plans to appoint the chamber as its representative in Malta, confirming the trust it has in this Maltese structure. Bank of Valletta accepted to become once again one of the Maltese-French Chamber of Commerce partners. The agreement was signed in my office," she pointed out.

In which commercial sectors, in the Ambassador's opinion, are French companies making most headway in Malta?

"France is very strong in the maritime sector," she said. "In Malta this is quite evident with the presence of French operator CMA CGM, a worldwide shipping group serving over 400 of the world's commercial ports. They run operations at the Malta Freeport. What's more, this coming August they are expected to extend their local interests significantly.

"Another sector in which France has invested a lot is new technologies. Now we are reaping the benefits of this undertaking.

"French citizens appear to have voted as global citizens instead of trying to build walls"

"ST Microelectronics, a Franco-Italian venture which is Malta's largest exporter, benefits from French advanced research activities. French companies are among the leading employers in Malta.

"In addition to CMA and ST Microelectronics, the Total factory Pamargan is the largest private employer in Gozo having 210 workers on its books. This factory, exporting rubber connectors, is planning to expand with a new unit soon. Most locally-based French companies employ Maltese personnel at all levels."

The Ambassador said that digital technology is also attracting a dynamic group of young French entrepreneurs.

"Among them are some big players, such as Betclic, a French-Monegasque company, and smaller start-ups. Together with Maltese digital entrepreneurs, they recently launched Silicon Valletta, an association which promotes Malta as a digital hub. It is worth noting that members of the Malta Communications Authority also went to Paris to visit incubators in this field. In the field of environment, sev-

eral French and Maltese entrepreneurs have set up a Maltese NGO called Eco French Malta, promoting green technologies, sustainable trade and eco-tourism among other activities."

France on the global stage

Is France taking a new role on the global stage with its new young president Emmanuel Macron?

The Ambassador noted there was a strong international and particularly European undertone in the recent presidential election. "French citizens voted for a President who committed to protect their interests through the EU and international agreements such as the Paris agreement on climate. French citizens voted as global citizens instead of trying to build walls, so yes it gives the President a strong voice, on their behalf, on the international scene."

"This idea of meeting the challenges of the world through the EU and through dialogue with all Mediterranean countries, including on migration, is in consonance with what the Maltese seem to feel. It was precisely the message of the Valletta Summit in November 2015."

Will France be stronger after Brexit?
"The French did not want Brexit even though they respect the decision of the British people. President Macron said the door remains open but a rethink becomes difficult once negotiations get under way.



The French Ambassador during a visit to Birżebbuġa container terminals operated by Malta Freeport Terminal Limited, a subsidiary of French maritime giant CMA CGM. PHOTO: JONATHAN BORG

It is important that the EU 27 move forward united as we have done under the Maltese presidency.”

Cultural exchanges

Following the poniard exhibition till September 7 in Valletta, on loan from the Louvre, do we expect more cultural exchanges?

“This year saw the conclusion of an agreement between Heritage Malta and the Louvre, where the Paris School of Caravaggio exhibited the work of Valentin de Boulogne (1591-1632), on loan from Malta,” she said.

“During my tenure we created longlasting partnerships between cultural entities, such as between the Arts Council of Malta and the School of Photography of Arles, where every year a festival of photography is organised. Another partnership was reached on gastronomy and education between the Institute for Tourism Studies and the Institut Paul Bocuse of Lyon.

“Legacy will be important for Valletta 2018. When Marseille was the Capital of Culture in 2013, the Mucem was created, becoming one of the most-visited art museums in France. Teams from Marseille have visited Malta in view of the opening of Muza.

“Both Malta and France wish that such exchanges should include an educational part, enabling young people to come together,” concluded Madame Le Fraper du Hellen.



The French Ambassador sponsored the new partnership agreement between the Maltese-French Chamber of Commerce (Joseph Bugeja) and Bank of Valletta (Kenneth Farrugia).

commerce



French Ambassador Béatrice Le Fraper Du Hellen, Maltese-French Chamber of Commerce president Joseph Bugeja and Health Minister Chris Fearné, at the half-day conference on healthcare business in the Mediterranean.

Another year of positive results

Our aim is to constantly improve business relationships between Malta and France, Joseph Bugeja, President, Maltese-French Chamber of Commerce, says.



Since the last issue of *Focus France* publication in 2016, the council for the Maltese-French Chamber of Commerce has continued with its steady mission, embracing the Maltese and French interest at large.

“Another year of activities has been undertaken and here we are again, with another issue of the *Focus France* publication,” Joe Bugeja, President of the Maltese-French Chamber of Commerce, said.

The Chamber’s tasks can be classified in three main categories.

First, it supports the French Embassy in various commercial and economic initiatives, welcoming delegations and business people on fact-finding missions and market studies.

The Chamber also supports its members on various aspects, such as identifying business opportunities, keeping its members abreast of any developments and supporting

“The Chamber will also shortly conclude negotiations to establish itself as the formally appointed entity to represent Business France interests in Malta”

initiatives that generate more tourism between the two countries. This is on the increase – between January and November of last year, tourism figures reached 138,000, which represents an increase of 11 per cent over the previous year.

“We also maintain a healthy presence within the international sphere through cooperation with Business France, UCCIFE and its contributions with French business delegations visiting Malta,” Mr Bugeja said.

The Chamber will also shortly conclude negotiations to establish itself as the formally appointed entity to represent Business France interests in Malta while extending its support to the development of further business and delegations.

Business France is the national French agency supporting the international development of French economy, responsible for fostering export growth by French businesses, as well as promoting and facilitating international investment in France.

“We have remained true to our mission – that of being the voice for French commercial entities in Malta and Gozo, as well as promoting investment,” Mr Bugeja said.

During a recent event, French Ambassador Béatrice Le Fraper Du Hellen said: “Speaking from experience, I can say that Mr Bugeja and his team work proactively in fostering close collaboration between the Maltese and French business community.”

“We have remained true to our mission – that of being the voice for French commercial entities in Malta and Gozo, as well as promoting investment”

She also referred to the regular events organised by the Chamber for its members, which is an invaluable tool to keep the members abreast of developments and opportunities.

“The Chamber is one of the first points of reference for Maltese business people wishing to do business with or in France, and for French business interests seeking to learn more about investment and business opportunities in Malta,” she added. “I am confident that these efforts will bear fruit and yield greater opportunities for the business community.”

In November, the Chamber organised a half-day conference on

healthcare business in the Mediterranean.

“The aim was to focus and address medical research and development, medical training and medical tourism,” Mr Bugeja said.

“We drew inspiration to hold this conference from the fact that Malta has recently experienced a number of radical structural reforms, including the construction of a new Gozo hospital and the refurbishment of St Luke’s Hospital.”

Mr Bugeja also referred to his recent participation at the Infor-

mal Ministerial Conference Blue Growth, Ocean Governance in the EU and the Mediterranean Innovation, and Nautical Tourism, held on April 19-20.

Following this conference, the French ambassador organised a meeting with Vincent Bouvier, Prefet, Secretariat General for the Sea.

The meeting was also attended by the chairman of the Malta Maritime Forum together with another board member to review various initiatives being undertaken by the Malta Maritime Forum.

“The meeting was very constructive and it gave both sides the opportunity to exchange various experiences,” Mr Bugeja said. “We also agreed on further cooperation with the aim to support the blue economy concept.”

In conclusion, Mr Bugeja referred to the recent cooperation agreement signed with Bank of Valletta. “We have formalised a long-lasting cooperation that has grown from strength to strength over the years,” he said, while also thanking RCI Life Ltd. and Wins for their constant support of the Chamber.

Maltese-French Chamber of Commerce Council members

Bernadette Bonnici Kind
Dr Mark Miggiani
Dr Kevin Deguara
David Fleri Soler
John Rausi
Ann Petroni
Dr Gilles Gutierrez
Richard Cleland
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business



Benjamin Carlotti, managing director of *oulala.com*, the Ambassador of France to Malta Mrs Béatrice Le Fraper du Hellen, Valéry Bollier, CEO of *oulala.com* and the cultural counsellor of the French Embassy Laurent Croset.

Malta hacks Paris!

Maltese digital experts visit France and meet counterparts

A digital delegation from Malta has taken part in March in the event Hacking de l'Hôtel de Ville. The event has gathered more than 1,000 start-ups, investors, and stakeholders from the digital economy.

Bernard Agius, Business and Innovation Development Manager at the Malta Communication Authority, Benjamin Carlotti, managing director at OulalaGames, and Chris Knights, head of digital at Brnd Wgn, took part and presented the various opportunities of digital business in Malta.

During their stay in Paris, they also visited some incubators, and had a meeting at the Ministry of Finance with two public agencies working on digital inclusion, the Agence du Numérique and the Grande Ecole du Numérique.

"It kicked off with a fascinating tour of the city's incubators, laboratories and cultural spaces. The facilities impressed me. But more impressive was Paris's commitment to support people brimming with original ideas and new business models," said Chris Knights.



Chris Knights, head of digital at Brnd Wgn, and Benjamin Carlotti, managing director at OulalaGames.

Clicking on

Silicon Valletta

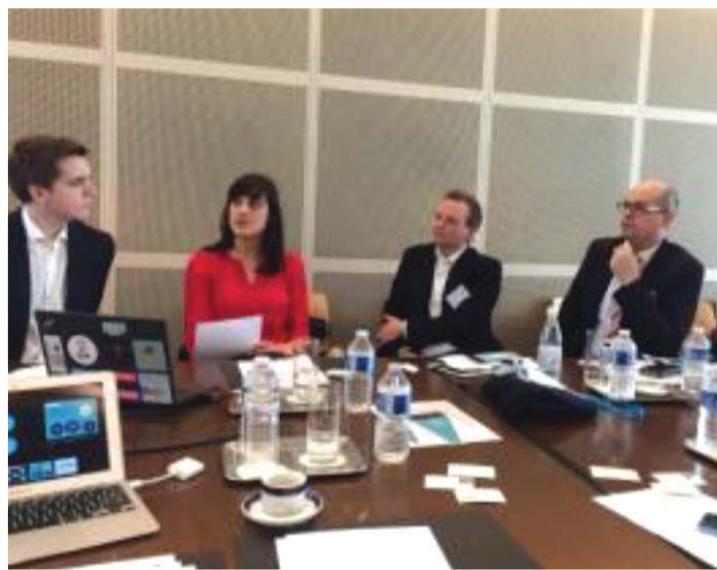
In 2016, a few entrepreneurs located in Malta decided to create Silicon Valletta in order to federate influential individuals from the young digital ecosystem. Their goal was to create an efficient local network among the Maltese digital sector.

Silicon Valletta offers advice to other start-ups to help them become more successful.

The members share knowledge in order to attract talent, investors and start-ups from all over the world.

The association now gathers about 40 businesses. French entrepreneurs Valéry Bollier and Benjamin Carlotti, CEO and managing director *oulala.com*, are among the founding members of Silicon Valletta.

For more information, please visit www.siliconvalletta.com.



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Services offered by KS Shipping Malta also include ship management services, including ISM and ISPS certification, as well as crewing services, including MLC2006 certification.

The advantages of registering a vessel in Malta is that the island is becoming one of the world's largest ship registries.

Ship owners and operators recognise that a Maltese vessel will not be subject to trading restrictions, that they enjoy preferential treatment in certain ports, and that registry requirements are renowned and recognised by major international shipyards and classification societies.

KS Shipping Malta also offers additional services such as underwater hull inspections (class approved) and load tests.

KS Shipping Malta is the sole distributor for Folch Ropes with a stock of various ropes held in Malta. Folch Ropes are certified by DNV/GL and meet OCIMF specifications.

KS Shipping Malta is a member of FPAL and FIATA, and has also been accredited as being in compliance with Bureau Veritas Standard for Quality Management System of Seafarers Manning Offices.

KS Shipping Malta has been involved in assisting a number of vessels flying the French flag, both commercial as well as French Navy vessels during their stay in Malta.

Since its inception, KS Shipping has sought to become one of the most prestigious ship agencies in Malta. Keith Murphy, owner and director of the company has always sought to provide the most professional and courteous service to ship owners, master, and crew. "A vessel and its crew is like a living entity and has to be regarded, and respected, as such, with specific, and sometimes sensitive, needs being addressed accordingly," Mr Murphy said.

(Content provided by KS Shipping Malta)

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Simone Mahler professional dermocosmetics guarantee scientifically proven efficiency. They are environmentally friendly thanks to the refillable jar initiative: the client can buy a refill the second time she needs the cream, thus saving money and the environment through a reduction in packaging.

Simone Mahler products are only available from professional salons, combining effective treatments with products that are dermatologically tested, with extremely high skin tolerance and proven visible results.

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(Content provided by Beautimport)



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Glass full

The Vinexpo Bordeaux 2017 spread contacts, business and taste through the grapevine.

Held from June 18-21, Vinexpo Bordeaux, the world's leading wine and spirits exhibition, recently concluded four days of intense activity.

More than 2,300 exhibitors from 40 countries gathered to meet buyers, sign contracts, discover new products and grow their business contacts.

From this year's edition, three clear trends emerged. The first is the quality of visitors and the strong presence of decision makers, a fact remarked on by exhibitors and re-emphasised by the number of one-to-one wine meetings set up by Vinexpo.

These 2,000 meetings, arranged in advance, were targeted, constructive and resulted in the signing of a large number of distribution contracts.

"Our aim was to give added support to the quality of our visitor

universe. I can say today that we have kept our promise," said Guillaume Deglise, CEO of Vinexpo Group.

Buyers coming from 150 countries showed that the distribution sector has become a worldwide business and that the Vinexpo brand is the world benchmark when it comes to finding new markets and growing of networks.

"Major international brands, family businesses, small winegrowers, and regional or national exhibitors were widely represented and showed their enthusiasm"

The largest number of visitors came from France, followed by China and the US.

The signature of an agreement between Vinexpo and TMall (Alibaba Group) will reinforce the position of Vinexpo in China and help it to grow its reputation in this vast territory.

The launch of Vinexpo New York in March 2018 will similarly help to develop the appeal of Vinexpo for Americans.

"We exhibit at Vinexpo to meet American and Chinese buyers. We have been coming here for 16 years

and we know that at Vinexpo Bordeaux we shall meet with professionals whom we could not meet at the other big exhibitions.

"On our first day we signed deals with a Chinese importer and a company from Saudi Arabia," said Tanja Robinson, Commercial Director of Robinson & Sinclair (South Africa).

The second is the ability of Vinexpo to unite the players in the sector. Major international brands, family businesses, small winegrowers, and regional or national exhibitors were widely represented and showed their enthusiasm.

"My best Vinexpo for 10 years," said Jean-Frederic Hugel of Maison Hugel (Alsace).

The showcasing of producers gave professional visitors the chance to rediscover the Tre Bicchieri from the Gambero Rosso guide, to taste the 2016 vintage of the Union des Grands Crus of Bordeaux, or Rieslings from Wines of Germany.

The Institute of Masters of Wine was also present as well as representatives of world gastronomy through starred chefs and well-known sommeliers.

Vinexpo also succeeded in bringing together specialists such as Michel Bettane and Thierry Desseuve, to create new approaches towards niche products. Nor should we forget key media such as Wine Spectator, Terre de vins, The Drinks Business or the Revue du Vin de France. Uniting people and businesses leads also to creating different approaches for different needs. The new space for bio wines WOW! (World or Organic Wines) is a good example of that approach.

PHOTOS: PHILIPPE LABEGUERIE, JEAN-BERNARD NADEAU.





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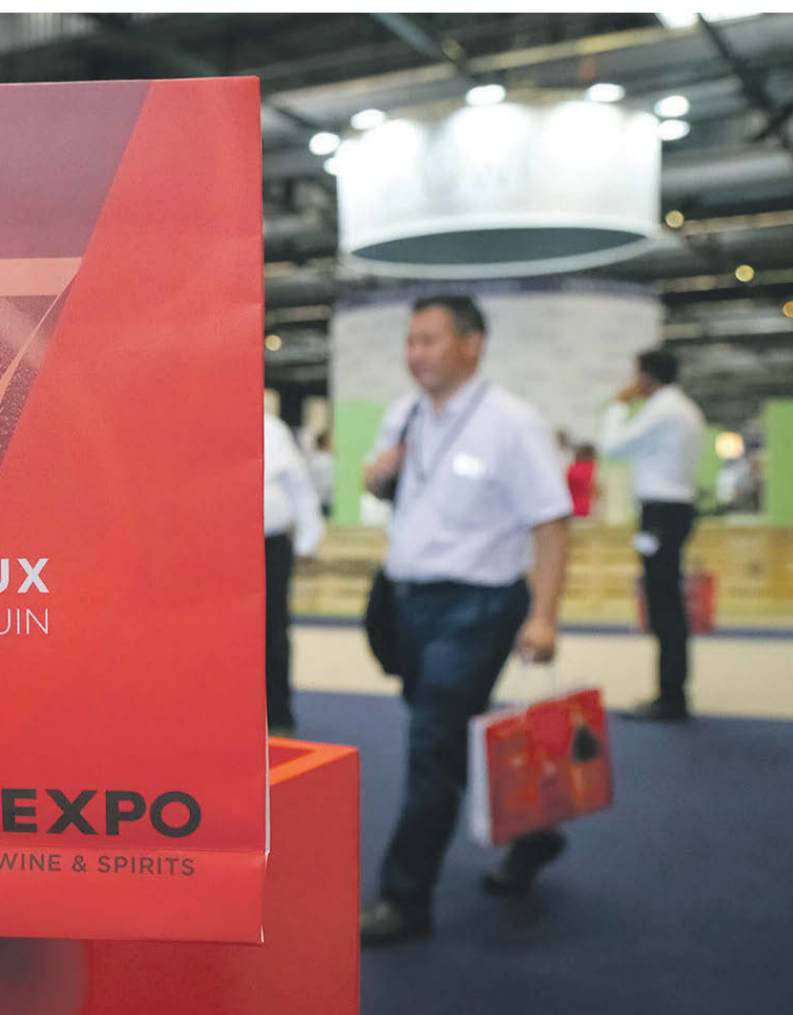
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news



Setting new standards

For his first journey as President of France, Emmanuel Macron chose to ride in the DS 7 Crossback, the latest model of DS Automobiles.

The DS brand is proud that DS 7 Crossback is the inauguration's car of the new French President and that DS 7 Crossback was driven for the first time in public on an official ceremony. The DS brand, whose ambition is to embody both French know-how and innovation in the automotive industry, is pursuing the tradition of being the official car manufacturer of the French presidency. DS models are emblematic and have historical provenance, having been used many times on similar symbolic occasions with the Fifth Republic. Discover on facebook.com/DSMalta.

Car of the year 2017

Joining its numerous other prizes, the new Peugeot 3008 was named the 2017 Car of the Year. The judging panel comprising 58 European journalists, acclaimed its style, interior design and performance.

Peugeot has received the Car of the Year prize for the second time in three years.

The new Peugeot 3008 is the first SUV winner since the creation of the trophy in 1964. It is the fifth Peugeot named Car of the Year, following the 308 in 2014, the 307 in 2002, the 405 in 1988 and the 504 in 1969.

Discover more by visiting facebook.com/PeugeotMalta

Unique offering

Citroën is stepping up its international offensive in the SUV segment with the New C3 Aircross. Unique body styling and generous forms lend it a powerful and fresh attitude. A personality strengthened by extensive personalisation possibilities.

This people-minded SUV features unrivalled spaciousness and modular design, reaching outwards thanks to its opening panoramic sunroof.

Equally at ease in the city and out on the open road, the new model's adventurous abilities have been enhanced with grip control and hill assist descent.

Engine of the year

During the Engine of the Year Awards in Stuttgart, an international jury of journalists awarded the 2017 prize "Engine of the Year" to the 1.2L 3-cylinder turbo PureTech petrol engine in the 1L to 1.4L category.

For the third year in a row, the 2017 Engine of the Year prize confirms the success of this engine, available in PureTech 110 and 130bhp, deployed on over 90 vehicle applications in 70 countries.

Peugeot, Citroën and DS Automobiles are represented locally by Michael Attard Ltd.

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Their retail concept is wonderfully unique as one can find exceptional luxury brands for the home together with everyday gift items like designer scented candles and decorative pieces together with wines, spirits and fine foods all under one roof and without anything feeling out of place.

Each area of their store offers a wonderful selection of brands and products to choose from and their friendly sales team is always at hand if you are looking for any advice or guidance.

The ground floor is dedicated to their range of distinctive gifts and decoration for the home, having a large area devoted to their luxury brands including Christoffle, Baccarat and Bernardaud. Another area is devoted to leading brands like Casa Bugatti, Riedel, Guy Degrenne

and Nachtmann while the rest of the floor space is taken up by their wonderful selection of gifts and decorative pieces from Castelbel, Welton, Cor Mulder and many others.

The first floor takes you to a world of quality wines, premium spirits, cigars and fine foods. The wines are exclusive imports of the company and include some great producers like Montes, La Scolca and Pommery Champagne. During the Christmas season, the range of gourmet products explodes to include lots of specialty confectionery and chocolates.

Their iconic hamper collection is made up of their exclusive range of wines, fine foods and chocolate brands and beautifully packaged in their luxury gift boxes.

The shop is open Monday to Saturday, from 10am to 7.30pm and parking for patrons is free of charge. It is also recommended that you pop into their C&S Wine Café for an excellent cup of coffee or a glass of your favorite wine.

(Content provided by Cleland & Souchet)



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The stage is set

From fireworks and seafaring festivals to jazz and rock, this summer, France is where it's at

Karel Appel

February 24 – August 20, Musée d'Art Moderne de Paris

Dutch artist Karel Appel was a founding member of the CoBrA group of artists formed in Paris in 1948. This group of artists proposed a spontaneous, experimental form of art that included techniques inspired by primitivism and children's drawings.

Made possible thanks to a donation of 17 paintings and four sculptures by the Karel Appel Foundation in Amsterdam, this exhibition charts the artist's career, from the CoBrA years to his passing in 2006.



Balenciaga in Paris

March 8 – July 16, Musée Bourdelle

The sculptural form of this Paris museum is the perfect setting for an exhibition of Cristóbal Balenciaga's haute-couture creations.

The central thread running through this exhibition is the colour black, which features in lace embellishments, silk velvet flourishes and intricate embroidery which sculpted the silhouettes of numerous legends, including Marlene Dietrich.



Chartres en Lumieres

April 13 – October 7, Chartres

First held in 2003, Chartres en Lumieres lights up the beautiful city from April to October. For the occasion, more than 20 monuments and major landmarks in the city are illuminated with artistic light designs. The ones which generate the greatest interests are the Towers of Chartres Cathedral, the old Episcopal Palace and the Chartres theatre.



Chorgies in Orange

June 19 – August 5, Orange

The Chorgies in Orange is the oldest festival in France, having been organised since 1869.

Hosted in the beautiful and perfectly preserved Theatre Antique, this festival offers popular operas, lyric art performances and classical music concerts against a fairy-tale backdrop. The stage wall, which stands over 37 metres tall, guarantees exceptional acoustics.



Pyrotechnic Art Festival

July 14 – August 24, Cannes

Every year, the glamorous city of Cannes welcomes the world's greatest pyrotechnics for sky-blistering shows which combine technology, artistry and colour.

The shows are held on a 400-metre sea front and is watched by thousands of spectators, who gather along the famous Croisette. Like in past editions, this year six guest countries will compete in one of the most famous international pyrotechnic competitions to win a Silver Vestal.



Rock en Seine

August 25 – 27, Paris

First held in 2003, Rock en Seine has become a red-letter three days in the capital's music calendar. Each year, some 100,000 festival-goers gather at the National Estate of Saint-Cloud to listen to some of the best names in rock, pop, garage rock, electro and more.

This year, the line-up includes Franz Ferdinand, The XX, PJ Harvey, Band of Horses, The Kills and George Ezra.



Jazz in Marcillac

July 28 – August 15, Marcillac

Held under the stars since 1978, the Jazz in Marcillac festival attracts over 200,000 people every year to the small village. A fringe festival also takes place on the main square in Marcillac, against the backdrop of magical medieval arcades.

This year, the festival blows 40 birthday candles and celebrates 600 nights and almost 6,000 raised curtains.

This year's line-up complements this celebration, featuring Roy Hargrove, Stanley Clarke, Joshua Redman, Emile Parisien and the legendary Herbie Hancock.

The Sea Shanty Festival

August 11 – 13, Paimpol

Paimpol Festival, an international sea shanty gathering, attracts boats from all over France for an adventurous gathering of travel, discovery, camaraderie and shipwrecks. The festival is also a reminder of salty sagas and oral tradition, featuring Sinbad, Achab, Jack Aubrey and Corto Maltese.

Paimpol harbour also welcomes several hundred wooden ships – the day before the festival. All crews take part in the famous and lively crew's meal.



The Ultra-Trail

August 28 – September 1

The Ultra-Trail du Mont-Blanc is a 170km trail running race to keep up their fitness. Fully, this trail running race where high temperatures are common.

Known as one of the most challenging Ultra-Trail du Mont-Blanc routes, it crosses France and Italy for a total of 170km and high-altitude passes, standing at 2,500m.

MiMa Puppet Art

August 3 – 6, Mirepoix

The International Festival of Puppetry in the medieval town of Mirepoix. Activity, the festival is open to all ages and update puppet techniques, string puppets and

A leading Mediterranean hub port with extensive global network connections

Malta Freeport Terminals is presently well poised to efficiently handle the business of the shipping alliances that have chosen the Freeport as their central Mediterranean hub port following the ambitious investment undertaken in its facilities to the tune of over €237 million since its privatisation.

In October 2004 the government of Malta awarded the French carrier CMA CGM a 30-year concession to operate and further develop Malta Freeport Terminals. In 2011, Terminal Link, the port operator of CMA CGM, transferred half of its shares in the Freeport to the Yildirim Group of Turkey and in 2013, Terminal Link sold 49 per cent of its shares to China Merchant Holdings (International) Company Limited with CMA CGM retaining a 51 per cent shareholding.

This strong and reliable shareholding structure is providing a solid foundation for further growth.

The all-embracing investment undertaken in the facilities was imperative for the Freeport considering that shipping lines are investing heavily in ever-larger container vessels and ships of this magnitude create demands for ports in terms of the need for deeper water depths, larger cranes and longer berths.

Furthermore, the container shipping industry continues to face instability and increased competition, with carriers reorganising their networks and consolidating into fewer and stronger alliances. After months of transformation in the form of mergers and acquisitions, 11 of the world's largest container shipping lines have come together into three new alliances, namely The Ocean Alliance, 2M and The Alliance. These alliances have set sail on April 1 of this year.



Malta Freeport Terminals is proud to have roped in the Ocean Alliance which is led by CMA CGM, and also made up of COSCO Shipping, Evergreen Line, and Orient Overseas Container Line. This is a significant achievement for the company which clearly confirms that the Freeport's facilities offer carriers the required infrastructure, equipment, top-notch technology and trained personnel to efficiently operate the largest vessels afloat.

Moreover, the 2M Alliance which is made up of Maersk Line and Mediterranean Shipping Company has sustained its calls at the Freeport. Other carriers calling at the port include Hamburg Sud, Hapag-Lloyd, Seago Line and UASC. These alliances are increasingly

strengthening the Freeport's accessibility worldwide.

In view of this, the Freeport is providing considerable benefits to the local commercial sector and the international business community alike, including regular global connections with 115 ports, around 60 of which are in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. This results from the transshipment services operating from Malta Freeport which would otherwise not be available since no shipping line would call with a mainline service for a market with the restrictive size of Malta.

As a result of the outstanding investment undertaken in the Freeport's facilities to ensure that it has the right mix of resources to be able to effectively handle 18,000 TEU vessels and

larger simultaneously on both its container terminals, the Freeport now offers total operational deep water quays of 2,463 metres which are equipped with 21 Quayside Cranes, a total area for container storage of 771,000 square metres and a total of 15,290 container ground slots. The Container Terminals' current capacity is 3.8 million TEUs.

The company is currently drafting long-term strategies with further developments planned to be undertaken at the port to further strengthen its operational capabilities to 4.5 million TEUs. Such crucial developments will enable Malta Freeport Terminals to continue operating successfully within the Mediterranean transshipment market for many years to come.

(Content provided by Malta Freeport Terminals)

Moving your world forward

Sullivan Maritime provides a multitude of valuable services in the shipping sector, enriched by expertise and experience.

Sullivan Maritime guarantees highly personalised, attentive customer service, utilising a specialised documentation system for all cargo.

The company ensures the smooth, efficient handling of clients' requirements across a broad range of services, shipping a vast range of cargo from any origin to any destination, importing and exporting hazardous materials, and providing storage requirements.

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whether you are a company or just an individual. Clients can expect value, efficiency and reliability, and Sullivan Maritime prides itself on the quality offered in all its services.

For more than a century, spanning four generations, the Sullivan family has operated and managed businesses in sectors including shipping, hospitality and finance. Malta's strategic geographical position and strong maritime tradition contributed to these sectors being lucrative opportunities.

The shipping sector has become synonymous with the family name of Sullivan, with an excellent reputation for services



globally. Sullivan Maritime's competence in achieving client satisfaction across a comprehensive range of support services is directly related to the importance it places on its human resources.

A dynamic and energetic team of both qualified and experienced professionals operates the organisation. Sullivan Maritime's offices are ideally located in Malta's

capital city Valletta, on St Barbara Bastion overlooking the Grand Harbour. The company is well established in the local business community with strategic networks and links in place with all key stakeholders connected to the shipping industry, both locally and internationally.

(Content provided by Sullivan Maritime)

s all happening.



du Mont-Blanc

3, Mont Blanc

Mont Blanc is an event for those who want levels even in the hot season. Thank-lyce is held in the Alps mountain range es fear to tread.

most difficult races of its kind, the ic passes through France, Switzerland 0km. The trail is dotted with glaciers s, with the highest, the Grand Col Fer- etres above sea level.

Festival

of Puppet Art is held every summer in oix in Ariège. A hive of activity and cre- to young creators and artists who influ- theatre, including object theatre, glove and marionettes.

news/technology



Plant operation certified

In April, the gas giant Air Liquide carried out an audit of the Multigas plant as part of its analysis of its global partners. Air Liquide, a French multinational supplier of industrial gases, operates across 80 countries, with 67,000 employees running 433 large gas production plants.

Air Liquide audited the Multigas plant, applying their expertise in plant management and customer supply chain continuity to Multigas's processes.

"The audit determined that Multigas is managed in a way that is consistent with the Air Liquide standards for quality and that Multigas has excellent in-house technical knowledge," said Michael Mifsud, CEO of Multigas, upon successful completion of the audit.

Air Liquide went on to draw from their extensive knowledge base to provide recommendations for optimisation and these are already well under way.

Multigas is one of the first companies in Malta to supply atmospheric and special gases. Starting with provision of carbon dioxide for breweries in 1926 and gaining experience across more spe-

cialised gases, Multigas now provides the most complete spectrum of gases to the industry, along with complementary equipment and services.

Applications of gases supplied range from hospitals (medical oxygen) to pharmaceutical production process (GMP nitrogen for inerting) to demolition projects (such as the dismantling of industrial plants and tanks with oxy-fuel cutting) to helium for balloons and carbon dioxide for effects at events and movie sets.

Multigas has built essential bridges with international business such as ST Microelectronics. The multinational of French and Italian origins is a world leader in semiconductors that include components essential to smartphone manufacture. Multigas supplies ST in Malta with the industrial gases that are essential to its operation.

Multigas is also the supplier of various brands of welding equipment, professional hand tools, oxy-fuel welding equipment, accessories, consumables, tools and safety equipment.

(Content provided by Multigas)

France's vibrant ecosystem

'French Tech' refers to everyone working in or for French start-ups, in France and abroad. These are firstly the entrepreneurs but also the investors, engineers, designers, developers, companies, associations, media, public operators, research institutes, and others.

Above all, the French techers foster the development of French start-ups and strengthen their international influence.



WHAT IS LA FRENCH TECH?

La French Tech facts & numbers



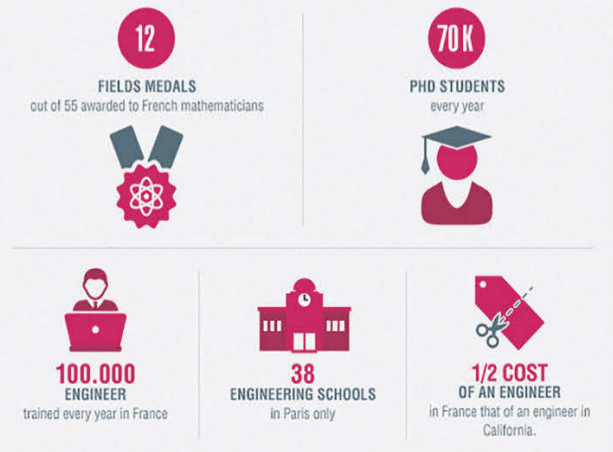
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FRANCE : IDEAL CONDITIONS to found a tech startup



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electric



The Ambassador of France to Malta Mrs Béatrice Le Fraper du Hellen and the chauffeurs of the embassy, Ian Grech and Joseph Bayliss. PHOTO: JONATHAN BORG

France goes electric

The French Embassy in Malta went green by acquiring a zero-emission car. The French Renault Kangoo Z.E. is 100 per cent electric, as part of the Embassy's green approach and commitment towards environmental driving.

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explore

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PHOTO: EMMANUEL BERTHIER



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PHOTO: SIMON BOURCIER

Great Brittany

From lakes and a dramatic coastline to medieval castles and fairytale forests, Brittany is ripe for exploration.

Named after a historic and geographic area, Brittany covers the western part of Armorica, as the region was known during the period of Roman occupation. It is also one of the richest regions in France, with a wealth of tradition, folklore, natural beauty and gastronomic delights.

Brittany's coastline is especially worth the detour. Or rather, plenty of detours because there is virtually not a single straight line along the region's edges. This presents various peninsulas and bays, each with its own beautiful identity.

The region's rivers are similarly varied. Towards the east, the Couesnon, Ille and Vilaine form a kind of informal border, while to the northeast, the Rance is as mighty as rovers come. Other rivers such as the Trieux, Jaudy, Scorff and Blavet all vie for attention.

Manmade canals are not only engineering feats but nowadays also serve as a major tourist attraction. The major Breton canal connects Nantes and Brest and visitors can hire boats or use towpaths to make it a marvellous part of their holiday.

Inland is a wealth of mountains and forests. The highest mountain ranges reach over 1,000 feet and are perfect for trekking and walking. Covered in low heath, Monts d'Arrée lends itself to walks and picnics.

Vast swathes of forest once covered most of central Brittany. While most of these forests have been cut down to make way for fields, the ones that remain are unspoilt and well protected.

Brittany's natural landscape is dotted with mighty medieval castles. Some are virtually built on the beach, such as the Chateau de Suscinio and Fort La Latte. The Chateau du Taureau is exceptionally stunning – the only issue is that it is only accessible by boat.

For an adventurous and active itinerary, Brittany has three natural parks. The Parc d'Armorique, which is the second regional natural park to be created in France, extends from the Monts d'Arrée to the Molène archipelago, towards the Parc Marin d'Iroise. The third park, Brière, is the second largest marsh in France. Extending between the Vilaine and Loire Rivers, this marsh is densely covered with reeds and is home to the greatest concentration of thatched houses in France.

The region's folklore is expressed through various festivals, including costumed parades, re-enactments and dance gatherings, such as Guingamp. Several towns also stage historic festivals, such as Dinan, Vannes and Lorient's August Festival Interceltique.

Brittany's cities and towns are rich in architecture and culture, especially the capital, Rennes. For a relatively small region, Brittany is especially rich in ecclesiastical architecture – in fact, the region boasts nine cathedral cities.

Dramatic fortifications are also a constant theme in the region, with towns surrounded by great walls and towers. Fortifications in Dinan, St-Malo, and Hénnebont are great crowd-pullers.

But it's not just the great towns and cities that should be on your itinerary. Little historic Breton towns are enchanting – those awarded the title 'petit cité de caractère' are especially worth the detour.

The region's historic, natural and cultural wealth translates itself into delicious gastronomy. Butter flavoured with local sea salt features heavily in the region's kitchen, as do the famous Breton pancakes. The region is especially renowned for producing the finest seafood, celebrated every day and during festivals such as the Festival de la Coquille St Jacques.

PHOTO: JACQUELENE PIRIOU



news

Passion for wine

“Wine is the most civilized thing in the world,” wrote Ernest Hemingway. And how right he was, and still is.

One of today’s leading companies in the Bordeaux wine sector, Lucien Lurton & Fils was set up by Lucien Lurton and his children in 1993. The business took the name La Passion des Terroirs in 1999 to mirror its strong attachment to terroir and the passion of a whole family for vines and wine throughout its history and to become a fully-fledged Bordeaux wine merchant.

The company is now among the top 10 *négociant* houses in the Bordeaux market, distributing wines from all the appellations of the Bordeaux region.

Care for your skin

With its commitment to skin health and by observing the natural mechanisms of the skin’s functions, leading French dermatological skincare brand, Bioderma has created a revolutionary new sun care product for combination to oily skin – Photoderm Nude Touch SPF50+.

Featuring a breakthrough liquid-to-powder formula, this sensorial ultra-light texture provides a very safe and high 100 per cent mineral sun protection. With a touch of foundation, the revolutionary formula offers a bare skin effect to perfect the skin immediately and proves an eight-hour anti-shine action as well as an improvement of the skin condition after 21 days.

Photoderm Nude Touch SPF50+ is available in all leading pharmacies and is hypoallergenic, non-comedogenic, photo-stable, fragrance free, paraben free and has excellent skin and eye tolerance.

(Content provided by Vivian Corporation)



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Raise a glass to Bordeaux

Two weekly flights to French city

Think Bordeaux and immediately a series of postcards is projected through your mind: the beautiful Garonne river, the imposing Cathedral of Saint-Andre, noble 19th century mansions, manicured public gardens and, as soon as you're outside the city, dreamy chateaux set among rolling vineyards.

Bordeaux is all this and much more. And the good news is that the city now features on Malta International Airport's summer schedule, which means it can now be reached from Malta via two weekly flights.

Located close to the European Atlantic coast in the southwest of France, Bordeaux was, until a few years ago, nicknamed 'Sleeping Beauty'. However, in just a few years, it has transformed itself into one of France's most vibrant cities. In fact, in 2015, it won the prestigious 'Europe's Best Destination' title and now welcomes some 5.5 million visitors every year.

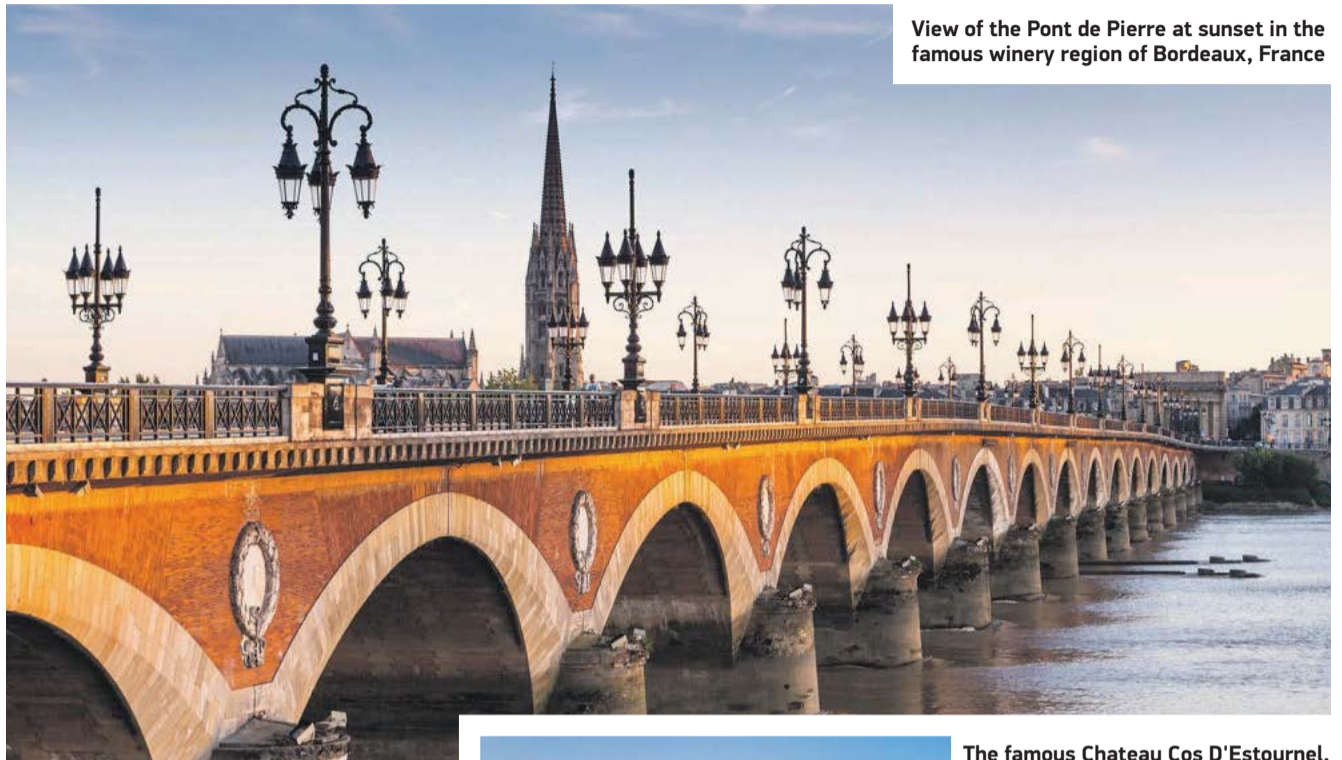
"Whether you discover Bordeaux via a boat trip down the Garonne, on foot or by bike, the city is a sure treat from every angle"

For history lovers, Bordeaux is a beautiful playground, with the number of historic monuments dotting the streets of Bordeaux almost rivalling the number of monuments found in Paris.

Indeed, some of Bordeaux's streets and buildings date as far back as the Roman era.

The Miroir d'Eau is possibly Bordeaux's most recognisable and photographed attraction, and it is recognised as a contemporary World Heritage Site by UNESCO.

But it is not just this water attraction that has UNESCO's mark of approval – 1,810 hectares of the city are listed as a



View of the Pont de Pierre at sunset in the famous winery region of Bordeaux, France

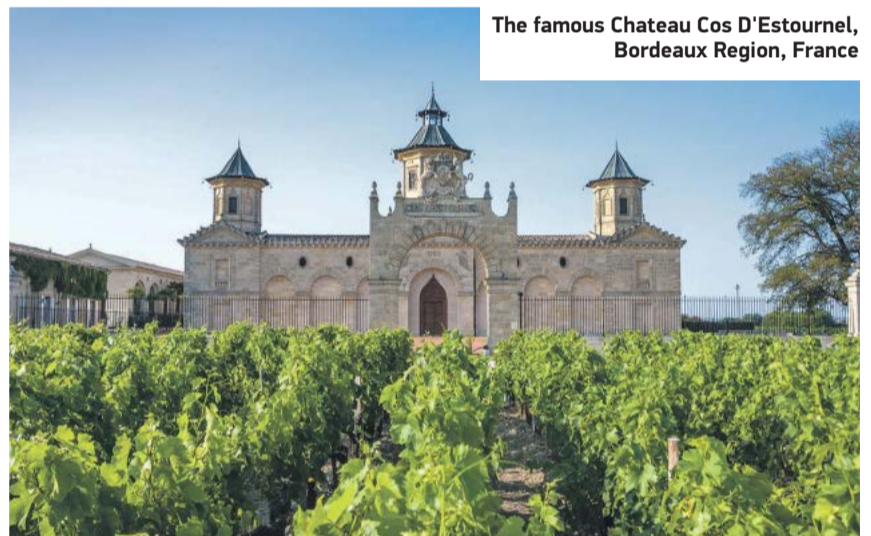
UNESCO World Heritage Site, with the organisation describing its urban form as a representation of 'the success of philosophers who wanted to make towns into melting pots of humanism, universality and culture.'

Bordeaux is indeed a very photogenic city, but if you want to capture some shots from above, consider a visit to the PeyBerland Tower, which is open every day except for Monday. Dating back to 1440, the top of the PeyBerland Tower is accessible via some 229 steps – so it's probably not the most brilliant of ideas to visit after a wine-tasting session.

Whether you discover Bordeaux via a boat trip down the Garonne, on foot or by bike – it was voted fourth friendliest bicycle city in the world in 2013 – the city is a sure treat from every angle.

Bordeaux is very often referred to as the wine capital of the country, producing an average of 700 million bottles of wine on a yearly basis.

Unsurprisingly, Bordeaux has its very own decanter-shaped wine museum, La Cité du Vin, which provides visitors with an interactive wine-themed experience split on 10 different levels.



The famous Chateau Cos D'Estournel, Bordeaux Region, France

A good three hours should be set aside for a proper visit.

A guided tour of one of Bordeaux's sprawling vineyards is a must, especially if you're after a relaxing holiday. Let's just say that some of the finest grape juices paired with cheeses and enjoyed in the middle of nature will more than help you 'unwind'.

Day trips to the medieval village of Saint Emilion are very popular. A visit to the charming heart of the Bordeaux wine re-

gion, where beautiful architecture, fine wineries, and narrow streets await, will transport you back to the 8th century when a monk named Emilion and his followers started wine production in the area.

If you're interested in a journey even further back in time to pre-history, do make time for a day trip to the Perigord Noir region, which is just a short drive away from Bordeaux. The region is a trove of pre-historic cave paintings, castles and charming villages.

Hello summer, let's get ready to bloom

They say that the bigger the hair the closer to heaven and BaByliss' new secret, that is about to be unveiled, has geared up to take you on a glamorous journey.

It is time to stay away from the done-up look and enjoy summer coiled waves that are guaranteed to drop

jaws with BaByliss' latest innovation in hair styling technology: the BaByliss Curl Secret Ionic Styler. Not only does this cutting-edge novelty brace an anti-static function, but it also enhances the frizz-free smoothing effects and brings out the brighter luxurious shiny tone that we love.

BaByliss Curl Secret Ionic Styler works like magic. Like an illusionist

about to perform a trick, lock a streak of your hair, clamp it at the roots in the crater of the device and watch as the length of your hair disappears in it. Wait for a few seconds until you hear the beep and effortlessly release your grip, remove the device and witness the perfect long-lasting curl appear before your eyes.

Expert styling has never been so easy with automatic BaByliss Curl Secret Ionic Styler that boasts a professional quality-heating element for fast and lasting curls and a ceramic coating for softer, shinier and better-protected hair. With its ionic setting that eliminates static for a perfect frizz-free finish, and heat time features set to create various curl effects, suddenly the perfect curl doesn't seem so complicated.

Available in stock at HomeTrends, San Gwann or Zebbug Malta. For more information call on 2144 5654.

(Content provided by Rausi)



food

Claude Scicluna (ITS) and Christèle Robin-Le Roux.



The French Ambassador visits ITS staff and students before Good France.



Good France 2017: a gourmet collaboration

On March 21, over 2,000 restaurants in 150 countries participated in the Goût de/Good France event with the aim of promoting French gastronomy.

The French Embassy in Malta and the Institute of Tourism Studies joined forces to pay tribute to the excellence of French cuisine. Students from the institute assisted the chef both in the kitchen and during service.

Before this gourmet dinner, French Ambassador to Malta Béatrice Le Fraper du Hellen met the team and the students in their kitchens.

She insisted on the values of excellence and sharing that lie at the core of the cooperation between the French Embassy and the ITS.

The French-Maltese culinary cooperation is still on the rise as ITS will propose as of September a new bachelor programme in culinary arts in partnership with the French Institut Paul Bocuse of Lyon.





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The land of plenty

The country roads of France's Occitanie take Stephanie Fsadni home – at least for a few days.

A huge bowl of *soupe à l'oignon* welcomed our arrival in France.

Our party of four had just sat down for a late lunch in Lamagdelaine, in the suburbs of Cahors, a 90-minute drive to the north of Toulouse, and had ordered the *menu du jour*, without actually understanding what we would be served. But it proved to be a delicious start to our road trip in Southwest France.

Followed by a main course of steak and *frites*, fresh fruit and mousses for dessert, local wine and coffee, we felt recharged and ready to steer our hired SUV along the Occitanie route.

Comprising the former French regions of Languedoc-Roussillon and Midi-Pyrénées in Southwest France, Occitanie may not be as well-known as other regions in the country, such as Provence or Normandie, but there's plenty to see and do in this tranquil, laid-back part of the country. At least, that's the impression my three friends and I had as we drove through one medieval village after the other along the traffic-free country roads.

These villages, some of them just a gathering of houses seemingly huddled in conversation, exude the charm of a biscuit-tin fantasy. They are also historically important and their proud inhabitants were all very cordial and friendly – although few spoke good English and we only knew a couple of words in French, they did their best to serve us or help us out.

Walking through Cahors, our first stop, with its narrow alleyways and half-timbered houses, I felt like I was stepping back in time to the days of Joan of Arc or visiting the set of the 1985 film *Ladyhawke* (which I found later was actually shot in Italy).

The capital of the Lot department, enfolded within a meander of the River Lot, is famous for its Unesco World Heritage-listed Valentré Bridge with its three fortified towers (and its legend about the devil) and the St Etienne Cathed-

ral, which is considered a French national monument.

Cahors is a good base to explore the *Parc naturel régional des Causses du Quercy*. We enjoyed the park's beauty on a long day-trip which took us through many tiny villages along the river until we reached Saint-Cirq-Lapopie, a member of *Les Plus Beaux Villages de France* (the most beautiful villages of France) and which is perched on a steep cliff 100 metres above the Lot. You can walk along a scenic towpath dug in the side of the cliff to reach it or else take a boat ride and pass through locks to emerge in the breath-stopping view of the village.

“These villages, some of them just a gathering of houses seemingly huddled in conversation, exude the charm of a biscuit-tin fantasy”

Further up in the same park is another magnificent and stunning site – Rocamadour, which is set in a gorge above a tributary of the River Dordogne. We took a small tourist train to the upper town dominated by the Romanesque-Gothic Basilica of St Sauveur and the chapel of Notre Dame, whose cult image of a wooden Black Madonna has over the centuries attracted kings, bishops and nobles.

Leaving Cahors, we headed to Albi, a place I had long wanted to visit. My brother had been there a few years ago and when I saw his photos, I was struck by the sight of the imposing medieval cathedral of St Cecilia (a Unesco World Heritage Site) and the Pont Vieux (Old Bridge) above the river Tarn. I have

also long nursed a fascination for French artist Henri de Toulouse Lautrec and I was eager to visit his birthplace and the museum dedicated to him at the Palais de La Berbie. I had visited an exhibition of his paintings in London a couple of years ago, but this could not compare with the circa 1,000 of his works, including 31 of his famous posters, spread over three storeys found here.

We were lucky enough to arrive at Albi on the day of the *Nuit de Pastel*, a local version of the *Notte Bianca* – pastel referring to the plant (woad) which produces an incredible blue dye, for which Albi and Toulouse are particularly known. We saw the usually sleepy town come to life with concerts and performances along the main streets and in buildings such as the St Salvi cloister and a brilliant 1920s-style trapeze show beneath the cathedral.

Some 30 minutes away from Albi is another well-preserved medieval town, Cordes sur Ciel, which sits high on a hilltop and which is replete with small galleries and leather and crafts shop. The long, knee-cracking walk to the upper town was certainly worth it.

We also enjoyed wandering through other towns in the vicinity of Albi, like Rabastens, Lisle-sur-Tarn and Gaillac, where a stop at the *Maison du Vin*, within the Benedictine abbey of Saint Michel, is a must. Here you can sample some of the wines of the Gaillac region, which is particularly known for its reds.

Next on our itinerary was Narbonne but not before stopping for lunch at Castres – which reminded me a bit of Girona, Spain, due to the houses overlooking the river, and which is home to the Goya Museum, the largest collection of Spanish paintings in France – and some more sightseeing at Carcassonne. We were enthralled by the fairy tale exterior of this fortified town – where *Robin Hood: The Prince of Thieves*, starring Kevin



Saint-Cirq-Lapopie

Costner, was partly shot – and enjoyed our stroll along the cobble streets lined with souvenir shops and restaurants.

The route to our destination changed dramatically along the way, from the rich plains and dairy farms around Toulouse and Albi to the dry scrubland full of vineyards of the coastal region of Languedoc.

Narbonne, in the Aude department, is an elegant medieval town, situated some 15km from the shores of the Mediterranean. Upon entering the historic old town, built in Roman times, you find an open square intersected by the Canal de la Robine. On the left is *Les Halles de Narbonne*, a closed market offering all kinds of local delicacies, from cheeses and salamis to seafood and pastries. We went particularly crazy about the delicate *cabécou*, a soft goat's cheese with a moldy crust that simply melts in the mouth, and the *croissants*, of course!

A couple of steps away is one of the grandest cathedrals I've been

to while in France – and I assure you there are many all over the place. The riches inside the cathedral dedicated to Saints Justus and Pastor, including the glass-stained windows and the massive organ, are impressive.

On a breezy summer day while staying in Narbonne, we enjoyed a relaxing day at various coastal towns – from the quiet Narbonne Plage to the scenic and charming Guissan, with its lively market, to the more popular Canet-en-Roussillon, Saint Cyprien and Argelès-sur-Mer – all having extensive sandy beaches, a marina, fancy restaurants and bars, and plenty of accommodation options.

We headed towards the Pyrenees for our final days of the holiday, where we chose cottage-style lodging near Foix, the capital of the Ariège department, and which lies close to the border with Spain and Andorra. A chateau overlooking the town draws tourists interested in the history of the Cathars.



Cahors



Carcassonne



Albi

Foix also lies on the edge of the Parc Natural Regional des Pyrénées Ariégeoises, where one can try different kinds of adventure sports like rafting and kayaking.

Our very last destination was Toulouse, called “the pink town” for the colour of its brickwork. It’s an enjoyable, lively city on the banks of the Garonne, which has plenty of shopping options, including the upmarket French department store Galeries Lafayette, eateries and creperies.

The main visitor attraction here is the Basilica of St Sernin, the largest remaining Romanesque building in Europe and another Unesco World Heritage Site, lying in the route of Santiago de Compostela in France. The massive Place du Capitole is the beating heart of the city, which is always bustling with tourists and locals and hosts Toulouse’s major events.

We could not leave for Malta without having one last French

meal and I tried a typical dish of the area – cassoulet, a rich, slow-cooked casserole containing meat – mainly pork sausages, goose and duck – pork skin and haricot beans. It was definitely a hearty meal that brought this road trip to a satisfying end.

However, I foresee more of such holidays across France as there is so much to discover in this land of plenty. Besides, the food is exquisite, the wine is divine and the hospitality is great. I couldn’t ask for more.

How to get there

Ryanair flies to Toulouse twice weekly, on Thursday and Sunday.

A car is the best way to visit Occitanie, however, the region has a very extensive train network and you can reach the main towns, like Cahors, Albi, Carcassonne, Narbonne and Foix, easily. Visit www.voyages-sncf.com for schedules and prices.



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sports

Cyclists ride around the Arc de Triomphe in Paris. PHOTOS: REUTERS



Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo and the co-president of the Paris bid for the 2024 Olympics Tony Estanguet sail on the Seine river in Paris.

An Olympic effort

It's the final countdown to see if Paris will be successful in its bid to host the 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

A diver plunged into the Seine while the mayor of Paris took to the river in a kayak, as the French capital transformed itself on June 24 into a giant Olympic park as part of its final push to win the rights to host the 2024 Games.

Paris and US rival Los Angeles are the only two cities bidding to stage the 2024 Olympics, and in a final push, the French capital ran a series of events to promote its credentials.

“Paris last hosted the Olympics in 1924”

Canoes and kayaks filled the Seine just outside Notre Dame cathedral, while a diver jumped into the river from one of the city's bridges.

“This is a great opportunity for us to give a taster of what the games will be like here in 2024,” said former Olympic gold medal canoeist Tony Estanguet, who is leading the capital's bid to host the event.

Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo also turned up alongside Estanguet,



French President Emmanuel Macron plays tennis as Paris was transformed into a giant Olympic park on June 24 to celebrate International Olympic Days with a variety of sporting events for the public.

with the two of them taking to the Seine in a kayak, not far from where sprinters pelted along a floating athletics track.

Paris last hosted the Olympics in 1924, while Los Angeles has held it twice, most recently in 1984.

In July 2005 in Singapore, London pipped an over-confident Paris, which had lost out to Beijing for the 2008 Games, to win

the right to stage the 2012 Summer Olympics, triggering tears in the French camp when the results were announced.

Paris had formally announced its bid to host the 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games in June 2015. The bid was launched at the headquarters of Comité National Olympique et Sportif Français, the National Olympic Committee of France, with the bid committee leaders, more than 50 leading French athletes and hundreds of representatives from France's sports movement.

Launching the bid, Bernard Lapasset, Chairman of Paris 2024, said: “Paris is delighted to officially confirm its bid for the 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games – an important first milestone as our host city campaign journey commences.

“We believe that this bid and our goal to host the 2024 Games will excite, unite and enthuse the people of Paris, our entire nation and lovers of Olympic and Paralympic sport all over the world.”

The 2024 host city is scheduled to be selected on September 13 in Lima, Peru.

For more information visit www.paris2024.org.

A diver performs from the Pont Alexandre III bridge into the River Seine in Paris.



A general view from the Pont Alexandre III bridge shows an athletics track on the River Seine, with the Eiffel tower in the background, in Paris.

An exceptional celebration

Beyond the competitions, the ambition of Paris 2024 is to share the Olympic dream with everyone by providing the world with celebrations worthy of the capital's exceptional heritage, a symbol of innovation and elegance.

Everything that characterises Paris, from art, architecture and gastronomy to culture, fashion and music will feature in this unique celebration.

Paris 2024 promises to deliver spectacular games with 95 per cent of venues already existing or temporary. Paris 2024 will use existing world-class sporting facilities, showcasing France's know-how and expertise in organising major international competitions and the country's passion for sport.

The project will include the Stade de France (opening and closing ceremonies, athletics), the Stade Roland-Garros (tennis, boxing, wheelchair tennis, wheelchair basketball and

wheelchair rugby), the Paris Arena I (basketball, judo and wheelchair basketball), the Velodrome national de Saint-Quentin en Yvelines (track cycling), the Parc des Princes (football), the legendary Stade Jean-Bouin (Rugby sevens), and more.

The city's most emblematic and iconic sites will be transformed into spectacular competition venues in the heart of the city. The Grand Palais will host the fencing and taekwondo competitions, the Esplanade des Invalides archery, and the beach volley and football five-a-side competitions will take place at the Champ de Mars, while the marathon, the triathlon and the open-water races will start off at the foot of the Eiffel Tower, in the cleaned-up Seine river.

Finally, the equestrian events will take place in the majestic gardens of the Château de Versailles.



A team from the Embassy ran through the 5km-long circuit, and expressed its support for Paris' candidacy for the 2024 Olympic Games.



The team of the French Embassy in Malta is mobilised for the candidacy of Paris 2024.

French Embassy runs for Paris 2024

The Embassy expressed its support for Paris' bid for the 2024 Olympic Games by taking part in Colour My Run Malta.

Organised by young French entrepreneur Julien Lagarde, the event gathered more than 700 participants in Pembroke on Sunday, March 14. Part of the income was donated to

the Inspire foundation, which promotes the social inclusion of people with a disability. A long-time partner of Inspire, the French Embassy sponsored the event. H.E. Béatrice Fraper du Hellen joined on the scene at the end of the race President of Malta Marie-Louise Coleiro-Preca, who addressed the crowd.



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