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(*L'Hexagone*, incidently, is one of France's nicknames due to the nearly hexagonal shape of metropolitan France)

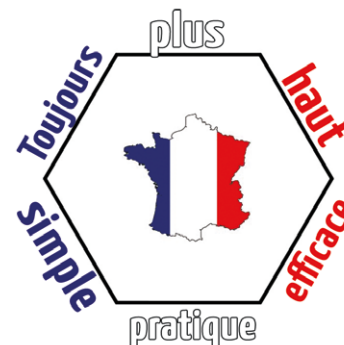
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# History, Politics and... Camemberts

by Bernard Richard, Historian

Camembert is one of France's gastronomic emblems along with the baguette, champagne, coq au vin, wine and many other products that make up the French identity.

According to a well established, but undocumented, legend the cheese called camembert was created in about 1791 by a certain Marie Harel. Marie was a milkmaid and her statue was inaugurated by the French president in 1928 in the town of Vimoutiers, which is the administrative center down the road from the village of Camembert. Vimoutiers is in the Orne department in Normandy. The story goes that Marie, during the chaos of the Revolution, gave refuge to a priest who came from Brie, east of Paris. To show his gratitude the priest gave Marie the famous cheese recipe. But in fact much earlier, around 1705, Thomas Corneille, brother of the playwright Pierre, already wrote of the "good cheese from Camembert".

The round boxes made of wood slivers (poplar, pine and spruce) with their illustrated labels appeared around 1890, nearly a century after the invention of the cheese, when the need to transport the cheese to Paris by train required stacking the cheeses

without crushing them. Very early on the labels, with white background and decorated with bright attractive colors, were saved, stuck on walls and even collected.

Up until the 1970-80s, cheese labels often depicted history or even the politics of the moment, showing historic figures, kings, queens, famous men, presidents of the French Republic, generals and more. This wonderful diversity however disappeared when cheese production was industrialized and concentrated in the hands of large companies, the "three Bs": Besnier (now Lactalis), Bongrain and Bel.

## Republican camemberts and the Sower

Let's begin our trip through the historic cheese labels - which come in a wide variety of graphic styles - with the familiar Republican camembert.

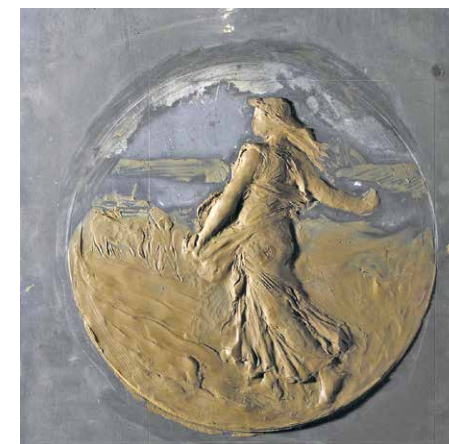
This label (image 1) from 1903 reproduces the Sower created by the medal maker Oscar Roty as the new symbol of the Republic of the late 19th century. The Sower appeared on coins, postage stamps, posters and other objects. The camembert label from the beginning of the 20th century



1. Le camembert de la République, 1903.



Silver coin with Roty's Sower, 1898



Wax model of the first Sower, called « Agriculture », 1887



is a declaration of support for the Republic, a cheese for Parisians that fits with their political ideas and ideals. Amongst the hundreds or thousands of different camembert labels, this one is surely one of the prettiest and most majestic.

The Sower rapidly became a republican emblem comparable to the painting *Liberty Guiding the People* by Delacroix or the sculpture *La Marseillaise* by François Rude which graces the Arch of Triumph. The model of the Sower medal, made of wax on slate and a bronze casting are in the Musée d'Orsay in Paris.

Similar labels from a bit later include the Sower in a red tunic (2) with a red sunset on a livarot label (another Norman cheese) and the “La Marianne” (3) with her white dress for a “real camembert made in Picardy”. Both of these labels show the female allegorical figure wearing a bright red phrygian cap.

Other “republican” cheeses had labels honoring Pasteur, the “benefactor of humanity”, much celebrated by the French Republic. (4)

### French history's finest

Amongst earlier historical figures on cheese labels we find Vercingetorix, (5) the Gaulic chief who was defeated in the battle of Alésia by Caesar. William the Conqueror is on a pont l'Eveque label. (6) Since camembert is a Norman product they were proud to glorify William, duke of Normandy, who conquered England in 1066.

4. Pasteur,  
Nec Plus Ultra



3. La Marianne



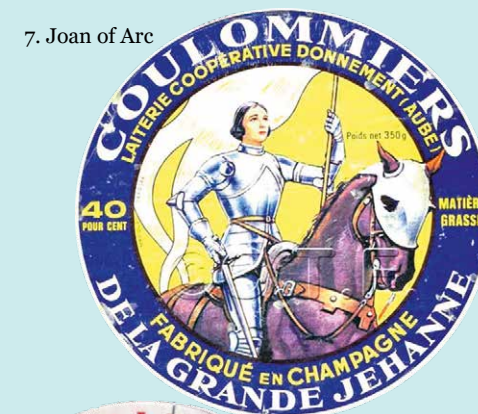
2. The Sower



5. Vercingetorix



6. William the  
Conqueror



7. Joan of Arc

There is also a viking label, honoring those who were the ancestors of the Normans.

Moving forward in time we find coulommiers and camembert labels featuring Joan of Arc (7), a camembert with Charles VII (8) or with Agnès Sorel (9) his mistress. Yet another label features Diane de Poitiers mistress of Henri II in the 16th century. More great men to appear on cheese labels include the Grand Condé, a prestigious general of the 17th century and the philosopher Descartes on a camembert produced in his native village. The respectability of the person chosen for the label was a sort of a guarantee of the quality of the cheese and the cheesemaker.

To these we can add a Saint George (10) (the patron saint of England since the middle ages) label for cheese sent to England or for the French market there is the gallant Henry IV, the most beloved of French kings. (11)



8. Charles VII



9. Agnes Sorel





10. Saint George  
for the English



14. Les Invalides

Napoleon, the great emperor, has yet more importance than all the other great men and is thus featured on many labels. One cheese called carré de l'est from the Champagne region is nicknamed the "Briennois" (12) after Brienne-le-Château, the town in the Aube department where young Bonaparte was a student. A camembert shows the Arch of Triumph (13) built by Napoleon with text in English and mentioning Cambridge, Massachusetts was clearly destined to the American market. We can also find a camembert called "Notre Dame" where Napoleon was crowned emperor in 1804, an "Invalides" cheese commemorating his burial. Napoleon's entire life is featured on cheese labels: from youth to glory to the grave !



11. Henry IV



13. A Triumph of soft ripened cheese  
from France for the Americans



12. Napoleon  
the student





16. Joffre/J'offre



15. Les Poilus



### Important events in French history

Cheese becomes patriotic and extols the Allies of 1914-18. There are several labels depicting the French soldier or *poilu* in the trenches. (15) A play on words and the subtle trick-of-the-mind addition of an apostrophe on Field Marshal Joffre's surname gives an ambiguous label. (16) The label celebrating Joffre as the best general "*Joffre le meilleur*" (he was the victor at the battle of the Marne in September 1914) and the household's choice of quality in serving the best cheese "*J'offre le meilleur*".

Other patriotic labels that collectors have preserved include a victory camembert produced - prematurely - in 1915! Also a "camembert of the victorious" depicting President Clemenceau with General Pétain, also prematurely printed in 1917 or early 1918. After the war was finally over in 1919 a camembert "Clemenceau", in honor of the French president during the war, and camembert "Les victorieux" were produced.

The Alsatian milkmaid (17) on the label celebrates Alsace and Lorraine's

return to France after German annexation from 1870-1918.

After the first World War, despite its Norman roots, camembert was being made all over France and became thus a national cheese, and the cheese of the nation and an emblem of France.

The catalyst for the boom of sales of camembert was in fact the war of 1914-1918 itself. It was during these four years that it became a staple for most of the French. The cheese was frequently part of soldier's rations in the trenches and thus was introduced to men from all corners of France. Normandy, however, couldn't produce enough cheese for the whole army and so it was during the war that the cheese started to be made in many different milk-producing areas of France and was no longer an exclusively Norman product. A small name and quality protection zone was established in 1909 around the village of Camembert, home of the true camembert. However camembert-style cheese was and is made all over France and today in many countries such as Switzerland,



18. Kamamber from Russia

Spain, the United States and recently production of "kamanber" has been started in Russia as a response to trade limitations imposed on Russia after the annexation of Crimea. The Russian kamanber (18), with its label written in Cyrillic characters, is however quite a different product made of cow and goat milk with sometimes vegetable oil added for creaminess...

Following World War I, cheese labels turn to the colonial world and exotic themes, then in vogue. The "Caïd" cheese is an example. (19)



17. Alsace - French again!



19. An Asian Kingpin



When Ethiopia was invaded by Mussolini's army in 1935, the Ethiopian emperor or négus was greatly admired by the French for his resistance, and cheese makers honored him with a label. (20) A similar admiration was shown on a cheese box when the ocean liner Ile-de-France (21) saved hundreds of shipwrecked people during a trans-Atlantic crossing in 1954. The ship was nicknamed the "Saint Bernard of the Atlantic" in the press. The tricolor flag in the background attaches the ship's heroics to France itself.

When the atomic bomb was tested a cheese was named "L'Atomic"! (22) Others celebrated the yoyo, rockets, the lunar landing, Sputnik and the founding of the European Union.

In 1994 the 50th anniversary of D-Day is commemorated on several camembert labels. (23/24) A particular anecdote comes to mind regarding the second world war. During Allied bombings of the 14 of June 1944 the town of Vimoutiers, which englobes the village of

Camembert, was all but razed by error, more than 200 civilians were killed and the statue of camembert creator Marie Harel from 1928 was destroyed. In a bid to make amends in 1956 an Ohio cheese maker, which also produced camembert, replaced the statue.

### Two who are missing from the camembert pantheon

Surprisingly, given all the patriotic labels, there are no labels glorifying Field Marshal Pétain or General de Gaulle.

There is a savoyard cheese called "Le Maréchal", but seems, given his country-style cap, to be more honoring the profession of farriers (maréchal-ferrant) (25) rather than the field marshal. Interestingly while there are no cheese labels honoring Pétain, he does have a wine label (26) in his name, but only thanks to the Mayor of Beaune, also the prefect



22. A cheese bomb?



20. Ethiopian Admiration



24. American heroes



21. French heroes



23. D-Day Semicentennial



25. Professional cheese

26. Pétainian Wine



of the Cote-d'Or department, who transferred some Hospices de Beaune property to Pétain. There is no cheese to accompany the wine however...

General de Gaulle, is honored with a huge quantity of trinkets in his hometown of Colombey-les-Deux-Eglises. There you can find mundane souvenirs similar to the chocolate caves and sugar virgins of Lourdes – but the only cheese label you'll find is a camembert with a Lorraine cross. (27) The cross is a symbol of gaullism. But on the label the cross is paired with a thistle thus making it more about the Lorraine region than the General de Gaulle. Nevertheless the cheese is a souvenir for the "pilgrims" visiting Colombey.

Even though he is not linked to his own cheese label, journalists and admirers have attributed many cheese quotes to the General, such as « *la République n'est pas un fromage !* » (The Republic is not cheese). Another famous quote, which was also attributed to Churchill at some point, is « *Un pays qui produit plus de 365 sortes de fromages ne peut pas perdre la guerre* » (A country that produces more than 365 different kinds of cheese can't lose the war). And finally the General's famous exclamation « *Comment voulez-vous gouverner un pays où il existe 246 variétés de fromages ?* » (It's impossible to govern a country that has 246 types of cheese!).



27. More Lorrainian than de Gaullian

## Conclusion

Think back to the Republican Camembert of 1903 (1). The association

of republican emblems with the gastronomic emblem, camembert, is intriguing and worth review. However these labels are now slowly disappearing and are just leftovers from the early 20th century. Today we see few interesting cheese labels in the markets. You'll find them only in collections, at antique and bric à brac fairs or at the remarkable Camembert Museum in Vimoutiers.



Article written in French by Bernard Richard, historian and specialist of political symbols from the French Revolution to today. Mr. Richard has been a teacher-researcher and a French cultural attaché to foreign countries. He has published several books under the editor CNRS: *Les Emblèmes de la République* (2012, paperback 2015), *Petite histoire du drapeau français* (2017) and is working on *Les Échos de la Marseillaise dans le monde*.

*Tyrosémiophilie* is the general term for cheese label collection. The labels can be from round camemberts or other types and shapes right down to the little triangle of La Vache qui rit. And don't laugh; this is serious collecting in France, some individual collectors have amassed more than 100,000 labels and the collector's collective has millions! To see some in person visit the Musée du Camembert in Vimoutiers and the Maison du Camembert nearby in the village of Camembert in Normandy. Read more about *tyrosémiophilie* on [www.letyrosemiophile.com](http://www.letyrosemiophile.com)

The name Camembert, by the way, is surmised to come from a land-owner's name. There was a Franc named Mambert who owned the area. In the early middle ages it was referred to as Champs de Mambert and in the renaissance Campo Mauberti – deformed over the years to Camembert.

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# Do you know ...

- the western most point in France is the Point du Raz at the tip of Brittany. The department is called the Finistère... do you hear it? Fini-terre? The end of the earth.



- these town names in France that will make an English speaker giggle: Plaisir, Bitche, Les Cars, Brainville, Contest, Le Sap, Stains, Dangers, Brest, Hompes, Bard, Nevers, Saint Hilaire-iours!

- this jingle by British Victorian poet Erskine, c.1850:  
The French have taste in all they do,  
Which we are quite without;  
For Nature, that to them gave goût  
To us gave only gout.

- the Buttes-Chaumont were built on a mound of clay where nothing grew. It was in fact called "Mont-Chauve" or bald. Chauve gradually morphed into "Chaumont".

- the difference between the Stade de France and the Stade français? The Stade de France is the huge stadium just north of Paris in Saint Denis. The Stade français is the Paris rugby team that plays at the Stade Jean Bouin in Paris 16th.

- the expression "Paris vaut bien une messe" which means "a small price to pay for a huge gain" is attributed to Protestant King Henri III from Navarre. He converted to Catholicism in order to become king Henry IV of France. He felt his converting (a mass) was a small price to pay. His name graces a national dish. The Poulet Henri IV makes reference to his desire that each of his subjects would be rich enough to have a chicken in the pot every Sunday.

- the Lion of Belfort symbolizes the heroic French resistance led by Colonel Denfert-Rochereau during the Siege of Belfort, a 103-day Prussian assault (from December 1870 to February 1871). A smaller bronze copy occupies the center of Place Denfert-Rochereau in Paris.

- the song "My Way" was originally a French song called "*Comme d'habitude*", written by Claude François, Jacques Revaud and Gilles Thibault in 1967

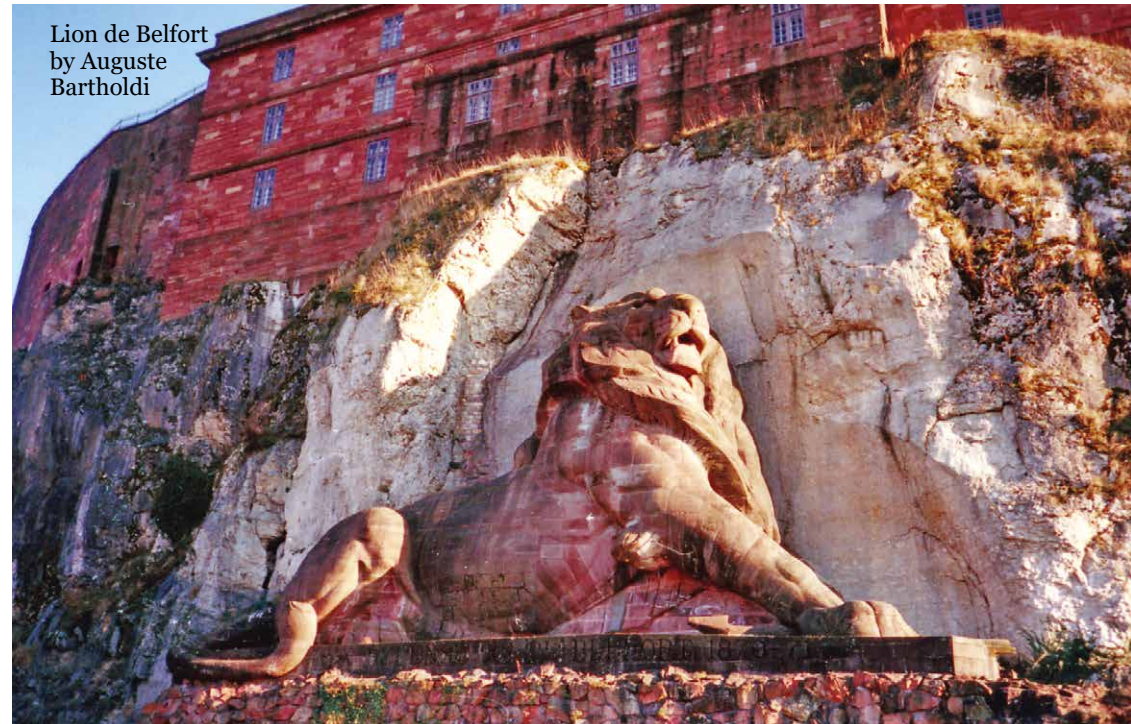
- the puns:
  - You must be French because Eiffel for you!
  - What is the favorite vacation destination for a French *canard*? Answer: Cannes
  - What you call a French cat who falls into a vat of paint in December? Answer: *Un chat peint de Noel*

- why many older French people all seem to have the same names... Xavier, Xavière, Gabriel, Gabrielle, Jean, Jeanne, Louis, Louise... there was a law dating from the French Revolution (Loi du 11 germinal, an X) that said that the given names of French children must be chosen from a list of acceptable names. Only in 1993 were parents given full liberty in the choice of a name or names for their child, as long as the name is not harmful to the child. Names must still be spelled with only characters from the French alphabet, for example ñ is not allowed. Bixente Lizarazu, the football player born in 1969, is of Basque heritage. His mother named him Bixente, but the administration recorded the French Vincent as his official name. Only in 1996 was he able to officialise Bixente as his name. The current most chosen given names in France are Emma and Gabriel, followed by Louis and Louise – we've come full circle!

Point du Raz  
at the tip of Brittany



Lion de Belfort  
by Auguste  
Bartholdi





# Speak Easy Puzzle

## « Your halo is slipping »

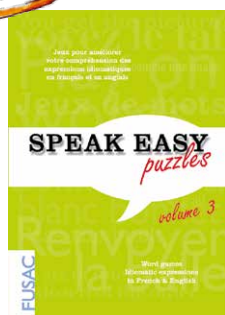


Match the French phrase with its English equivalent.  
Answers on page 60.

1. Tout le saint-frusquin
2. L'habit ne fait pas le moine
3. Investisseur providentiel
4. Ne plus savoir à quel saint se vouer
5. Travail de bénédictin
6. Heureux comme un pape
7. Il fait un temps de curé
8. Ne rien faire de toute la sainte journée
9. Prêcher pour son saint
10. Plus catholique que le pape
11. Un chien regarde bien un évêque
12. Sérieux comme un pape
13. Tu as été un ange de m'aider
14. Habitant de Los Angeles
15. Se croire le premier moutardier du pape
16. Une grenouille de bénitier
17. Être en odeur de sainteté
18. Pauvre comme Job
19. Être aux anges
20. Un ange passe
21. Une auréole
22. Tu descends de ton piédestal
23. Avoir la foi du charbonnier
24. Faiseuse d'anges
25. Prêcher un converti
26. Rire aux anges

- a. Your halo is slipping
- b. A business angel
- c. To preach to the choir
- d. Angeleno
- e. Holier-than-thou
- f. To have an axe to grind
- g. To think one is God's gift to mankind
- h. Solemn as a judge
- i. Painstaking task
- j. It's a lovely day
- k. You were an angel to help me
- l. To walk on air
- m. To be in somebody's good books
- n. As poor as a church mouse
- o. A holy Joe
- p. To be at wit's end
- q. A halo
- r. To be beside one's self with joy
- s. Everything but the kitchen sink
- t. An awkward silence
- u. Backstreet abortionists
- v. A cat can look at a king
- w. Happy as a clam
- x. You can't judge a book by its cover
- y. To have blind faith
- z. To do nothing the whole blessed day

The Speak Easy Puzzles book is available on <http://store.fusac.fr>



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# Ma langue au chat

## Tortures et délices d'un anglophone à Paris

It's delightful, it's delicious, it's the personal experiences of an anglophone using the French language poetically with humor and insight - something many of us can relate to. The subtitle of the book says it all "Tortures et délices d'un anglophone à Paris". Denis Hirson, a professor and writer, came to France from South Africa 40 years ago and has been learning and playing with the French language ever since. His recent book, published by Editions Points, is a collection of 60 anecdotes and reflections on French in French that can be appreciated by all of us who have learned the language from the bottom up and pursue this language each day. It's a wonderful read! French readers will raise their eyebrows and see their own language from a new perspective. Anglophones will say "Moi aussi, been there, done that". To whet your whistle here are three of Mr Hirson's vignettes.

Une soixantaine de textes courts empreints de poésie, véritable déclaration d'amour à la langue française. « Ma langue au chat est le premier livre de Denis Hirson écrit directement en français. Il observe, constate, s'étonne, et s'étonne de ce qu'on ne s'étonne pas. Les Français ne s'étonnent jamais assez ; s'étonner c'est reconnaître qu'on ne sait pas tout d'avance, c'est en quelque sorte un aveu de faiblesse, et les aveux de faiblesse ne sont pas le fort des Français. "Vous désirez, monsieur ? - Oui, madame, je désire." "Vous êtes un particulier ? - Euh... et vous, non ?" "Le ton n'est jamais cinglant ni agressif. Hirson vient à la langue française à sa manière inimitable, délicate et délicate, tel un Pan flûtiste sur la pointe des pieds. » -- Nancy Huston

### Mon petit accent

*Vous avez un petit accent, me dit-on.*

Tout le monde a un accent. Mais pas forcément un *petit* accent.

D'ailleurs, s'il était si petit que ça on ne dirait rien du tout.

On ne fait pas remarquer à une dame qui se promène avec un chihuahua *Vous avez un petit chien, madame.* On dit plutôt : *Qu'est-ce qu'il est mignon, votre chien.* Ou bien : *Il me fait les gros yeux, celui-là.* Quelque chose comme ça.

C'est que le chihuahua a la taille conforme, alors que mon accent est hors norme, il n'a pas grand-chose de mignon, je ne sais pas s'il a des yeux, mais il est assez dur de la feuille. C'est une espèce de créature, de corps étranger enfoui en moi.

Normalement, mon accent devrait rapetisser avec le temps à force d'imiter les sonorités françaises, se camoufler comme un phasme contre une branche, complètement disparaître. Mais c'est l'inverse qui se produit.

Chaque fois que je parle français, je

le nourris. J'ouvre large toutes les voyelles comme les fenêtres d'une maison surchauffée, les syllabes se mangent la queue plutôt que de rester chacune discrètement à sa place, les *r* se coincent dans ma gorge et en sortent comme des clous tordus. Je bousille systématiquement des mots comme *grenouille*, *pourboire*, *cuillère*. Rien à faire.

Parfois, mon accent me joue des tours, comme un miroir déformant. Quand je me sens mal à l'aise, par exemple, il lui arrive de doubler de volume, me faisant penser à ce poisson dont la gorge hérissée d'épines se gonfle de frayeur.

Parfois il devient plus raisonnable, *plus sage* comme on dit, alors que la sagesse n'a rien à voir là-dedans. C'est plutôt une affaire de pouvoir : mon accent se comporte comme il faut quand je suis bien dans mon assiette.

Mais à d'autres moments, à mon insu, il prend le large. Cela arrive au retour d'un voyage dans un pays anglophone, ou bien au beau milieu d'une conversation avec des inconnus. C'est arrivé hier soir, à la Maison de l'Amérique latine, où j'écoutais la poésie de César Vallejo.



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Sur scène, un homme lisait en espagnol. Sa voix résonnait bien au-delà de lui-même, et pourtant il lisait doucement, sans forcer, complètement habité par les poèmes de Vallejo. À ses côtés, une femme lisait en français, avec grâce, souriante et sérieuse.

Entre eux deux, il y avait Vallejo, ses mots de chair, sa musique d'ombres et de fruits qui transpirent, son désespoir qui chauffe les vers à blanc jusqu'à en tordre la syntaxe.

Après la lecture, je me suis approché d'eux. Mais quand j'ai ouvert la bouche pour parler en français, ce n'était pas avec mon accent habituel. Où était-il donc passé pendant la lecture, qu'avait-il absorbé ? À l'évidence c'était quelque chose de lointain, de bien plus lointain que la langue de ma mère. Mon accent m'était devenu méconnaissable, flottant, comme un pelage piqueté des marques du voyage, chien errant en quête de repères.

## Hélène et Reine

Moi, en matière d'accents, mon modèle, c'est *Hélène*. En l'écrivant, je pense à elle. Avec ses deux accents elle fronce les sourcils : *é*, puis *è*. *Élève* c'est pareil, *préfère* aussi, ça monte et puis ça descend.

Mais alors pourquoi ne pas écrire *électric* de la même façon, qu'est-ce qui s'est passé avec le *è* ? C'est plutôt grave, parce que sur l'ordinateur, après avoir essayé cette orthographe-là et avant d'arriver à la bonne solution, j'ai tenté *électric* et ensuite *elétrique*, *électric* en désespoir de cause, mais à chaque

fois un fil rouge-sang est venu onduler sous le mot.

Comment éviter de tels acc(id)ents ?

Voici une autre histoire. À la naissance de notre fils, ma femme était formelle : elle n'admettait pas l'idée qu'on puisse ajouter des accents sur les deux *e* du prénom que nous avions choisi, comme l'exigeait la dame de la mairie. Je lui ai pourtant rendu visite deux fois à cette dame, une dénommée Reine, mais je suis revenu bredouille au chevet de ma femme à la maternité : retranchée dans le bunker de son bureau, Reine ne voulait rien savoir, *Jérémie* pouvait à la limite s'écrire *Jérémy*, point barre.

Nous étions en 1997. La loi qui régleme l'attribution des prénoms avait pourtant changé depuis 1993 et les parents étaient donc libres de leur choix. Mais il semble que Reine n'était pas au courant, elle vivait à l'évidence à une autre époque : elle appliquait à la lettre l'article 1er de la loi du 11 germinal an XI, qui limitait les possibilités aux *prénoms en usage dans les différents calendriers, et à ceux des personnages connus dans l'histoire ancienne* – ceci jusqu'à l'arrivée dans le bureau de ma femme en robe de chambre, babouches assorties à ses pommettes rouge vif.

Face à la résistance jusqu'au-boutiste de Reine, elle a rempli le bureau de noms d'oiseaux anglais, presque tous composés de quatre lettres et plutôt aigus. Les murs ont tressailli, le plancher s'est craquelé, et au bout d'un certain temps (j'ignore la durée exacte, heureusement que je n'y étais pas), Reine a fini par abdiquer. Depuis, notre fils s'appelle

officiellement Jeremy.

Ce récit est la preuve qu'une histoire d'accentuation ça peut aller loin, jusqu'à la filiation même, et qu'un filet de sang sous un mot à l'ordinateur ce n'est rien à côté d'un meurtre auquel on a échappé de justesse dans un bureau de l'administration française.

## Hexagone

Le mot *hexagone*, je l'ai entendu prononcer plusieurs fois dès mon arrivée en France. Je me suis dit qu'il devait s'agir d'une région, d'un département ou plutôt d'une île, peut-être d'une île aux abeilles : les hexagones et les abeilles ne vont-ils pas de pair ? J'ai eu envie de vérifier, mais finalement j'ai oublié.

Il y avait tant de choses à comprendre, la langue française c'étaient des milliers d'éléments épars qui se précipitaient vers moi. Les gens me parlaient tellement vite qu'ils arrivaient en fin de phrase quand j'étais encore au milieu, voire scotché sur la phrase d'avant ; finalement j'étais complètement à l'ouest.

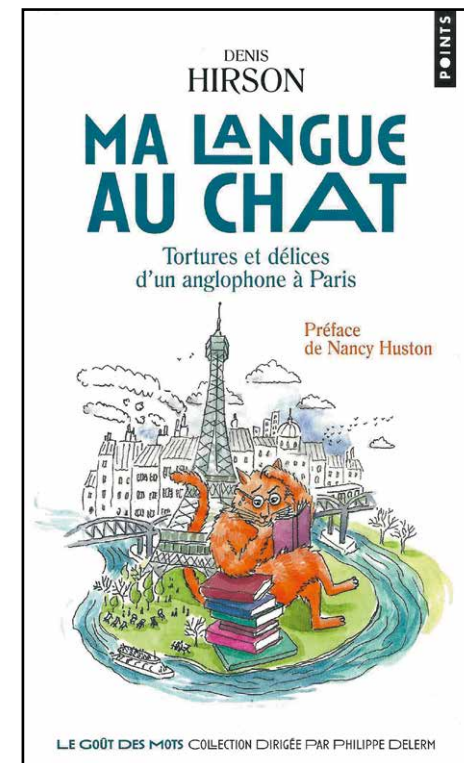
*L'Hexagone*. Il y avait peut-être des murs dont j'ignorais l'existence, quelque part à l'intérieur de la France, qui formaient un hexagone géant ?

Quand on m'a finalement aidé à élucider le mystère, je suis resté perplexe. La France tout entière, une forme hexagonale ? De loin, peut-être. De très loin. Mais plus je regardais la carte de près et moins ça semblait vraisemblable.

J'y voyais plutôt une peau d'ours étendue, un torse massif, éventuellement une figure à géométrie variable, aux côtés inégaux. Elle semblait cabossée de partout, dotée d'extrémités comme le Finistère et les Alpes-Maritimes qui s'étiraient de façon expressive et carrément non hexagonale.

Ceux qui prétendaient le contraire me faisaient penser aux belles-sœurs détestables du conte, qui cherchent par tous les moyens à fourrer leur pied dans la pantoufle de verre (ou même de vair) de Cendrillon.

Un hexagone, la France ? Comment faire rentrer ses contours aux irrégularités naturelles à l'intérieur d'une forme si abstraite, d'une idée si épurée ?





# FRANCE

## Culture

### Quiz :

#### 21 questions

to measure the extent of your knowledge

(answers on page 60)



1. Who scored the first goal in the inaugural game at the Stade de France in 1998 ?

2. Which of these is not a French national dish ?  
- Le poulet Henri IV  
- Dagobert Duck  
- Steak frites

3. The Genovese bridge, pictured to the right, is typical of which French island ?

4. A dog at the feet on a funerary monument symbolizes... ?

- Fidelity
- The profession knifemaker
- Cold feet
- Love of dogs

5. How many deputies compose the French national assembly?  
325 or 507 or 577



6. Match the cathedral on the left with its particularity from the list on the right.  
(\*photo hint )

Basilique St Denis\*  
Notre Dame in Reims  
Notre Dame in Verdun  
Saint Cecile in Albi  
Notre Dame in Rouen  
Saint Stephen in Metz  
Notre Dame in Chartres

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Constructed of brick  
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The largest gothic windows in Europe  
Where French Kings are buried  
Where French kings were crowned

7. Who is the author of "The Second Sex" (*Le Deuxième sexe*) published in 1949?  
- Simone de Beauvoir  
- Simone Veil  
- Elizabeth Badinter



## FRANCE Culture Quiz :

8. 6 June 2019 is the 75th anniversary of

- D-Day
- Victory WWII
- May 68

9. The first Tour de France was 6 stages of about 400km each!

Which year was this famous race created?

- 1951
- 1910
- 1895
- 1903

10. Match the Frenchie with their profession:

Sarah Bernhardt  
Gabrielle Renardot Flammarion  
Thomas Pesquet  
Ambroise Paré  
Johnny Hallyday  
Rosa Bonheur  
Yvette Horner  
Marie Crous  
David Guetta

Disk Jockey  
Surgeon  
Actress  
Astronomer  
Accordionist  
Mathematician  
Singer  
Painter  
Astronaut

11. Who said ?

*"The most certain sign of wisdom is cheerfulness."*

*"La plus constante marque de la sagesse, c'est une constante réjouissance."*

Hint: It wasn't the Dalai Lama - although he might quote this French man!

Montaigne. Sculpture by Paul Landowski. Photo by Philippe Fuzeau. Publié avec la permission du Musée Landowski.





## FRANCE Culture Quiz :

**12.** True or False?  
Jacques Cartier was an explorer and sailor.

**13.** Which French actress plays in the James Bond film "The World Is Not Enough ?"  
-Sophie Marceau  
-Isabelle Adjani  
-Marion Cotillard



**14.** The famous character created and played by Jacques Tati in a series of films in the 50s and 60s was :

Monsieur ...

- Hulot
- Mulot
- Boulot
- Culot

**15.** Which expression means "A little bird told me"

- Oiseau de malheur
- Ne pas bouger le petit doigt
- Mon petit doigt me l'a dit

**16.** The Camargue is the salt marsh of the Rhone river delta. This protected area is host to migrating birds along the African flyway. It is ideal habitat and breeding grounds for which bird in particular?

**JULIE COLLAS**  
**OH MY GOD**  
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"A hilarious crash course on the "real Paris".  
The Scotsman

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France 24 TV

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## FRANCE Culture Quiz :

**17.** Which French organization, founded in 1971, won the Nobel Peace prize in 1999?

- Reporters sans Frontières
- Médecins sans Frontières
- Action contre la Faim

**18.** What food was traditionally found on the bar in every café?

- hard boiled eggs
- sandwiches
- peanuts

**19.** Which of these men is not considered a founding father of Europe?

- Robert Schuman
- Jean Monnet
- Charles de Gaulle

**20.** True or False:  
France has never had a female Prime Minister.

**21.** Parisians covered their half timbered facades with plaster beginning in the 17th century. Why?

- Termite protection
- Fire prevention
- Better Aesthetics



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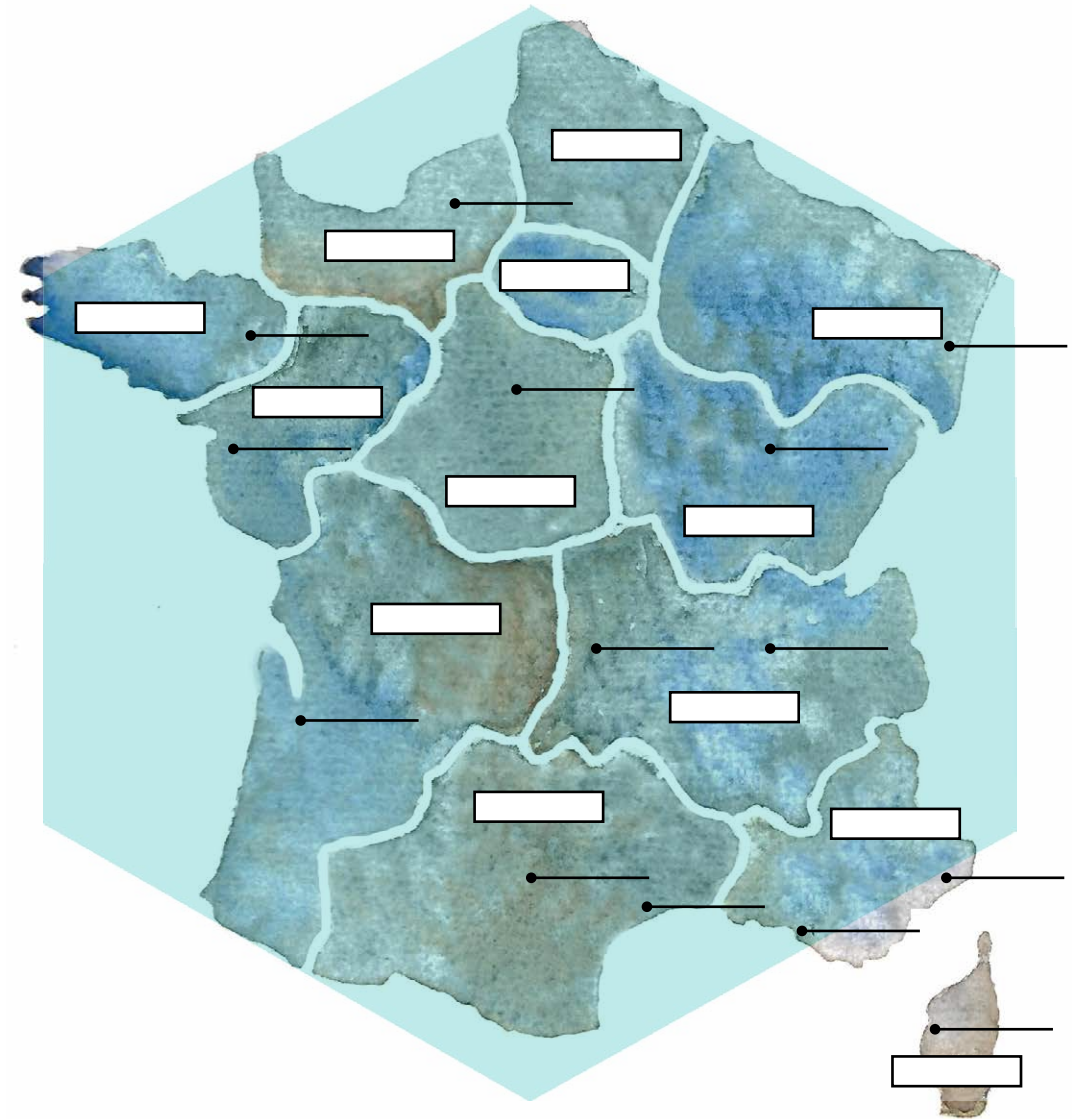
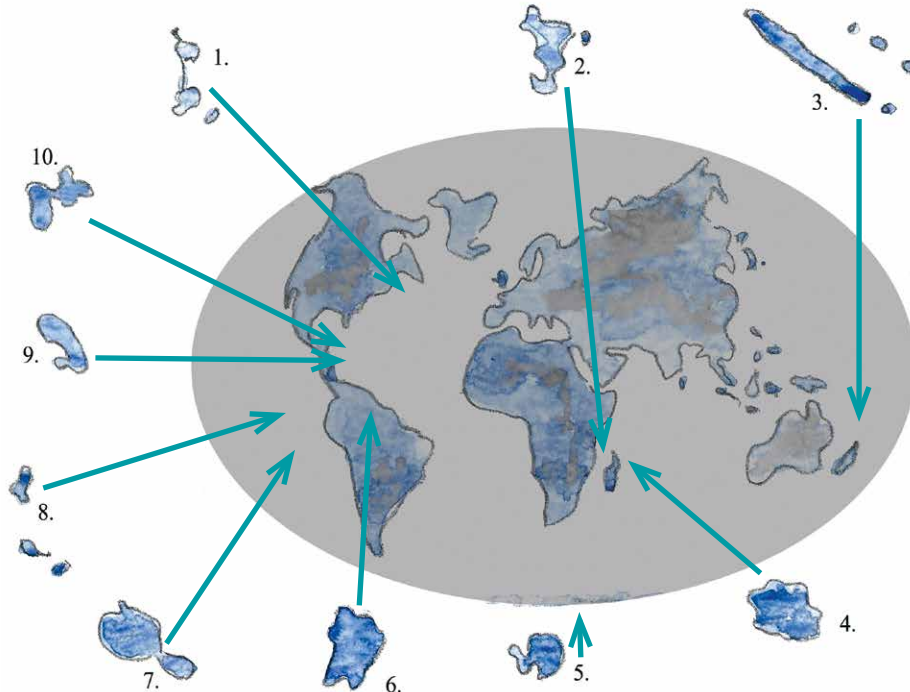
# Hexagonal Geography

Fill in the following cities on the black lines on the map

Lyon	Ajaccio	Nice
Lille	Bordeaux	Dijon
Marseille	Nantes	Rouen
Montpellier	Rennes	Orléans
Strasbourg	Toulouse	Clérmont-Ferrand

Locate France's overseas departments on the world map

- **Guyana** (hint: this is the only non-island)
- **Guadeloupe** (hint: its shape is said to resemble a butterfly)
- **Martinique** (hint: the nickname is the Island of flowers)
- **Mayotte** (hint: between Madagascar and Mozambique with a beautiful coral reef)
- **Tahiti** (hint: Gauguin)
- **Wallis and Futuna** (hint: where the highest point is the volcanic Mont Puke - good name for a volcano!)
- **Réunion** (hint: in the Indian ocean, this island has tropical forests, unique beaches and active volcanos)
- **St Pierre and Miquelon** (hint: a rather cold place)
- **New Caledonia** (hint: just voted to remain French)
- **TAAF** - Territoire australe et antarctique française Southern and Antarctic Lands (hint: population less than 200)



There are the 13 Administrative Regions in metropolitan France. Write them on the map in the white boxes.

Hauts-de-France	Grand Est
Île-de-France	Normandie
Bretagne	Pays de la Loire
Centre-Val de Loire	Bourgogne-Franche-Comté
Nouvelle-Aquitaine	Occitanie
Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes	Corse
Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur (say PACA if you want to sound French!)	



# In nearly every French household you'll find...

## NUTELLA

Originally made in Italy, starting in 1964 Nutella is in every French person's core and on their bread. Sometimes it is eaten right off the spoon out of the jar. Creamy hazel nut and chocolate goodness that is not just for kids, it's 82% of the spreadables market in France. 800,000 jars are made each day in the factories in France! It all started during the dog days of summer in a heat wave when the chocolate melted. Instead of fighting the heat the gooey chocolate was put into jars and sold that way. The name means little nut and the recipe is slightly different for each country! France holds the record for consumption, eating 26% or 300,000 tons of it each year - yup it's in the genes.



## L'OPINEL

In 1985 the Victoria and Albert Museum in London selected the Opinel knife as part of an exhibit celebrating the 100 most beautifully designed products in the world. Placing the Opinel alongside the Porsche 911 sports car and the Rolex watch. 2006 Phaidon Design Classics selected the Opinel amongst the 999 best designs in the world. 1989 the consecration is complete when the word «opinel» is added to the Larousse dictionary making the brand a household word for folding knife. When you get one in hand you'll appreciate the unique locking system. The family run company in Savoie produces about 5 million knives per year. No wonder every French person has one.



## QUECHUA

The Quechua are a people from South America. But Decathlon used the name as a brand and it is one of Decathlon brands which you will see on tons of French sports gear. The brand was born on the slopes of Mount Blanc in 1997 and most French people own some Quechua gear. The most innovative and award-winning is the flip out tent - you can put it up in 2 seconds - perfect for busy Parisians. Decathlon's model of pretty good quality, innovation and low prices draws everybody in. But don't forget there are other Made in France sports brands: Rossignol, Le Coq Sportif, Lacoste, Aigle, Adidas...



## LA CHARENTAISE

A charentaise is a generic French word for slipper. It refers however to a specific *pantoufle*, usually plaid, which came from the area near Angouleme in the Charente area of France about 300 years ago. The area had many paper mills. At the time paper was made from rags and leftover felt pieces from the papermaking were used to line wooden shoes, making them warmer and softer. A bit later a shoemaker from the town of La Rochefoucaud in the Charente had the idea to add a rigid sole to the felt clog liners thus creating the *pantoufle charentaise*. In the late 1980s the slipper industry produced 60 millions pairs per year - that works out to one pair per Français -- and exported them all over Europe.







A jar of lavender sits on my shop desk next to my well-used cookbooks. When I ache for France, I open it and take a whiff. Instantly, the heady aroma transports me to a place where I learned the meaning of a French word: *Bonheur*.

I began encountering *Bonheur*, which translates to happiness, a few months after a feisty Frenchman requested my hand in marriage. After the proposal, my intended and I took an obligatory flight from Montana to Paris, to get

acquainted with his *maman et papa*. As my monsieur ushered me through the Charles de Gaulle airport, I was without conviction they would approve of me. I didn't speak a lick of French. I was American. And a divorcée.

Claude, my husband's ever-so-elegant Parisian mother stood out at the airport, clad in a full-length fur coat, jet black hair tightly pulled into a bun, wearing sunglasses the size of saucers and bright red lipstick. Jean-

Pierre, my husband's father wore a WW2 U.S. army jacket and spoke English without a trace of French accent.

After a hasty introduction with pecks on each cheek, and a jetlagged drive into Paris, my future *belle-mère* blurted out "*Mon Dieu, vous parlez français comme une débutante!*" So much for the language crash course on the airplane. With bruised feelings, I later fell asleep in the bathtub, sipping a glass of Chablis and failed to hear Claude's ear-splitting

"*A table!*". She glared across the table in my direction. That's when my *beau-père* asked what my profession was. I had recently quit my job as a technical writer to open a chocolate shop (a decision that bewildered my American parents). "*Ohh-là-là,*" he smiled tenderly. And like a macaron, whose crisp shell gives away to a softness, relations became sweeter with these two Parisians.

The next day, under the tutelage of Jean-Pierre and Claude, we whirled around their beloved city. They presumed that French flavors and its culinary character would be excellent research for my business. Jean-Pierre told me that after you've seen all of Paris, you should begin again because it will be a different experience the second go around. He had been born and raised here, never losing any enchantment with his beloved *ville*. As early darkness pressed, my taste buds tingled, and I felt my heart beating to the pulse of this city of light. My fiancé, noticing my pleasure whispered in my ear "Paris can be everyone's city, including yours. Treat her right, and she'll show you her wonders and embrace you, too." He alluded to Paris as one might speak of an elegant, generous, enchanted woman, I mused.

Over the course of the week, we entered *pâtisseries*, *chocolateries*, and *boulangeries* that dotted the broad boulevards and rues, tarrying over tea, while a trail of buttery crumbs fell from our napkins. Barely noticing the city landmarks, I spent most of each day loitering around shop windows filled with towering pyramids of chocolate truffles, dusted with gorgeous, amber cocoa powder. I soaked up all of this inspiration and began scribbling down new flavors, recipe ideas with illustrations. I yearned to bring it all home and re-create these flavors in my chocolate shop: my love letter to Paris.



We married shortly after that delicious trip to Paris and built our small business back in Montana. But, before we even tied the knot, we knew we wanted to raise our blended family of four young boys and one young girl Franco-American and instill the same reverence for France we possessed. We scrimped and saved, driving the same old Volvo, and living contentedly in a small house so that we could afford the plane tickets for our brigade of children. We invaded Grand-mère and Grand-père's small Paris apartment each summer. With barrack-like sleeping arrangements, we squabbled over dirty laundry and dawdlers, yet we knew that time with our children and Grand-mère and Grand-père would force us to slow down, inspire and restore us.

We would often use French sweets for consoling sad feelings, nursing hurt bodies or teach good manners. One summer, Jacques, our middle son missed his cat back in the states, so we brought him to Ladurée for *langues de chat*, the little flat cookies that resemble cats' tongues. Our youngest, Ethan, accidentally tripped on Grand-mère's rug one evening and busted her china cabinet into shards of glass. He narrowly escaped shattering her entire collection of hand-cut red Baccarat glasses. Ethan suffered a swollen black eye from this and luckily Grand-mère didn't give him another black eye with her fist! Afterward, we consoled him with an entire bag of his favorite plump madeleines from St. Michel.

One coolish afternoon, Grand-mère took the children to the Angelina Tea Salon for a lesson in French manners. She treated them to *chocolat chaud*, *Mont Blanc* (because they thought it looked like spaghetti), *financiers*, and *flan*. They politely ordered in French, ate with their knife in the right

hand, fork in the left and «*Mais non!*» they dared not put their hands under the table. Grand-mère was pleased.

With each new adventure, our family's mutual awareness flourished. One sweltering summer, we crammed like sardines into Grand-père's un-airconditioned Mercedes and drove far south to the Côte d'Azur. Our fighting, sweaty kids exasperated us. However; once we stepped foot on the beach of Bandol, every tiny grain of frustration lifted. We found *joie de vivre* dipping into the sparkly blue water and nibbling sandy *pain d'épice*. The boys didn't even seem to notice the topless ladies on the beach! We bribed them to exchange snorkels for binoculars one day and take a side trip to the Camargue to see the cowboys and pink flamingos. After tasting the delicate and crunchy Camargue *fleur de sel*, we stuffed our suitcase with jars of it swirled it into a pot of caramel once back home.

Over the years a joyous kaleidoscope of memories endure through anecdotes and laughter around our dinner table. French *bonheur* immeasurably shaped and enriched our family's way of living, helped us create award-winning recipes from its scents and flavors, and to build a successful business upon it.

*Que du bonheur!*

Shannon Grochowski and her French husband founded La Châtelaine Chocolat Co. When they're not in working in their bustling shop, they're restoring a house in Burgundy, where they offer chocolate and pastry-making workshops.

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# French Economics: an industrial rebirth ?

Factories are timidly returning to the French landscape.

In the first six months of 2018 thirty five of them cropped up! While this doesn't constitute a full-fledged dawning of a bold new day it does offer a few encouraging rays of light.

The Hexagon (that's France to the French) lost more than 600 factories in the past ten years. In 2009 alone 224 were abandoned. Neighboring Germany is a completely different story. In this same period, 2008 to 2018, Germany's industrial production increased by 25%, while France's industrial activity declined by 3 % according to Trendeo, a firm which monitors French employment and investments. But now with these new factories we have a promise of better days ahead. A further indication of this renaissance can be seen by taking a look at the annual trade fair Made in France. MIF, the brainchild of Fabienne Delahaye, launched its first edition in 2012 with 80 stands and 15,000 visitors. The 2018 edition held in November at the Porte de Versailles exposition park boasted 450 stands with 65,000 visitors. If this entrepreneurial trend continues the re-industrialisation of France could well be on track. We visited the fair to see for ourselves. What follows is an eclectic sampling of French production creativity and entrepreneurs on the move. Many are startups but not all.

## 1083 Borne in France: Jeans and shoes

Wondering about the odd name 1083? It turns out that 1083 kilometers separate France's two most distant cities: Menton in the southeast and Porspoder a small village north of Brest in the northwest. "Borne in France" is a clever double entendre using born(e) to underscore the Made in France aspect which is then reinforced by the word and image of a borne. For those who do not drive the hexagonal highways a borne is a stone or concrete roadside signage element intended to identify the road and to indicate distances to neighboring localities. They are found along old national and departmental arteries.

Created only 4 years ago, the 1083 jeans brand boasts 2 million euros in sales today. Thomas Huriez, the young founder, hired about fifteen people from the region Romans-sur-Isère which was once the capital of shoe manufacturing before being hit hard by a wave of relocations. His made in France initiative has graced headlines in economic publications and the national press. Price of jeans: between 89 and 129 euros. [www.1083.fr](http://www.1083.fr)

## Nap & Up: Power nap at work

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### Maroquinerie Philippe Serres: Fine leather goods (maroquinerie)

The family-owned leather goods company SERRES is more than eighty years old. It is located in Graulhet, a couple dozen kilometers from Toulouse. The current director represents the fourth generation of leatherworkers devoted to beautiful and authentic French craftsmanship. Briefcases, tote bags, purses, men's bags, sacoches (satchels) billfolds, change purses...all come in gorgeous colors of red to gold, marron (chestnut) to loutre (dark brown). Website in French only. [philippe-serres.com](http://philippe-serres.com)

### Vertical: Trendy Suspenders for men and women, leather and plaited belts

San Francisco, Fall 2014:

« Hey what's up my man ? Those suspenders are way too cool. Where did you get them ? » This often-heard remark lies behind the launch of Vertical l'Accessoire in December 2015 recounts Hubert Martin, dynamic and trendy entrepreneur par excellence. Travelling around Canada, South America and the USA for 5 years Hubert often accompanied his simple outfits – jeans and a t-shirt – with a pair of suspenders. Day in and day out and wherever he went, his cool suspenders were a knockout. And they continue to be! [vertical-laccessoire.com](http://vertical-laccessoire.com)



### Le Caméléon dine: Dishes for kids 100% cocorico

Here's a great new twist on « Open the garage—here comes the car! » This fun and educative plate (*On mange, on découvre, on s'amuse*) for children involves a round detachable center where parents insert a paper disk on which a question or a guessing game is printed. As the child eats he discovers the intrigue resulting in an amusing interplay of food and thought. Three age groups are targeted: ages 3 – 6, 6 – 8 and 8+. Currently in French only but watch for coming versions in English and German. No longer will parents write: «In desperation, I took to cavorting around the kitchen wearing goggles and a white scarf, waving a spoonful of strained beets, flapping my arms and chortling, «Here comes the Spirit of St. Louis – Open the hangar!» [www.lecameleondine.com](http://www.lecameleondine.com)



### Confort ID: Pillows and backrests

To get on cloud nine requires a good, comfortable pillow. A Confort ID pillow is personalized to your morphology – it adapts to you and not the other way around. How does this work? A choice of modular cores allows you to change the thickness and support the pillow provides. To find the right core you take a short quiz. Furthermore, the ability to remove material on the soft side of the pillow allows for variations of its overall height. You create the pillow that suits you best. Questions about the tricky art of finding the right pillow for you can be directed to the helpful and very friendly Arnaud Courtel, a young man who counts more than one relaxation therapist (aka sophrologist) amongst his friends. [arnaud@confort.id](mailto:arnaud@confort.id). Handmade in France. Bienvenue dans les nuages. Site: [confort.id](http://confort.id)

### French Oui: Selection of French products made in France

FrenchOUI is a selection of French brands and products made in France: fashion, home, beauty, lifestyle and sport. You'll find unusual, innovative and quality products. Frenchoui bills itself as much more than a shop with its eco-citizen and eco-responsible approach. [boutique.frenchoui.fr](http://boutique.frenchoui.fr)



So Frenchie, so good !





### Coutellerie Cognet: Knives

The doux-doux is a French-made pocket knife of simple sheet-metal construction. It has been manufactured by the Cognet cutlery firm in Thiers France since 1929. The great Gaston Cognet, the doux-doux creator, intended it for sales to France's overseas colonies in Oceania. The unique handle depicts a «doux-doux», or a Melanesian spirit incarnation. Where did Gaston get the design idea? He found the name and design by randomly opening an illustrated Larousse dictionary. (What's the French word for serendipity? Sérendipité!) Coutellerie Cognet has continued to produce the knife up to the present day, using the same simple methods. Today they are offered with several decorative designs, stainless or carbon steel blades, and in three different sizes. [www.coutellerie-cognet.com](http://www.coutellerie-cognet.com)

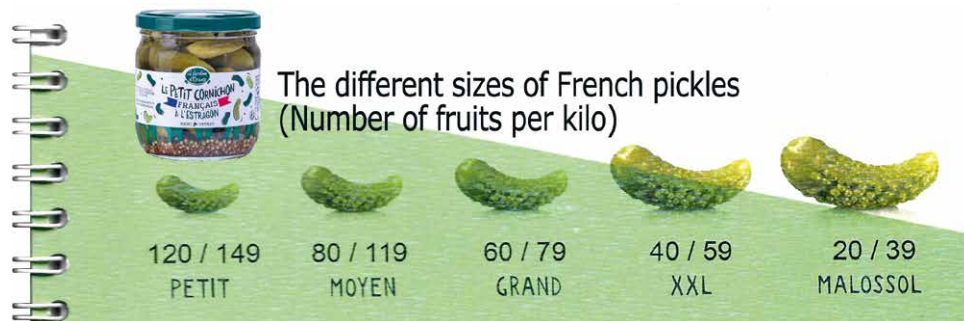
### Gautier: Furniture

The Gautier furniture range covers bedrooms, living rooms, children, dining, storage and other accessories. Gautier started operations in 1960 spearheaded by Patrice Gautier a woodworker and his entrepreneurial wife Annick. With the baby boom in full swing, Patrice - a visionary - imagined his first children's bedrooms. The boom enabled the company to become a leader in the junior market in only a few years. The originality and quality of Gautier furniture has since built the brand's reputation. This creativity remains Gautier's strong point. It has three integrated manufacturing facilities in the Vendée region spread producing 15.000 units every day. The company signature "Meublez, Vivez" translates to something like "load up the house and live". [www.gautier-furniture.com](http://www.gautier-furniture.com)

### Le Jardin d'Orante: Pickle production

Reviving large-scale production of pickles in France is the ambitious project of the Jardin d'Orante. Most pickles today are produced in India, Germany, Turkey and the United States. Our French gherkin specialists have taken up the challenge of reestablishing this exceptional fruit in France on a large scale. You'll be pickled tink to know that the Jardins d'Orante have met with success since 2016 thanks to strong and equitable partnerships between farmers, manufacturers, distributors and suppliers. Progress stats: 2016 -- 2 *petits*, 3 hectares, 54 tons produced. 2017-- 5 *petits*, 10 hectares, 137 tons produced. 2018--11 *petits*, 17 hectares, 204 tons produced. We hear there are also more and more pickle jokes going around...

Q: What does an agreeable pickle always say? A: I relish the idea! [www.cornichonsfrancais.fr](http://www.cornichonsfrancais.fr)



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Small, cute, full of perspicacious cultural observations on France. A whimsical way to measure acquired Frenchness. A gift or souvenir. For anyone who has spent time in France.

*"I am laughing so hard right now at this book because it is so on point!!"* — Stevie Benanty

*"I realized I didn't often greet the bus driver so began doing so, and then carried on by saying Bonjour Madame or Monsieur to salespeople. I have gotten so much better service!"* — Judith B.

by Shari Zetlin Segall with the collaboration of Lisa Vanden Bos  
Illustrations by Judith Halasz

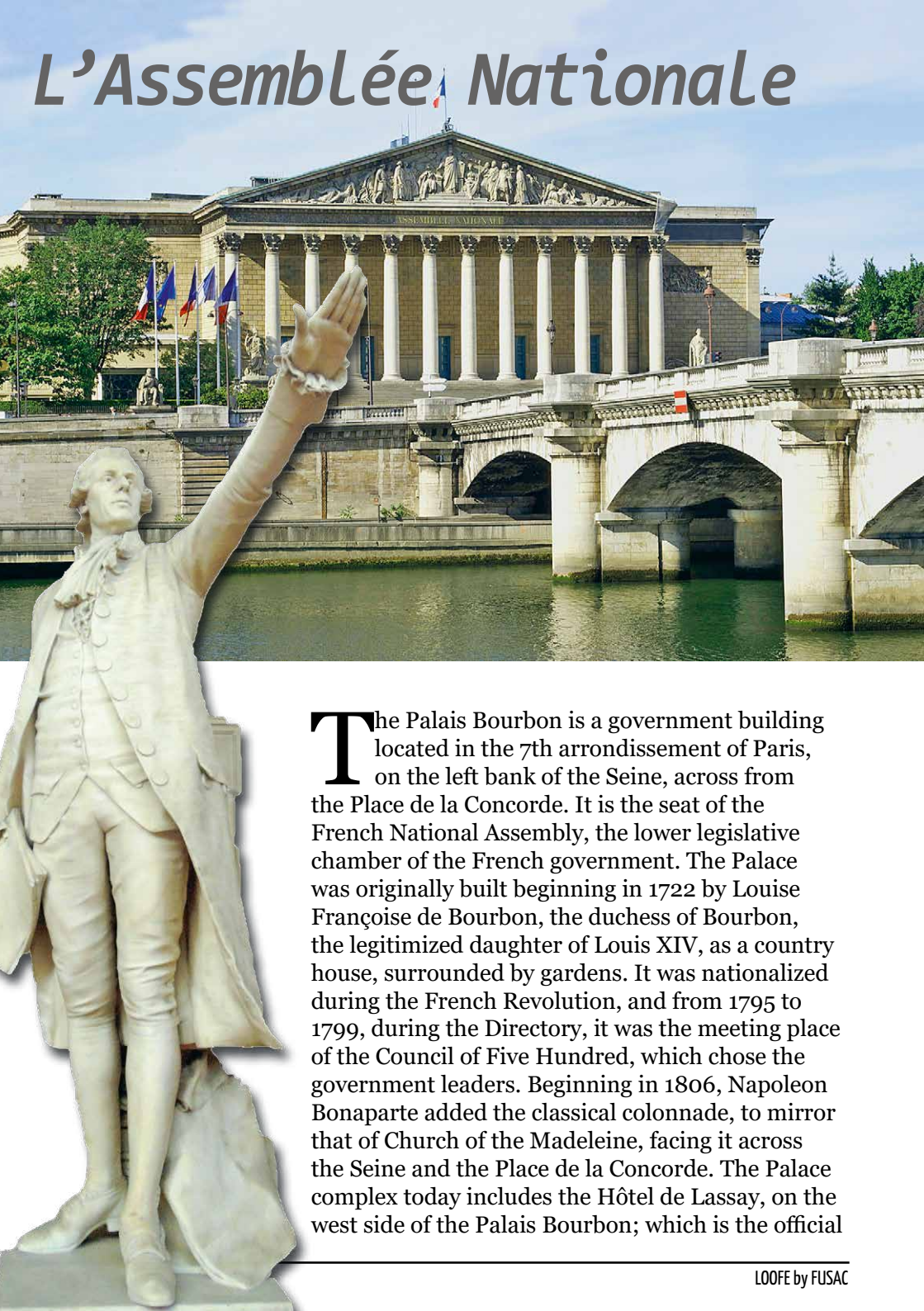
Watch the video preview on [Becoming-French.com](http://Becoming-French.com)

Available at these shops in Paris:  
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• Gab and Jo (28, rue Jacob - 75006)  
• Les Parisettes (10 rue Gramme - 75015)  
Or online <https://store.fusac.fr>

FABRICATION FRANÇAISE



# L'Assemblée Nationale



The Palais Bourbon is a government building located in the 7th arrondissement of Paris, on the left bank of the Seine, across from the Place de la Concorde. It is the seat of the French National Assembly, the lower legislative chamber of the French government. The Palace was originally built beginning in 1722 by Louise Françoise de Bourbon, the duchess of Bourbon, the legitimized daughter of Louis XIV, as a country house, surrounded by gardens. It was nationalized during the French Revolution, and from 1795 to 1799, during the Directory, it was the meeting place of the Council of Five Hundred, which chose the government leaders. Beginning in 1806, Napoleon Bonaparte added the classical colonnade, to mirror that of Church of the Madeleine, facing it across the Seine and the Place de la Concorde. The Palace complex today includes the Hôtel de Lassay, on the west side of the Palais Bourbon; which is the official

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## Vinosfera

It stands to reason that residents of France know about shopping. Everyone has their favorite *boulangier*, *boucher*, *et caviste*. Perhaps you have uncovered an uncommon baker and an uncanny butcher but still lack a unique wine merchant. *Amis ne cherchez plus*. Friends look no further. Vinosfera offers stellar wines from France and around the world while specializing in the unbelievable wines of Italy. Visit the unusually helpful and uncommonly friendly Vinosfera people at their boutique/wine bar located in the oldest house in Paris in the Marais or their new shop My little Vinosfera in vibrant Neuilly. Moreover, you can book the intimate Marais shop for your private parties.



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residence of the President of the National Assembly who, as we go to press, is Monsieur Claude Bartolone.

In a short preface to the English version of The French National Assembly, the official guide book, we find these opening words:

«The Palais Bourbon which is the beating heart of our democracy, brings together, through its architecture and its exceptional artistic heritage, nearly three centuries of the political and cultural life of our country.»

François de Rugy, who wrote the preface, is a former President of the French National Assembly and currently head of the Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development and Energy. He is also married to a funny, sassy and sometimes pungent journalist Séverine Servat. But we stray from our subject ....

Monsieur de Rugy admirably sums up in just one sentence why the Palais Bourbon should be on everybody's list of monuments and institutions to visit one day.

The rub, however, is that touring the Palais Bourbon is no *mince affaire* (small matter). Security measures have eliminated individual visits; the only way to take a tour is with a group invited by a *député* or parliamentary member. This

can take weeks or months to arrange. (Fusac is organizing a visit in May 2019. You are invited to join us for this event limited to not more than 50 people. To sign up send an email to fusac.office@gmail.com.)

Meanwhile there is a fabulous and moving way to



## Doctor Bouaziz, my English-speaking Dentist

When my dentist announced her move to London a couple of years ago I thought that was bad news. But I had the good fortune of meeting her successor, Dr. Bouaziz. I was tickled pink to find a caring professional to fix my crowns and broken teeth and to take care of my regular dental hygiene care almost painlessly. Recently an annoying rough spot on the lower right cuspid was irking me and it didn't seem to want to go away. I contacted Dr. Bouaziz via email and she gave me a rendez-vous for the next day. She smoothed out the rough spot in 5 minutes! Now I call her Dr. Awesome. I trust her work and advice completely and all of her interventions have been outstanding. She is perfectly bilingual, possesses excellent skills, enjoys a good story and has two very pleasant assistants, Olivia and Cathy. Dr. Bouaziz's office is close to the Eiffel Tower in Paris's 16th arrondissement. Wanting to get to know her better we recently asked her some personal questions ...

### Your main character trait ?

People around me describe me as patient, calm and kind. But for me it is softness!

### What makes you happy?

I am happy when I succeed to help my patients regain a better and healthy smile.

### Your motto ?

Hard work always pays off

### What do you do in your free time?

I am taking piano and theatre classes. I read many books a year and I work out 3 times a week.

### The gift you would like to have ?

TIME!! There are so many things I want to do but I have not enough time.

### What title would you give your autobiography ?

It would be: «In pursuit of a better me».

### Which song for your life sound track ?

Survivor (Destiny's Child), it gives me so much energy.

### Which book have you read more than any other ?

In reality there are many books: Le petit prince (Saint-Exupéry), Zadig (Voltaire), The Picture of Dorian Gray (Oscar Wilde)

### Your heroes in real life ?

Scientists in the first place, working hard to improve the future. And those who risk their lives to save others.

### What pleasure makes you feel the guiltiest ?

Eating chocolate, and French pastries, so tasty but not good for the teeth or waist line!

### Your favorite place in the world ?

Place du Trocadero in Paris, just in the front of the EIFFEL TOWER. This is why I established my office so close to it.

### What 3 things would you save from your burning home ?

My work computer, my photo album and my favourite books

### Who would you invite for a last dinner on earth ?

My family and closest friends

### And the menu would be ?

Love, friendship and good mood

Dr Wiem BOUAZIZ  
Dental surgeon, Periodontist, Implantologist  
18, Rue de Magdebourg 75116 Paris  
Office : +33 (0)1 47 64 31 72  
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Sketch for Le Serment du jeu de paume by J.L. David, 1791. Public domain.

introduce yourself to the National Assembly. Start at the beginning. And the beginning is in Versailles in what is known as la salle du Jeu de Paume, the hall of the tennis court.


You'll recall from your history books that on 17 June 1789, one month after the Estates-General met at Versailles, the members of the third estate declared themselves to be the "National Assembly",

since they represented at least 96% of the nation. They decided to frame a constitution restricting the powers of the king and not to disband until the thing was done. This is the tennis court oath – *Le serment du Jeu de Paume*. Henceforth, sovereignty was to reside not in the person of the monarch but in the nation, which would exercise it through the representatives it elected. The Oath is a key moment of the French Revolution. This is where the boogie ends and the woogie begins...

Visiting the Jeu de Paume is *facile comme bonjour* (easy as pie). Take an RER C train to Versailles and walk 8 minutes to 1 Rue du Jeu de Paume. It's open every afternoon except Monday from 2pm to 5.45pm. Free admission. Emotions guaranteed.

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*A Novel*



Set in Paris shortly after World War II, *L'Amérique* recounts the fortitude of a Parisian family in a nation humiliated by defeat and torn by recriminations. It is above all the story of Jeanot, a boy raised by disparate people in a middle-class apartment building, and the journey that will take him to *L'Amérique*, where dreams come true, but rarely as expected. A story of coming of age in a strange mythical land of too many promises.

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# Loofe asked...

sixteen expatriates/immigrants to France a few questions about their life in the Hexagon. How have you become French? Who is in the casting of your perfect dinner party in France? What brought you to France? Why do you stay? What region holds your heart?

## And they replied...



**Rachael Hampton** from the USA is a creative brand strategist and designer UX/UI at ardephwerk.com and Blogger/YouTubeur at rachael-helps.com

«I would invite François Damien (Belgian actor-comedian), he is out the box funny. Omar Sy (French actor-comedian) to add in some cultural taboo to the mix. Norman Thavaud (French actor-comedian and YouTubeur) would add a younger feel to the group. I've lived and worked in several cities in France: Paris (10 years), Nantes (7 years), Metz (1 year) and I am now in Toulouse. Even though there are things that annoy me in France, like the tax on everything. I do enjoy the easy access to other countries. I can drive for three hours AND BOOM, I'm in Spain. Not to mention low daycare prices and health care. Alsace Lorraine, Brittany and Pays de la Loire during spring and summer months. Aquitaine, Midi Pyrénées (where I live now) and all of southern France any time of the year. France is a country rich in history. 'Nyctalopie' is my favorite French word. It has the same meaning in English (nyctalopia), however; I love the pronunciation in French. Also, not many French people know this word. And if they heard it for the first time, they might think it's a bad word.»



**Denis Hirson** lived in South Africa till the age of 22, and settled in France in 1975. His first seven books are mostly concerned with the memory of South Africa under apartheid. His recent publications are «Footnotes for the Panther, ten conversations with William Kentridge», and «Ma langue au chat», a book in French about the torture and delight experienced by an Anglophone when speaking and writing in French.

«Have I become French? There are more than 1789 steps to take before you get there, multiplied by several generations and more spelling and grammar points to master than there are hairs on Bernard Pivot's head, multiplied by at least two perfect home-made soufflés (to make sure the first one wasn't a fluke).

To my dinner party I would invite Henri Michaux, Jeanne Moreau, Georges Perec, Jacques Prévert, Simone Signoret and Simone Weil (the philosopher) as well as the chefs Jessica Yang and Robert Compagnon from the incomparably wonderful Paris restaurant Le Rigmarole to do the cooking. I would also invite Chris, part of the Rigmarole team.

I stay in France because this is now home, a place where there is an understanding of good living; where there is relative peace (though much less in some of the poorer suburbs), relative good sense in the world of politics (if only this was not a monarchy in disguise) and in the world of culture; relative generosity; an appreciation of the value of balance, just as people are balanced in the way they eat and balanced in their bodies, look how well they hold themselves. This is home, and home is always imperfect, with chambers of light and chambers of darkness, but home nonetheless, which is more than fortunate.»



**Anna Eklund-Cheong** from Minnesota has lived in France since 2000, raising a family and volunteering with several expat organizations. A writer, editor and blogger, she is also a published haiku poet and shares her thoughts on French culture and her haiku on her blog parishaiku.com and its associated Facebook page.

«I'm a trailing spouse. I thought we were coming for two years, it's now been 18, and counting. I finish my meals with an espresso and a small tab of dark chocolate, drink hard cider in bowls with my crepes, and shop weekly at open air markets for fresh produce and seasonal and regional specialties. As an official, long-term French resident, I love the healthcare system here, the long vacations, and the ease of visiting the rest of Europe from Paris. Normandy and Brittany are my favorite regions, as I prefer cooler weather. I love walking along the coastal paths looking out over the channel and the ocean, the landscapes, food, culture, brocantes, architecture, and friendly residents. My favorite French phrase is 'Comme vous voulez' or 'Comme tu veux!' And the best word in the French language is 'crêpuscule'. »



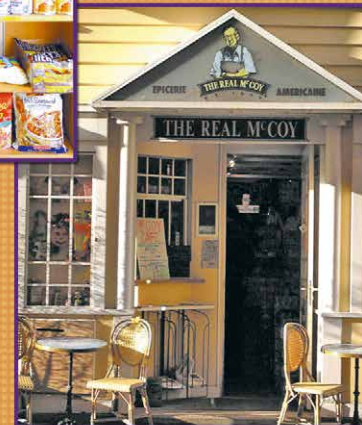
**Hanna Skupniewicz-Tolbinski** came from Poland and is passionate about France, cooking and drawing. She's author and illustrator of Cooking with French Expressions and ebooks for children. Her favorite French phrase is «Ce ne sont pas tes oignons».

Comment es-tu devenu français? ...par hasard - Qui participe au casting de votre parfait dîner en France? .... Frédérique Taddei - Pourquoi restes-tu? ... par crédit à la banque - Quelle région retient ton coeur? .... Luberon

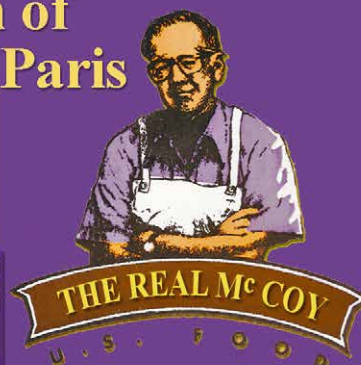
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**Cathleen Clarity** is an American woman, mom, chef, cookbook author and dog lover, in France for over 30 years. She runs an online cooking show on [atelierdeschefs.fr](http://atelierdeschefs.fr) and is promoting her new book "La Cuisine Américaine Familiale et Authentique" (Hachette cuisine).

«I roll my eyes and say *pffff* quite a bit. My perfect dinner party would include Alain Ducasse, Pierre Hermé, Anna Gavalda, Jean Prouvé, the owner of Château Ducru Beaucaillou, and my kids. I came to France for the beautiful language, crunchy baguettes and salted butter. I stay because it's just home now. My favorite French phrase is 'Il y a une couille dans le potage' and the region that holds my heart is the Île de Ré.»



**Janet Skeslien Charles** is the author of «Moonlight in Odessa» (Bloomsbury US/UK), a book about the booming business of email-order brides. Her shorter work has appeared in Montana Noir and Slice magazine. She currently teaches at the Ecole Polytechnique and at HEC.

«Growing up [in Montana], I lived on the same street as a French war bride. I learned about France from her, and first came here as an exchange student when I was 15. Later, I came for a teaching job and never left. Why do I stay? The short answer: the pastries, especially the Paris-Brest! A longer answer: I appreciate my French husband, the universal healthcare, Paris's thriving independent bookstores, and the great discussions I've had here with family, friends, students, and readers over the years.»



**Tim** from Hertfordshire, England has been in Paris for 5 years. He works for the UK department of an E-commerce website and is a musician performing regularly in Paris.

«What brought me to France - L'amour! My wife is Parisian. After several years in London together and visiting Paris regularly, I felt that the lifestyle suited me well enough to move here and haven't looked back since! How have I become French? Cheese after most meals has become natural. Long debates at the dinner table. I recently acquired a turtleneck! Aside from Paris, I have a close affinity with the Côte d'Azur. My wife and I visit the region often, exploring different towns. A picturesque setting which inspired so many great artists!»



**Kathryn Baxter** came to Paris in 2005 a Yorkshire lass with big dreams. Several years, chocolate eclairs and cups of tea later, she is now settled in this beautiful city with her Parisian husband, children, and a teaching company, Le Bus Bilingue.

«The baguette! I couldn't live without it, I have a favourite type, a preference for the cuisson, a carefully selected provider.. heck, I even talk about the price of it! The perfect dinner party includes Edith Piaf for a glimpse into the past and her strength of character. Thierry Lermite and Jamel Debouze to lighten it up and make me giggle. Xavier Niel because I'm super interested in tech. Cyril Lagnac because I'm no good at cooking and because, well who wouldn't want him around for dinner? I have very fond memories of the Dordogne where I spent a year teaching in schools (and gaining several pounds... oh the canard...the fois gras...!). Ever since I was learning French at school, 'Formidable' has been my favourite word. It's positive and strong.»

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Born and raised in Quebec City, Canada, living in France since 2012, **Gary Swindells** is married with two children. He started with Costco Wholesale in 1993 as Warehouse Manager and in 2012 became President of Costco in France.

«I would love the opportunity to sit down to dinner with the ‘deciders’ in France, to explain our culture and better understand theirs. I would also love having my new French friends around... What brought me

to France? Air Canada....-), well really it was when Costco chose to open the first store in France in 2009. I was very proud to be asked to pilot this amazing project. I stay for the food and wine....)....seriously, for the challenge of installing solid roots for Costco in France but mostly because I am surrounded by an amazing team. The last 6 years Bordeaux and La Cote d’Azur have been regular destinations. And my favorite word is ‘VOILA!’...because it ends every phrase that means exactly nothing...VOILA!»



**Ariadna Archer**, an entrepreneur, wife and mother knows from her own experience that expat moms need a network to feel supported and empowered. She hopes that her company Blisshood will provide just that.

«I think that I have become French in the sense of having high expectations for my food. I’m now picky about bread. I would invite Daphne Burki she’s funny, stylish and incredibly clever, Raphael Enthoven for nice philosophical discussions, Caroline de Magret --she

just embodies the edgy Parisienne, Karl Lagerfeld--I mean, he’s an institution and a living legend, and Sarah Lavoine--I don’t know why I think we’d be great friends. I came to be married to a fabulous French man; I stay because of that ‘je ne sais quoi’ that can only be found in Paris. The Loire Valley is my favorite region - I absolutely love the castles, the wines, and the relaxed lifestyle. Word: ‘Finesse’; Phrase: ‘C’est la vie!’»



**Lynn Rovidia**, from Pennsylvania, was owner of a small shop in the Marais featuring quirky, handmade art objects and wooden toys. Now she is happily retired and enjoying the cultural wonders that Paris has to offer! Paris 14th is the place that holds her heart.

«I came to France in 1977 with just my suitcase. I didn’t know a soul and didn’t speak French. I can’t say what brought me to France. It was just instinct. I was following my nose. The perfect dinner party is three

men and three women: Agnes b, Bernard Pivot, Christine Ockrent, Bixente Lizarazu, Riad Sattouf and Agnes Varda. I have never questioned myself about staying or not staying. Little by little, I put down roots and made Paris my home.»



**Shari Leslie Segall**, once from Philadelphia, has been in Paris since 1985 and is the author of France-themed books and articles, teaches cross-cultural communication at Sciences Po and the French Military Academy.

«How have I become French? I don’t like being asked personal questions. (In return, I’ll not ask you any. How’s that for a deal?). I’d invite the entire Lost Generation to the dinner party! My favorite French word or

phrase? ‘Plein comme un oeuf’ (as full as an egg--it does not get fuller than that) and ‘Nu comme un ver’ (naked as a worm--it does not get nakeder than that).»



**Nina Wilson-Bury** is passionate about child development and food. After 10 years at the International School of Paris, she will soon open the Take it Easy Family Cafe in Etampes, with her chef husband. Her favorite phrase is a verse from Jean de La Fontaine: «Tout est mystère dans l’Amour, Ses Flèches, son Carquois, son Flambeau, son Enfance. Ce n’est pas l’ouvrage d’un jour; Que d’épuiser cette science.»

«I was born and raised in Paris by two amazing American artist parents.

I spoke French before English and my friends were all French, I ate snails when I was just 3 and when I turned 13, a judge ruled me as officially French...but I don’t think I will ever really be French...too much positivity in me for that. The dinner party is a great question: Omar Sy (for laughs), Norbert Tarayre (for more laughs and great food), Céline Alvarez (for education) and Ben Onclé (for groove). Despite not feeling 100% French, I am a natural here. I feel free to think and live as I wish with no judgement and know my family is safe. Paris holds a big piece of my heart, and you have to admit, it’s pretty awesome!»

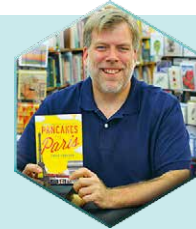


Photo: Stéphane Cugnier

Originally from Connecticut, **Craig Carlson** came to France as a student and fell in love with the country. Craig found himself craving pancakes and home fries and decided to open Breakfast in America, the first American diner in Paris.

«I’ve come to appreciate the value of five weeks paid vacations for all, an excellent health care system (where it’s a right, not a privilege) and the importance of balancing work and pleasure. For the dinner party: Jean

Cocteau, Ernest Hemingway, Alice B. Toklas and Gertrude Stein and Jean Renoir (the filmmaker and son of the great painter). I’m especially fond of Normandy, where I studied for a year and lived with two different French families. Give me a slab of camembert and a glass of Calvados and I’m in heaven! Favorite French word or phrase? I’ll go with: ‘C’est pas tes oignons!’ (‘It’s not your onions’, but it really means, ‘It’s none of your business!’)»



Photo: Kate Devine/Our Paris Stories

**Grace Wong-Folliet** is a communications and events consultant and co-founder of INSPIRELLE.com, a community which aims to connect and empower internationally-minded women in France. Born in Chicago, she is of Chinese origin and lived and worked in Hong Kong for 16 years before moving to Paris.

«Originally from Chicago, I moved to Hong Kong to discover my Chinese roots but, ironically, I met and married a French man. We moved here 9

years ago with our kids for his job. Despite the taxes, we stay in France mainly because of my husband’s work, but also because Paris is one of the greatest cities in the world. While I’ve had some tough moments adjusting to life here, there’s much to love: the rich culture, majestic mountains, quaint villages, medieval chateaus, and spectacular coastlines.»



**Anna Khuade** was raised in a small Russian town, studied and worked in Britain then moved to Paris in 2011. She traded in her corporate background for a mission to spread health and happiness, founding Affordable Yoga & Fitness.

«Why do I stay? I’ve been fortunate to be able to start a business around something I love. That really grounds me here, giving me a sense of purpose and meaning. My favorite French word or phrase is ‘Petit à petit,

l’oiseau fait son nid,’ a simple but lovely reminder of how persistence can pay off.»



# Acronymal France

Marie-France, a French lady, citizen of the RF, lives in IdF. She commutes daily via the RER, STIF and the RATP to the center of Paris where she runs a PME SARL. She learned her business acumen at INSEAD. She deals daily with TVA, PVs, CFE, CVAE, the CNIL, the RGPD, but luckily she doesn't miss deadlines and thus does not receive many LRAR.

When she goes on vacation to PACA, her favorite region, she takes the SNCF, a TGV or TER. She dreams of visiting the TAAF, as well as the DROM-COM to walk the famous GR on Ile de la Réunion. To get there she'll fly from one of the ADP, probably CDG. She plays the FDJ lottery and the PMU once in a while hoping to win big to finance her trip. She also has a PEL and a PEA to save money. She shops at the FNAC or the BHV where she pays with her CB.

M-F and her mate Jean-François are PACSé. He works for a GAFAM. J-F roots for the PSG and really gets excited when they play their rival the OM.

Both M-F and J-F listen to RFI and read FUSAC and LOOFE. They watch the JT each evening on either TF1 or FR2. They love contemporary art and so visit the FIAC every year and go to exhibitions at the RMN-GP or the MAD.

M-F's mother, who is well on in years, unfortunately had an AVC and now lives in an EHPAD. She no longer reads the JDD thus is not up on the news and the latest debates between the MEDEF, CGT and FO or LaREM, RN, PS or LR. She knows that since she paid the CSG and other payroll charges all her life the URSSAF will take care of her medical bills since she is registered with the CPAM. Her DMP shares information to all her different doctors. When she needs to go to the CHU for an IRM or ECG she rides in a SAMU, but hopefully not a SMUR.

M-F and J-F's son, Frédéric, works for the GIGN. That's quite a dangerous job and he is highly trained. He had experience as a CRS too. A classmate that he's known since CE got his CAPES and now is a teacher of ESL and SVT in a ZEP. Both ate frequently at the CROUS in between TDs and CMs when they studied for their DEUG and used the CAF to pay rent. They still send each other frequent SMS saying MDR about their favorite BDs.

Daughter, Frédérique, is a ZADist. She is involved with many causes and especially supports IVG, PMA and the SPA. Professionally she has a BTS and is an assistant to a researcher at the CNES, where she's happy to have a CDI now after a short CDD at the INSEE.

The family home is hooked up to the EDF and the GDF. When the power is HS they call the SAV. Once it is fixed there's RAS. Paying the bi-monthly bill is easy as they provided their IBAN, previously known as a RIB for direct debit. Soon they hope to reduce their utility bills now that the CEE will help them insulate. Their house is equipped with a VMC for fresh air. Their insurance is covered by la MAAF. Their family pet is a NAC named Heri. Starting in 2019 they will pay their IR by PAS.

They are a generous family and give each year to various ONG that help SDF, those with low incomes who live in HLMs and those with HIV.

***If you understood 90% of this text your name must be Marianne!***

## The faces of France on stamps from 1849 to 2018



After 1945 the name of the artist is below each stamp.



# The answer page

Hexagonal Geography, page 32-33

France Overseas

1. St Pierre and Miquelon
2. Mayotte
3. New Caledonia
4. Réunion
5. TAAF
6. Guyana
7. Tahiti
8. Wallis and Futuna
9. Martinique
10. Guadeloupe

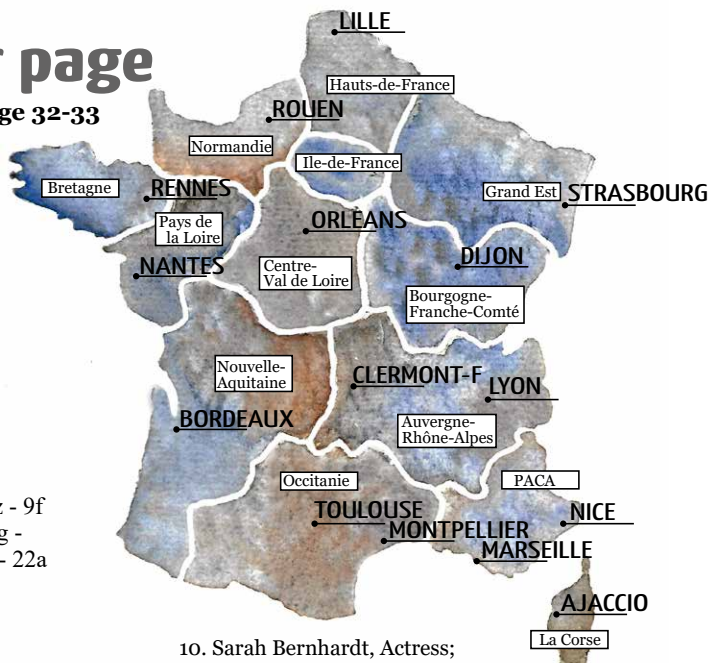
Speak Easy, page 18:

- 1s - 2x - 3b - 4p - 5i - 6w - 7j - 8z - 9f  
- 10e - 11v - 12h - 13k - 14d - 15g -  
16o - 17m - 18n - 19l - 20t - 21q - 22a  
- 23y - 24u - 25c - 26r

France Culture Quiz; page 24

1. Zinedine Zidane
2. Dagobert Duck (Dagobert was a French king in the 7th century but he did not lend his name to a duck dish)
3. Corsica
4. Fidelity
5. 577
6. Basilique St Denis, Where French Kings are buried; Notre Dame in Reims, Where French kings were crowned; Notre Dame in Verdun, The oldest; Saint Cecile in Albi, Constructed of brick; Notre Dame in Rouen, Painted by Monet; Saint Stephen in Metz, The largest gothic windows in Europe; Notre Dame in Chartres, Visible from more than 10 km away
7. Simone de Beauvoir
8. D-Day
9. 1903

10. Sarah Bernhardt, Actress; Gabrielle Renaudot Flammarion, Astronomer; Thomas Pesquet, Astronaut; Ambroise Paré, Surgeon; Johnny Hallyday, Singer; Rosa Bonheur, Painter; Yvette Horner, Accordionist; Marie Crous, Mathematician; David Guetta, Disk Jockey
11. Michel de Montaigne
12. True
13. Sophie Marceau
14. Hulot
15. *Mon petit doigt me l'a dit*
16. The greater (or pink) flamingo
17. Médecins sans Frontières
18. Hard boiled eggs
19. Charles de Gaulle
20. False. Edith Cresson was PM in 1991/1992
21. Fire prevention



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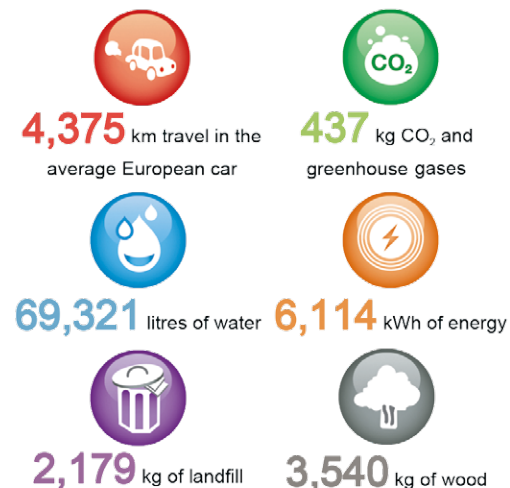
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