



HELP IN FRANCE

Assistance for British people moving to or living in France

infos@help-in-france.co.uk

0033 (0)5 61 49 15 05

<http://www.help-in-france.co.uk>

The FROG's NEWSLETTER #18 May 2009

Your Bank Account in France

If you are resident in France or own a second home here, you will very soon need to open a French bank account.

Essential services such as EDF and France Telecom etc. will ask you for your RIB (Relevé d'Identité bancaire) or IBAN (International Bank Account Number) for direct debit payments. You will also need a French account if you are paid a salary.

To open an account with any bank in France, you will need :

- Personal identification (a residence permit or passport)
- Proof of your home address in France (a phone or electricity bill or rental agreement)
- You may also need written proof of earnings.

If you are asked to supply your RIB, copies can be found in your French cheque book or you can ask your bank to supply you with a copy.

A useful currency converter can be found at : <http://www.gocurrency.com/>

(If you need help opening a bank account, do let us know.)



Post offices in France are normally open from 9 am to 5 pm but times may vary according to where they are located.

Stamps (or timbres) are available in post offices but also in tabacs which can save you time in queuing. Asking for " Un carnet de timbres" will give you a booklet of 10 stamps.

Standard first class post within France is currently charged at 0.54 €. For Britain, the charge is 0.60 €. For an up to date guide on prices, please use this link :

<http://www.laposte.com/find-a-postage-rate-95>

The postcode on addresses in France are 5 digits ex : 31000. The first two digits denote the department in France, (31 = Haute Garonne), the last three digits denote town or village in the department.

www.france-codepostal.fr/en/ is a link for postcodes in France. Typing in the village or town you are sending to will automatically give you the postcode.

There is a 'La Poste' website in English containing further information.

Go to : <http://www.laposte.com/> then click 'site international'.

French Income Tax Returns are Obligatory !



Everyone who is resident in France is obliged to submit a tax return. You are also obliged to submit a return if you are non-resident, but have earnings coming from France. This rule applies even if you think you may be below the income threshold for liability to income tax.

If you have not previously made a tax declaration in France, (declaration des revenus) then you may well not be sent a tax return for your first submission. You should contact your local tax office, or your local mairie, and ask for the paperwork.

It is not considered a valid excuse if you later claim to the French tax authority that you did not submit a tax return because you were not sent one.

There is no PAYE system for employees as there is in the UK. Income tax in France is collected in arrears, so your tax declaration for 2009 will cover your earnings for the calendar year ending 2008.

For 2009, the closing date for submission of tax returns for residents is 29th May 2009. Non-residents from Europe and the USA need to have submitted their return by 30th June 2009.

If you need any help with registering for tax or filling the form, do send us a mail or give us a call. We'll be pleased to help. infos@help-in-france.co.uk + 33 (0)5 61 49 15 05

FOR SALE

Family run approved kennels and much sought after breeding stock (Russell & Border terriers, Labradors & Cotons de Tuléar) for sale in NW Mayenne. Help provided with obtaining necessary French qualifications. Planning permission in place for 100m² house on site. Go to <http://todspack-kennels.monsite.orange.fr/> for more info. 140,000€ ring 02 43 03 20 94



PUPPIES for SALE -

We have 10 superb, healthy puppies 6 females (6 reserved) and 4 dogs (2 reserved).

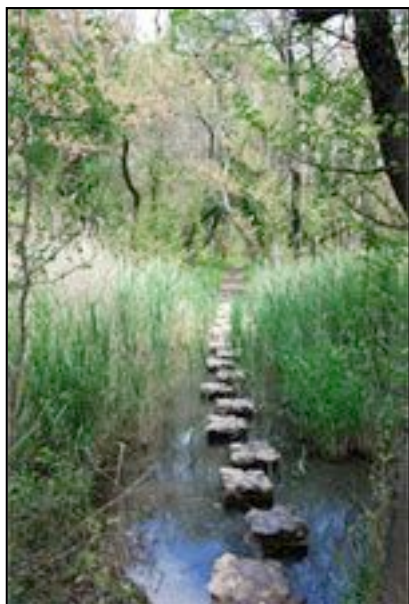
The father of the bitch was in the grand final at Crufts after winning Best of Breed and Best of Gundog Group. (22000 dogs competed at Crufts). The photograph was taken on the day of their birth.

The LOF number of the mother is: 7BR.H.PR6 104/1 469

Come and visit our Vizsla family to meet the parents and to learn more about this beautiful breed (south Haute Vienne)

Contact Sue Virr on 05 55 48 17 50 or email : info@nearlyheaven.com

Public Footpaths in France



A customer asked us about walking in France, where you are allowed to walk and where you are not. As with many things French, the answers are not always completely clear. However, we've searched the Internet and came up with two websites that are packed with information on the subject.

<http://www.franceonfoot.com/overview.htm>

<http://www.bellefrance.co.uk/askwalking.php>

However much you look, you are unlikely to find on any footpath in France the old fashioned English style. For some reason, the French never got around to inventing it.



Le Chemin de Compostelle

One very famous footpath (if that is the right term) that goes through France (and Spain) is Le Chemin de Compostelle.

It is the ancient path that Christian pilgrims took on their way to Santiago de Compostela--the town in northwest Spain where the remains of Saint James are said to be buried.

In recent years the "Chemin" has experienced a resurgence of travelers and not only Christian pilgrims.

Starting from the Pyrenees, its about 750 kilometers to Santiago. Walking about 20 kilometers each day will get you to Santiago in a little over a month. Many pilgrims and walkers choose to do one section of it and leave the rest for another time.

There are many places to stop over on route but although they are not in every village, you can count on finding one every 20 kilometers.

One such place is L'Arbaldoise gîte and chambres d'hôtes in the Gers. It is 2.4 kilometres from Nogaro and a very welcome resting place for the weary traveler. Carole and Frédéric told us that their customers came from all walks of life and were by no means only pilgrims.

Tél.05 62 09 14 11 - 06 14 75 90 24

arbladoise@tele2.fr

<http://www.chemindecompostelle.com/arbladoise>



Who would open a restaurant in this financial climate?

Restaurant L'Es Pratz



In 2003 we were introduced to the rare and beautiful Chateau du Puits es Pratz (Wells & Marshes) and fell in love at first sight. The vision of creating cooking, art and photography courses as well as B&B and cottages for holiday rental became the perfect excuse to leave our careers in London, Sasha as an illustrator and photographic food stylist working for advertising, magazines and food product development and Tim as an advertising photographer.

Well, not content with these challenges, after five years we embarked on converting our ancient wine 'Cave' into a beautiful and unique space to facilitate Wedding receptions, concerts and most recently as a restaurant for anyone from 'outside' who likes good food and wine. This seemed a logical progression seeing that we were getting more and more wedding enquiries. After a renovation nightmare and a huge amount of help from the Mayor, we eventually opened in December, right in the middle of the worst the financial crisis to hit England and France, not the best timing ever!

The restaurant called, 'L'Es Pratz' has become the central heart of the Domaine with an entrance onto a tranquil courtyard on one side, bordered by stables and old staff cottages we originally renovated to gites, and on the other, a stunning terrace overlooking a secluded vineyard at the rear of the property. Here in the summer months, one can dine under the stars and both inside and out are etched with memories of times past when the Chateau was one of the biggest wine producers in Ginestas.

We have a great team who are villagers who grew up on the Domaine, or who originally worked here, and are now working here again. They are the foundation of the restaurant; it is with them and their support and collaboration that the evolution of the life on the Domaine has been re-born and life has come back to the 'old stones'.

We hope that when guests enter the restaurant they will at once experience the atmosphere of time that is so much part of the fabric of the building with it's old twelve-foot oak wine 'foudres' and the wine press, now the bar, that have been preserved into a living and developing history.

During the winter months we have only been open on Friday and Saturday's as very few people have been coming out to eat. The wet spring has not helped, but now the sun is out

people are slowly emerging from their homes again and Sasha's menus are beginning to gain a significant reputation. We have also introduced live music on most Saturday evenings and are rapidly attracting a small but regular clientele.

Sasha changes the menus each week and specializes in delicious French Fusion cuisine and menus that are based on many cultures. Since the middle ages the cooking in this part of the Mediterranean has melded with many ingredients from around the world and makes for an eclectic mix which can now be experienced through Sasha's innovative menus.

Today the sun is out and the birds are singing so hopefully our beautiful climate has returned and we would love to welcome you to our restaurant where we have a variety of menu 'theme' evenings and two concerts during May. If you would like a change from the norm, please do come and enjoy the unique atmosphere that has been preserved at L'Es Pratz. If we can't interest you in the minefield of rules and regulations of setting up a restaurant in France hopefully we can with the regularly changing menus using only fresh ingredients and our comprehensive wine selection all at local prices.

Restaurant L'Es Pratz
Chateau Du Puits Es Pratz
40 Avenue Du Minervois
11120 Ginestas, France

For reservations and further information please call direct on
+33 (0)468 46 58 33

info@goholidayfrance.com

www.goholidayfrance.com

L'Es Pratz is a unique restaurant where the menus vary each week.
Open Friday and Saturday evening and Sunday Mid-day in May and June.

Menus start at 15 euros

Theme evenings : Please reserve.

Saturday 9 May: Guitar Duo + Menu Malaysian

Saturday 16 May: Live Jazz + Menu Thai

Thursday 21 may: Male voice choir from Finland. Menu buffet €18

Saturday 23 May: Classic music group : French Menu

Saturday 30 May: Singer Hazel O'Connor + Menu France-Fusion

Saturday 6 June: Jaqui Waugh Jazz singer & pianist + Menu Malaysian

Sunday 7 June: Fete des Meres + Pianiste + Menu Fete des Mères

Saturday 13 June: Trio Panama blues + Menu France-Fusion

Saturday 27 June: Rock-a-billy with Les Météor's + Menu American

Sunday 28 June: Lunch dance with a big band + French Menu



Looking for Host Families

Could you be a host family and earn some extra income ?

We are looking for host families and English teachers both in France and in England.

If you would like to take part, please do contact us here.

With our best wishes,

HELP IN FRANCE.

infos@help-in-france.co.uk

One of our students was so pleased with his stay in a host family in England that he offered to write a short piece in English for this newsletter. He has since been accepted for a post in English speaking Canada and is now busy sorting out the formalities for his family's new life there.

My Stay With a Host Family

Last February, I have been in Brighton in a home stay sought by "Help in France". Why? I'm going to tell you my story (a summary).

I'm Spanish. In my village, there was not a choice in foreign languages: it was French. When I was 14, I was ill the summer before joining the college, so I couldn't move to learning English and I had to study French for four more years. In the university, English was a hard subject for me, but, as it was a written exam, I could have the Aeronautical Engineer Diploma.

Now, I work for Airbus France in Toulouse. I need English every day at my job and I know that my level is not "really perfect"... So, I needed to improve it. To do that, I got in touch with "Help in France" and I asked them if they could help me to find a stay in England. My possibilities were very limited because I'm married and I have two daughters, so I had to have my stay during the French school holidays of February (and moreover not too expensive!!!).

"Help in France" found it for me: one week in home stay including 20 hours of English lessons. It was a really good choice for me because the house owner was an English teacher and I could study and practise to improve my English level quickly. I know that one week is not enough but it's better than nothing ... I really enjoyed my stay in Shoreham-by-sea (close to Brighton) and I recommend you the experience.

Tomas Pacheco.

THE HELP IN FRANCE NEWSLETTER

All information provided by Help in France newsletters is believed correct at time of publishing and is provided in good faith but is published partly based on information provided by third parties. Although every care is taken to ensure the accuracy of information presented in our newsletters, we cannot accept any liability for any inaccuracies.

The information published in this newsletter is of a general nature only and has not been designed to meet any individual needs. It therefore does not constitute professional or legal advice.

