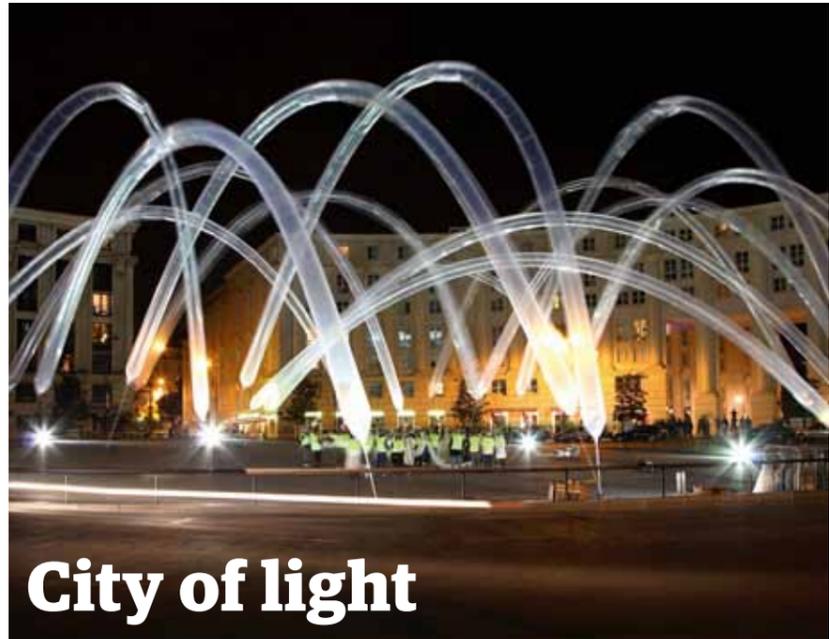


News & events

With the summer crowds long gone, October is an ideal month for a cultural break in the capital. Emma Rawle picks her must-see events, plus travel news and a reader giveaway



City of light

1 One night only

Prepare for a sleepless night in Paris on Saturday 4 October as the city becomes nocturnal for one night only during the Nuit Blanche event. The dusk-to-dawn celebration of art and culture aims to showcase the French capital in new and original ways, giving even long-term residents a novel view of Paris. From 7pm museums, libraries, monuments, parks and gardens open their doors for free until 7am on Sunday. Visitors can also expect concerts, artwork and light installations on the streets of the city. The event has become so popular it has been adopted by other cities in France and around the world.
www.paris.fr

2 Grand reopening

After a long wait the Musée Picasso, housed in the Hôtel Salé in Paris's Marais district, will be re-opening its doors to the public on 25 October - the birthday of Picasso, who died in 1973. The impressive 17th-century property has undergone a five-year €52 million refurbishment to extend the exhibition space to the entire five-floor building. The 5,700m² space will now be able to display more of the 5,000 works and archive pieces, largely donated by Picasso's heirs and friends, and admit nearly double the number of visitors at one time. If you fancy a sneak preview, the museum will be open on Nuit Blanche.
www.museepicassoparis.fr



3 Rising up

Art lovers are spoilt for choice in Paris this autumn with the opening of another art museum on 27 October in the Bois de Boulogne park. The new Fondation Louis Vuitton, designed by Frank Gehry, soars above the trees and boasts 12 glass sails created from 3,600 sheets of glass, offering panoramic views of the park and city from its terraces. Fittingly, the first exhibition the Foundation will host is of the building itself, showing the processes of development and creation. There will also be temporary exhibitions of contemporary art and special artists' commissions, plus one-off performances in its auditorium.
www.fondationlouisvuitton.fr



Mountain dwellers

The Réserve des Bisons d'Europe sits at an altitude of 1,400m in Margeride in the mountains of Lozère and is home to 40 European bison roaming 200 hectares of land. Created to save the animals from extinction, the reserve now offers tours to the public so you can get up close and personal with these prehistoric animals. In winter, tours are conducted on a sleigh, while the rest of the year a horse-drawn carriage is the means of transport and there is also a museum telling the story of the bison and the reserve. Prices start at €13.50 for a tour and museum visit.
www.bisoneurope.com



RULE BRITANNIA

Every October the seaside town of Dinard on the Brittany coast welcomes film fans for its annual celebration of British cinema. Running from 8 until 12 October, the British Film Festival shows popular and upcoming films in five screens across the town. Tickets go on sale 30 minutes before the showings and cost €5.50 each. This year there is also a pre-festival event taking place from the end of August until 7 October, with free screenings of popular British films such as *Philomena* and *12 Years a Slave*, an open-air cinema and events for schools.
www.festivaldufilm-dinard.com



Bargain hunt

Second only to the Braderie de Lille, the Amiens Réderie is a flea market on a grand scale. With a total of 2,000 sellers from all over France setting up stalls in the city centre, the event offers plenty of opportunities for some 80,000 visitors to pick up a bargain. The Réderie is taking place on Sunday 5 October, and Amiens is only about an hour and a half's drive from Calais... Tempted?
www.grande-rederie-amiens.com

X marks the spot

Ever been to the most amazing restaurant in France and then been unable to find it again? Or forgotten the name and location of a museum a friend recommended that you wanted to visit? Well, no more thanks to the Pin Drop app. The app lets you drop a pin on a map to mark somewhere you've been or want to go. You can add photos and notes to your pin to create a memoir of your holiday and selectively share your pins with contacts to make recommendations or just boast about your trip. The app is free to download and is available from the iTunes store and Google Play.
www.pindropapp.com



OUT OF RETIREMENT

Serge Tanneur (Fabrice Luchini) is living as a recluse on the picturesque Île de Ré after retiring from a successful acting career, when fellow actor and TV heart-throb Gauthier (Lambert Wilson) turns up at his door. Gauthier wants Serge to join him in a production of Molière's *The Misanthrope* and agrees to five days' rehearsal in order to convince him. This warm and witty film follows these rehearsals and the pair's bike rides around the island, with much bickering and humorous incidents.
Cycling with Molière (DVD), £15.99, Cert. 15, Artificial Eye, www.artificial-eye.com



Foodie favourites

France and food go hand in hand, and October is a great time to sample tasty fare. Here are some food-related events to try this month



An education

Food is a serious business in France, and as such there's an entire week dedicated to educating the public all about it. La Semaine du Goût (13-19 October) sees demonstrations by food professionals in schools, plus special menus in restaurants.
www.legout.com



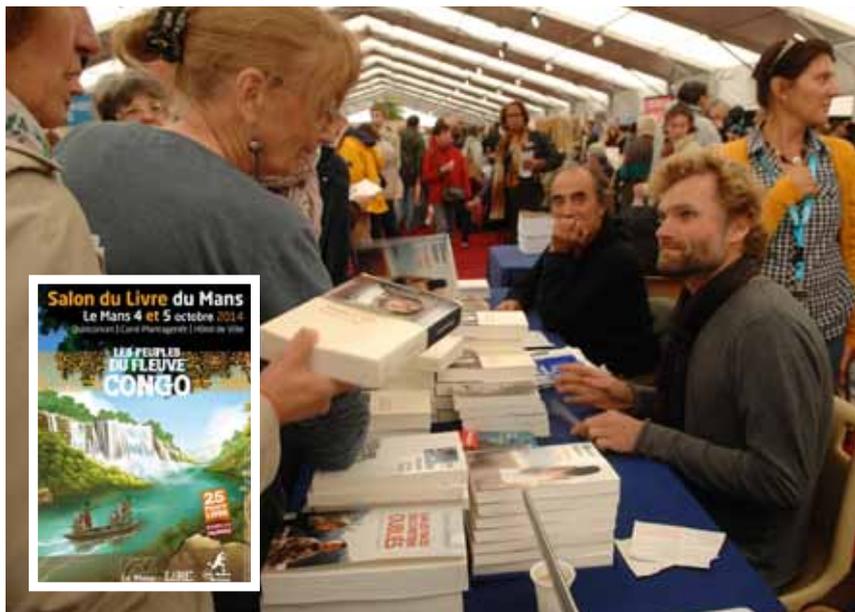
Sweet treat

An event not to be missed for any chocolate fans, the Salon du Chocolat in Paris runs from 29 October to 2 November and features companies and *chocolatiers* sharing their chocolate passion with new products, live demonstrations and the Chocolate Fashion Show.
www.salonduchocolat.fr



Cook up a storm

If you fancy learning to make a Michelin-star standard dinner then sign up for a cookery class at Château Cordeillan-Bages in Pauillac. During the lesson you will learn to make an appetizer, starter, main and dessert. Classes are a minimum of four, run until 21 October and cost €80 per person.
www.cordeillanbages.com



Lost in a book

Bookworms will be in heaven at the 25e Heure du Livre in Le Mans, one of the oldest book fairs in France. Over the weekend of 4-5 October, 200 authors, 80 publishers and 30,000 visitors gather to celebrate the written word in what has become the highlight of the autumn cultural scene. The fair celebrates French-language literature with debates, interviews and workshops as well as other forms of writing from sci-fi to children's books. Tickets cost €4. www.la25eheuredulivre.fr

Did you know?

Number of rivets used in the construction of the Eiffel Tower*

2.5m

REALITY BITES

A must-read for anyone interested in wines and France, Caro Feely's latest book *Saving Our Skins* is the story of her family's struggles to make their dream of running an organic vineyard a reality. In her first book, *Grape Expectations*, we followed the family from Dublin to a run-down vineyard in Saussignac, Dordogne and their attempts to transform it into an organic, profitable vineyard. This book picks up the tale as the family are facing financial difficulties and a potentially fatal frost – can they continue with their dream, or is reality about to bite? Not only providing an insight into Caro and Seán's life in France, this book is full of interesting details about the skill of organic wine-making and the economics of the wine industry.



WIN!

We have 5 copies of *Saving Our Skins* to give away. For a chance to win visit www.completefrance.com/community-forum. The closing date for entries is 20 October.

Saving Our Skins: Building a Vineyard Dream in France, Caro Feely, £8.99, Summersdale Publishers www.summersdale.com

Travel news

Man's best friend

A petition has been launched by pet gift website petspyjamas.com asking for designated dog-friendly carriages to be added to Eurostar trains, allowing dog owners to travel between France and the UK with their pets. Currently, Eurostar allows guide dogs on board but no other pets or animals, although dogs can travel to France via car and ferry. The petition closes on 30 September and can be found here:

www.epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/66847

Hit the slopes

Tickets are now on sale for the Eurostar ski train offering a direct service from London St Pancras to Moûtiers, Aime-la-Plagne and Bourg-St-Maurice in the French Alps. The trains run on Friday nights and Saturdays, with return trains on Saturdays both during the day and night, from 19 December until 11 April. Skis and boards travel for free and return fares start at £149 per person.

www.eurostar.com

In the know

A new email and text message service has been launched by airline Monarch aiming to keep customers, and their family and friends, up to date with any changes to Monarch flights. Customers can sign up to the free service when they book their flight and will receive either an email or text message if there is any change to departure or arrival times.

www.monarch.co.uk

Early birds

Brittany Ferries is now taking bookings for 2015 so early birds can book their ferry crossings to France and start planning their getaways across the Channel. With seven routes from the UK to France to choose from, including Portsmouth to Le Havre and Plymouth to Roscoff, there are plenty of options and all you need is a £35 deposit to secure your booking.

www.brittany-ferries.co.uk