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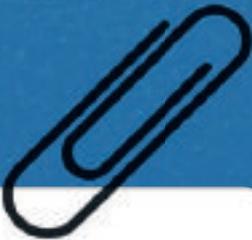
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A MAGAZINE FOR THE GET-UP-AND-GO GENERATION

TRAVELLER

MARCH 2017

From world-beating video games to flying water taxis, why France is electrifying in 2017



THE FRANC-O-FILE

From flying river taxis to the new nouvelle cuisine, a glut of big ideas is shaking up France in 2017 (even its wine is getting a makeover). We've got the access-all-areas file to the most exciting happenings on French soil this year. Open with caution...

WORDS BY

*Florence Derrick, Tristan Rutherford,
Kathryn Tomasetti*

1. FRANCE'S CAVIAR IS GOING GREEN

Aquitaine province is becoming a centre for sustainable caviar

YOU MIGHT NOT instantly think of the Gallic nation when it comes to caviar, but the country produces 10% of the world's total, with most of it produced around Bordeaux in the Aquitaine region – so much so that the six producers here have applied for Caviar d'Aquitane to have its own AOC seal à la Champagne or Roquefort cheese.

Now, the biggest of them is trying to become the world's greenest caviar producer. At Sturia – tagline: "Caviar Haute Couture" – the 60,000-80,000 sturgeon are fed GMO-free food, are never treated with antibiotics, and swim in filtered water from the local river.

"It's important that the fish have a good quality of life," says Bastien Debeuf, who looks after the stock. "They were here before us and it would be a shame if they disappeared because of us."

The eco credentials continue when the fish die, typically after 6-11 years. Bones are sold as bonemeal, and their flesh is made

into terrine, while the mud on the bottom of the pools is sold to farmers as fertiliser. Even the fish food is stored in silos to avoid wasting sacks. So next time someone asks you what's black and green...

sturia.com, harrods.com



MORE AOC FOOD NOTES:

Roquefort cheese, Bresse chicken, Le Puy green lentils, Côtes du Rhône wine, Somme salt marsh lamb

2. IT COULD BE SET TO WIN THE OLYMPICS

Surfing on the Seine? (it could) happen if France wins its 2024 bid...



FRANCE HAS A STRONG HISTORY of Olympic hosting. In 1900, the second ever Olympiad was held in Paris and laid on zany sports, including ballooning, croquet and a swimming obstacle course.

Then in 1924, alongside sporting trophies, the games featured art and literature events. Guess who picked up the most medals here? *Oui, la France.*

This time, the capital's 2024 bid is laced with contemporary touches. Like the temporary surf zone on the River Seine and the skateboarding venue on the Champs-Élysées. If successful, the sailing will be held in Marseille, while football teams will compete in Nice, Lyon, Bordeaux and Lille in a rerun of Euro 2016.

While previous bids have lacked public support, "Paris 2024 will serve everyone, everywhere," claims bid co-president Tony Estanguet. According to the bookies, it's a firm favourite to pip Budapest and LA to the post this September. Torches ready!

3. MONET IS ON HIS WAY HOME

Le Havre is set to be reunited with one of its most famous artworks

THE BIRTHPLACE of Impressionism celebrates its 500th birthday in September. Expect city-wide celebrations and the return of Claude Monet's masterpiece 'Impression, Sunrise', which will leave Paris for where it was painted more than a century ago. It will be at the MuMa 9 Sept-8 Oct. muma-lehavre.fr

5. EVEN IN ADVERSITY, THERE'S ART

How illustrator Jean Jullien created the iconic Paris for Peace sign

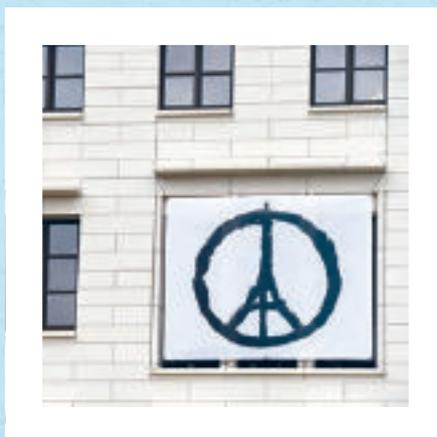
IN THE WAKE OF THE PARIS attacks in November 2015, illustrator Jean Jullien attempted to express his sorrow the way he expresses most things: by drawing. By the next morning, his Paris for Peace sign - a peace sign designed like the Eiffel Tower - had gone viral, and was ubiquitous on social media and at vigils across the world.

"It was the first thing that sprang to mind," he recalls. "Other people wrote down stuff to express how they felt; I do it with drawings." As for the response, he says: "It was completely overwhelming, but it was out of my control. I just became a witness to it."

Jullien is far from a one-trick pony, though. His wry, deceptively simple

black pen drawings of everyday life were recently turned into a book, *Modern Life*, with 150 illustrations providing a very unique kind of social commentary.

Of his signature style, often done on whatever comes to hand, he says: "It's unfortunately not intentional. In all honesty, I can't draw that well. I could never do beautiful, ornamental illustrations, so I played with my weaknesses instead." jeanjullien.com



6. LIBERTÉ, ÉGALITÉ... NUDITÉ

Naturism is on the rise - and it turns out it's surprisingly family-friendly...

FRANCE HAS LONG BARED its buttocks to officialdom. In the 1950s, Brittany holidaymakers ripped down WWII Atlantic sea defences and replaced them with a nudist resort. Cheeky.

Today, there are 30 official nudist campsites and over 100 textile-free beaches in France, and naturism contributes an astonishing €250m to the national economy, much of which, we assume, is spent on sun cream for more sensitive parts.

And according to the Fédération française de naturisme, which represents 40,000 nude members, it is families that are joining in their droves, swelling the number of naturists from 1.5m to 2m in the past three years. Mon dieu.

7. THERE'S A NEW SUB-SEA PIONEER IN TOWN

Jacques Cousteau would love his country's new cultural showpiece...

THE FRENCH MARINE conservationist would be hopping with excitement at the planned June opening of France's first underwater museum near Marseille's Vieux Port. If approved, visitors to the new Musée Subaquatique will don diving gear to swim with 45 sunken sculptures 8m below the waves. All will be made from pH-neutral cement that will encourage sea life to colonise the

artefacts, rendering the scene a living museum.

It's all inspired by undersea sculptor Jason deCaires Taylor, who created a similar museum in Cancun, Mexico, in 2009 and is set to contribute 15 of the

museum's sculptures. Taylor's previous work offers comments on society from the seabed, like the sunken statue of a couch potato eating a burger in front of a television. It's real fish food for thought.



11. THE RIVER TAXIS CAN FLY

UFOs have landed on the Seine. Not really, but it looks like it...

THIS SPRING, Parisians can catch a glimpse of speedy SeaBubbles zipping up and down the river. These oblong pods hover

70cm above the water and speed along at up to 30kmh. The futuristic shuttles will function as eco-friendly taxis – think biodegradable materials, silent running and battery-powered propulsion – carrying up to four passengers apiece. The pilot will eventually be a robot.

SeaBubbles was co-founded by French yachtsman Alain Thébault and Swedish windsurfer

Anders Bringdal. With an estimated global population of nearly 10 billion by 2050, three quarters of them living in urban centres, the ocean-loving duo claim it's time to ditch rush-hour traffic and use the cities' less crowded waterways instead.

"Many cities are facing the same issues nowadays: pollution, noise, traffic," says company spokesperson Joséphine Thebault. "After Paris, we're planning on expanding our product around the world. We've already had requests from more than 50 cities."

Paris was an obvious choice for the pilot, with eco-conscious mayor Anne Hidalgo behind the scheme from the beginning (see entry 16 for her plans to reduce Parisian pollution). Thébault has suggested that London or Geneva might be next.



GREEN TRANSPORT NOTES:

The world's first mass-market bike-share scheme, Paris's much-copied Vélib' celebrates its 10th anniversary this year

12. YOU CAN EAT LIKE A STAR

Go where the Cannes Film Festival jury fill their stomachs

EACH YEAR THE JURY for France's glitziest film festival descends on Michelin-starred La Palme d'Or for their first official dinner. This year, chef Christian Sinicropi has created tribute menus to hit movies like *Jaws* and *Alice in Wonderland*... Trippy.

13. IT'S STILL GREAT FOR KIDS

Stormtroopers usher in the 25th birthday of Disneyland Paris

THE GRAND OPENING of Disneyland Paris in 1992 didn't exactly go to plan, with one Parisian thespian branding it a "cultural Chernobyl". A strict staff code banned tattoos, dreadlocks and piercings and worse still, meetings were conducted

in enforced *anglais*. But the French elite ignored the magnetic pull of one thing: Who doesn't love Mickey Mouse? As French philosopher Michel Serres noted: "It is not America that is invading us. It is we who adore it." Disneyland is now France's most popular attraction, pulling in twice the crowds of the Eiffel Tower or the Louvre. Anne Pedersen, of national tourist board Atout France, claims its 25th anniversary year will be big: "*Star Wars* Stormtroopers will patrol through the village ahead of a Jedi Training Academy. That's sure to be a smash hit."

