

[<Back](#) [Print](#)

Corsica Bulltinu

September 2009

In This Issue

New vegetarian restaurant opens in Ajaccio
 Adventures in the Fango
 Alizée - Ajaccio's musical sensation
 Calvi Polyphony festival - starts today
 Come and meet some Corsicans!
 And finally...

Sign Up

[SIGN-UP!](#)

Some useful links...

OUR PARTNERS...

Corsica Isula - a mine of information about Corsica
 Corsicaholiday.com - your Corsica holiday booking site
 -/-

PLANNING YOUR CORSICA HOLIDAY?

1. Corsica holiday deals & flights from Thomson
2. Book a holiday with Eurocamp at Ghisonaccia
3. Book a holiday with Clubmed in Cargese or Sant' Ambroggio
4. Book a Corsica holiday with Simply Corsica
5. Visit Corsica Isula's revised travel pages
6. Book a holiday with Corsican Places
7. Corsica Isula car hire at great prices

-/-

SITES FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE

More about the Fango (in French)
 Alizée Nation - AW's blog about the Corsican singer
 Calvi's Festival of Polyphony

-/-

BEFORE YOU GO...

Join Corsica Lista - our discussion group
 Renewing your travel insurance?

Greetings!

Well, another summer is approaching its end, but in case you are already getting post-holiday blues, here is another issue of *Corsica Bulltinu*, this time with a rather watery theme.

I wanted to share with you an excellent experience we had in June when we went exploring in the Fango (see my picture right, taken from a canoe).



We don't often venture into the world of popular music in this newsletter, but I thought it was about time we carried something about Ajaccio's famous young singer, Alizée. I'm not much of a devotee of modern music these days, but I must admit I find her songs very accessible and lyrical.

Below, there's a note about a new vegetarian restaurant in the island's capital, and I'm also giving overdue plugs to Corsica's new English Club and Calvi's polyphony festival, of which the latter starts today.

Enjoy the September Bulltinu!

Mac

New vegetarian restaurant opens in Ajaccio



Try writing down all the food that you love when you come to Corsica. I bet vegetarian food won't figure very largely. In the past, vegetarians have struggled to find variety on the island.

Now however, all that is changing with the opening of a super new vegetarian restaurant in Ajaccio. It is called *A Cantali* and it is at 6 rue San Lazaro, near the

Buy Lonely Planet's Guide to Corsica

Buy the new Granite Island edition

station and the Palais de Justice. A Cantali is the brainchild of three committed vegetarians - Marie Claude Scarbonchi, Michel Satta and Alain Ceria.

Alain - who produces all the vegetables himself - tells me they try and put a different menu up each day - La carte varying with what vegetables are seasonally available. The restaurant is open lunchtimes, and also Friday and Saturday evenings. The menu varies from 12 to 15 euros.

I asked him about the kind of dishes you might find at the restaurant. On a typical day you might find *Tortilla de courgettes au bruccio*, *Galette végétale et sa farandole*, and *Velouté de fraises Mara des bois*.

I can't wait to try it. Bon appetit!

Adventures in the Fango



by Mac McKeone

A turtle takes a breather amongst the waterlilies on the banks of the River Fango, one of Corsica's most precious natural resources.

Approach the little coastal village of Galeria from the north, and you will find yourself crossing an apparently dry stony riverbed near the campsite *Les Deux Torrents*.

It doesn't look like a river that is one of Corsica's natural treasures, but that is exactly what it is. To the east and to the west are stretches of water and (to the west) a river delta that plays host to a myriad of plants and endangered creatures.

To reach the delta, cross over the bridge, turn right at the tourist office and head towards the sea and the centre of the village. As you get to the sea there is a car park on the right that advertises canoe hire. You have to park your car here and take the path opposite: after a walk of perhaps half a kilometre, you reach a stony beach on the river estuary where a dozen bright yellow canoes are drawn up on the shore.

To hire a canoe with *Balade en Canoe Kayak* costs just 5 euros per person for an hour and is just about the best five euro's worth of anything you could buy on the island.

When we were there in June, Jean Bernard explained to us how to use the paddles, fitted us with life jackets, told us the dos & don'ts of paddling in a nature reserve, and talked us through some of the species we were likely to encounter on our trip.

We chose a *canoe biplace* - a slightly longer canoe with room for two people paddling front and rear. Swimming gear or old clothes is highly recommended; I have to admit we got soaked with water trickling down the paddles into our laps. And of course we took hats and plenty of sunscreen - the sun out in the delta can be merciless. Provided with the canoe is a useful plastic box where we were able to store valuables such as wallets, purses and cameras.

And we were off. Immediately we were surrounded by trees and walls of bamboo rising sheer from the water. There were lots of little inlets with mud banks and logs and the edges were picked out with water lilies. The effect was magical - we'd entered a different, older world.

We'd only gone a few dozen metres before I was scrabbling in the box for my camera to snap a little turtle, perhaps 12cm long,

basking on a log amongst some water lilies. (see my photo above) Now I'm one of those people who never seem to see the wildlife that I'm supposed to see (how often have you been told "They were all over the place yesterday but today they have hidden themselves for some reason - what a shame"). However, that day we were not disappointed. We saw around a dozen turtles, singly and in pairs, in several different arms of the river delta, always on logs. Most seemed to be just sunbathing. One was drinking gracefully from the river. All were very well camouflaged in shades of grey and brown. You can also see moorhens, grebes and egrets in the delta.

Have you ever tried doing a three-point turn in a car with two drivers, neither of whom are very competent? We just about managed the equivalent in our canoe, but by the time we got our craft safely back to Jean Bernard we were soaked and we were both sitting in pools of water. We were almost as wet as the large fish we saw leaping out of the water in front of us as we paddled slowly back.

It was good to get back to the car and dry off - for a while. Despite our soaking, we decided it was time for a swim, and for this we needed to head a few kilometres east, past the tourist office and further up the river to the tiny village of Tuarelli. Here, the river has gouged a sizeable cleft in the rocks and for its passage through the village, the Fango is several metres wide and up to three metres deep. It's perfect for swimming.

If you have a snorkel and face mask, I recommend you take them with you to Tuarelli because while there are no turtles in this stretch, there are plenty of fishes. You'll be sharing the river with trout, freshwater blennies scurrying along the bottom amongst the stones, and river eels. Because the water is so pure, you can see everything around you with great clarity.

So if ever you need reminding that Corsica is not just about beaches and sunshine, try visiting the Fango for the day! What a magical place.

For lunch, we stopped at [L'Alivu](#), near the waterfront in Galeria who provided us with an excellent lunch at a reasonable price. They can also provide sandwiches on request. If you fancy an overnight stay here, where better than the Chambre d'Hote [Casaloha](#) (actually located on the banks of the Fango) managed by Jean Pierre and Isabelle. Isabelle is an occasional contributor to Corsica Bulltinu, is an English teacher and speaks perfect English. You can find out more about the Fango Valley on this [French Government site](#).

Alizée - Ajaccio's musical sensation



We have talked a good deal in this newsletter about Corsica's musicians of yesteryear. But readers may not realise that Corsica has a very current and highly popular music phenomenon in Alizée Jacotey. I am indebted to AW, webmaster of the lively blog [Alizée Nation](#) for this intimate account of Ajaccio's pop princess.

"I talk a lot about nature in my songs because I always think of my land of birth. The island is truly magnificent: one can go to the sea, walk in the mountains and ski on the high mountains"

Ahh, Corsica. The beaches, the mountains, the climate, the people. It's a long list. It is an island of history, beauty and character. From within the maquis there is another gem: Alizée!

"Yes, absolutely, I think I was born under a lucky star"(1)

Alizée is as interesting as the island itself. If the mysteries of Corsica appeal to you, so then will Alizée. Alizée Jacotey is a French singer born in Ajaccio, Corsica on August 21, 1984. On more than one occasion she has mentioned as to be born under a lucky star. It certainly seems that way.

"I'm very fond of my name and it has a story behind it. My parents love windsurfing and chose to call me Alizée after a type of wind of the same name." (1)

When sharing Alizée with others it is best to share the story of Alizée. As with Corsica, just one picture of a beach will not do, it deserves more. This name, Alizée is as good a starting point as any. "Alizé" is the name of trade winds that blow over the Mediterranean and Alizée is the feminine form of that word. A unique name. According to the web site "Behind The Name" Alizée was ranked as No. 93 for feminine baby names in Belgium in 2001. An obvious spike caused by the Alizée sensation at that time.

"My true pleasure in this business is singing before an audience. These are very happy moments. I'm always a little nervous before getting out there, but once I'm on stage I could never stop"(1)

The first brush with fame for Alizée came in 1995. At the age of 11 Alizée entered a drawing contest for AOM French Airlines. She won. Her drawing was incorporated onto a real plane and the plane was also named after her. In addition, she and her family won a trip to the Maldives.

Next came *Graines de Stars* in 1999. While attending dance school in Ajaccio she tried out for the French television show of that name. The original intention was for Alizée to enter as a dance contestant but the show had no category for individual dance contestants. She then entered as a singer and won the *Meilleure Graine* award for most promising young singing star of tomorrow. As fate would have it, Alizée caught the attention of French star Mylène Farmer and musician director Laurent Boutonnat.

Under the guidance of Mylène Farmer Alizée released her first album *Gourmandises* in 2000. It was a tremendous success with four singles being released from this album. They were 'Moi, Lolita', 'L'Alize', 'Gourmandises' and 'Parler Tout Bas'. This success was followed by another with the release of her second album *Mes Courants Électriques*. Three very popular singles from this album were 'J'en Ai Marre', 'J'ai Pas Vingt Ans' and 'À Contre-Courant'. The third album was *En Concert*, which consisted of live performances of Alizée on tour.

"I'm very shy and reserved. But I'm also generous and very stubborn. It seems that I always have to be right in everything"(1)

In the midst of all this success Alizée married Jérémy Chatelain, a fellow performer, on November 6, 2003 in Las Vegas, Nevada. This is where Alizée gets fun and interesting. At the end of the *En Concert* tour Alizée went on a four year break from public life. Alizée is an extremely private person, time away from the public is not uncommon. Her personality reflects her Corsican background, independent and private. Personal life and family are her top priorities. During her hiatus, Alizée and Jérémy had a daughter, born April 29, 2005.

2007 brought an end to the hiatus with the introduction her album, *Psychédélices*. It was a turning point. Alizée separated from Mylène Farmer and Laurent Boutonnat to produce her own sound. It was also a break away from the 'Lolita' character that was prominent under the Mylène era. Two singles were released, 'Mademoiselle Juliette' and 'Fifty-Sixty'.

"I was surfing the net and I understood that in Mexico I was very welcome and that in addition, there were people who liked my music"(2)

Psychédélices went on to be a huge success in Mexico. Alizée then followed that up with a tour in 2008. A new album is in process and is due out late Autumn 2009. It is said to have her first song in Spanish, which will appeal to the large number of her Spanish speaking fans. It has been described as a concept album with references to the model Edie Sedgwick as was the single 'Fifty-Sixty' from *Psychédélices*.

Alizée is a unique individual. She follows her own plan for life. Her appearances are rare, to date in 2009 are her January appearance in *Les Enfoires* and an appearance in April at Aguascalientes, Mexico. Her devotion to family supersedes all else. As a result, Alizée has a unique devoted group of fans. These days you can best follow Alizée on [Twitter](#). For wonderful photographs of Corsica we only need to turn to her Father, [Jo Jacotey's blog](#) where the photos speak for themselves.

Alizée has signed with the *Jive Epic* for the upcoming album. Jive Epic, after being asked about Alizée via their own Twitter account responded "Are the Alizée fans the most devoted ? :)"(3) and then later to appease the newly crowned most devoted, Jive Epic responded "L'album prévu pour novembre. Tiendrez-vous jusque là ? :)"(4). November it is!

- (1) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/User:Soumyasch/Backlog/Alizee_info
- (2) <http://alizeeamerica.com/forums/showthread.php?t=3404&page=6>
- (3) http://twitter.com/Jive_Epic/status/3203422155
- (4) http://twitter.com/Jive_Epic/status/3307287034

Calvi Polyphony festival - starts today

The 21st *Rencontres de Chants Polyphoniques* starts today in Bastia and as ever, continues through the week in Calvi.

This year the lineup is even more international, the themes even more eclectic than usual. Today, 15th September, the event starts with a concert featuring Corsica's talented and innovative polyphony group, *A Filetta*, and a French/Moroccan band called *Band of Gnawa*. Later in the week there are performances from musicians from Senegal, Bulgaria, Albania, Vietnam, Siberia, Italy, Poland and Corsica's neighbour Sardinia.

As always, *A Filetta* will be hosting the event and all of the concerts will feature some of their music.

The event runs from 15th to 19th September and most of the individual concerts take place in Calvi's Citadelle. Prices range from 15 euros (student rate) to 23 euros (full price).

More details [here](#).

Come and meet some Corsicans!

Would you be interested in getting to know some Corsican people?

Would you be prepared to help some Corsican students improve their English?

Would you like to practise your French in a social situation?

If the answer to any of these questions is YES, then you should consider joining Corsica's ENGLISH CLUB, managed by two English teachers based in Corsica. Even if you are just in Corsica on holiday for a week or two, Marie-Do and Isabelle would be pleased to see you there!

The format of the evening is very informal, and includes buffet and drinks! (There's no doubt that a glass of wine loosens the throat muscles - making it easier to speak in a foreign language!)

The Club takes place each month at Bastia or Galeria or Pietracorbara, on Thursdays or Fridays at 7.30 pm.

The next one is on Friday, Oct 2 in Galeria.

To find out more, please contact Marie-Do +33 614209173 or skype : mdvt1.

And finally...



Here is a picture of the marina at Solenzara, on Corsica's east coast. I like it because it conveys peace and activity at the same time.

If you have a favourite picture of Corsica that you'd like to share with us, please send it in.



That wraps things up for this issue - the next issue will arrive in your emails on 15th December.

Many thanks to AW of *Alizée Nation* for the Alizée article, and to Alain Ceria, Marie-Do Vittori, and J M Colonna for the info for the other articles.

If you have something for the next issue - whether it's an article, a picture, a poem or just an idea, please get in touch.

Best Wishes to you all,

Mac

Mac McKeone
Corsica Bulltinu

email: mac@corsicaholiday.com

web: <http://www.corsicaholiday.com>

[Forward email](#)

SafeUnsubscribe®

This email was sent to mac@corsicaholiday.com by mac@corsicaholiday.com.
Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe](#)™ | [Privacy Policy](#).

Email Marketing by



Corsica Bulltinu | Bishopstoke | Eastleigh | United Kingdom