

Speak the Culture: France

December 2008

Notes

Quiz Questions

Q. Which French ruler was crowned Holy Roman Emperor on Christmas Day in AD 800?

A.

Q. Which prestigious French literary prize did Afghan-born writer Atiq Rahimi win in November for his novel *Syngué Sabour*?

A.

Q. Which electronic music duo broke new ground with their debut album, *Homework*, recorded in 1997?

A.

Q. At Christmas, what is *le Réveillon*?

A.

Q. Who have the French Socialist party elected as their new leader, amid claims of 'voting irregularities'?

A.

Q. The French usually have turkey or capon for the main course of the Christmas meal, but what is the Yuletide shellfish of choice, often eaten as a starter?

A.

Q. Which German, permanently in sunglasses, is chief couturier at fashion house Chanel, and has been since 1983?

A.

Q. The Arc de Triomphe in Paris was built after which series of conflicts?

A.

Q. Who is the French character that accompanies St Nicholas on his Christmas rounds, spanking children who haven't been as good as they might have been?

A.

Q. Which 61 year old English singer, adopted by the French as one of their own back in the 1960s, recently released the album *Enfants d'Hiver*?

A.

Q. A fragment of staircase from the original Eiffel Tower sold recently at auction for over half a million euros, but in which decade was the tower built?

A.

Q. Name the actress who won an Oscar in 2008 for her portrayal of Edith Piaf in the film *La Vie en Rose*.

A.

Quiz questions written
by Andrew Whittaker
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In association with
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Quiz Questions

Q. Which region of France produces the brandy Armagnac?

A.

Q. What is the *Sapin de Noël*?

A.

Q. Which French composer wrote *Le carnaval des animaux* in 1886?

A.

Q. Which American state was named after a French king in 1682?

A.

Q. *Plus Belle la Vie*, a blockbusting soap opera that draws over six million viewers each weekday night, is set in which city?

A.

Q. Which 19th century author wrote the epic series of novels entitled *La Comédie humaine*?

A.

Q. Who is Cyril Lignac?

A.

Q. Who painted fields of poppies near the village of Argenteuil (now a Parisian suburb) in the 1870s?

A.

Q. Bertrand Cantat has resumed his singing career after being released from prison, having served five years for the manslaughter of his girlfriend. With which popular French band is he the lead singer?

A.

Q. What is the PTT?

A.

Q. How many *régions* are there in France; and how many *départments*?

A.

Q. Who redesigned the street layout of central Paris under Napoleon III, creating the city's wide elegant boulevards?

A.

Q. British children leave stockings by the fireplace for Father Christmas. What do French children leave?

A.

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Notes

Quiz Questions and Answers

Q. Which French ruler was crowned Holy Roman Emperor on Christmas Day in AD 800?
A. Charlemagne.

Q. Which prestigious French literary prize did Afghan-born writer Atiq Rahimi win in November for his novel *Syngué Sabour*?
A. The Prix Goncourt.

Q. Which electronic music duo broke new ground with their debut album, *Homework*, recorded in 1997?
A. Daft Punk.

Q. At Christmas, what is *le Réveillon*?
A. A family meal taken after Midnight Mass.

Q. Who have the French Socialist party elected as their new leader, amid claims of 'voting irregularities'?
A. Martine Aubry, mayor of Lille.

Q. The French usually have turkey or capon for the main course of the Christmas meal, but what is the Yuletide shellfish of choice, often eaten as a starter?
A. Oysters.

Q. Which German, permanently in sunglasses, is chief couturier at fashion house Chanel, and has been since 1983?
A. Karl Lagerfeld.

Q. The Arc de Triomphe in Paris was built after which series of conflicts?
A. The Napoleonic Wars.

Q. Who is the French character that accompanies St Nicholas on his Christmas rounds, spanking children who haven't been as good as they might have been?
A. Le Père Fouettard.

Q. Which 61 year old English singer, adopted by the French as one of their own back in the 1960s, recently released the album *Enfants d'Hiver*?
A. Jane Birkin.

Q. A fragment of staircase from the original Eiffel Tower sold recently at auction for over half a million euros, but in which decade was the tower built?
A. 1880s.

Q. Name the actress who won an Oscar in 2008 for her portrayal of Edith Piaf in the film *La Vie en Rose*.
A. Marion Cotillard.

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December 2008

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Quiz Questions and Answers

- Q.** Which region of France produces the brandy Armagnac?
A. Gascony.
- Q.** What is the *Sapin de Noël*?
A. Christmas tree.
- Q.** Which French composer wrote *Le carnaval des animaux* in 1886?
A. Camille Saint-Saëns
- Q.** Which American state was named after a French king in 1682?
A. Louisiana.
- Q.** *Plus Belle la Vie*, a blockbusting soap opera that draws over six million viewers each weekday night, is set in which city?
A. Marseille.
- Q.** Which 19th century author wrote the epic series of novels entitled *La Comédie humaine*?
A. Honoré de Balzac
- Q.** Who is Cyril Lignac?
A. He's a celebrity chef.
- Q.** Who painted fields of poppies near the village of Argenteuil (now a Parisian suburb) in the 1870s?
A. Claude Monet.
- Q.** Bertrand Cantat has resumed his singing career after being released from prison, having served five years for the manslaughter of his girlfriend. With which popular French band is he the lead singer?
A. Noir Désir.
- Q.** What is the PTT?
A. The Poste, Téléphone et Télécommunications, in charge of the French postal service and public telephones.
- Q.** How many *régions* are there in France; and how many *départments*?
A. 22 *régions* and 100 *départments*.
- Q.** Who redesigned the street layout of central Paris under Napoleon III, creating the city's wide elegant boulevards?
A. Baron Haussmann.
- Q.** British children leave stockings by the fireplace for Father Christmas. What do French children leave?
A. Shoes or clogs.

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Speak the Culture: France

November 2008

Notes

Quiz Questions

Q. Name the French winner of the 2008 Nobel Prize for Literature.

A.

Q. When the Papal See was moved to France in the 14th century, which city became home to the popes?

A.

Q. Why did more than 60 French people with the surname Bougon take a TV production company to court recently?

A.

Q. Who is Bertrand Delanoë?

A.

Q. Which foreign author and playwright died in the Hotel d'Alsace doss house on the Left Bank, Paris, in 1900?

A.

Q. Why did pop star Lââm find herself caught up in a national row recently?

A.

Q. Before the 19th century, farmers in Gascony wore *tchangues* to tend their flocks of sheep. What were *tchangues*?

A.

Q. Which actor, often referred to in relation to his famous father, died recently, aged 37?

A.

Q. Why was Mathias Guerrand-Hermes, heir to the Hermes fashion fortune, arrested in New York earlier this month?

A.

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Q. Paris' newly opened centre for modern art, Centquatre, launched at a cost of €100 million, is located in a former what?

A.

Speak the Culture: France

November 2008

Notes

Quiz Questions and Answers

Q. Name the French winner of the 2008 Nobel Prize for Literature.

A. Jean-Marie Gustave Le Clézio

Q. When the Papal See was moved to France in the 14th century, which city became home to the popes?

A. Avignon.

Q. Why did more than 60 French people with the surname Bougon take a TV production company to court recently?

A. They complained that *Les Bougon* (translates as 'grumpy'), a comedy about a family of liars and miscreants, was giving them a bad name. The case was dismissed.

Q. Who is Bertrand Delanoë?

A. Mayor of Paris.

Q. Which foreign author and playwright died in the Hotel d'Alsace doss house on the Left Bank, Paris, in 1900?

A. Oscar Wilde.

Q. Why did pop star Lââm find herself caught up in a national row recently?

A. The French-Tunisian performer sang *La Marseillaise* at the football match between France and Tunisia and was drowned out by booing, to the deep consternation of President Sarkozy.

Q. Before the 19th century, farmers in Gascony wore *tchangues* to tend their flocks of sheep. What were *tchangues*?

A. Stilts (it died out after Napoleon II began a drainage programme).

Q. Which actor, often referred to in relation to his famous father, died recently, aged 37?

A. Guillaume Depardieu.

Q. Why was Mathias Guerrand-Hermes, heir to the Hermes fashion fortune, arrested in New York earlier this month?

A. He allegedly punched the captain of an Air France flight and grabbed his testicles on board a flight between Paris and the US.

Q. Paris' newly opened centre for modern art, Centquatre, launched at a cost of €100 million, is located in a former what?

A. Funeral parlour.

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Speak the Culture: France

October 2008

Notes

Quiz Questions

Q. What did former Spanish Prime Minister José Maria Aznar recently deny in an official statement to the French media?

A.

Q. Which day of the year does France celebrate la Journée de l'Europe?

A.

Q. How many gold medals did France win at the Beijing Olympics? (Clue: it was 12 fewer than Great Britain.)

A.

Q. Who is Catherine Millet?

A.

Q. Why did the publication of photographs showing Taliban fighters by *Paris Match* stir controversy recently?

A.

Q. What is the difference between Vintage and Non-Vintage champagne?

A.

Q. Which French actress starred alongside Daniel Craig in the 2006 James Bond film, *Casino Royale*?

A.

Q. Who, born Madeleine Cinquin in November 1908, and recently voted France's sixth most popular personality in a newspaper poll, published her memoirs in August?

A.

Q. Who contributed the breathy female vocals to Serge Gainsbourg's 1968 hit *Je t'aime...moi non plus*?

A.

Q. Which novelist turned film director made his cinematic debut in 2008 with an adaptation of his own book, *La Possibilité d'une île*?

A.

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October 2008

Notes

Quiz Questions and Answers

Q. What did former Spanish Prime Minister José Maria Aznar recently deny in an official statement to the French media?

A. That he fathered the as yet unborn child of Rachida Dati, French Justice Minister.

Q. Which day of the year does France celebrate la Journée de l'Europe?

A. May 9.

Q. How many gold medals did France win at the Beijing Olympics? (Clue: it was 12 fewer than Great Britain.)

A. Seven.

Q. Who is Catherine Millet?

A. Author of the hugely successful *La Vie sexuelle de Catherine M*, who released her second book, *Jour de Souffrance*, in August?

Q. Why did the publication of photographs showing Taliban fighters by *Paris Match* stir controversy recently?

A. The fighters were wearing the uniforms of dead French soldiers.

Q. What is the difference between Vintage and Non-Vintage champagne?

A. Vintage champagne is blended from wines produced in a single, vintage year. Non-Vintage is blended from wines across various years.

Q. Which French actress starred alongside Daniel Craig in the 2006 James Bond film, *Casino Royale*?

A. Eva Green.

Q. Who, born Madeleine Cinquin in November 1908, and recently voted France's sixth most popular personality in a newspaper poll, published her memoirs in August?

A. Soeur Emmanuelle, a nun dubbed 'the French Mother Theresa'.

Q. Who contributed the breathy female vocals to Serge Gainsbourg's 1968 hit *Je t'aime...moi non plus*?

A. Jane Birkin.

Q. Which novelist turned film director made his cinematic debut in 2008 with an adaptation of his own book, *La Possibilité d'une île*?

A. Michel Houellebecq.

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Speak the Culture: France

September 2008

Notes

Quiz Questions

Q. Why did the small northern French town of Hautmont make the news in August?

A.

Q. Who was the most famous inhabitant of the Saint Paul de Mausole asylum in Saint-Rémy, Provence?

A.

Q. Jeannie Longo, aged 49, took part in her seventh Olympic games this month, finishing fourth in one event. What sport does she compete in?

A.

Q. Gerard Depardieu and Emmanuelle Beart starred in which 1986 remake of a Marcel Pagnol film?

A.

Q. Why is Coteaux du Tricastin, a vineyard in the south west of France, thinking about changing its name?

A.

Q. Why was veteran *Charlie Hebdo* columnist Maurice Sinet sacked recently?

A.

Q. What do villagers in Espelette, close to the Spanish border in the Pays Basque, hang out to dry on the front of their houses in autumn?

A.

Q. Which novelist and short story writer wrote *Bel-Ami* in 1885?

A.

Q. What French luxury good, dating to 1893 and now the oldest known example, was recently found in a sideboard in a Scottish castle?

A.

Q. When vandals attacked a cathedral in Metz recently, they shattered a stained glass window by which artist?

A.

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Speak the Culture: France

September 2008

Notes

Quiz Questions and Answers

Q. Why did the northern French town of Hautmont make the news in August?

A. It was hit by a tornado that killed three and injured 13.

Q. Who was the most famous inhabitant of the Saint Paul de Mausole asylum in Saint-Rémy, Provence?

A. Vincent van Gogh.

Q. Jeannie Longo, aged 49, took part in her seventh Olympic games this month, finishing fourth in one event. What sport does she compete in?

A. Road cycling.

Q. Gerard Depardieu and Emmanuelle Beart starred in which 1986 remake of a Marcel Pagnol film?

A. *Manon des Sources*.

Q. Why is Coteaux du Tricastin, a vineyard in the south west of France, thinking about changing its name?

A. To avoid association with the nearby nuclear power plant, where an apparently harmless uranium leak occurred this summer.

Q. Why was veteran *Charlie Hebdo* columnist Maurice Sinet sacked recently?

A. He was accused of anti-Semitism after commenting on the relationship between the President's son, Jean Sarkozy, and his Jewish fiancé.

Q. What do villagers in Espelette, close to the Spanish border in the Pays Basque, hang out to dry on the front of their houses in autumn?

A. The Piment d'Espelette, a small red pepper.

Q. Which novelist and short story writer wrote *Bel-Ami* in 1885?

A. Guy de Maupassant.

Q. What French luxury good, dating to 1893 and now the oldest known example, was recently found in a sideboard in a Scottish castle?

A. A bottle of Veuve Clicquot champagne.

Q. When vandals attacked a cathedral in Metz recently, they shattered a stained glass window by which artist?

A. Marc Chagall.

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August 2008

Notes

Quiz Questions

Q. What's the name of the Dany Boon movie that, in April 2008, became the most successful French film of all time?

A.

Q. What have Parisians been using roughly 120,000 times a day, for an average of 22 minutes at a time, since their introduction last year?

A.

Q. Which French duo recorded the album *Moon Safari* in 1998, selling over two million copies worldwide?

A.

Q. Which Hollywood couple chose a maternity clinic in Nice for the recent birth of their twins?

A.

Q. Who is Patrick Poivre d'Arvor (or PPDA as he's also known) and what did he give up recently after 21 years?

A.

Q. Which poet, author of *Les Fleurs du Mal*, riddled with syphilis, died from a massive stroke, aged 36, in 1867?

A.

Q. Who is Mark Cavendish and what did he do, twice, in France in early July?

A.

Q. What has become known as the 'Zambelli Affair'?

A.

Q. Who do the French refer to as the 'father of photojournalism'?

A.

Q. By what term are the 40 sitting members of the Académie Française, the body charged with protecting the French language, also known?

A.

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August 2008

Notes

Quiz Questions and Answers

Q. What's the name of the Dany Boon movie which, in April 2008, became the most successful French film of all time?

A. *Bienvenue chez les Ch'tis*.

Q. What have Parisians been using roughly 120,000 times a day, for an average of 22 minutes at a time, since their introduction last year?

A. The 16,000 *vélib*s; free bikes for the capital launched by Mayor Delanoë.

Q. Which French duo recorded the album *Moon Safari* in 1998, selling over two million copies worldwide?

A. Air.

Q. Which Hollywood couple chose a maternity clinic in Nice for the recent birth of their twins?

A. Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt.

Q. Who is Patrick Poivre d'Arvor (or PPDA as he's also known) and what did he give up recently after 21 years?

A. He's *the* French news anchorman, or was, now replaced by the glamorous (female) Laurence Ferrari as host of TF1 news after two decades in the job.

Q. Which poet, author of *Les Fleurs du Mal*, riddled with syphilis, died from a massive stroke, aged 36, in 1867?

A. Charles Baudelaire.

Q. Who is Mark Cavendish and what did he do, twice, in France in early July?

A. British cyclist, the first to win two stages of a Tour de France for 35 yrs.

Q. What has become known as the 'Zambelli Affair'?

A. The investigation of Father Raymond Zambelli, rector and treasurer of the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes, suspected of embezzling over €400,000. He denies any impropriety.

Q. Who do the French refer to as the 'father of photojournalism'?

A. Henri Cartier-Bresson.

Q. By what term are the 40 sitting members of the Académie Française, the body charged with protecting the French language, also known?

A. Les Immortels?

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