



# News From France

A free monthly review of French news & trends

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NEWS FROM FRANCE  
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## France Alumni USA platform launches

### FRANCE ALUMNI USA HAS OFFICIALLY LAUNCHED

Alumni who studied in France are invited to join a new online platform, France Alumni USA, to network with other alumni and stay connected to France.



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## A message from Ambassador Gérard Araud

Dear Friends,

Every September, I feel strongly the spirit of change brought on by the fall. The *rentrée* can be felt throughout the Embassy, as new colleagues arrive, visits from our ministers from France pick up pace, and a new season of cultural programming begins.

The *rentrée* for students is a time for new friendships. Of course, the friendship between France and the United States goes back centuries, to the very foundations of the country. But this September has nonetheless been a month of new and strengthened relationships.

For French diplomats, the Ambassadors' Week conference August 29-September 2 was a wonderful opportunity for digital diplomacy. France's Ambassadors gathered in Paris to meet with Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Development Jean-Marc Ayrault and discuss diplomatic priorities. But as much time as we spent with colleagues discussing the policies and priorities of our posts, we spent an equal amount of time interacting with the public, our constituents, in person and through social

media. As an avid twitter user, I believe that social media offers ambassadors an invaluable opportunity to interact personally and to truly get to know our interlocutors at home and abroad.

It has also been a month of events that brought a new focus to the partnership between the United States and France. In New York, the French delegation (led by President François Hollande and Minister of Foreign Affairs Jean-Marc Ayrault) attended the high level meetings of the United Nations General Assembly to move forward action on the refugee crisis and the Paris Agreement on climate change. In Washington, D.C., Ségolène Royal, Minister of the Environment, Energy and Marine Affairs, took part in the "Our Ocean" conference hosted by Secretary of State John Kerry, to pursue action together to protect oceans and marine life.

In short, September has been a month of *rentrée* for France in the U.S., a month during which we have had opportunities to renew our work together, towards common goals. I invite you this month to reach out in the name of French-American friendship, through social media or in person.



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# Minister Ségolène Royal attends “Our Ocean” conference



**FROM SEPTEMBER 15-16**, French Minister of the Environment, Energy, and Marine Affairs Ségolène Royal joined world leaders at the “Our Ocean” conference hosted by Secretary of State John Kerry in Washington, D.C.

The conference centered around four goals: increasing Marine Protected Areas, minimizing the impacts of climate change on the ocean, combating marine pollution by improving international waste management and recycling systems, and management of fish stocks.

As President of COP21 (the twenty-first Conference of Parties of the UN Framework on Climate Change), Minister Royal has pushed to make France a leader in global efforts to combat climate change. She thanked President Barack Obama for ratifying the Paris Agreement on climate change, expected to enter into effect by the end of this year. COP21, which initiated the Paris Agreement, was the first conference to recognize the role of the ocean in the climate system.

In addition to moderating a panel called “The Ocean in a Changing Climate,” Minister Royal introduced the “Our Ocean, One Future” panel at Georgetown University, opened the French American Climate Talks on Ocean and hosted a meeting between 11 Mediterranean countries to apply findings of the conference to the Mediterranean Sea.

During these events, Minister Royal emphasized the importance of reducing plastic waste and better understanding the relationship between oceans and the climate. She also announced several French initiatives, including a coalition of countries joining France in implementing a plastic bag ban, and a goal of protecting 75% of the world’s coral reefs by 2020.



**Above:** France’s climate plan includes increasing Marine Protected Areas. **Left:** Minister Royal meets with Mediterranean leaders.

## Cultural and political institutions open their doors during the Journées Européennes du Patrimoine



The Paris Hôtel-de-Ville, one of the many public buildings that opens its doors during the Journées européennes du patrimoine.

**SEPTEMBER 17-18** marked the 33rd annual “Journées Européennes du Patrimoine” or European Heritage Days in France, drawing flocks of foreign and French visitors alike to institutions, public buildings, embassies, and

ministries, many of which are not normally accessible to the public. Every region and town hosted their own events and tours, which brought a total of 12 million visitors to France’s monuments.

European Heritage Days offer visitors a chance to tour such sites as the Sorbonne, the Elysée Palace (including the President’s office), the Hôtel-de-Ville and the Senate. Lines to enter government buildings could be daunting, but many took advantage of the unique opportunity. Other visitors in Paris found themselves in the heart of innovative design and modern architecture, as the Jérôme Seydoux-Pathé Foundation and the Foundation Louis Vuitton opened their doors to film enthusiasts and contemporary art devotees, allowing them to stroll through curving glass sails and daylight terraces.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development focused on this year’s theme of “heritage and citizenship,” hosting several events on issues regarding European migrations, peace processes and diplomatic relations. Minister of Foreign Affairs Jean-Marc Ayrault was pleased to host a number of artists, education workshops, concerts and exhibits for visitors to the Quai d’Orsay, whose halls can normally only be seen by outsiders through a virtual tour.

Unusual destinations included the oldest basketball court in the world inaugurated in 1893 at the YMCA Union de Paris, and the underground quarries used to build the Basilica of St. Denis. Outside of Paris, a treasure hunt was held in Rouen, and in Nogent, a tour “following in the footsteps of Flaubert.”

The “Journées Européennes du Patrimoine,” take place every third weekend in September.

# Emily Greenhouse, Managing Editor of The New Yorker

Emily Greenhouse is Managing Editor of The New Yorker magazine. She has written about France for publications including The New Yorker, Bloomberg, and The New Republic, and has appeared on media including “Charlie Rose” to speak about France and recent terrorist attacks.

## Describe your role as Managing Editor of The New Yorker:

I have the wild privilege of working with a team of editors and writers who are daily challenging and inspiring me. Alongside them, I help to decide what stories we assign, and when, and then I track the pieces’ progress and delivery, and from there help to choose what goes into every issue. I make sure we have a diversity of subjects and writers; it’s a priority for me, personally, as a (relatively) young person and a feminist, to make sure we include voices of different races, genders, and backgrounds.

## What is your relationship to France?

My mother’s mother, Françoise, died when I was only a few weeks old. She held me in her arms just before she died, but I never had the chance to know her—and yet I have her to thank for my French heritage, my proud French nationality.

I spent more than 5 of my first 6 years on earth living in Paris; my father, a newspaper reporter, was stationed there with the New York Times. I made my earliest friends in Paris, I learned to read and write and tie my shoes there. Very technically, French is the first language I spoke. I moved around a lot as a child, because of my father’s job, and my connection with France is something I always held to as a defining part of my identity, a key.

## Describe your time in France and how it influenced or shaped your career.

During college, I studied French literature, and spent about 9 months in Paris, studying and working at a newspaper. As soon as I graduated from university in the U.S. I moved back. I had just turned 22 and I wanted to meet a place on my own terms, prove to myself that I was capable of creating myself. It may have been a twisted vision

of courage and adulthood, but Paris opened her arms and quais to me.

The issue that most enralls me now, intellectually, is the study of the Other in France: *l’alterité*. Being from a French-Jewish family, and having lost relatives in the Shoah, I try to approach all the work I do with empathy, knowing that I, too, could be foreign, unwelcome, unwanted.



Emily Greenhouse was named Managing Editor of The New Yorker earlier this year.

## New York and Paris have a unique relationship of exchange and admiration, how is this reflected in The New Yorker?

To me, the vocabulary of art and letters seems to be increasingly international. In many of our staff, I perceive a real Francophilia. From the days of Janet Flanner—who wrote an astonishing seven hundred some “Letters from Paris” under the *nom de plume* Genêt, between the magazine’s founding, in 1925, until her retirement, in 1975—the magazine has always devoted ample space to covering the City of Light, and the country around it. Adam Gopnik’s work on Paris is a sort of miracle of curiosity and humanism. George Packer has written about immigrant communities in the suburbs of Paris, including Bobigny, where I have spent considerable time, with remarkable insight. This summer, we published an excerpt from my colleague Lauren Collins’s new memoir, “When in French,” about how

she and her husband, Olivier, fell in love despite different native tongues. Lauren is a joyfully inventive writer who thrills to the peculiarities and intricacies of language.

Françoise Mouly, the art editor of The New Yorker—with whom I count myself lucky to be close—is a native of Paris and a dynamic force who cultivates many artists around the world. Françoise and I once worked together on a spread about an imagined New Yorker-like magazine called The Parisianer, covers of which were displayed at the Galerie de la Cité Internationale des Arts, in Paris.

I should mention—or maybe I shouldn’t!—that David Remnick, our editor-in-chief, spent younger days busking in the Paris Métro.

## What differences do you see between journalism in France and the US?

The pulse of ideas is stronger, or at least more direct, it seems to me in French journalism. There is greater fluency with the language of theory—I only wish we had something like Le Monde Diplomatique in our own mainstream papers.

It’s impossible not to be aware, this election season, of the ghastly polarization and balkanization of the media in the United States. Perhaps we all are responsible. I don’t mean to romanticize the situation in France, but it seems to me that moorings are a little bit closer to reality, in French journalism.

## Can you tell us about something great you’ve read lately in French or in translation?

I really admire the ferocity of the women Marie NDiaye writes, tangled between familial and national loyalty and the search to define themselves apart, anew.

I recently learned that my boyfriend’s great-grandfather, who immigrated to the United States from Russia, by way of Canada, legally changed his name to Anatole when he arrived, as an homage to Anatole France’s work. He’s a writer I’ve been revisiting lately; I hadn’t known of his relationship to Proust and to L’Affaire Dreyfus. But learning this story from my boyfriend just goes to show: admiration for France is everywhere! 

## En chiffres...

# 1585

The number of “speed-dating” style meetings between entrepreneurs and ambassadors held during Ambassadors’ week August 29-September 2.

# 6.8 MILLION

The number of primary school students who went back to school in France for the September *rentrée*.

# 5

The number of “mother sauces” or foundational sauces of French cuisine. The 5 sauces are: Béchamel, Velouté, Espagnole, Tomate and Hollandaise.

# The French President and Ministers' week at the UNGA

**FROM SEPTEMBER 19-23**, a French delegation led by President François Hollande attended the high-level meetings of the 71st session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) alongside representatives from all 193 member states of the UN. The General Assembly is tasked with passing resolutions that deal with international cooperation, peace, and security, voted upon by all member states.

Besides President Hollande, the delegation to New York included Minister of the Environment, Energy, and Marine Affairs Ségolène Royal, Minister of International Affairs Jean-Marc Ayrault, and Minister of State for Development and Francophonie André Vallini.

President François Hollande spoke before the Assembly on September 20, addressing a number of priorities including bringing an immediate solution in Syria, implementing the Paris Agreement on climate change, and proposing a new agenda for African development. During the trip to New York, President Hollande and other French leaders also took the opportunity to strengthen relationships with American institutions and to promote the unity of French-speaking countries around the world.

## Crisis in Syria

In the same September 20 speech, President Hollande focused on the war in Syria, the main source of refugees and migrants today. He warned that "the Syrian tragedy will be seen by history as a disgrace for the international community if we do not end it quickly." He called for an immediate end to the political instability and inhumane conditions in Syria.

President Hollande encouraged the Syrian government's backers, such as Russia and Iran, to push the regime toward peace. He claimed that once a peaceful resolution has been reached in Syria, "there will finally be hope for the displaced and for the refugees."



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Minister Ayrault addressed the September 19 High-Level Summit for Refugees and Migrants hosted by Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, emphasizing the need to immediately end the Syrian crisis. He pledged France's support to surrounding countries hosting refugees as well to the Lake Chad basin communities, where the terrorism of Boko Haram has displaced 2.5 million and caused 200,000 to flee as refugees. President Obama's Leaders' Summit on Refugees the following day, attended by President Hollande, put the goals of the New York Declaration into action by raising an additional \$4.5 billion in humanitarian appeals. President Hollande confirmed that France will contribute more than €1 billion between 2016-2018 in response to the Syrian crisis.

The September 19 event resulted in the adoption of the New York Declaration by member states who committed to protecting the rights of migrants and refugees and planned for safer and more efficient migration in the coming years.

## Paris Agreement

On September 21, a meeting was held with the goal of enacting the Paris Agreement on climate change. The agreement, negotiated under France's COP21 presidency, aims at mitigating the effects of greenhouse gases through individually decided contributions by each member nation.

In advance of the ratification meeting, President Hollande proclaimed before the UNGA general debate that "Despite the significant nature of this agreement, we have no time to lose." He praised the U.S. and China for their contributions and recognized that "nothing would have been possible" without their contributions setting an example on the global stage.

The terms of the Paris Agreement stipulate that it will not go into effect until it has been ratified by 55 countries comprising at least 55% of greenhouse gas emissions. Following the recent ratification of the Agreement by nations including India, Brazil, Mexico, and the UAE, the



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threshold for country membership was met with a total of 62 countries formally on board as of October 4. These 62 countries account for 51.89% of global emissions. With the October 4 vote by the European Union to ratify the agreement, the threshold of 55% of global emissions will be passed, meaning that the agreement will go into full effect on November 4, 2016.

### Agenda for African development

During his speech at the UNGA general debate, President Hollande proposed an Agenda 2020 for Africa. He urged investment to develop the continent's potential and reduce population displacements that destabilize countries of origin and host countries alike.

According to President Hollande, this plan "must allow all Africans to gain access to electricity... [the lack of access is] an injustice, but above all it hinders sustainable growth in Africa." It was to this effect that a renewable energy initiative was launched during COP21. Ten funding partners have undertaken to mobilize \$10 billion by 2020, with France contributing 20% of the total. Hollande called his fellow UNGA members to action, arguing that a "mutual investment" in Africa would benefit all.

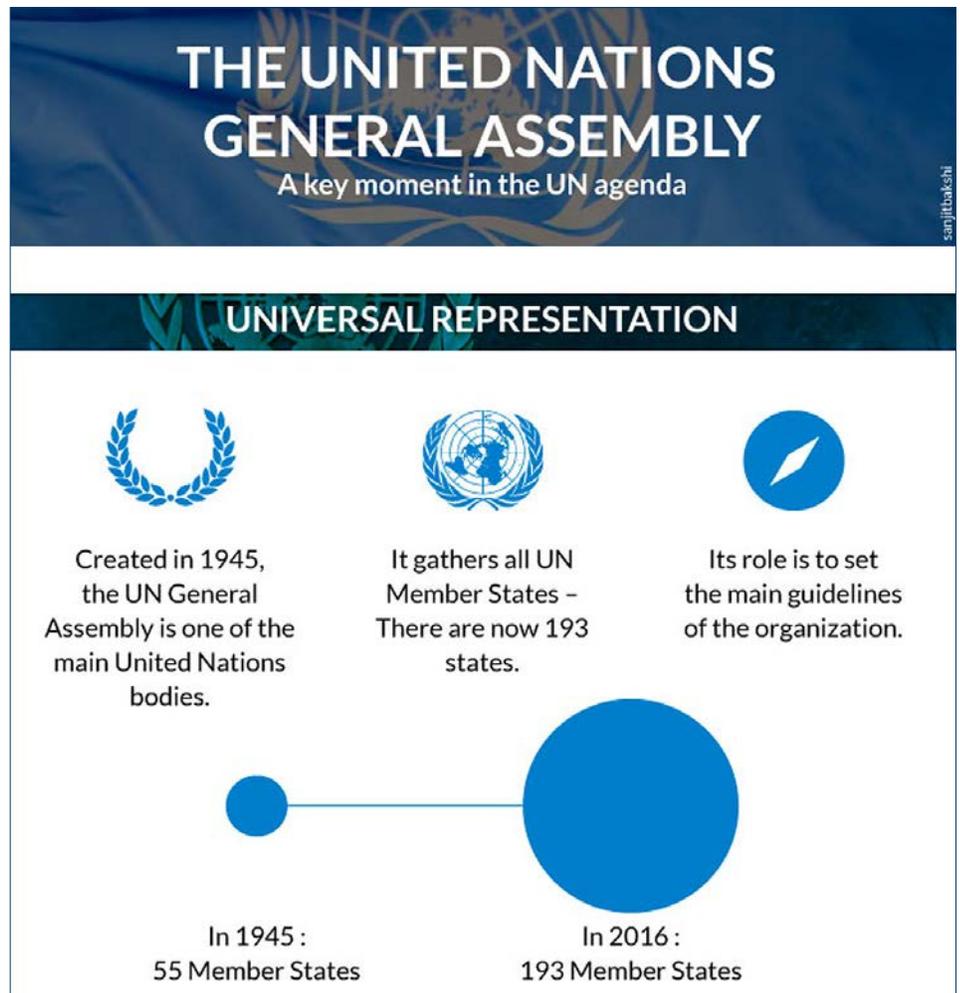
### Official events and receptions

The French delegation also used their time in New York to affirm their dedication to human rights, the unity of the French speaking world, and the strength of U.S.-French relations.

On September 19, Henry Kissinger presented President François Hollande with the World Statesman Award on behalf of the Appeal of Conscience Foundation, an interfaith coalition of religious and business leaders. The foundation seeks to promote peace and security by ensuring freedom, democracy, and human rights around the world. President Hollande was "recognized for his leadership in safeguarding democracy and freedom in a time of terrorist violence and for his contribution to global stability and security" by the foundation's founder and president, Rabbi Arthur Schneier.

In his acceptance speech, President Hollande reaffirmed France's commitment to fighting anti-semitism and other threats to religious liberty. He also addressed the threat of terrorism worldwide, proclaiming that "terrorism puts democracies to the test. It seeks to destroy our cohesion and imposes division." Ministers Ayrault and Royal attended a reception on September 22 for the ministers of Francophone countries, also attended by United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

Beyond the UNGA, President Hollande spoke of France's efforts to protect cultural heritage at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Minister Ayrault spoke at the launch of the much anticipated France Alumni USA network, a virtual



**Counterclockwise from opposite top:** President Hollande at the UNGA; Minister Ayrault in meeting on Syria; President Hollande & U.S. Vice-President Joe Biden at the Metropolitan Museum of Art; UNGA infograph from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

platform for alumni to keep close ties to France and each other. Further cementing the ties between France and the U.S., he gave a speech at Columbia University's School of International and Public affairs on September 22, where he

stressed that "against populism and demagogues, we need to reaffirm our values and not abandon our principles. "France and the U.S. share a lot of the same views," he emphasized. "Our successes are based on our cooperation."

## INRA releases study on reducing food waste



©Earth Fix/ K. Campbell

Most grocery stores have no choice but to throw their food waste into the garbage.

**EVERY DAY WE SEE** wasted food: from restaurant leftovers to one-day-past-the-expiration-date products in the dumpster behind the store. Most of this waste is produced in cities. A recent study from the French National Institute for Agricultural Research (INRA) has looked at food distribution and consumption to propose some solutions.

Most individuals don't think they are a big part of the problem, but the statistics are staggering. In the United States, 30-40% of the food supply is thrown out according to the United Nations Environment Programme. In Europe, about 381 pounds of food are wasted per citizen in a year. "More than two-thirds of this are lost during

distribution, by restaurants and catering firms, and when cooking at home" according to the INRA study.

France made the news earlier this year by prohibiting supermarkets from throwing away or destroying unsold food. The INRA study attempts to further tackle this problem by proposing a set of "enablers" that can be implemented to reduce waste. Some of these enablers include implementing new taxes to modify behavior, allowing for more flexibility in dealing with defective or almost expired products (recycling or donating, giving discounts based on appearance or expiration) recycling unconsumed foods (through compost, for example) and educating the general public.

Because urban areas are the main culprit, the experts who conducted the study had to understand the future of how cities eat. Looking at current trends, they identified three possible scenarios: 1) globalized metropolises dominated by major retailers and people disconnected from farmers; 2) medium-sized urban communities networked together and using new green technologies to stay connected to agricultural areas; and 3) shrinking urban areas that develop local, socially connected and low-tech economies. Though implementation of the changes needed will vary depending on the city's circumstances, the study is clear that attitudes must change. 

## France Alumni USA platform launches in New York

**ON SEPTEMBER 21**, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Development Jean-Marc Ayrault and the Embassy of France in the U.S. officially launched a new online platform, France Alumni USA, for students and professionals who studied in France. Operated by Campus France, this platform will provide resources and networking opportunities with other professionals with a French connection.

The site is intended to keep alumni connected to French language, culture and business as well as listing internship and employment opportunities. It is aimed at those who have completed part or all of their studies in France, in any subject, for a period of 3 months or longer. Membership is free, and those who join have access to a directory of other members and themed discussion groups.

In anticipation of the launch of France Alumni USA, Campus France ran a competition, "Yes! I studied abroad in France" where alumni could respond with a written or video message on their French experience. The best stories from the contest are featured on the new site. The winner,

Renee Field, won a trip to France with a humorous video in which she observed the French penchant for wearing scarves, advising to wear them "because French people do not like necks for some reason."

At the launch event, Minister Ayrault gave a speech to alumni about France and the United States' shared values. "Student mobility is a

pledge of tolerance and liberty," he proclaimed, encouraging all present to maintain their connections to France.

It is estimated that over 300,000 students pursue a form of study in France, including 17,000 Americans per year. The international France Alumni platform so far connects a community of more than 35,000 of these alumni. 



Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault gives a speech at the France Alumni USA launch. 

©French Embassy/ S. Tribollet

# France takes home nine golds at Rio Paralympics



Marie-Amélie Le Fur beat her world record in the long jump. She took home two Gold and one Bronze medal during this year's Paralympic games.

**AS FRANCE WRAPPED UP** its Olympic season, French paralympians returned home with a total of 28 medals, bringing home nine gold, five silver, and 14 bronze, officially closing Rio de Janeiro's Paralympic games. A total of 126 French athletes competed in the games with notable performances in fencing, track and field, and table tennis events.

France's most dramatic win was the Men's épée team gold against China. A computer

generated coin toss after a standoff score of 41 - 41 promised a win to France if no decisive blow was successful in the last remaining additional minute. No point was scored, leaving France's team, including Robert Citerne, the oldest wheelchair fencer in the games, to bring home the gold. This constituted Citerne's fourth title since 1992.

In track and field, Marie-Amélie Le Fur beat her world record in the long jump on September 9.

The 27-year-old athlete managed to shave a fraction of a second from her previous score, winning with a time of 59.27 seconds. Le Fur also won a second gold in the T44 400m dash.

In table tennis, France also performed impressively. Fabien Lamirault won the H-Class 2 one-on-one match against Polish player Rafal Czuper, while Stéphane Molliens, Jean-François Ducay and Lamirault played a team table tennis match, winning yet another gold for France. 🇫🇷

## Events you don't want to miss

### ON TOUR

#### Piaf! The Show

October 17–January 6, Princeton, Scottsdale, Los Angeles, New York, Washington, DC, Boca Raton + more

Hailed as "Edith Piaf's legitimate musical heiress," Anne Carrere brings to life the sparrow of Montmartre's songs in Piaf! The Show.

### EAST COAST

#### Filming at the Borders: Migrating to Europe Today film series



October 13–28, New York  
This special series at Columbia's Maison Française presents screenings of 10 recent films followed by in-depth discussions with the filmmakers and academic specialists.

#### Festival Albertine

November 2–6, New York

Curated by National Book Award-winning author of "Between the World and Me" Ta-Nehisi Coates, the third annual Festival Albertine at the Albertine Bookstore will explore the changing nature of identity and how the arts interrogate our national, social, and cultural labels today in France and the U.S.

### SOUTH

#### Hélène Berr, A Stolen Life

August 26–November 13, Houston

This exhibition at the Holocaust Museum in Houston tells the story of Hélène Berr, a young Jewish French woman whose promising future was brutally cut short by the Nazi extermination plan.



© Mémorial de la Shoah, Paris

#### Festivals Acadiens et Créoles

October 13–16, Lafayette, LA

Founded to keep Cajun culture alive, this festival showcases the best of Cajun and Zydeco music, traditional and fine artists and craftspeople from across Louisiana, and delicious Cajun foods.



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### MIDWEST

#### A la carte French Food Festival

October 19–30, Chicago and cities across the Midwest

A week-long celebration of contemporary French food, wine, and lifestyle. The event includes specially crafted menus at restaurants, cooking workshops, and activities for children.



©Vicente Villamon

**REUNION ISLAND, IN THE INDIAN OCEAN EAST OF MADAGASCAR**, is a French overseas department known to adventurers for its natural beauty. Due to its location, Réunion has long been a crossroads for travel and trade.

The tiny island holds a range of geographical wonders, from magnificent mountainous and volcanic landscapes to tropical beaches. The island is mostly unsettled, with 40% of its 970 mi<sup>2</sup> territory classified as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.

There are three volcanic calderas (large volcanic craters): Cilaos, Cirque de

Mafate and Cirque de Salazi. Wild with vegetation, these unique sites offer hikers a chance to discover beautiful waterfalls and spot unique wildlife.

The population of a little over 843,500 lives mainly in the cities of Saint-Denis (the capital), Saint-Paul, Saint-Pierre and Le Tampon. Much like its Indian Ocean neighbors, Réunion is a multicultural society with a population of people originally from France, Mozambique, India, China, Madagascar, and the Comoros Islands. Though French is the island's official language, Creole is the main language of everyday use. 

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