



Classified ads page 7

What's on? page 8

My Riviera page 6

Inside this week

Rock Rescue

Twelve year old trapped in Menton breakwater, p3

Concrete Canal

Peymeinade protests at canal changes, p3

Strip Strop

Antibes woman hits world headlines, p4

Biot Shooting

Attempted murder in tourist town, p4

Cops With Clout

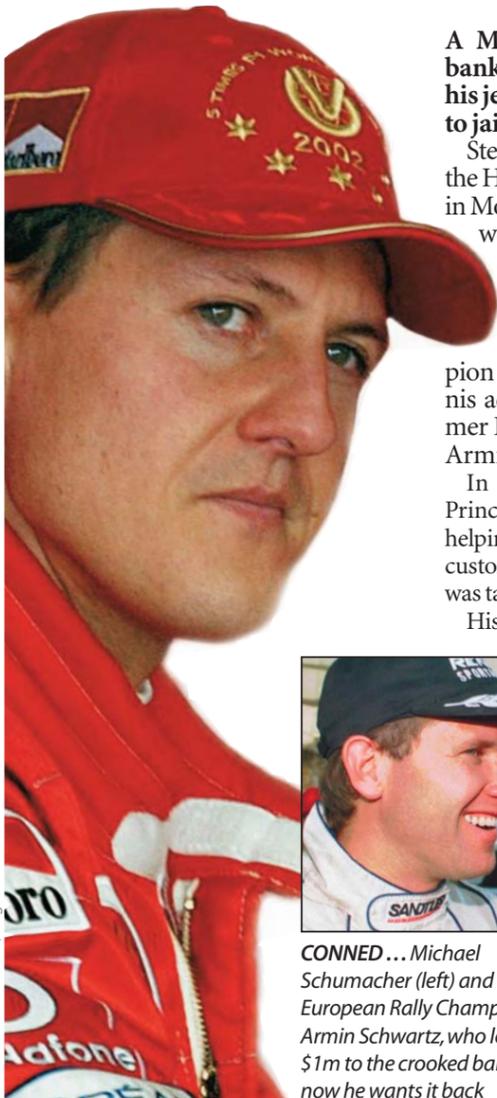
Local police get new powers, p5

My Riviera

Chimney creator Gordon Dietzmann, p6

4½ years in jail for 'trusted' British bank manager who conned clients

MONACO BANKER STOLE STARS' CASH



A MONACO-BASED British banker who stole €14m from his jet-set clients has been sent to jail for four and a half years.

Steven Troth was a manager at the HSBC Republic private bank in Monaco for ten years, but it all went wrong when he started abusing the trust he had built up with eleven wealthy clients including Formula One world champion Michael Schumacher, tennis ace Henri Leconte and former European Rally Champion Armin Schwartz.

In a trial which rocked the Principality, Troth, 42, admitted helping himself to money from customer's accounts. €10 million was taken from Schumacher alone.

His defence team told the court he did it because he was depressed following his divorce.

Luxury

To console himself he made nearly 150 unauthorised withdrawals, transferring the money into Swiss bank accounts and buying two luxury villas in Roquebrune.

He emulated the lifestyles of his wealthy clients and owned a string of

By **JENNY PAUL**

luxury vehicles, including a rally car, a Porsche and a 4X4.

He also loaned €2m to French popstar Liane Foley, who is now repaying the cash.

Loans

Prosecutors claimed that he even hired an architect to renovate one of his villas and then paid him with money taken from the architect's own account.

Troth paid back €5million when the fraud was discovered, but he had also loaned money to other clients by raiding customers' accounts without authorisation.

The scam was discovered by an internal investigation at the bank whilst Troth was on holiday in the Maldives. Monaco police arrested him upon his return.

Troth was also fined €30,000 at the sentencing on Tuesday. Adrian Russell from HSBC Republic said "We feel the result today speaks for itself."

But Troth's defence lawyer, Olivier Le Maux, said of Tuesday's sentence "I don't agree with this sentence at all. They have given him six months more than the prosecution asked for. It is very harsh." Troth has spent the last fifteen months in Monaco's prison, awaiting trial.

The bank says it has already

refunded all affected clients. However, some remain angry and out of pocket after Troth's taste of the high life.

German rally champion Armin Schwartz told *The Riviera Gazette* "I knew Stephen for many years and had no reason not to trust him."

"I never dealt with anyone else at the bank."

"I lent him \$1m, which he said he'd invest and repay with interest within two weeks."

"What I didn't know was that the bank had suspended him two weeks beforehand for misconduct. Nobody from the bank told me."

"It seems he took my money and used it to repay his mortgage at the bank."

"They used my money to pay back Schumacher!"

"Now, because Stephen was not working for them anymore, they have not reimbursed this money," he continued.

Forged

Schwartz's lawyer, Donald Manasse, confirmed that "a civil complaint and a possible criminal complaint involving a forged signature against HSBC Republic in Monaco are now in process."

An HSBC Republic spokesman said "with regards to further proceedings, we do not wish to comment until we have studied the court transcripts."



CONNED ... Michael Schumacher (left) and former European Rally Champion Armin Schwartz, who loaned \$1m to the crooked banker – now he wants it back

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CMYK

VILLAGERS IN CANAL MARCH

ALMOST three hundred Peymeinade residents marched last week to protest at major works being carried out by water company Lyonnaise des Eaux.

"Our canal is being destroyed!" complains Alan Dearlove, who lives next to the Canal de Siagne in Peymeinade.

He told *The Riviera Gazette* "We're very upset. They've taken out the water and put in huge plastic tubes, all without telling us, and now it stinks because the mud is going stagnant."

The 55 kilometre canal was built in the 1860s to provide fresh water to the people of Cannes.

But Lyonnaise des Eaux dismissed residents' concerns. "We're just clean-

ing the canal, and when we've finished it will look as it did before," a spokesman told *The Riviera Gazette*.

Dearlove is doubtful. "You can see the scale of work going on here. I'm not convinced our canal will be the same afterwards," he said.

Peymeinade's Mairie was playing down the impact of the works this week. "They're putting pipes through the canal, to carry clean drinking water. These run under the old canal, and the water on top will hide them.

"They have to do this because of pollution, but the canal will look the same afterwards.

"The water company is not acting illegally, but locals are upset as it looks ugly while the work is being carried out."

Photo: Eileen Dearlove



Nice Martin

BETWEEN A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE... a team of rescue workers took nearly an hour to free the trapped 12 year old

Youngster trapped by sea wall

A TWELVE year old girl was rescued after she got trapped between huge rocks in the sea-wall in Menton on Monday – but no action is to be taken to stop similar accidents in the future.

The Italian girl had been playing on the breakwater when she slipped and fell into a deep hole between the artificial rocks and a concrete wall.

Nine *pompiers* worked carefully for nearly an hour to rescue the girl, identified only as Francesca. After being examined by a doctor at the scene, she

By Alison Craddock

was taken to the town's La Palmosa hospital for checks.

But, although she was badly shaken by the incident, she escaped with only bruises.

"It was a difficult rescue because there was a danger that moving any of the rocks might have caused her to fall further, or to be crushed" said a Menton *pompiers* spokesman.

Breakwaters are regarded as dan-

gerous playgrounds – anyone unlucky enough to get trapped amongst the large boulders could be drowned by an incoming tide.

But nothing will be done to stop the same thing happening again in the town, according to a rescue worker who didn't want to be identified.

"This is the first time such an accident has occurred" he said.

"There are signs forbidding people to walk on the rocks – and if they had been obeyed the accident would not have happened."



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Antibes woman blows top in US airport, gets \$2 fine

AN ANTIBES woman who made world headlines after she stripped topless at a US airport security checkpoint has returned safely home after escaping with a \$2 fine.

Elaine Aguilhaume became confused by an over-zealous search with a security wand at Evansville regional airport in Indiana last week, and ended up 'helping' checkpoint staff by removing her sweater, blouse and bra.

The 56-year-old was promptly arrested, but as police tried to handcuff her she dropped to the ground and refused to get up. She was charged with public indecency, resisting arrest and disorderly conduct at an airport.

Relatives paid a \$5,300 bond to get her out of the county jail, and at a court hearing late last week Aguilhaume was ordered to pay fines of \$1 for public indecency and \$1 for resisting law enforcement.

She must also pay \$130 in court costs.

Defence attorney Glen



FINE TIME... Elaine Aguilhaume hit the headlines after impromptu strip

Grampp said after the hearing that his client was embarrassed by the ordeal and attributed it to a misunderstanding arising from the language barrier.

After having to remove her shoes for the first part of the check, she thought that the female officer wanted her to remove her clothing.

She told *Nice Matin* "I

thought I was being strip-searched.

"How could they think I was doing a strip-tease?"

She added "I only pleaded guilty in court to put this all behind me."

Aguilhaume, who had been in the US for a nephew's wedding, is now recovering at her home in Antibes.

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Prostitutes protest in Paris

THE country's prostitutes took to the streets of Paris on Tuesday night to protest against the new crime bill, which makes the world's oldest profession illegal in France for the first time.

Several hundred demonstrated in front of the Senate in a bid to persuade parliament to vote against the bill.

The bill creates the new offence of 'passive soliciting'. Anyone found guilty of touting for sex, even 'by their dress or posture' will face up to six months in prison or a fine of up to €3,750. Prostitutes from abroad could also have their residence permits taken away.

"It is a law that is repressive in every respect," says activist Josiane Ceret of the Women's



PRO-TEST... one sign read "You sleep with us, you vote against us"

Rights Collective. "It won't solve the problem, it will just hide it."

"They are trying to make us out to be delinquents, even criminals" said one outraged prostitute.

Police in Nice continue to crack down on organised prostitution. Four Hungarians were this week given between three and five years in prison for running a team of prostitutes on the Promenade des Anglais.

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Shooting shocks Biot

A BIOT woman has narrowly escaped death in what police think was attempted murder on Saturday afternoon.

Marie-Blanche Gianni was shot in the head, apparently by an assailant who was trying to disguise the shooting as suicide.

The 39-year-old's parents found her unconscious and bleeding in the garden outside her villa in the town's Chemin St Julien district.

Police believe another person was involved, but won't say why. However, detectives say a gun was put in Gianni's mouth and fired. The bullet tore through her tongue and exited through her cheek.

Officers from Valbonne and Cannes are working on the case, which shocked the normally quiet village. "We don't know who did this, nor can we speculate on a possible motive" confirmed an investigator.

The victim is now recovering after leaving hospital, but is expected to be unable to speak for quite some time.

ADORABULL!

THERE'S a long tradition of dressing up in spooky costumes for Halloween, but one Golfe Juan office worker thought it would amoozing to go to work dressed as a COW!

Colleagues called the Gazette's snapper to DS Maritime in Port Camille Rayon, where PA Priscilla Whitaker spent last Friday in the fetching black-and-white outfit.

"I felt like an udder idiot at first, but it's gone down well. I'm not sure I cud do it again next year," said the cownterfeit bovine.

And a workmate quipped "Priscilla's always been outstanding in her field."

Got a photo opportunity? Let us know on 04 93 09 66 43



Local cops get more clout

A NEW law has extended the powers of the *Police Municipale*, France's 'local' police force, reports Alison Craddock.

And, although it allows local police to issue on-the-spot fines of up to four and a half euros to jay-walking pedestrians, a spokesman told *The Riviera Gazette* that the force is much more interested in using the new measures to deal with more serious traffic offences.

"Previously we were unable to detain suspected stolen vehicles while we checked them with the Police Nationale's central record system," said a spokesman from the Municipal Police depot in Nice.

"It meant that many criminals were able to escape arrest."

The local police will now get their own in-car computer links, which will let them run spot checks on car registrations and ownership.

In practice, the new powers have been in place since November 1999, when the National Assembly voted in favour of the proposals.

But they have taken three years to pass through judicial process and into law.

Municipal Police can now demand proof of identity from suspects and issue penalties for traffic law infringements – powers previously only available to the Police Nationale.

"This is the result of years of lobbying. At last we are able to go about crime-fighting in a more efficient way," said the police spokesman.

Club flies Monaco police to Ground Zero ceremony

TWO Monaco policemen who witnessed last year's terrorist attacks on New York were guests of honour at the Monaco-USA association's meeting on Tuesday night at the Thermes Marins in Monte-Carlo.

Monaco-USA, a non-profit association that promotes links between Monaco and the US, donated money to cover travel expenses for the men's trip to New York for last September's remembrance ceremonies.

Jean-Pierre Raffaelli and Roger Bosio, representatives of the Monaco chapter of the International Police Association, have travelled to the city on many occasions to meet and train with their American colleagues in the NY Police and Fire departments.

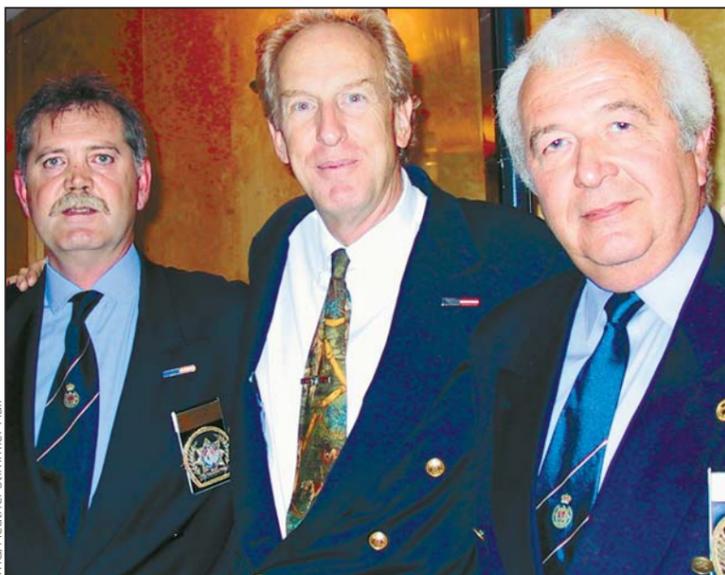
As the first hi-jacked aircraft slammed into the World Trade Center's twin towers, the pair were close by, waiting to take a tour of Manhattan in a police helicopter.

And, one year later, they were keen to return with a delegation from Monaco's fire and police forces to attend the memorial services.

"It was important for us to show our solidarity with the American fire and police forces by being in New York," said Raffaelli.

City authorities decorated each member of the Monaco delegation with a special memorial medal bearing the stars and stripes.

"We attended memorial ceremonies at two New York fire departments we had visited before, where



WITNESSES... Roger Bosio, Monaco-USA's Mike Powers and Jean-Pierre Raffaelli

firemen we knew had died," said Monaco fireman Thierry Galland.

"The widows and families were there. It was very moving," he continued.

The men's trip was not a junket, according to Monaco-USA's president, Mike Powers. "They attended the memorial services in New York on their own time and at their own expense – the Principality didn't pay for it.

"I've known Roger for ten years, and Jean-Pierre for almost forty, because I grew up in Monaco," he said.

"When I heard they were actually in

New York when it happened, I felt quite emotional.

"Police and firemen are already underpaid, and they perform such an important service to the community, so I asked the association if we could cover their airfare."

Monaco-USA is a non-profit association which raises funds for charitable causes.

The association's next meeting is a traditional Thanksgiving Dinner at Stars'n'Bars.

Anyone wishing to go, or to join the association, can call Isabelle or Merrily on 06 78 63 15 73.

Wolf inquiry

A PARLIAMENTARY board of inquiry will look into the presence of wolves in the Mercantour, it has been announced this week.

The commission will report in six months, and will consider all aspects of the wolves' presence, from protection of the species to effective solutions for livestock security.

Monte Carlo Pirates

KEEN sportsman HSH Prince Albert has approached the US's National Football League with a plan to bring American Football to Monaco.

He wants Monaco to have its own professional team, competing in the NFL's European league.

The team could be called the Monte Carlo Pirates and would be based at the Stade Louis II.

The NFL plans to add more sides to its six-team European league in 2005.

Tram plan derailed

LOCAL MP Rudy Salles has infuriated Nice mayor Jacques Peyrat by presenting the Minister of Transport with a last-minute alternative to the proposed town tram network.

Funding is in place and work is due to begin on the €305 million tram system in March 2003.

But Salles, an old friend of the Minister, says an electric hybrid tram/bus system would be cheaper and quicker to install.

Soapless situation

TOWNS minister Jean-Louis Borloo is waging war on unsanitary housing.

Some 1.9 million people still live in accommodation without a toilet or a shower. Some have neither.

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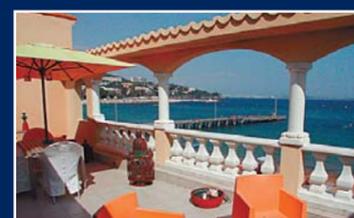
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My Riviera

Fireplace creator **Gordon Dietzmann** tells Heather Stimmler-Hall why he does a roaring trade on the Riviera...

“ I'M from Germany. I came to the Riviera seven years ago because I didn't want to have to choose between working with my father in Northern Italy or studying in Frankfurt, where my mother lives.

I had visited friends in Cabris before, so when I was 18, I got my truck-driving license and brought my horse and dog, Rosie, to make a new life in France.

It's not easier to live here than anywhere else, but it's more beautiful. I chose Cabris, specifically Speracedes, because it's a more authentic part of the region. People are really rooted here. In the village there's a lot of interesting people - artisans and masons; people who make olive oil.

For the most part the region is a victim of its own success, but Speracedes is still a living village and not a commercial place for tourists.

I like the mountains here, especially between Cabris and Lac Saint Croix. I try and go riding with my horse when I have time, around Lac de Saint Cassien and Peymeinade. I'm not much into nightlife; I prefer to have friends over at my place. The bad part about living inland is that it's so far to travel if you want go out.

But when I do go out, my favourite places to eat out are unpretentious. I prefer good food and ambiance, so I go to the Quatre Saisons in Grasse's St Jacques quarter, the Pitchounet in Peymeinade, and the Mini Grill in Cabris, which doesn't have the best view in town, but has good food and great people.

I knew a bit of French, but I learned mostly after I arrived. I think it's very important to speak the language to do well here.

I've been making fireplaces for four years. I learned how to build stoves and



FIRE MAN... Gordon and Rosie get cosy by a fireplace he built in just five days

fireplaces from my father. My grandfather was also a stove builder. I didn't think I could make a living doing this on the Riviera because I'm used to building stoves to heat, but here they are not such a necessity and mostly used for decoration. But no, a lot of people want feature fireplaces, and I'm quite happy doing this.

Since I moved here I've seen a lot more construction - villages are getting bigger and there's much more traffic. The public transportation is expensive and unreliable and it's impossible to get around by bike.

It's such a beautiful region, and it's important to keep it natural. A lot of peo-

ple come with a lot of money, construction is out of control, and it's quite difficult for normal people to live here.

I think we need to plan better for the future, to think of how things can be better if we want to raise our children here. I would like to stay permanently.

I'm lucky because with work I travel a lot in the region and have a lot of contact with people in general, both French and foreigners.

One of the most important things, when you don't have any family nearby, is having good friends - and I've made a lot of true friends here.

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Local roads

● Antibes Access restricted on Rue Thuret until Mar 20, 2003

● Antibes Traffic lights, diversions and 30km/h speed limit on RD4 until Dec 13

● Cannes No vehicular access to a 190m stretch of Rue d'Antibes until Dec 2002. Diversions in place

● Cannes Roadworks on Ave. du Dr Picaud. Long delays until Nov 8

● Mandelieu Traffic lights and 50km/h speed limit on RD109 until Nov 22

● Moyenne Corniche The RN7 is closed between Eze and Villefranche until Dec 15. Diversions are in place

● Nice Delays possible on the Promenade des Anglais, at Pont Magnan until Dec 20 and rue Halevy until Nov 4

● Nice Delays possible on the Quai des Etats Unis, at Cap de Nice, until Nov 29

● St Jean Cap Ferrat Construction work on a new fire station will cause delays at Pont St Jean until Dec 2003

● Valbonne Roadworks on the RD103 with a 50km/h speed limit, causing delays in the village centre until Dec 19

● Villeneuve-Loubet Long-term 50km/h limit and delays on the RN98 coast road, caused by lane closure due to last winter's storm damage

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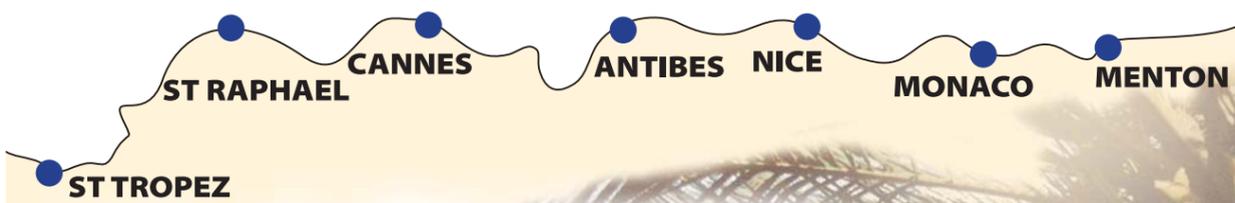
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THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

"All the world's a stage and most of us are desperately unrehearsed"
Sean O'Casey

5 MAIL to: Riviera Gazette Classifieds, 738 Route Notre Dame (Cidex 47), 06330 Roquefort les Pins, France • EMAIL to classifieds@TheRivieraGazette.com • FAX to 04 93 09 66 53 • or submit ONLINE at http://www.TheRivieraGazette.com

What's On and Where To Go...



The Riviera This week

Thursday 7

- The **Australian film festival** continues tonight at Espace de la Vignasse, Valbonne village with *Animals* and *Dance me to my Song* at 8:30pm. Call Béatrice Dutertre on 04 93 95 86 38 to book tickets.
- 120 **ice skaters** arrive in Nice today to compete for the Trophee de la Baie des Anges. Russians Pavel Lebedev and Maria Mukortova, 4th in the World Championships, and former world bronze medallists Sarah Abitbol and Stéphane Bernadis join senior and junior skaters from across France and nine other countries at the Palais des Sports Jean-Bouin, Nice. Tickets for the closing gala on Sunday cost €15 and €20.
- The MC Art **painting and sculpture** salon opens at the Espace Fontvieille, Monaco at 6pm today and runs until Sunday. Several hundred works of art will be on sale. The salon is open daily 10:30am to 8:30pm; entry costs €2.50.
- Salon du Meuble, the region's largest **home furnishing and decorations exhibition**, continues at the Acropolis, Nice until Monday. *The first five visitors to mention The Riviera Gazette get free entry today.* Irish dance spectacular Riverdance continues at the Palais Nikaia, Nice until November 10. The Bourse aux Vêtements second-hand clothes sale at the Residence du Louvre, Menton continues until tomorrow and the Festival Manca, Nice's annual modern music festival, continues until Saturday.

Friday 8

- The pre-Christmas food celebrations begin today with the first of the region's **gourmet food exhibitions** opening at the Hippodrome in Cagnes-sur-Mer. The 11th Salon Gourmand offers 3,500 square metres of specialist and big name wines, foie gras, chocolates, cheeses, meats and other food and drink products, all at direct from the producer prices. Open 10am to 8pm daily until Monday, entry costs €7.
- Beatles fans should head to the Château de Bernes, Lorgues tonight for a night of **Beatles hits**, courtesy of tribute band Patchwork, and an English themed dinner. Tickets are €43 from 04 94 60 43 64.
- The annual Salon de la Fleur et de l'Oiseau opens at the Chantier Naval Opéra, Antibes today. Nearly 300 breeders will be showing nearly **3,000 birds and over 10,000 cut flowers** will be on display. The show is open daily 10am to 6pm until Monday.
- Valbonne's **Australian Film Festival** continues with *Palace Café* and *Children of the Revolution* at 8:30pm.
- Continuing today are Salon du Meuble, MC Art, ice skating, Festival Manca, Riverdance and the Bourse aux Vêtements.

Saturday 9

- The British Association is celebrating **Guy Fawkes night** tonight with a dinner at the Neptune restaurant on the seafront in Cagnes-sur-Mer from 7pm. Tickets cost €29 including drinks. Call Linda Bruce on 06 23 40 45 41 to book or to find out about the association.
- AMIAC, the Alpes-Maritimes International Aperitif Club, is holding its AGM at 11am today, followed by **aperitifs** – of course – and lunch at le Caveau restaurant, Cannes. Tickets cost €32 including drinks. Call 04 92 97 50 72 to join in or to find out more about this very active social club.
- The region's Master Pâtisseries gather at the Palais des Congrès, Juan-les-Pins today, tomorrow and Monday for their annual exhibition. Fantastic **creations in sugar and chocolate** will be on display and in competition, and there'll be demonstrations of the art of confectionary cuisine. Kids will be able to have a go too.
- Nice plays Monaco tonight in a French **football** league Division 1 match at the Stade du Ray, Nice at 8pm. Tickets on 04 92 07 06 06.
- The Australian Film Festival continues with *The Wolf* and *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* at 5pm, *Strike your Heart* and *Lantana* at 7pm, followed by food and music with an Australian theme at 9pm. Call 04 93 95 86 38 for tickets.
- Californian **jazz guitarist** and violinist Art Johnson plays at the San'Louis, on the RN7 in Cagnes-sur-Mer tonight. Call 04 93 31 15 77 for info.
- Continuing today are Salon du Meuble, MC Art, ice skating, Festival Manca, Riverdance, Salon Gourmand and Salon de la Fleur et de l'Oiseau.

Sunday 10

- **Remembrance Sunday.** An English language service, supported by the Cannes branch of The Royal British Legion, is being held at 10:30am at Holy Trinity Church, Rue General Ferrie, Cannes. Flag Bearers will be in attendance. The Cannes branch raised €3,430 for the Poppy Appeal last year – to make a donation and organise your poppy, call 04 93 64 29 79.
- **Antiques lovers** should head to la Collesur-Loup today for a street market. Call 04 93 32 68 36 for info.
- Valbonne's Australian Film Festival continues with *Amy* at 2:30pm, debates and **short films with an Aborigine theme** from 4.30pm and *Dust* and *Mullet* at 8:30pm. Call 04 93 95 86 38 for tickets.
- The Troupe du Rhum **acrobatics group** performs at the Theatre de la Cité, Villeneuve-Loubet at 9pm every night until November 16 and at 3pm on November 17. Call 04 93 16 82 69 for ticket info.

- The **Massive Ragga Party** brings a Jamaican feel to La Palestre, Le Cannet tonight with live acts Natural Black and Big Red. Tickets cost €15. Call 04 93 46 48 88 to book or visit www.lapalestre.com
- The Orchestre Régional de Cannes PACA performs **Mozart** and Haydn at the Théâtre Noga Croisette, Cannes at 4:30pm. Call 04 92 98 62 77 to book.
- Continuing today are Salon du Meuble, Riverdance, Salon Gourmand, Master Pâtisseries and Salon de la Fleur et de l'Oiseau.

Monday 11

- Valbonne's **Australian Film Festival** closes today with *One Night the Moon* and *Dancing in the Dust* at 3pm, *Strike your Heart* and *Lantana* at 6pm and *The Third and Siam Sunset* at 8:30pm. Tickets from 04 93 95 86 38.
- Today is the last chance to see the much-lauded **Della Robbia exhibition** at the Musée Marc Chagall, Nice. It features the work of the famous 15th and 16th Century Florentine family of sculptors and ceramicists.
- Continuing today are Salon du Meuble, Master Pâtisseries and the Troupe du Rhom.

Tuesday 12

- It's **quiz night** at Stars 'n' Bars, Monaco tonight courtesy of the British Association of Monaco. The evening starts with a Tex-Mex buffet at 7:30pm. Tickets are €37. Call +377 93 50 19 52 for info.
- Continuing today is the Troupe du Rhom.

Wednesday 13

- **Mushrooms** are the theme of today's nature and discovery day at the Parc du Vaugrenier, Villeneuve-Loubet from 10am to 5pm. Admission is free of charge – call ASSEM on 04 92 60 78 78 for information.
- Continuing today is the Troupe du Rhom.

Now booking

- Red Pear Theatre presents **An Evening of Romantic Opera and Song** with tenor Justin Lavender (Royal Opera, La Scala, Glyndebourne) and mezzo soprano Louise Crane at the Antibea Theatre, Antibes on November 15 and 16. Tickets are €23; call 04 93 61 01 71 to book.
- Nice's annual **Russian festival** runs from Nov 15 to 24. This year's event includes an Imperial Gala dinner at the Hotel Negresco on Nov 24 and the official twinning of the cities of Nice and Saint Petersburg. Call 04 93 13 90 90 for a full programme of events.

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PM	15C Cloudy	16C Partly Cloudy	17C Sunny	17C Partly Cloudy	19C Cloudy	18C Mainly Clear

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november 14
see you
next week!**