

FRENCH FUN

Although January can feel a little gloomy for some, the prospect of *The France Show 2012* will soon sweep away the seasonal blues. Whether you're planning your next trip across the Channel, or you just want some inspiration and a little light reverie, book your ticket to the event from 13-15 January at Earls Court in London. For an insider's guide to France pay a visit to the tourist board stands lining the venue. Browse the activities on offer from the Nord-Pas-de-Calais or Sensation Bretagne for some seaside fun, or while away the hours planning historical jaunts to Arras in the north of France or Bordeaux further to the south. *FRANCE Magazine* readers can buy two tickets for £10, a saving of £16 (door price £13 each). Simply visit www.thefranceshow.com and enter code FM332 before 31 December to claim your reduced-price entry.



Did you know?

The official introduction of the bikini in 1946 was hotly contested by two French designers; legend has it that although Jacques Heim produced his version first, dubbing it 'L'Atome', his rival Louis Réard marketed a smaller version, calling it 'Le Bikini' after the Bikini Atoll, and the name stuck.



LIVING THE HI-LIFE

Located in the Rue Charonne just a step away from the Place de la Bastille, the new minimalist Hi-Matic Hotel in Paris is designed around the needs of the customer. Described as an 'eco-lodging concept', the hotel's contemporary layout and inviting communal areas are crafted with responsibly sourced renewable materials. Each of the 42 rooms is available to book online - with the décor modelled on the concept of a cabin, guests are encouraged to take advantage of the clever use of space with the well designed internal structure. Organic breakfasts are served in the dining room, with automatic dispensers proffering everything from foodstuffs to guidebooks on the local area. Doubles from €110 per night. Tel: (Fr) 1 43 67 56 56, www.hi-matic.net



Our resident snail is en vacances – can you tell where he is?



WIN!

If you know where Serge is, send us an email at editorial@francemag.com or send us a postcard (address on page 6) with your answer and you could win a £50 voucher for a high street store of your choice. Deadline for entries is 12 January 2012.