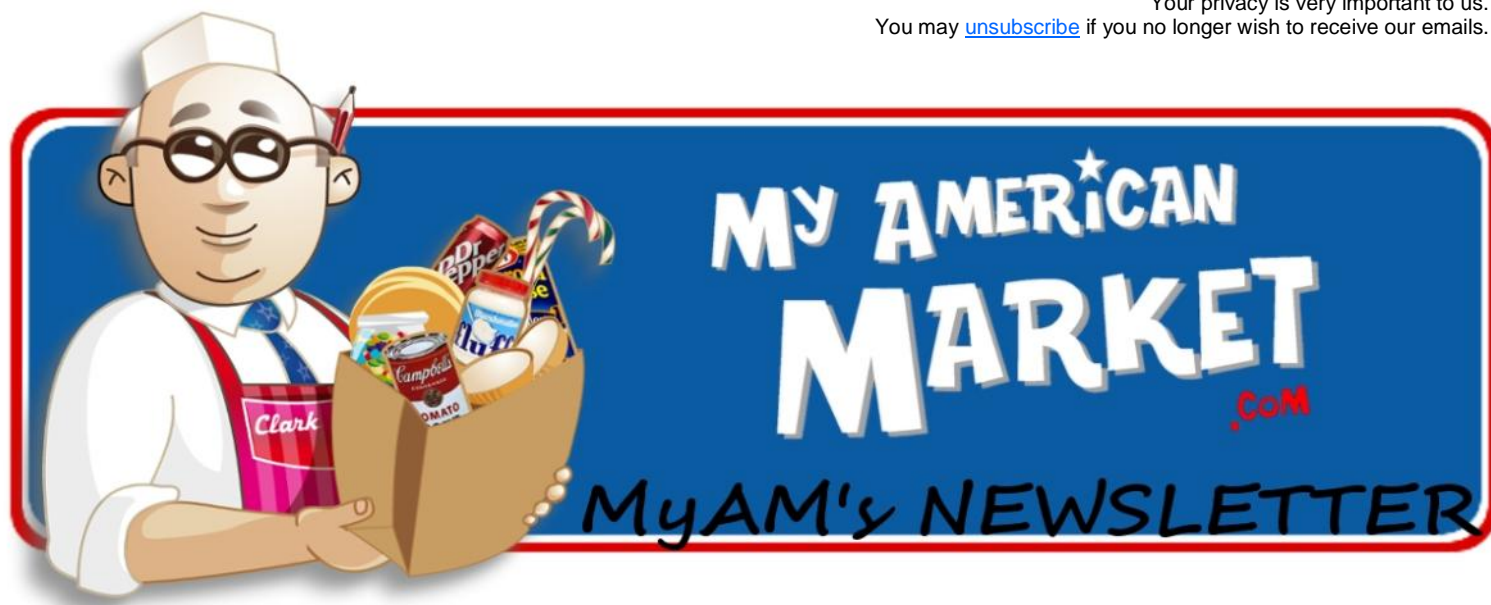


You are receiving this email from My American Market because you purchased a product, subscribed to the newsletter, or have communicated with us in the past. My American Market does not rent, sell or share our databases with anyone.

Your privacy is very important to us.

You may [unsubscribe](#) if you no longer wish to receive our emails.



Dear MyAMers,

Springtime always gets me in the mood for projects, be it a closet that has been begging for some organization, an old chair that I have been meaning to freshen up with a new coat of paint, or a little handmade something to give to one of my loved ones. I don't know what it is, but there is something about the birds singing and flowers blooming that gets my creative juices flowing.



With Easter just around the corner we have some great ways to help spark *your* creative energies in this month's issue. One of them even involves prize potential!

- Check out the contest details for our ["Easterize Clark"](#) drawing contest on page 2. We can't wait to see what you come up with.
- If you're looking for an Easter project you can do with the whole family, be sure to read ["Go Green with Your Easter Eggs"](#) in this month's Kid-Friendly section on page 3.
- Maybe your springtime project involves exploring the beautiful French countryside by car. If it does, Pierre-Antoine Dubosc's article ["Driving in France,"](#) has some points to keep in mind for Americans wishing to drive in France as well as some book recommendations on page 4.
- Finally, don't forget to take a look at the yummy springtime (or anytime!) treats American pastry chef Tracy Treville has kitchen and kid-tested for you just in time for Easter! [WHOOPIE!](#)

Here's to a new projects and a very happy Easter to all!

Anne-Claire



[Subscribe to the newsletter](#)



[Become a fan on Facebook](#)



twitter

[Follow us on Twitter](#)

Newsletter #19
April 2011

In this issue:

> ["Easterize Clark" Drawing Contest](#)

> [Go green with your Easter eggs!](#)

> [Driving in France...](#)

> [What do I need to consider when renting my apartment short-term?](#)

> [Get your «traductions assermentées» online!](#)

> [Everyone says «whoopie»!!](#)

> "Easterize Clark" Drawing Contest



As you may have noticed, our mascot Clark the Clerk's look evolves throughout the year: different hats, new accessories, etc.

This time we thought we would ask you to put on your creativity hats and show us your « artsy » sides!

Send us your drawings of an Easter-themed version of Clark at contact@myamericanmarket.com or by mail to 56 bd Silvio Trentin, Appt A11, 31200 Toulouse.

You have until **midnight on Tuesday the 19th** to submit your entries.

We will then post all your drawings on [facebook](https://www.facebook.com) under 2 categories : contestants 12 and under & 13+. You will be asked to vote for your favorite with the « like » button (friends and acquaintances welcome!).

Winners from both age categories will receive a 30-euro gift basket from MyAM :-)

Best of luck!!



Kid-friendly

Go green with your Easter eggs!

An Easter celebration just doesn't seem complete without an evening spent dyeing Easter eggs in preparation for the Easter Bunny's arrival. As a little girl I used to love competing with my brother and sister to see who could create the brightest, most beautiful egg. Of course, the dyeing process was easy with the PAAS brand egg-decorating kits you could find in any American grocery store this time of year. Since moving to France in 2008, I have foregone this springtime tradition, but this year I decided I was determined to bring it back despite my lack of those trademark PAAS tablets. Who needs them when you have everything you need to make beautiful, naturally-dyed Easter eggs readily available in your own kitchen?

Below is a non-exhaustive table detailing different natural dye stuff:

Color	Dye Stuff
Blue	canned blueberries; red cabbage leaves (boiled) purple grape juice
Shades of brown	strong coffee; instant coffee; black tea, dill seeds; chili powder
Gold	turmeric
Green	spinach leaves (boiled)
Shades of purple	violet blossoms (+ 2 tsp lemon juice); red zinger tea; hibiscus tea; small quantity of red onions skins (boiled); red wine
Pink	beets; cranberries or juice; raspberries; red grape juice; juice from pickled beets
Red	lots of red onion skins (boiled); pomegranate juice; canned cherries (with syrup); raspberries
Orange	yellow onion skins (boiled); carrots; paprika
Yellow	orange or lemon peels (boiled); chamomile tea; celery seed (boiled); green tea; ground cumin (boiled); ground turmeric (boiled); saffron

Directions:

1. Except for spices (approx. 6 tablespoons), put two or three handfuls of dye stuff in a saucepan.
2. Add enough tap water to cover the dye stuff by at least one inch (approx. 1 cup water for 1 handful of dye stuff).
3. Bring the water to a bowl, then reduce heat and let simmer 15 minutes – 1 hour or until you reach the desired color, keeping in mind that the eggs will be lighter than the color of the dye. Remove from heat.
4. Pour mixture into a liquid measuring cup. Add 2 to 3 teaspoons of white vinegar and salt for each cup of strained dye liquid. Pour the mixture into a bowl or jar that is deep enough to completely cover the eggs you want to dye.
5. Gently lower your hard-boiled eggs into the dye with a spoon and let sit until they obtain the desired color. You can even leave them overnight; just be sure to keep the dye and eggs refrigerated.
6. Gently remove the egg(s), and let them dry on a rack or drainer. The original egg carton also works well as a drying rack.
7. Your naturally-dyed eggs will have a matte finish. If you wish, you can use a soft cloth to rub cooking or mineral oil on them to give them a soft sheen.

The sky is the limit with these naturally-dyed eggs. Let your imagination run wild and get creative. Use a clear or colored wax crayon to make designs on the eggs before dyeing or dab the still-wet eggs with a sponge for a more textured look. One of the best things about these homemade creations is the anticipation. You never know what you're going to get! The one thing that doesn't change, is the great taste of hard-boiled eggs on Easter morning...

HAPPY EASTER!



Cultural tips

> Driving in France...



Pierre-Antoine Dubosc is a Parisian living in Montmartre who loves to share his passion for the city of Light. He has just started a company, [Paris on Demand](#), to help tourists visiting Paris make the most of their trip: off-the-beaten-tracks addresses, trip tips, updates on the latest exhibitions and shows.

You can write him here: parisondemand@ymail.com

The best way to discover France is by car. But driving for the first time in a foreign country can be pretty hectic and France is no exception to the rule. With very few automatic cars and quite a number of peculiar rules, it may be stressful and even dangerous to drive in France without a few instructions. Bearing the following in mind will help you ease your mind and enjoy your trip even more!

First, you'll have to get an international driver's permit. You just need to be at least 18 and go to the American Automobile Association with two photos. If you plan on staying in France for more than a year, you'll need a French driver's license. However, the exam is not mandatory if you have a valid driver's license from one of the following states: Connecticut, Illinois, Kansas, Michigan, New Hampshire, South Carolina, Florida, Kentucky or Texas. If you are not from one of the above states, you'll have to take a written test composed of 40 multiple choice questions and a classic driving test. You don't have to take them on the same day. You just need to pass the written test (which means correctly answering at least 35 out of the 40 questions) before taking the driving test.

The main difference between driving in France and the US is the notion of "priorité à droite". This is an old and historically-based rule typical of France. Unless a sign indicates you have the right of way, it means that any vehicle coming from your right-hand side has the right of way, even if the road is a small one and the other vehicle has arrived at the intersection after you.

You also have to get familiar with a manual transmission car. Less than half of French cars are equipped with automatic transmissions. This may be the main difficulty you will encounter. If you've never driven such a car, the best solution is to go to your local driving school and ask for a few lessons in order to get familiarized with it. A driving lesson costs approximately 50€.

Finally, beware of alcohol consumption. France has very strict rules, and anyone caught driving under the influence will be severely penalized. As a quick reminder, it takes just one glass of wine to reach the accepted limit.

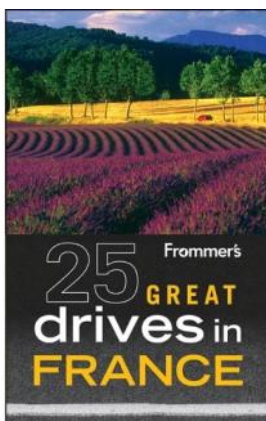
If you feel ready, the best "torture" test is to venture to the "Etoile" roundabout on the Champs Elysees in Paris. Here, the only rule is that no rule applies... Passing the "Etoile test" means that you are ready to face any situation!

Here are some useful books:



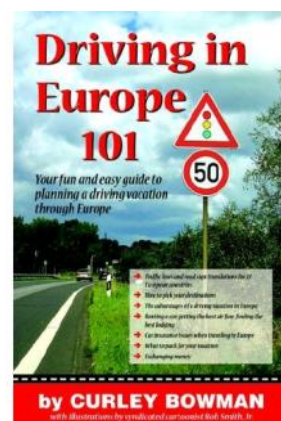
The essential guide for driving in France: a no non-sense guide to the Ins and Outs of driving in France

10.63 euros on [Amazon.fr](#)



Frommer's 25 Great Drives in France

13.83 euros on [Amazon.fr](#)



Driving in Europe 101
10.77 euros on [Amazon.fr](#)

Jean's advice

> What do I need to consider when renting my apartment short-term?



Jean Taquet is a French consultant and associate member of the Delaware State Bar Association. If you'd like a personalized answer to one of your administrative/immigration issues, I recommend you contact Jean:

Phone: (33) 01.40.38.16.11 / Email: ga@jeantaquet.com

QUESTION

My parents recently bought an apartment near the American University in Paris, since I have attended this school for a year. The plan is that it will be rented or sold when I graduate. I have changed my plans and am staying in Paris with my girlfriend, and working rather than attending the university. I am getting proposals to perform in various places in France and I will be traveling for several weeks at a time. So, to ease my parents' disappointment, I told them that I would do short-term rentals and this way I would be paying for the apartment alone. They have heard awful things about this way of renting and it is making the matter even worse. Can I convince them that I can do it safely and that I will not be caught?

ANSWER

I believe the key issue in your situation has been improperly identified, although I do fully understand your parents' reaction. There are two very different ways to view your situation and therefore your plan. Your parents have reacted to the first one, which is that they are the owner and you are one of several tenants, all of whom are staying short term. This would clearly fall under short-term rentals, an activity that carries a lot of negative consequences.

You are probably looking at the situation in the second way, which is that your parents have one paying tenant: you. The apartment will be your primary residence for fiscal purposes as far as the French and American authorities are concerned. On certain occasions – and there can be many of them – you sublet your primary residence and you declare this rental income to the authorities. The only issue left is that your parents as the owners must allow you to do so. If they can see it this way, I think that they would accept it. Furthermore, there is no reason to hide this activity. There is no law that prevents anyone from letting someone else use their home for free or for pay. The only problem might be if you rent it out for a majority of the time and in effect live elsewhere more or less permanently. That would be cheating. But as long as you are away because you are performing in various places and staying in hotels, B&Bs and so on, the risk is close to zero even if you were to face an audit, since there is no place you would be staying longer than your home.

You also have the right to take in roommates, again with your parents' approval as your landlord. After that, it is an issue of the size of the apartment and the need for privacy, which only you can decide.

Now, there are some basic guidelines that you should follow:

- 1 – Never have anyone stay in the apartment for a longer period than you yourself do in a calendar year.
- 2 – Never have anyone stay there for more than six months, especially if it is a foreigner in a calendar year.
- 3 – Avoid at all costs having the person declare the apartment as his primary residence for fiscal purposes.
- 4 – Never allow anyone other than your partner and yourself to have his/her name on any utility; everything must be sent in your name.

French law heavily protects one's domicile, i.e., primary residence. If your apartment somehow becomes someone else's primary residence, you could have a lot of trouble getting rid of them. If you have any doubt about this risk, ask a lawyer specialized in this field so that you know exactly what the courts use as guidelines to define one's residency in a third party's place.

How do you convince your parents that this is a much safer plan than the usual kind of short-term rental? I cannot answer this question; I do not feel competent to advise you about it. But considering how much of the issue is defined by what the *residence principale* is, I would take the time to give them an in-depth explanation of this French legal concept, and only then would I explain how it relates to your proposal. The idea is to show them that what you plan is, objectively and visibly, a completely different set-up from what they envision. Good luck.



Now, get your « traductions assermentées » online!
Fast and easy.

ADVERTISING



FRANCE is a country renowned for its paperwork, but living here can go much more smoothly if you can provide the right documents via an approved translator.

A sworn translation is essential for important documents such as birth certificates, driving licences, property documents and contracts. No matter how confident you are speaking or reading the language, it is not always possible to translate documents yourself as not everyone is qualified to provide a sworn translation. This is where Karen Renel-King steps in.

A bilingual, fully-qualified translator, she is regularly called on by English-speakers who need documents for their *notaire*, *mairie*, *préfecture* or social security office – and in many cases she can provide results within 24 hours. Whether it involves setting up a business, getting planning permission, inheritance matters, marrying or getting passed, you can be assured Karen has the specialist skills and experience to help by providing sworn translations of all the official documents required.

“What people want in a translator is a simple, fast and efficient service, and this is exactly what I provide,” says Karen. Originally from the U.S., Karen arrived in France in 1964 and understands first-hand the struggles many English-speakers come up against. She has qualifications in translation and interpreting from the Sorbonne in Paris, plus 26 years of experience working as a sworn translator. She has translated thousands of documents from English to French and vice-versa.

Whatever your particular situation demands, this bilingual, native English speaker offers the ideal solution. The quickest way to receive your translation is to scan the original and send it by email. Karen can then issue a prompt quote and get to work as soon as payment is received by secure online payment service PayPal or by check. “Because I work online, I can provide a translation service for customers all over France,” said Karen.

Prices typically start at €30-€35 per page for a driving licence or birth certificate. More complicated documents, such as contracts, are priced by the word.

You can contact Karen for a free estimate by phone: 06 18 03 18 38 or email: karen.king@wanadoo.fr.

You can find ore information on her websites:
> www.certifiedfrenchtranslation.com
> www.traductioncertifiee.fr



> Sweets Corner

Everyone says « whoopie »!!



Tracy Treville is an American pastry chef living and working in France. She is the founder and baker of [Tracy's Treats Gourmet Cookies & Brownies](#), offering fresh, homemade, gourmet cookies & brownies shipped throughout France.

Visit her site at: www.GourmetCookies.fr

Also be sure to check out Tracy's Treats Gourmet Cookies & Brownies on [Facebook!](#)

If you are American you may remember Whoopie Pies from when you were a child. They may have been called Moon Pies or even a “gob”. Really, who wants to eat something called a gob? Let's stick with the name whoopie pie because it's more fun to say and when you, your friends or your children eat them they are sure to say “Whoopie!!!!!!”.

A whoopie pie is kind of a cross between a cake and a cookie with frosting sandwiched in between. We've been pretty whoopie crazy at our house lately because I have been testing (and re-testing) recipes to add to my website. Yes, my kids (and their teachers and friends) love my job! Here I will share with you the recipes that I have found to be perfect, along with a few ideas for frostings and sprinkles that you can roll them in if you wish.

Happy baking and have a great Spring!

Classic Chocolate Whoopies

Ingredients:

115 g (4 oz) butter, softened
200 g (7 oz) [dark brown sugar](#)
1 tsp [vanilla extract](#)
1 large egg
280 g (10 oz) all purpose flour (type 55)
50 g (1 ¾ oz) cocoa powder
1 ¼ tsp bicarbonate of soda ([baking soda](#))
pinch of salt
225 ml (8 fl oz) buttermilk (lait fermenté)



Directions:

- Preheat the oven to 190°C/170°C for convection. Line 3 – 4 large baking sheets with baking paper or silpat.
 - Put the butter, sugar and vanilla extract in an electric mixer bowl, or use a large mixing bowl and hand-held electric mixer and whisk together until light and fluffy. Beat in the egg.
 - Sift the flour, cocoa powder, baking soda and salt into the bowl and stir together. Add the buttermilk and stir until combined.
 - Using a level 5-cm/2-inch ice cream scoop or heaped tablespoon, put the mixture onto the prepared baking sheets. Allow room for spreading.
 - Bake in the oven for 10 – 12 minutes or until firm to the touch. Transfer to a wire rack and leave to cool.
- When the whoopies are cold, match each whoopie half with its closest partner in size. Spreading with a palette knife or using a piping bag, cover the flat side of one whoopie half of each pair generously with the filling. Top each with its matching half, flat-side down, and gently press together.

Classic Vanilla Whoopies

Ingredients

115 g (4 oz) butter, softened
200 g (7 oz) granulated sugar
1 tsp [vanilla extract](#)
1 large egg
350 g (12 oz) all purpose flour (type 55)
1 ¼ tsp bicarbonate of soda ([baking soda](#))
pinch of salt
225 ml (8 fl oz) buttermilk (lait fermenté)

Directions

Follow directions as indicated above for the classic chocolate whoopie omitting only the cocoa powder.



FILLINGS

Peanut Butter Filling

275 g (9 ¾ oz) [peanut butter](#), smooth or crunchy
140 g (5 oz) butter, softened
57.5 g (2 oz) confectioner's sugar (sucre glace)

- Put the peanut butter and butter in a large bowl and beat together until smooth.
- Sift in the icing sugar and beat together until light and fluffy.

Chocolate Ganache

150 g (5 ½ oz) dark chocolate
150 g (5 fl oz) heavy cream
Small pat of butter (1 tablespoon)

- Break the chocolate into a heatproof bowl and add the cream. Stand the bowl over a saucepan of simmering water and heat until the chocolate has melted, stirring constantly.
- Remove from the heat and add the butter. Stir until smooth and shiny. Leave to cool for about 2 hours, stirring occasionally, until firm enough to spread.

Classic Marshmallow Filling

100 g (3 ½ oz) icing sugar (sucre glace)
115 g (4 oz) butter, softened
100 g (3 ½ oz) [Marshmallow Fluff](#)
1 tsp [vanilla extract](#)

- Sift the icing sugar into a bowl. Put the butter and Marshmallow Fluff in an electric mixer bowl and whisk together until light and fluffy, about 3 minutes. On low speed, gradually add the icing sugar. Add the vanilla and beat together for a further 3 minutes until combined.

The terrific thing about a whoopie is that the possibilities are only limited by your imagination. Once they are baked and frosted, you can roll them in sprinkles, [peanut butter m&m's](#), [coconut m&m's](#), heath bits, toasted/chopped [pecans](#), [butterscotch chips](#), or anything else you can think of.

Editors Anne-Claire Bocage - Kristin Meunier Johnson

Article contributors Jean Taquet, Tracy Treville, Pierre-Antoine Dubosc

Advertisers Karen Renel-King

MyAM's Newsletter is a monthly publication of My American Market, 56 bd Silvio Trentin, 31200 Toulouse

Phone (33) 06 45 45 85 06 / Email contact@MyAmericanMarket.com

www.MyAmericanMarket.com