

NEW STRAITS TIMES

# LIFE & TIMES

*Live it up on Saturday*

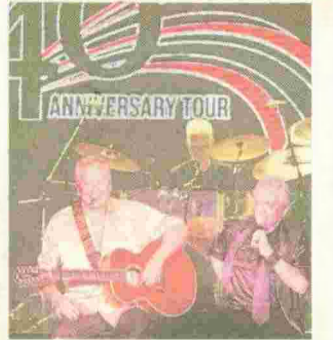
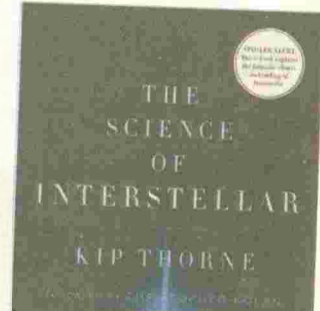


## HEALING JUNGLE

GREEN PAGES 6 & 7

## APPETITE FOR SCIENCE

WELL LIT. PAGE 8

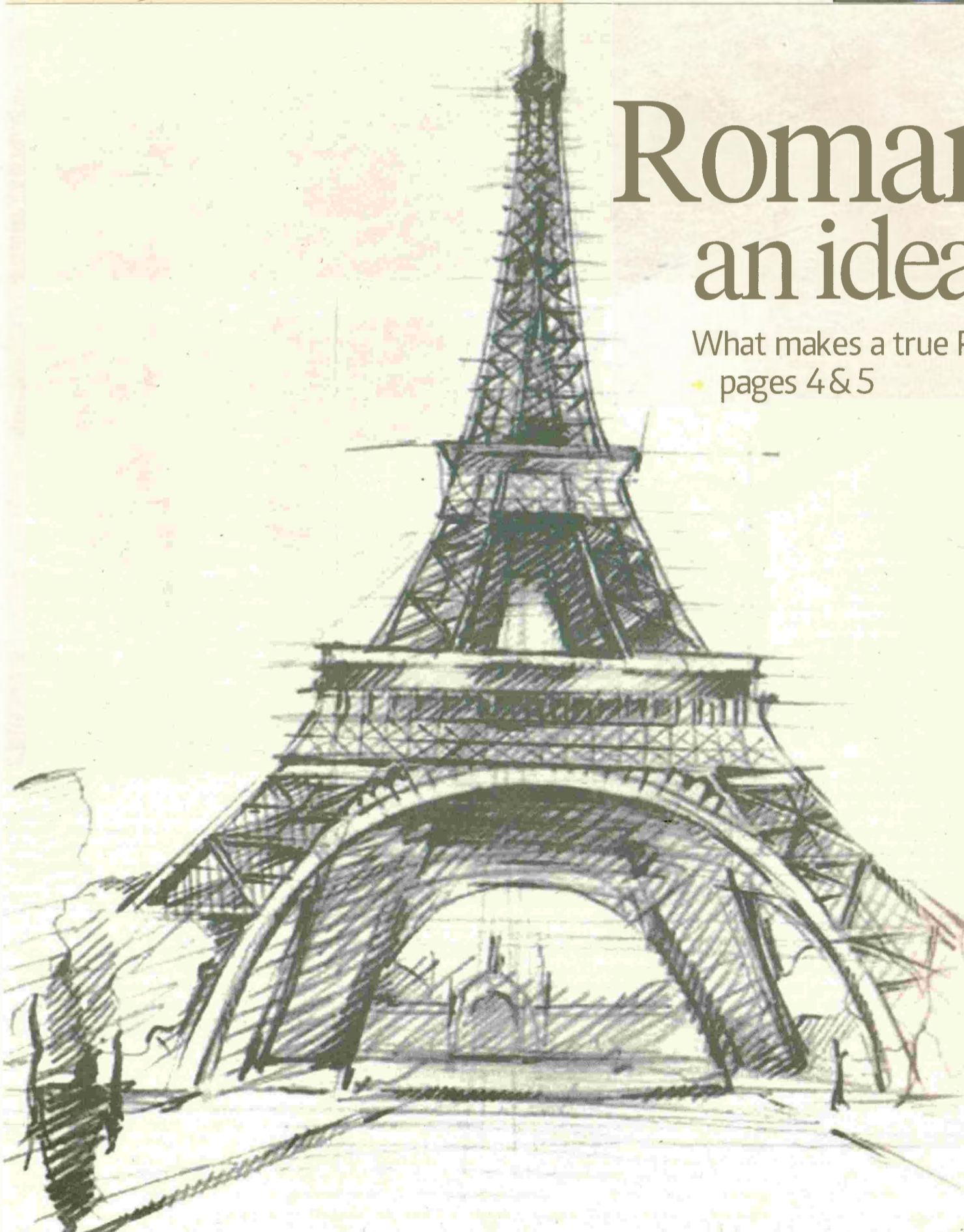


## PLENTY OF AIR SUPPLY

SHOWBIZ PAGE 14

# Romancing an ideal

What makes a true Parisienne  
pages 4 & 5



LIFE&TIMES LIVING

# Parisienne state of mind

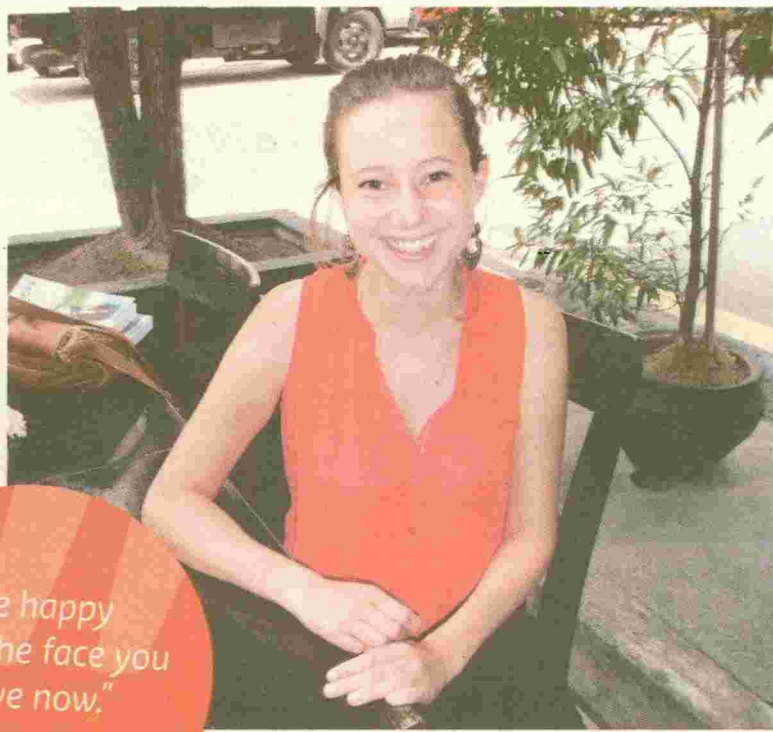
The Parisienne is not defined by how she looks or what she wears, discovers **Aneeta Sundararaj**

**T**HERE she stands, a thin, angular woman in closed-toe heels, wearing a double-breasted navy suit with matching pillbox hat. One of her accessories is a cigarette holder, daintily held between slim fingers sheathed in white gloves. She has perfect skin and exudes the scent of Channel N°5. She's charming and witty, the embodiment of the chic Parisienne.

**STATE OF MIND**

That's not necessarily so, explains Morgane Buffin. "Being Parisienne is more a state of mind. There is some snobbishness about being Parisienne," says the 25-year-old French Literature graduate whose focus now is supporting French teachers in Malaysia. With the French Language Week 2015 in full swing until March 25, it seems rather timely to turn our sights to all things French.

Morgane, who works at the French Embassy in Kuala Lumpur, is as irreverent as the tone of the language in the book we're



*"Be happy with the face you have now."*  
Morgane Buffin

discussing, *How To Be Parisian Wherever You Are*, authored by Anne Berest, Audrey Diwan, Caroline de Maigret, and Sophie Mas, all Parisiennes.

It is a fun book which gives a spirited take on "what it means to be a Parisienne: how they dress, entertain, have fun and attempt to behave themselves".

To prove her point, Morgane, who comes from Lyon, opens to page six and reads the following passage: *Her thing is art, culture and politics. She cultivates herself the same way she cares for her radishes growing on*

*the balcony — that is, with love. Watering can in hand, she'll tell you how the last film to win the Palme d'Or is Rotten Tomatoes. But she probably hasn't even seen it. The Parisienne already knows what she must think: The opposite of what you think, no matter what.*

Morgane says: "A friend of mine who moved to Paris said that a Parisienne is so thin because all she does is drink coffee and smoke cigarettes. Actually, the Parisienne is more cultured than she is beautiful. We are taught from young that no matter how rich or beautiful, the main thing you must develop is 'culture general' — general knowledge."

**SHOW A LITTLE OF YOUR 'ASSETS'**

The Parisienne is sexy, but never vulgar.

"You don't have to wear a blouse which has such a big decollete. It should be the kind of blouse that when you bend, you show a little of your 'assets', but just a glimpse. Because mystery is more important. A Parisienne never gives too much away. Less is definitely more," says Morgane.

To give an example of an Asian woman who embodies this "less is more" mantra, Morgane chooses an actress from one of her all-time favourite movies, *Devdas*: Madhuri Dixit.

"Look at her. She's playing a prostitute in that movie, but she is very beautiful and sexy," says Morgane, who describes the minute details of Dixit's various costumes throughout the movie. She makes the point that they were provocative rather than revealing.

"I went to see one of the most recent Hindi movies during



## AURA OF MYSTERY

IN *How To Be Parisian Wherever You Are*, there are tips that any woman can follow to acquire that aura of mystery that a Parisienne is famous for.

**1** You don't have to spend a decade's worth of salary on your wardrobe, or flaunt designer brands the whole time. All you need is one signature item: The one you wear when you need to feel strong.

**2** Do not dye your hair, or if you do, only in your original colour to highlight it, or to hide any grey. You keep the colour Mother Nature chose for you.

**3** On plastic surgery: First choose one part to focus on, one single operation. The thing that bothers you the most. Next, put off for as long as possible the age at which you first have work done.

**4** French women avoid using foundation, which merely serves as a shroud and therefore trivialises.

**5** The French manicure is something of an enigma: It is the exact opposite of French chic. The Parisienne does not understand the point of it and never wears it.

**6** Better to look your age than look no age at all. Sure, some women sometimes master the art of Botox, but most of the time, let's be honest: Instead of a face free of wrinkles, what you really see is the face of fear.

**7** A single rule outweighs all others: Enjoy the face you have today. It's the one you'll wish you have 10 years from now.

**8** You are not defined by your pregnancy. This is a period of growth. You are a pregnant woman, which means you are above all a woman. With a little extra something.

**9** In short, you are not a slave to the cult of the perfect body — so learn to make the best of what nature gave you.

**10** It's only normal that:  
a. He holds the door for you.  
b. He carries your suitcases and your shopping; a woman only ever carries her handbag.



the new year and these younger actresses wear such revealing clothes. They're almost naked and they just look vulgar, not sexy at all."

The Parisienne is fragile, but never weak. At the heart of this, Morgane says, is that women must be honest with themselves. "You can show that you're vulnerable, that you need protection. But, if the help you need doesn't come, you must be able to manage yourself," she adds.

The Parisienne is opinionated, but never "masculine" when she exerts her strong beliefs and ideas. In fact, she does it with lots of chic and charisma.

Morgane says: "We have had very strong role models for this. One of them, also mentioned in the book, is Simone Veil. Her name has become part of history in France — she fought for women to have the right to choose whether or not to have an abortion. Someone in Asia

who is this strong is Aung San Suu Kyi. She stands up for what she

believes in and with such charisma. These kind of role models give us, younger girls, the idea that 'If she can do it, I can.'"

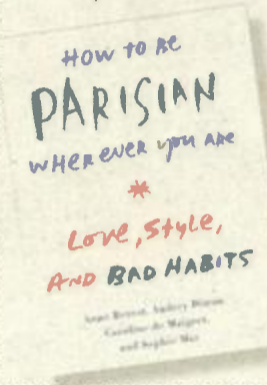
**EMPHASISES WHAT'S GOOD**

There is not a single woman on earth who doesn't like some part of her body. The Parisienne, however, is proud and confident in spite of all the little faults she thinks she has. She emphasises what's good rather than focus her energies on getting rid of what's bad, thereby, embracing her femininity in its entirety.

"You know, when you read all those magazines, they make you feel guilty about what's wrong. In this book, the authors give you advice and there is a lighter tone to what they say. So you will feel relief. I mean, they make you realise that if you don't do all the stuff they want you to do, you can still be a very nice woman. Be happy with the face you have now," says Morgane.

Recommending this book for

**Title:** How to Be Parisian Wherever You Are  
**Authors:** Anne Berest, Audrey Diwan, Caroline De Maigret and Sophie Mas  
**Publisher:** Doubleday  
Details at [www.howtobeparisianbook.com/](http://www.howtobeparisianbook.com/)



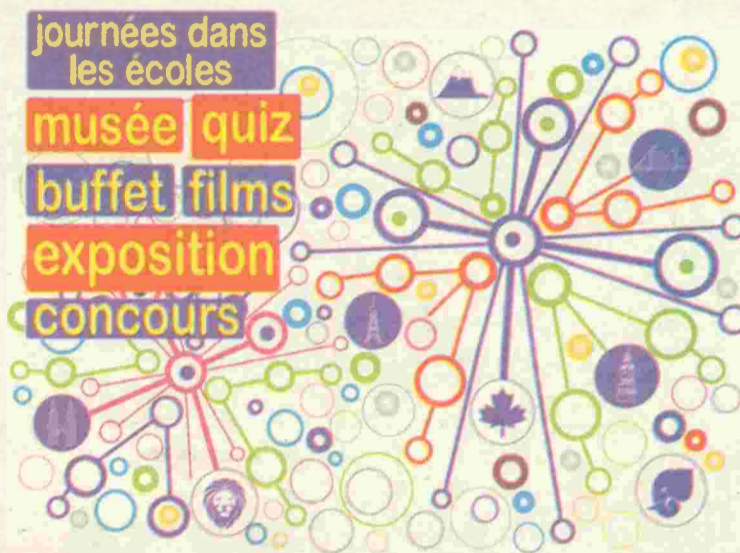
**Quiz night**

To mark French Language Week 2015, a special Francophonie quiz is being held, which is open to the public.

**When:** March 18, 8.30pm to 11pm  
**Where:** Restaurant la Creperie de Caroline, 33 Jalan Telawi 3, Bangsar Baru, KL

**Contact:** 017-213 0238. Early reservation is recommended  
**What:** Open to the public with a registration fee of RM15 per participant upon arrival at the restaurant. Prizes include a 3D/2N stay at Novotel Kuala Lumpur City Centre and gift sets from Christian Dior, l'Occitane and Yves Rocher. Quiz topics include French-speaking countries and organisations (OIF-Francophonie), French language, culture, and famous people from those countries.  
Email [mycaroline14@gmail.com](mailto:mycaroline14@gmail.com)

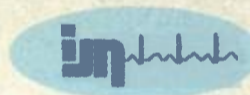
any woman who has somehow lost herself, she adds: "It puts into words what I feel. I mean, if you build your life around your children or your family, you will be disappointed. You must find your passion. You have to keep something for yourself. And this book shows you how."



fête de la langue française et de la **FRANCOPHONIE**  
French language festival en Malaisie



du 9 au 27 mars 2015



**INSTITUT JANTUNG NEGARA**  
National Heart Institute

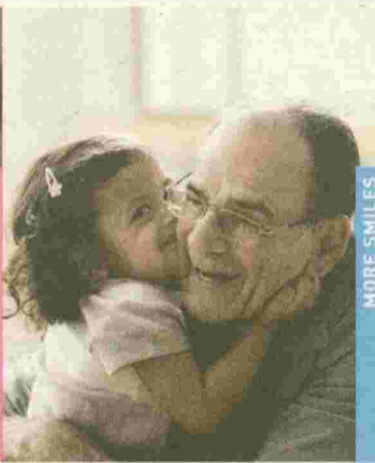
**MALAYSIA'S PREMIER HEART CENTRE**



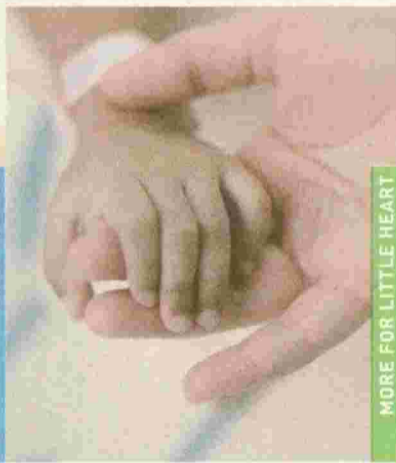
MORE EXPERIENCE



MORE CARE



MORE SMILES



MORE FOR LITTLE HEART

IJN was established on 1st August 1992 as a heart specialist institution committed to delivering advanced standards in cardiovascular and thoracic medicine for adult and paediatric heart patients. Previously the Institute had been part of the Kuala Lumpur General Hospital. Since the foundation of the institute, IJN has treated over a million patients and gained recognition as one of the leading Cardiovascular and Thoracic Health Centre in the region.

Today IJN provides a full range of cardiac services. The institute also houses a number of associated cardiac treatment clinics. The institute is staffed by an experienced and committed team of specialist cardiologist, surgeons, anaesthesiologists, paramedics and clinical support staff. The medical staff are fully supported by the modern technology allowing IJN to treat the most complicated cases.

**Our Services**

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- IMR Clinics
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