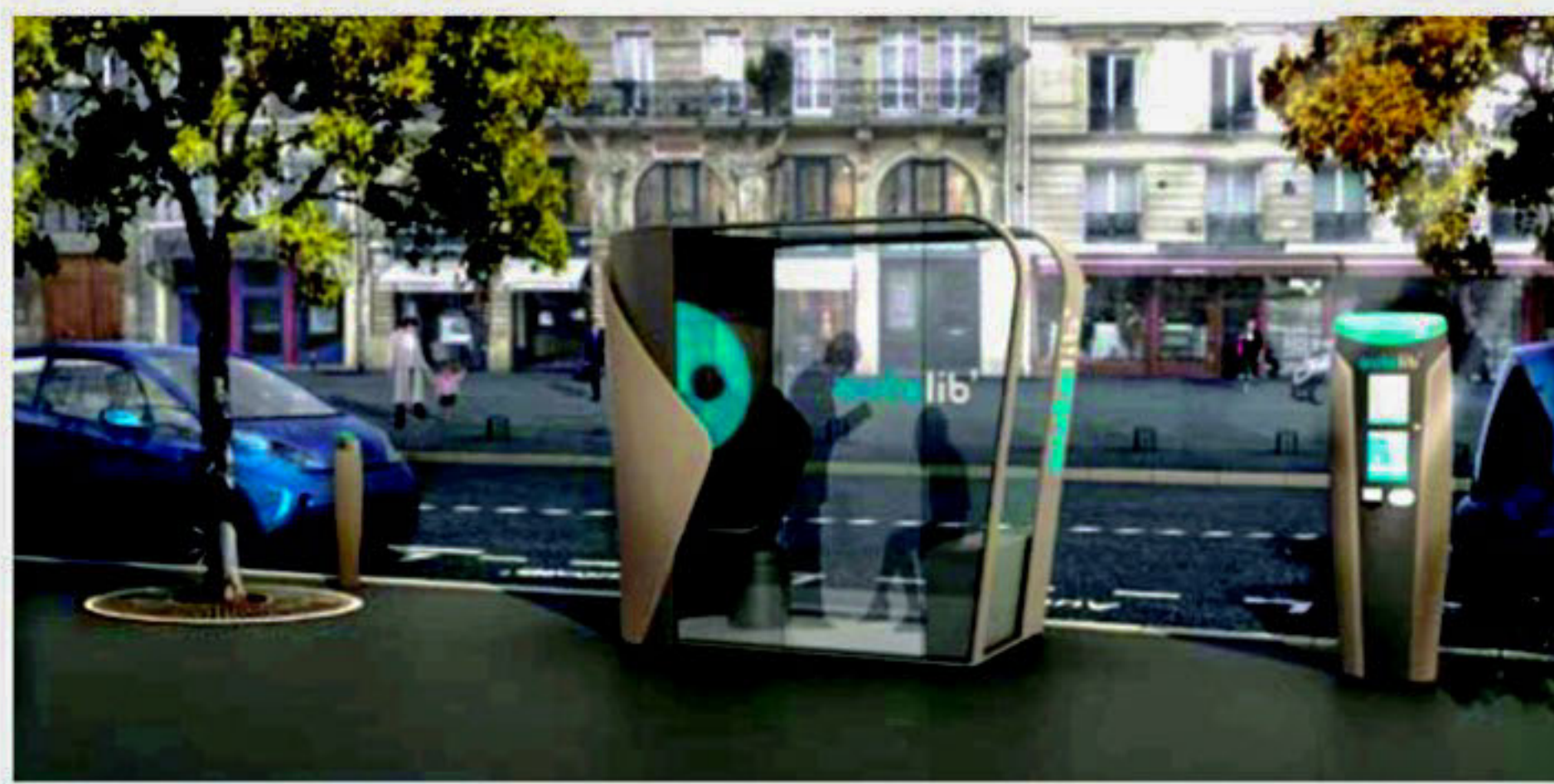


Self-service electric cars in Paris

FOLLOWING on from the success of self-service bicycles, Autolib' is a new service offering very short-term car hire. The first self-service electric cars will be on the streets of the French capital from next October. A scheme that has already proved worthwhile in several major cities in France and abroad.

It's the car version of the Vélib' self-service cycle hire scheme. From this autumn, visitors to Paris and local residents will be able to hire a self-service electric car for short periods to travel around the city and its suburbs. As with the Vélib' scheme, users will be able to



An Autolib' stop with an interactive terminal and charging points

pick up a car at one point and leave it at another.

The city of Paris is a keen supporter of the project, the contract for which was

awarded to the Bolloré Group, and has set its sights high: a fleet of 3,000 electric cars in over 1,000 locations in Paris and around 40

neighbouring towns. An experiment on an unparalleled scale designed to encourage Parisians to give up their vehicles, by offering

them the use of a car as and when they need it, which costs less and is better for the environment.

A subscription will cost €12 a month, with a €5 euro charge for the first hour of use. Paris's city runabouts will be fitted with lithium polymer batteries produced in Brittany in the west of France. Shared cars are nothing new for Parisians. Caisse Commune, Okigo, Mobizen and Carbox already offer car hire by the hour or half-hour in the capital. Users simply reserve a car online and pick it up at one of the city's car parks.

But what is new this time is that the whole scheme is based on self-service: the

ability to pick up a car in one location and drop it off at another. A benefit that should appeal to large numbers of users, since 58% of Parisians do not own a car and two-thirds of them have expressed an interest in the project.

Around 20 French cities have already set up similar projects, but they are not really self-service schemes, allowing you to pick up and drop off the vehicle in different locations, they are more like car-sharing.

With these schemes, you borrow the car for a quick spin and take it back to the same place a few hours later. That is how it works in Lille, Rennes, Bordeaux, Toulouse, Lyon and La Rochelle, a pioneering town in terms of ecological transport, which has been running the scheme for ten years. Besançon, Strasbourg, Montpellier, Chambéry and Marseille have also set up car-sharing schemes, called Carliberté, Autotrement and Autocité.

The scale of these experi-

ments is still modest: the network in La Rochelle consists of 50 electric cars kept at seven different locations. The economic advantage of these schemes is however unquestionable: if you drive less than 10,000 km a year, as many city dwellers do, it makes much better sense to use a car sharing scheme than to own your own vehicle. More to the point, residents no longer have to worry about maintaining their car or finding a parking space!

Corsica: An island between sea and mountain



main French tourist destinations.

As one of the 27 administrative regions of France, Corsica enjoys greater powers than other French local governments due to its unique geographical location and strong regional identity. Yet it remains fully part of the French national community. Its ruling body, the Corsican Regional Council, is run by President Paul Giacobbi, MP, who visited Bangladesh last January as Chairman of the Parliamentarian Friendship Group France-Bangladesh.

LOCATED in the Mediterranean Sea at 170 km of the Azur Coast, Corsica occupies a

very unique place in France. Combining both sea and mountain landscapes, the "Emerald Isle" is one of the

A turbulent history
Corsica has been successively dominated by two of



The cliffs of Bonifacio (South end of Corsica).

the most powerful civilisations of the Mediterranean: Ancient Greeks and Romans. Well preserved archaeological sites can still be seen along the East Coast of the island, in particular in Aléria, which was a sea port of major importance in Antiquity.

The High Middle Ages consisted of successive waves of invasions and confrontations between Byzantines, Saracens and others. The arrival of great naval powers like the Republics of Pisa and Genoa offered Corsica relative stability. From the XVth century, the entire coast was fortified with 120 towers, so as to prevent any attack from the sea. In 1768, Corsica became part of the Kingdom of France.

Some Corsicans marked the history. One of them in particular, Napoléon Bonaparte, changed the face of France and all Europe by establishing an empire at the beginning of the XIXth century.

A strong cultural identity

As a reflection of its composite history, the richness of Corsica's heritage appears in diverse monuments, such as the anthropomorphic menhirs of Filitosa, the Genoese citadels on the coast or the churches of Castagniccia with their rich Baroque design.

Corsica's living culture finds its full expression in music (polyphonic choirs), gastronomy (cheese, wine) and craftwork (leather, pottery). The countless cultural events and rural fairs are the showcase for the Corsican way of life and

traditional crafts. In the wake of an assertion of identity, the Corsicans champion the traditions of their region and, above all, their language, Corsican.

A preserved nature

With a "Regional Natural Park" that covers two thirds of its surface, Corsica is a well-preserved island divided between nature reserves and listed sites. The island offers a rich fauna and a diverse flora, including numbers of endemic species.

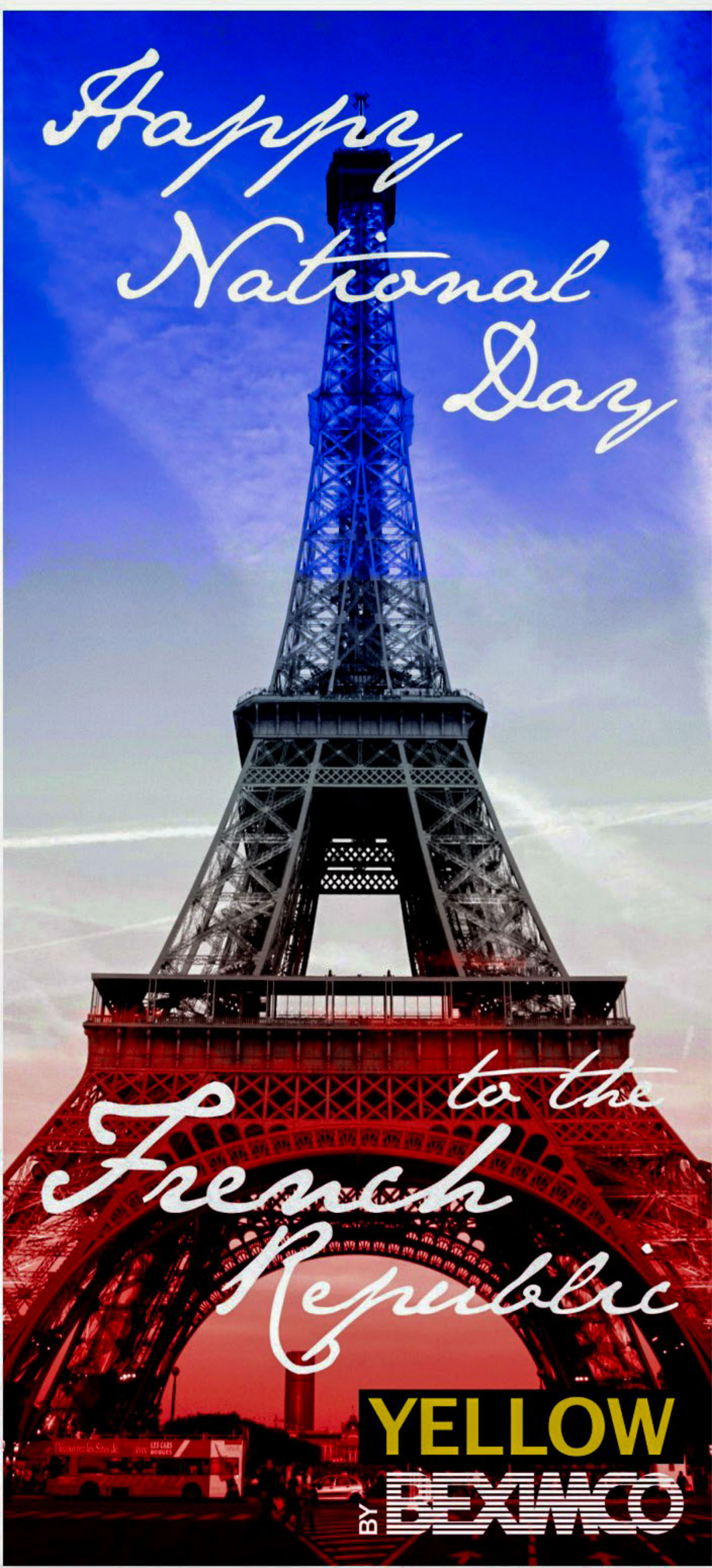
A unique diversity of coastal landscapes

With more than 1 000 km of coastline, Corsica presents a variety of marine landscapes, from the vast fine sandy beaches to the small deserted creeks and granite cliffs inhabited by sea birds. With water temperatures reaching 24°C in July and August, Corsica is the dream setting for practising all kinds of water sports: sea kayaking, funboarding, sailing, water skiing, diving, surfing and jet skiing.

The mountain island

With 120 summits above 2 000 m, snow-capped in winter, Corsica is called "a mountain in the sea".

The mountain represents Corsica's heart, the guardian of its traditions and identity, and the natural setting for villages of stone cottages. The mountain of Corsica is therefore one of the favourite destinations for enthusiasts of trekking, horse-riding, mountain-biking and climbing. In winter, even skiing is possible, since the island offers a number of sites for the practice of snow sports... with views of the sea!



Our best wishes and Heartiest Felicitations to the Friendly People and the Government of The Republic of France on the occasion of their National Day on 14th July 2011



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