

## News & Info

### Lyon Whisky Festival

If you are over 18 and like Whisky\*, you won't want to miss the International Whisky Festival taking place in Lyon the weekend of 24 and 25 November.

For two full days there will be conferences and masterclasses, not to mention workshops, meetings with whisky aficionados, and of course, the much anticipated tasting of 77 brands of whisky from 10 different countries.

The festival will take place at the Palais de la Bourse in Lyon. For information about the schedule of events and ticket prices, click [here](#).

### Festival du Film Court de Villeurbanne

This year the Festival du Film Court de Villeurbanne celebrates its 39th edition, with more than 150 films, two competitions (Europe and Animation), nine special screenings, and four meetings with the directors and producers.

This year's festival runs from 16 to 25 November. For more information about the programme, films and venue, click [here](#).

\*Please drink responsibly

## Unexpected Benefits

**When we set up Version Originale in 2009, we wanted to create a work environment that benefitted our staff as much as ourselves. But we had no idea that this strategy would have unexpected, and positive, benefits for our clients as well.**

### Moving away from the status quo

We knew exactly what we wanted: to be able to practise a profession we loved (training and translation) but in better conditions compared to previous work experiences.

Because of the competitive nature of the business today, many language suppliers have taken the low-cost route of hiring self-employed staff. This limits payroll and keeps working conditions to the legal minimum. The downside requires managing a high level of turnover.



Our strategy was different — offer ourselves (and our staff) the best possible conditions (to ensure minimum turnover) and guarantee our clients the highest quality service. Most of all, we wanted to create a positive, benevolent

working environment where everyone felt happy about coming into work, any day of the week.

### A “lightbulb moment” for VO

A client recently gave us feedback at the end of his training. He was a beginner language learner who was preparing a six-month stay in Singapore. He made rapid progress and we knew he liked his lessons, but his feedback about the course was a revelation for us.

He made a direct link between the positive working atmosphere at Version Originale and his progress. It made a real difference to see everyone enjoying their work and being with each other; it put him in the right frame of mind to approach his lessons. Consequently, he made better progress than he ever imagined.

It was then we realised that what we were doing to help ourselves and our staff was also helping our clients, and consequently, our business. This has encouraged us to explore how we can take this even further, by upgrading our premises, creating an even more supportive learning environment, and by continuing to be open, transparent, and to communicate clearly with our staff and clients.

## VOCABULARY

Pilgrims - a member of a group of English puritans fleeing religious persecution

New World - North and South America in regard to Europe

harrowing - distressing and traumatic

likelihood - probability

loom (verb) - when an ominous or threatening event seems about to happen

decimated - destroyed, killed

thaw - a period of warmer weather that melts ice and snow

fortuitous - happening by accident or chance rather than design

crops - cultivated plants that are grown for food

clashes - violent confrontations

gloss over (phrasal verb) - to try to disguise or conceal something by treating it briefly or misleadingly



## A Day For Giving Thanks

**Thanksgiving, one of the most popular holidays in the United States, is celebrated on the fourth Thursday of November. It's commonly known as a time to eat turkey and pumpkin pie with family, and watch parades and American football on TV. Dig a little deeper, however, and it's earliest beginnings may surprise you.**

### Looking for a new home

In early 17th century England, a group of Pilgrims seeking religious freedom set sail for the New World on a ship called the Mayflower. After 65 harrowing days at sea, the 44 pilgrims, accompanied by 66 others (one having died at sea), sighted land on November 10th. The pilgrims decided to settle in Plymouth (Massachusetts) due to the large harbour and the likelihood of finding food, even though the threat of attack by a local Native American tribe loomed in their minds.

That first winter nearly decimated the Pilgrims. Many died from the extreme cold and lack of food. By the time the spring thaw arrived, there were fewer than 50 of the original men, women and children who had made the voyage across the Atlantic Ocean.

### A fortuitous encounter

In March of 1621, an Abnaki Indian by the name of Samoset entered the Pilgrim settlement and surprised them by speaking English. Soon after another Indian named Squanto, who also spoke English, met the Pilgrims. The traditional story says that Squanto taught the newcomers how to grow crops and find enough food to survive. By that fall, they had a bounty of food, and so shared a feast with nearly 100 local Indians that lasted three days. Soon after, an annual day of thanksgiving was proclaimed, a practice that continued from the American Revolution to the presidency of Abraham Lincoln in 1863.

### The other side of the story

Many historians agree that just one generation following the feast in 1621, the alliance that had been formed between the Pilgrims and the Indians broke apart, which led to many violent and deadly clashes that lasted many years. This trend only increased as large numbers of English colonists began to spread throughout the New World, eventually asserting control over the land.

The Thanksgiving story told to school children today often glosses over the harsh reality that the colonists and Indians were often at war. So when celebrating the holiday with your family, it's good to remember there's more than one side to the story.

**Happy Thanksgiving!**