

Lesson 73

Notes

Ça vous dirait de manger avec nous?

Do you fancy eating with us?

Programme Notes

Welcome to Coffee Break French, the podcast aimed at independent learners of French. Our regular podcasts will introduce you to the French language in easy steps. These programme notes will help you get more out of each episode by explaining how words are written and giving you more information about each phrase along with some bonus vocabulary where appropriate.

Conversation

Jean-Jacques	Bonsoir, ma chérie
Sophie	Bonsoir mon amour. Je commençais à me demander où tu étais...
Jean-Jacques	Écoute, je te présente ... mais en fait je ne sais même pas comment vous vous appelez!
David	Moi c'est David et ma femme s'appelle Christina.
Sophie	Enchantée. Je suis Sophie.
Jean-Jacques	Et moi, c'est Jean-Jacques. Sophie, tu ne vas pas le croire: ils sont écossais!
Sophie	Ah bon? Et vous habitez ici?
Christina	Non non, on est en vacances.
Sophie	Mais vous parlez très bien français.
Jean-Jacques	Ils habitent Leith!
Sophie	Tu n'as jamais su dire «Leith»!
Jean-Jacques	Je fais des efforts! C'est ça qui est important, n'est-ce pas?
Sophie	Anyway, we're practically Scottish neighbours! I grew up in Edinburgh.
Jean-Jacques	Qu'est-ce que tu dis, chérie? Tu parles de moi là?
Sophie	Non, je ne parle pas de toi! Tu es incroyable, tu sais? Je disais tout simplement que j'ai vécu à Édimbourg quand j'étais jeune. Sorry - as soon as I speak in English he thinks that I'm talking about him!
Christina	No, no. Please speak in French. I'm learning French so I'm keen to practise as much as possible.
Sophie	D'accord. C'est comme vous voulez.
Jean-Jacques	Écoute, Sophie. Tu sais si la table est prête? Enfin... ça vous dirait de manger avec nous, David et Christina?
David	Nous ne voulons pas nous imposer...
Jean-Jacques	Pas du tout. Si vous voulez une petite soirée romantique, en tête-à-tête, ce n'est pas un problème, mais par contre si cela vous dit, nous pouvons dîner ensemble.
Christina	Nous allons manger ensemble?

Conversation

Sophie	Vous êtes sûrs?
Christina	Oui, ce serait très sympa.
David	Comme ça vous pouvez nous conseiller sur ce qu'on peut faire pendant notre séjour à Villefranche. C'est toujours pratique d'avoir quelqu'un qui connaît bien le coin.
Jean-Jacques	Nous sommes bien contents de pouvoir vous donner des conseils à propos de ce que vous pourriez voir pendant votre séjour.
Sophie	Va demander une table pour quatre personnes alors.
Jean-Jacques	D'accord. J'y vais.

The notes below will help you understand the dialogue.

Language Notes

mon amour	my love	Note that although <i>mon</i> is the masculine possessive adjective, it would also be used if referring to a female because <i>amour</i> is masculine. Even if it were feminine, like <i>amie</i> , <i>mon</i> would still be used because the word begins with a vowel.
je te présente...	I present you...	More naturally translated as "let me introduce you to..."
je ne sais même pas	I don't even know...	
comment vous vous appelez	what you're called	Remember that <i>s'appeler</i> is reflexive, so the <i>vous</i> form has the subject pronoun <i>vous</i> , followed by the reflexive pronoun <i>vous</i> . In the dialogue, Jean-Jacques speaks quite quickly, so it's a little difficult to hear both words.
enchantée	nice to meet you / "charmed"	This adjective has to agree with the subject. In this case it's Sophie who is speaking so the written form has an extra -e.
tu ne vas pas le croire	you're not going to believe it	The word <i>le</i> is referring to the thing that Sophie isn't going to believe. We use the same idea in English: "I don't believe it".
on est en vacances	we're on holiday	Another example of <i>on</i> used as "we".
tu n'as jamais su dire «Leith»	you've never been able to say "Leith"	Two important points here: firstly, note that <i>savoir</i> is used as the verb meaning "to be able to". In this case, Jean-Jacques finds it impossible to say the sound 'th' in English, so he's literally not able / capable to say 'th'. He "doesn't know how" to say that sound, hence the use of <i>savoir</i> . See below for an explanation of <i>jamais</i> .

Language Notes

(ne...) jamais	never	Just as the negative <i>ne ... pas</i> means “not” in French, eg. <i>je ne parle pas français</i> (“I don’t speak French”) <i>ne ... jamais</i> means “never”. <i>Je ne parle jamais français</i> would mean “I never speak French”. There are more examples of this in this week’s bonus episode.
faire des efforts	to make an effort, to try	
c’est ça qui est important	that’s what is important	Literally, “it’s that which is important”.
tu parles de moi là?	are you talking about me just now? were you talking about me there?	In English we tend not to use “there” when referring to time, other than in the past as in the example translation, “were you talking about me there?” In French it’s used figuratively in this way quite commonly, but is difficult to translate word for word.
incroyable	incredible	
tout simplement	quite simply	
j’ai vécu	I lived / I have lived	
ça vous dirait de ... + infinitive	would you like to... / do you fancy ...	This expression is a common way of inviting someone to do something. Note that the indirect object pronoun is used - here it’s <i>vous</i> , meaning “to you (plural)”. Equally, if Jean-Jacques were speaking to one other person, he’d say <i>ça te dirait de ...?</i> It’s also possible to say <i>ça me dirait de venir avec toi</i> - “I fancy coming with you”, etc.
nous ne voulons pas nous imposer	we don’t want to impose	Note that “to impose” is a reflexive verb in French: <i>s’imposer</i>
une soirée romantique	a romantic evening	
en tête-à-tête	“just the two of you”	Literally, “in a (situation of) head-to-head”. Ironically in English we often use the French expression <i>à deux</i> as a translation of this!
par contre	on the other hand	
si cela vous dit	if you fancy	Similar to <i>ça vous dirait</i> . Here <i>dit</i> is the present tense. <i>Dirait</i> is in the conditional form of the verb - we’ll look more at this in a future lesson. Note also that <i>cela</i> is the full form of the word <i>ça</i> .
ce serait très sympa	it would be very nice	<i>Serait</i> is also in the conditional form. The conditional is translated as “would” in English.
comme ça	in that way, like that	

Language Notes

conseiller à quelqu'un de faire quelque chose	to advise someone to do something	
sur ce qu'on peut faire	on/about what we can do	
séjour (m)	stay	
coin (m)	corner, area	Literally <i>coin</i> means "corner", but it's used often to mean "the area", as in an area of a town.
nous sommes bien contents de pouvoir ...	we're very happy to be able to ...	Note the agreement of <i>contents</i> .
donner des conseils à quelqu'un	to give some advice to someone	
à propos de	about, on the subject of	
ce que vous pourriez voir	what you could see	<i>Pourriez</i> is another example of the conditional. It could be translated as "you would be able to see", or "you could see".
va demander une table	go and ask for a table...	Note <i>va</i> here: it's the imperative - the informal command form.
j'y vais	I'm on my way; right away; "no sooner said than done".	Jean-Jacques is agreeing to the request from Sophie. Literally it means "I'm going there".

In this week's extra podcast, we'll be taking a look at an alternative way to make a suggestion:

si on allait ...

what if we went ... / how would you feel if we went ... etc.

Some examples will be given in the podcast.

