WORLD TABLE BOOKS

French Table

A taste of the French kitchen.



10 recipes | Illustrated sample

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French home cooking has room for a simple carrot salad, an onion soup with a crisp cheese topping, a slowly simmered casserole and a warm tart shared at the table. This collection brings together familiar dishes and clearly described home adaptations. Choose portions and combinations that suit your meal; unlisted bread, rice, salads and other accompaniments are not automatically included.

Measure with confidence

Metric weights govern the recipes; US weights and volumes appear alongside. Weigh ingredients after peeling, trimming or boning when specified. Cooked and drained weights are different from raw weights. A teaspoon is rounded to 5 ml and a tablespoon to 15 ml. Egg weights exclude shells. Use a scale for flour, small seasonings and recipes that separate yolks and whites.

Build a useful French pantry

Keep plain flour, good olive oil, butter, Dijon mustard, wine vinegar and a few dependable herbs to hand. Prepared stock is normally unsalted unless the recipe says otherwise. Fresh thyme and bay flavour slow cooking; delicate herbs are often added at the end. Cheese strength and the salt in ham, bacon, anchovies and olives vary, so taste before adding more seasoning.

Wine and substitutions

Dry cooking wine should be drinkable and not a heavily salted cooking product. Brief simmering does not guarantee that all alcohol evaporates. Follow the stated wine-free option where one is provided. Substitutions can change flavour, texture, cooking time, nutrition and allergens. A vegetarian dish may require cheese made without animal rennet, as well as an appropriate stock.

Pastry, batter and bread

Keep shortcrust ingredients cold and handle the dough lightly. Line tins without stretching the pastry and use the stated chilling and blind-baking steps. Bread dough needs kneading and rising instead. Baking powder is not yeast. Flour type, tin dimensions, filling depth and oven preheating affect the result; a smaller tin is not an equivalent replacement merely because all the mixture can be squeezed into it.

Timing and signs of readiness

Preparation, cooking and waiting times refer to the full batch and are estimates. Notes identify ready-cooked ingredients, cooling, chilling, proofing and stages that overlap. A conservative total may add activities that can run together. Follow the described texture, colour and internal temperature as well as the clock. Oven temperatures use conventional heat unless stated otherwise; grill strength depends on the setting and distance from the element.

Cook, cool and store thoughtfully

Keep raw meat, seafood and eggs separate from ready-to-eat ingredients, and wash utensils and work surfaces between tasks. Cool cooked food promptly in shallow portions and refrigerate at 4°C / 40°F or below. Follow the shorter limits stated for particular dishes. In very hot conditions above 32°C / 90°F, refrigerate perishables within 1 hour rather than 2. Reheat only the portion needed. Homemade garlic-and-oil mixtures, fresh spreads and dressed salads are refrigerated foods, not shelf-stable preserves.

Portions and nutrition

Nutrition figures are approximate per stated portion, calculated from ingredient weights and generic composition profiles. Product brands, edible yield, discarded fat, pastry offcuts and the amount of sauce actually eaten can change the result. Listed pan oil is a working amount and may exceed what is absorbed. Unlisted accompaniments and optional substitutions are excluded. These figures are estimates rather than laboratory measurements; check product labels for additional allergens.

Make the meal your own

Start with the stated method before changing ingredients that determine structure, such as flour, yeast or eggs. Regional and household versions differ, and the named adaptations explain the approach taken here. Use the chapter links and recipe index to find a modest starter, a substantial main, a side or a dessert, rather than assuming every recipe is a complete meal.

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Chapter 1

Soups and potages

French onion soup

French home cooking

Slowly browned onions give this bistro soup its body and sweetness. A crisp baguette topping and a modest layer of Gruyère turn the broth into a substantial first course or a light meal.

4 generous bowls, each with two small Gruyère toasts

Prep 20 min | Cook 110 min | Wait 5 min | Total 135 min

The 135-minute estimate includes 20 minutes of preparation, about 75 minutes for the onions, 5 minutes for garlic, flour and wine, 25 minutes of simmering, 5 minutes under the broiler and a 5-minute rest. Toast the bread during the simmer. Onion caramelisation may take 60-90 minutes depending on the pan, burner and water content; allow extra time if needed.

Equipment: Wide heavy pot, about 26 cm / 10 in; Wooden spoon; Baking tray; 4 broiler-safe bowls or a separate tray for cheese toasts; Dry oven gloves.

Ingredients

Onion soup

Yellow onions peeled weight, halved and thinly sliced	1000 g / 35.27 oz
Unsalted butter	40 g / 1.41 oz
Olive oil	15 ml / 1 tbsp
Fine salt plus more only after tasting the stock	3 g / 0.11 oz
Garlic finely chopped	6 g / 0.21 oz
Plain all-purpose flour	10 g / 0.35 oz
Dry white wine	150 ml / 5.07 US fl oz
Unsalted beef stock prepared, check the label for celery	1200 ml / 40.58 US fl oz
Fresh thyme about 4 small sprigs	2 g / 0.07 oz
Dried bay leaf 1 small leaf	0.2 g / 0.01 oz
Black pepper freshly ground	0.5 g / 0.02 oz

Gruyère toasts

Baguette 8 slices about 1 cm / 3/8 in thick	160 g / 5.64 oz
Gruyère cheese grated	120 g / 4.23 oz

Method

1. Soften the onions

Use a heavy pot about 26 cm / 10 in wide so the onions have room to lose moisture. Melt the butter with the olive oil over medium heat. Add all the onions and the measured salt. Cook for 10-15 minutes, stirring and lifting the bottom layer regularly, until the onions have softened and released their liquid. Reduce the heat if the edges colour before the bulk softens.

2. Build a golden base

Continue uncovered over medium-low heat for about 60 minutes more, allowing 60-90 minutes in all for the onions to become uniformly deep golden and soft. Stir every few minutes, more often as the pot dries. If a dark film forms on the bottom before the onions are ready, add 15-30 ml / 1-2 tbsp water and scrape it up. Repeat only as needed. The finished onions should smell sweet and savoury, without black edges or a scorched smell.

3. Simmer the broth

Stir in the garlic for 30 seconds, then the flour for 1 minute. Add the wine, scraping the bottom, and simmer for 3-4 minutes. Pour in the stock and add thyme, bay and pepper. Bring to a gentle simmer and cook uncovered for 25 minutes. Remove the herb stems and bay leaf. Taste before adding any more salt. While it simmers, heat the oven to 200°C / 390°F and toast the baguette on a tray for 8-10 minutes, turning once, until dry and crisp.

4. Gratinate and serve

Switch the oven to a hot grill/broiler, about 240°C / 465°F if adjustable. Divide the soup among 4 genuinely broiler-safe bowls set on a metal tray. Place 2 toasted baguette slices on each and divide the grated cheese equally over them. Position about 15 cm / 6 in below the element and grill for 3-5 minutes, watching constantly, until melted, bubbling and golden in patches. Let stand for 5 minutes. Lift the bowls with dry oven gloves and warn diners that the crockery remains very hot.

Cook’s note

The colour of the onions matters more than the clock: stop at a rich gold rather than pushing them to bitter black-brown. Use a pot that suits the burner. If your bowls are not rated for a broiler, melt the cheese on the toasts on a metal baking tray and place them on the hot soup just before serving.

Substitutions

For a wine-free version, replace the wine with 150 ml / 5.07 US fl oz additional unsalted stock and add 10 ml / 2 tsp cider vinegar with the stock. To make a vegetarian variation, use a well-flavoured unsalted vegetable stock and a vegetarian hard cheese; check stock for celery and cheese for animal rennet. Wine simmered briefly is not guaranteed alcohol-free.

Storage

Keep soup and toasts separate. Cool the soup promptly in shallow containers and refrigerate at 4°C / 40°F or below within 2 hours. Use within 3 days, or freeze the soup without bread and cheese for up to 3 months for best quality. Reheat only the amount needed to 74°C / 165°F before adding freshly toasted bread and cheese. Do not store the soup in a large warm pot.

Allergens: Milk, Wheat, Sulphites

Milk and wheat are present; wine commonly contains sulphites. Check the stock label for celery and other allergens. Wine-free and vegetarian substitutions change the allergen profile.

Approximate nutrition per portion: 515 kcal | Protein 21.7 g | Carbohydrate 50.5 g | Fat 23.1 g

Approximate values per stated portion. Ingredient brands, edible yield and absorbed cooking fat affect the result.

French onion soup





1. Soften thinly sliced onions in butter and oil in a wide heavy pot.



2. Cook the onions slowly until evenly golden, scraping up the fond.



3. Deglaze and simmer the browned onions with stock and herbs.



4. Cover each bowl with toasted baguette and Gruyère, then gratinate.

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Chapter 2

Salads and small starters

Salade niçoise

Niçoise-inspired home salad

A bright Niçoise-style salad of raw summer vegetables, tuna, anchovies and hard-boiled eggs. This home version leaves out seasonal artichokes and broad beans and uses a little wine vinegar; it contains neither potatoes nor green beans.

4 main-course salads

Prep 25 min | Cook 15 min | Wait 10 min | Total 50 min

The 50-minute estimate adds 25 minutes of preparation, 15 minutes to heat water and hard-boil eggs, and 10 minutes to cool them. Vegetable preparation overlaps the egg cooking, so an organised cook may finish sooner. Tuna and anchovies are ready to eat; no fresh-fish cooking is included.

Equipment: Saucepan; Bowl and ice; Salad spinner or clean towel; Serving platter; Small whisk.

Ingredients

Salad

Eggs large, about 200 g / 7.05 oz without shells	4 eggs
Ripe tomatoes cut into wedges	500 g / 17.64 oz
Mixed salad leaves washed and dried	80 g / 2.82 oz
Green pepper seeds and stalk removed, thinly sliced	100 g / 3.53 oz
Radishes trimmed and thinly sliced	100 g / 3.53 oz
Celery hearts thinly sliced	60 g / 2.12 oz
Spring onions thinly sliced	40 g / 1.41 oz
Tuna in olive oil drained weight	240 g / 8.47 oz
Anchovy fillets in oil drained	30 g / 1.06 oz

Small black olives pitted, drained	60 g / 2.12 oz
Fresh basil leaves	8 g / 0.28 oz
Dressing	
Extra virgin olive oil	45 ml / 3 tbsp
Red wine vinegar	10 ml / 2 tsp
Garlic halved	4 g / 0.14 oz
Fine salt	2 g / 0.07 oz
Black pepper	0.4 g / 0.01 oz

Method

1. Hard-boil and cool the eggs

Lower the eggs gently into a saucepan of boiling water and cook at a steady, gentle boil for 10-11 minutes, until the whites and yolks are firm. Transfer immediately to ice water for 10 minutes. Peel and cut each into quarters. Wash hands and clean any surfaces touched by raw eggs before handling the salad.

2. Prepare the raw vegetables

During the egg cooking and cooling, wash and dry the salad leaves and vegetables thoroughly. Cut tomatoes into wedges and slice pepper, radishes, celery hearts and spring onions thinly. Drain the tuna, anchovies and olives separately. Keep tuna in large flakes rather than mashing it.

3. Season and arrange

Rub a wide serving platter lightly with the cut garlic, then discard the garlic; its full weight is included in the nutrition estimate even though it is not all eaten. Spread the leaves on the platter and arrange tomatoes and sliced vegetables over them. Whisk olive oil, vinegar, salt and pepper together. Use salt sparingly because anchovies and olives are already salty.

4. Finish just before serving

Arrange the tuna, 16 egg quarters, anchovies and olives over the vegetables. Tear the basil and scatter it on top. Spoon over the dressing just before serving. Divide among 4 plates, giving each person 4 egg quarters and a fair share of tuna and anchovy. Serve promptly while the leaves are crisp.

Cook’s note

Niçoise salad has many household versions. The Nice reference uses raw vegetables with cooked eggs, tuna and anchovies; this version omits tender seasonal artichokes and broad beans rather than replacing them with cooked potatoes. Start with ripe tomatoes and do not drown them in dressing.

Substitutions

Use canned tuna in spring water, well drained, for a lighter variation; the texture and nutrition change. If you omit anchovies, increase tuna by 30 g / 1.06 oz and season after tasting. This still contains fish. The vinegar may be omitted if the tomatoes have enough acidity.

Storage

Best assembled immediately before eating. Keep prepared vegetables, eggs and fish covered separately at 4°C / 40°F or below and use within 24 hours. Refrigerate within 2 hours of preparation or serving. Do not freeze. Discard any portion left unrefrigerated for longer than 2 hours; dressing does not preserve fish or eggs.

Allergens: Eggs, Fish, Celery

Check prepared condiments, fish products and substitutes for additional allergens. Wine vinegar, olives, capers, cornichons and mustard may contain sulphites depending on the product. Unlisted accompaniments are excluded.

Approximate nutrition per portion: 355 kcal | Protein 28.2 g | Carbohydrate 10.5 g | Fat 22.7 g

Approximate values per stated portion. Ingredient brands, edible yield and absorbed frying oil affect the result.

Salade niçoise





1. Cook the eggs until firm, then cool them in ice water.



2. Slice the raw vegetables and drain the tuna, anchovies and olives.



3. Arrange the leaves and vegetables on a garlic-rubbed platter.



4. Add eggs and fish, then dress the salad just before serving.

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Chapter 3

Eggs, tarts and savoury bakes

Quiche Lorraine

Lorraine-style home baking

A crisp shortcrust shell holds smoky bacon and a gently set egg-and-cream filling. This Lorraine-style version has no added cheese; blind-baking the pastry helps keep the base firm.

1 quiche in a 24 cm / 9 1/2 in tart tin, cut into 6 portions

Prep 35 min | Cook 75 min | Wait 60 min | Total 170 min

The conservative 170-minute total adds 35 minutes of preparation, 75 minutes of cooking (25 blind-baking, up to 40 for the filled quiche and 10 for bacon) and 60 minutes of waiting (30 dough chilling, 15 chilling in the tin, 15 resting). Cook bacon during blind-baking, so elapsed time may be shorter. Preheat during the second chill.

Equipment: 24 cm / 9 1/2 in metal tart tin, about 3 cm / 1 1/4 in deep; Rolling pin; Baking paper and baking weights; Baking sheet; Frying pan; Whisk; Food thermometer; Cooling rack.

Ingredients

Shortcrust pastry

Plain all-purpose flour	200 g / 7.05 oz
Unsalted butter cold, diced	100 g / 3.53 oz
Egg yolk about 1 large yolk	20 g / 0.71 oz
Cold water	35 ml / 2 tbsp plus 1 tsp
Fine salt	2 g / 0.07 oz

For rolling

Plain all-purpose flour for dusting	10 g / 0.35 oz

Bacon filling

Smoked bacon lardons raw, cut into small strips	180 g / 6.35 oz

Custard

Eggs large, about 150 g / 5.29 oz without shells	3 eggs
Heavy cream	200 ml / 6.76 US fl oz
Whole milk	150 ml / 5.07 US fl oz

Fine salt	1 g / 0.04 oz
Black pepper	0.3 g / 0.01 oz
Ground nutmeg	0.2 g / 0.01 oz

Method

1. Make and chill the pastry

Mix flour and pastry salt in a bowl. Rub in the cold butter with fingertips until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Stir in the yolk and cold water, then press together just until a dough forms; do not knead smooth like bread. Flatten into a disc, wrap and refrigerate for 30 minutes.

2. Line the tin

Lightly dust the work surface with the rolling flour. Roll pastry to about 3 mm / 1/8 in thick and line a 24 cm / 9 1/2 in metal tart tin about 3 cm / 1 1/4 in deep. Ease it into the corners without stretching. Trim neatly, prick the base lightly and refrigerate for 15 minutes. Heat the oven to 190°C / 375°F conventional with a baking sheet inside.

3. Blind-bake the shell

Line the chilled shell with baking paper and fill with ceramic baking weights or dry beans reserved for baking. Put the tin on the hot sheet and bake for 20 minutes. Carefully lift out paper and weights and bake for another 5 minutes, until the base looks dry and pale gold. Lower the oven to 170°C / 340°F.

4. Cook and drain the bacon

While the shell bakes, cook lardons in a dry frying pan over medium heat for 8-10 minutes, stirring, until cooked through and lightly coloured. Drain away rendered fat and spread the bacon over the baked pastry. Do not pour the frying fat into the custard.

5. Mix and bake the filling

Whisk eggs, cream, milk, custard salt, pepper and nutmeg just until blended, without making a froth. Pour into the shell, stopping below the rim; the stated tin should hold it comfortably. Bake on the sheet for 35-40 minutes, until the edges are set and the centre has only a slight wobble, with no liquid wave. The centre should reach 71°C / 160°F. If the pastry colours too quickly, cover its edges loosely with foil.

6. Rest and slice

Stand the tin on a rack for 15 minutes so the filling settles before cutting. Remove the outer ring only when the pastry can support itself. Cut into 6 portions with a sharp knife, wiping it between cuts. Serve warm; salad or other accompaniments are not included in the quantities or nutrition.

Cook’s note

Use the stated tin diameter and depth: a shallow or smaller tin may overflow or need a different bake time. The filling should be softly set, not puffed and dry. Do not add cheese automatically to this version; cheese-enriched household quiches are a separate variation.

Substitutions

Replace lardons with the same weight of fully cooked diced ham for a milder variation, omitting the bacon-frying stage. For a meat-free quiche use 180 g / 6.35 oz already-cooked, well-drained mushrooms; this changes the dish and its nutrition. Do not substitute raw wet mushrooms directly into the custard.

Storage

Cool leftovers promptly in shallow portions and refrigerate at 4°C / 40°F or below within 2 hours. Keep covered for up to 3 days. Reheat only the portion needed once, until the centre reaches 74°C / 165°F. Freshly cooked eggs have a better texture than reheated eggs. Freeze cooled portions for up to 1 month for best quality; thaw in the refrigerator before reheating.

Allergens: Wheat, Milk, Eggs

Check bread, bacon, ham, cheese, mustard, baking powder and substitutes for additional allergens where used. Mustard and cured products may contain sulphites. Buckwheat flour requires a suitable gluten-free label if avoiding gluten. Unlisted accompaniments are excluded.

Approximate nutrition per portion: 550 kcal | Protein 12.8 g | Carbohydrate 29.5 g | Fat 42.6 g

Approximate values per stated portion. Ingredient brands, edible yield and absorbed frying oil affect the result.

Quiche Lorraine





1. Rub cold butter into flour and bind the pastry with yolk and water.



2. Line and chill the tart tin, then blind-bake the pastry shell.



3. Cook and drain the bacon and whisk the egg-and-cream filling.



4. Fill the shell, bake until gently set and rest before slicing.

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Chapter 4

Fish and shellfish

Sole meunière

French home cooking

Delicate sole fillets with a light flour coating and a warm lemon-and-brown-butter finish. Cooking in two batches gives the fish room to colour without steaming.

4 portions, 2 small sole fillets each

Prep 15 min | Cook 20 min | Wait 0 min | Total 35 min

Allow 15 minutes to prepare and coat and up to 20 minutes to heat the pan, cook two batches and finish the sauce. The cooking butter is 30 g in total, split between batches; the separate 30 g makes the sauce. Extra batches need extra time.

Equipment: Large nonstick frying pan; Fish spatula; Plate for flour; Tongs; Food thermometer; Warm oven-safe plate.

Ingredients

Fish

Sole fillets 8 small skinless boneless fillets	600 g / 21.16 oz
Plain all-purpose flour for coating, excess discarded	40 g / 1.41 oz
Fine salt	3 g / 0.11 oz
Black pepper	0.3 g / 0.01 oz
Unsalted butter	30 g / 1.06 oz
Neutral oil	15 ml / 1 tbsp

Lemon butter

Unsalted butter	30 g / 1.06 oz
Lemon juice	30 ml / 2 tbsp
Fresh parsley finely chopped	10 g / 0.35 oz

Method

1. Dry and coat the fillets

Check fillets for pin bones, pat dry and season with salt and pepper. Put flour on a plate. Dust each fillet just before cooking and shake off loose flour; a thick coating becomes pasty. Heat the oven to 80°C / 175°F for a brief hold between batches.

2. Cook the first batch

Heat half the oil and 15 g / 0.53 oz of the cooking butter in a large nonstick frying pan over medium-high heat. When butter foams, add 4 fillets without overlapping. Cook for about 2-3 minutes on the first side and 1-2 minutes on the other, until lightly golden, opaque and reaching 63°C / 145°F at the thickest part. Thin fillets may cook faster. Lift onto a warm plate and hold briefly in the oven.

3. Finish the second batch

Wipe out dark flour residue carefully with kitchen paper held in tongs. Add the remaining oil and 15 g / 0.53 oz cooking butter and cook the remaining 4 fillets in the same way. Keep the cooked fish warm only while finishing the sauce; prolonged holding dries it out.

4. Make the lemon butter

Wipe the pan and melt the separate 30 g / 1.06 oz butter over medium heat. Swirl until the milk solids turn hazelnut-gold and smell nutty, usually 1-2 minutes. Remove from the heat, wait until vigorous bubbling subsides, then carefully stir in lemon juice and parsley. Divide the 8 fillets among 4 plates and spoon the sauce over them. Serve immediately.

Cook’s note

This fillet version is easier to portion than a whole sole meunière. The butter should smell nutty, not burnt; start the finishing butter again if the milk solids turn black. A fish spatula helps lift the fragile fillets intact.

Substitutions

Plaice or lemon sole fillets of similar thickness can replace sole; use the same edible weight and check the cooking endpoint. Rice flour can replace wheat flour for coating if suitable for your needs. It changes the crust; check for cross-contact when avoiding gluten.

Storage

Best served freshly cooked. Cool leftovers promptly in shallow portions and refrigerate at 4°C / 40°F or below within 2 hours. Use within 2 days. Reheat once to 74°C / 165°F throughout; fish becomes firmer when reheated. Do not freeze the finished lemon-butter fish for the intended delicate texture.

Allergens: Fish, Wheat, Milk

Check mayonnaise, mustard, stock, crumbs and substitutes for additional allergens where used. Fish stock may contain shellfish or celery; mayonnaise may contain mustard. Wine and prepared products may contain sulphites. Unlisted accompaniments are excluded.

Approximate nutrition per portion: 300 kcal | Protein 27.5 g | Carbohydrate 8.4 g | Fat 17.5 g

Approximate values per stated portion. Ingredient brands, edible yield and absorbed frying oil affect the result.

Sole meunière





1. Dry, season and lightly flour the sole fillets.



2. Fry the first batch in foaming butter and a little oil.



3. Cook the remaining fillets and keep the cooked fish briefly warm.



4. Brown the finishing butter and add lemon and parsley off the heat.

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Chapter 5

Chicken and duck

Coq au vin

French coq au vin adapted for chicken thighs

A chicken version of coq au vin with red wine, mushrooms, small onions and smoked bacon. Modern chicken thighs need a much shorter braise than a mature rooster; the sauce still has time to become rich and savoury.

4 portions, 2 small chicken thighs each

Prep 25 min | Cook 95 min | Wait 0 min | Total 120 min

Allow 25 minutes to prepare and about 95 minutes to brown in two batches, soften aromatics, braise and finish. The onions and mushrooms cook in parallel with the braise. No overnight marination or homemade-stock preparation is included. Large thighs may take longer; tenderness and the 74°C endpoint govern readiness.

Equipment: Wide heavy casserole with lid; Tongs; Knife and separate poultry board; Food thermometer; Separate frying pan.

Ingredients

Chicken and braising sauce

Chicken thighs 8 small bone-in, skin-on thighs, total purchase weight	1200 g / 42.33 oz
Fine salt	3 g / 0.11 oz
Black pepper	0.5 g / 0.02 oz
Neutral oil	15 ml / 1 tbsp
Smoked bacon lardons	100 g / 3.53 oz
Onion finely sliced	150 g / 5.29 oz
Carrots cut into 1 cm / 3/8 in pieces	150 g / 5.29 oz
Garlic finely chopped	10 g / 0.35 oz
Plain all-purpose flour	20 g / 0.71 oz
Tomato purée concentrated paste	15 g / 0.53 oz
Dry red wine	500 ml / 16.91 US fl oz
Unsalted chicken stock	250 ml / 8.45 US fl oz

Fresh thyme	3 g / 0.11 oz
Dried bay leaf	0.2 g / 0.01 oz
Mushroom and onion finish	
Cultivated button mushrooms quartered	250 g / 8.82 oz
Pearl onions peeled, or frozen peeled onions thawed and drained	200 g / 7.05 oz
Unsalted butter	20 g / 0.71 oz
Water	80 ml / 2.71 US fl oz
Fresh parsley chopped	10 g / 0.35 oz

Method

1. Brown the chicken and bacon

Pat the chicken dry without rinsing it and season with the salt and pepper. Heat oil in a wide casserole over medium-high heat. Brown thighs in 2 batches, about 8 minutes per batch, turning once; lift to a plate. Lower heat, cook bacon for 3-4 minutes and lift it out too. Leave about 2 tbsp fat in the casserole, discarding any excess carefully.

2. Build the red-wine sauce

Soften sliced onion and carrot in the casserole for 7-8 minutes. Stir in garlic, flour and tomato paste and cook for 1 minute. Add wine gradually, scraping up golden deposits, then stock, thyme and bay. Bring to a steady simmer for 3 minutes. Return chicken, bacon and any juices; liquid should reach roughly halfway up the thighs rather than submerge the skin completely.

3. Braise and cook the garnish

Cover loosely and simmer gently for 35-45 minutes, until the chicken is tender and reaches at least 74°C / 165°F near the bone without touching bone. Meanwhile melt butter in a separate frying pan, add pearl onions and water, cover and simmer for 10-12 minutes. Uncover, let water evaporate, add mushrooms and cook for 8-10 minutes until tender and lightly golden. Stir occasionally; do not let the onions scorch.

4. Finish and serve

Lift cooked chicken to a warm dish. Remove bay and woody thyme stems. Simmer sauce uncovered for 5-8 minutes if it needs thickening, then add the mushroom-onion garnish and return chicken for 2-3 minutes to heat through. Taste before adding more seasoning because bacon and stock vary. Scatter with parsley and divide into 4 portions. Potatoes, noodles or bread are extra.

Cook’s note

This is an accessible chicken adaptation, not a claim that a mature coq cooks in 45 minutes. No overnight marinade is required for this version. The wine remains an ingredient containing alcohol after braising; do not call the finished dish alcohol-free.

Substitutions

For a wine-free stew replace the red wine with 500 ml / 16.91 US fl oz extra unsalted chicken stock and add 15 ml / 1 tbsp red wine vinegar at the end. Its flavour differs from coq au vin. Replace bacon with 100 g / 3.53 oz extra mushrooms for a pork-free variation; check stock and vinegar labels.

Storage

Cool promptly in shallow portions and refrigerate at 4°C / 40°F or below within 2 hours. Use within 3 days. Reheat only the portion needed once to 74°C / 165°F throughout. Freeze cooled portions for up to 2 months for best quality and thaw in the refrigerator before reheating.

Allergens: Wheat, Milk, Sulphites

Check prepared stock, mustard, bacon, wine, vinegar and substitutes for additional allergens where used. Stock may contain celery; wine, vinegar, olives and prepared condiments may contain sulphites. Unlisted accompaniments are excluded.

Approximate nutrition per portion: 875 kcal | Protein 45 g | Carbohydrate 24.6 g | Fat 55.7 g

Approximate values per stated portion. Bones and cooking fat are not all eaten; edible yield and fat retention are estimated and can vary substantially. Remaining salt and sodium are not calculated.

Coq au vin





1. Brown the chicken thighs in batches and cook the bacon.



2. Soften the aromatics and add flour, red wine and stock.



3. Braise chicken gently while cooking the small onions and mushrooms separately.



4. Combine the garnish and sauce with tender chicken and finish with parsley.

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Chapter 6

Meat, braises and country dishes

Beef bourguignon

Burgundian-style home beef braise

Beef slowly braised in red wine with bacon, mushrooms and small onions. This home version starts the braise on the day rather than requiring a separate overnight marinade; fork-tender meat is the final test.

6 portions of beef with wine sauce and vegetables

Prep 30 min | Cook 240 min | Wait 0 min | Total 270 min

Allow 30 minutes for preparation and a conservative 240 minutes for browning, sauce, a 2 1/2-3-hour braise and finishing. Garnish cooks in parallel. No overnight marinade or homemade-stock preparation is included. Some cuts need longer; fork tenderness determines the endpoint.

Equipment: Heavy lidded casserole; Tongs; Knife and board; Wooden spoon; Food thermometer; Frying pan for garnish.

Ingredients

Beef and sauce

Beef chuck boneless trimmed weight, cut into 4 cm / 1 1/2 in cubes	1000 g / 35.27 oz
Fine salt	4 g / 0.14 oz
Black pepper	0.6 g / 0.02 oz
Neutral oil	20 ml / 1 tbsp plus 1 tsp
Smoked bacon lardons	100 g / 3.53 oz
Onion finely sliced	200 g / 7.05 oz
Carrots peeled, thickly sliced	250 g / 8.82 oz
Garlic finely chopped	12 g / 0.42 oz
Plain all-purpose flour	25 g / 0.88 oz
Tomato purée concentrated paste	20 g / 0.71 oz
Dry red wine	600 ml / 20.29 US fl oz
Unsalted beef stock	500 ml / 16.91 US fl oz

Fresh thyme	3 g / 0.11 oz
Dried bay leaf	0.2 g / 0.01 oz
Mushrooms and small onions	
Cultivated button mushrooms quartered	250 g / 8.82 oz
Pearl onions peeled	200 g / 7.05 oz
Unsalted butter	25 g / 0.88 oz
Water	100 ml / 3.38 US fl oz
Fresh parsley chopped	10 g / 0.35 oz

Method

1. Brown meat in batches

Pat beef dry and season with salt and pepper. Heat oil in a heavy casserole over medium-high heat and brown beef in 3 batches, about 5-6 minutes each, turning to colour several sides. Lift out. Cook bacon for 3-4 minutes and lift out too. Carefully spoon off excess fat, leaving about 1 tbsp in the casserole.

2. Build and start the braise

Soften onion and carrots for 8 minutes over medium heat. Stir in garlic, flour and tomato paste for 1 minute. Gradually add wine, scraping the bottom, then stock, thyme and bay. Bring to a simmer for 3 minutes. Return beef, bacon and their juices. Liquid should nearly cover the meat; add a little hot water only if needed. Cover and keep at a very quiet simmer for about 2 1/2-3 hours, stirring occasionally.

3. Cook the garnish and test tenderness

During the last 30 minutes, put pearl onions, butter and the separate water in a frying pan. Cover and simmer for 12-15 minutes, then uncover to evaporate the water. Add mushrooms and cook for 8-10 minutes until tender and lightly coloured. Test several beef pieces with a fork: they should yield easily. If still firm, continue in 20-30-minute increments rather than serving tough meat.

4. Finish the sauce

Remove bay and woody thyme stems. Lift beef out briefly if sauce needs reducing and simmer sauce uncovered for 10-15 minutes until it lightly coats a spoon. Return beef, add mushrooms and onions and heat through for 3-5 minutes. Taste before adding extra seasoning and finish with parsley. Divide into 6 portions. Extra mashed potatoes, bread or noodles are not included.

Cook’s note

Braising beef is ready when its connective tissue softens, not merely when it passes a minimum meat temperature. Keep the heat low and replace evaporated liquid sparingly. This is a red-wine version; cooking does not guarantee that all alcohol disappears.

Substitutions

For a wine-free variation replace the wine with 600 ml / 20.29 US fl oz extra unsalted beef stock and add 15 ml / 1 tbsp red wine vinegar at the end. It is a different, stock-based beef stew. Use 100 g / 3.53 oz extra mushrooms instead of bacon for a pork-free adaptation; check stock and vinegar labels.

Storage

Cool promptly in shallow portions and refrigerate at 4°C / 40°F or below within 2 hours. Use within 3 days. Reheat only the portion needed once to 74°C / 165°F throughout. Freeze cooled portions for up to 2 months for best quality; thaw in the refrigerator before reheating.

Allergens: Wheat, Milk, Sulphites

Check prepared stock, bacon, sausage, mustard, crumbs, cider, wine, vinegar and substitutes for additional allergens where used. Stock may contain celery; sausage may contain wheat, milk, mustard or sulphites. Wine, cider and pickled products may contain sulphites. Unlisted accompaniments are excluded.

Approximate nutrition per portion: 600 kcal | Protein 38.7 g | Carbohydrate 20.6 g | Fat 32.9 g

Approximate values per stated portion. Ingredient brands, edible yield and absorbed frying oil affect the result.

Beef bourguignon





1. Brown the dried beef in uncrowded batches and cook the bacon.



2. Soften aromatics and begin the long red-wine and stock braise.



3. Cook mushrooms and pearl onions separately and check the beef with a fork.



4. Reduce sauce if needed, combine the garnish and finish with parsley.

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Chapter 7

Vegetables from the French kitchen

Ratatouille

Provençal-style chunky ratatouille

A chunky ratatouille of aubergine, courgette, peppers, tomato and herbs. Cooking the aubergine and courgette separately before the final simmer helps the vegetables retain their shapes.

6 generous vegetable side portions

Prep 30 min | Cook 75 min | Wait 0 min | Total 105 min

The 105-minute estimate adds 30 minutes of preparation and 75 minutes of cooking. Tomato base and separate vegetable sautéing overlap on two burners. A small frying pan or single burner requires extra batches and more time; aubergine tenderness and sauce thickness govern readiness.

Equipment: Wide heavy casserole; Broad frying pan; Knife and board; Wooden spoon; Bowls for separate vegetables.

Ingredients

Vegetables and herbs

Aubergine trimmed, cut into 2 cm / 3/4 in cubes	400 g / 14.11 oz
Courgettes trimmed, cut into 2 cm / 3/4 in pieces	400 g / 14.11 oz
Red pepper trimmed, cut into short strips	200 g / 7.05 oz
Green pepper trimmed, cut into short strips	150 g / 5.29 oz
Onion finely sliced	200 g / 7.05 oz
Ripe tomatoes cored and chopped, with juices	600 g / 21.16 oz
Garlic finely chopped	15 g / 0.53 oz
Olive oil divided into 3 portions of 20 ml / 1 tbsp plus 1 tsp	60 ml / 4 tbsp
Fine salt	6 g / 0.21 oz
Black pepper	0.6 g / 0.02 oz
Fresh thyme	3 g / 0.11 oz

Dried bay leaf	0.2 g / 0.01 oz
Fresh basil leaves torn	12 g / 0.42 oz

Method

1. Prepare the vegetables

Wash and dry all vegetables before cutting. Keep aubergine, courgette, peppers and onion in separate bowls so each can cook at its own pace. Chop tomatoes and retain their juice. Set out 3 separate 20 ml / 1 tbsp plus 1 tsp portions of the measured oil; extra unmeasured oil is not needed.

2. Start the pepper and tomato base

Heat one portion of oil in a wide heavy casserole over medium heat. Cook onion for 5 minutes, then add peppers and 2 g / 0.07 oz of the salt. Cook for 10 minutes until beginning to soften. Add garlic for 30 seconds, then tomatoes, thyme, bay and pepper. Simmer uncovered for 10-15 minutes, stirring occasionally.

3. Cook aubergine and courgette separately

Meanwhile heat the second oil portion in a broad frying pan. Add aubergine and 2 g / 0.07 oz salt and cook for 12-15 minutes, turning, until softening and lightly golden. If it catches, add 15-30 ml / 1-2 tbsp water and let it evaporate rather than pouring in more oil. Tip into the tomato base. In the same frying pan heat the last oil portion and cook courgette with the remaining 2 g / 0.07 oz salt for 7-10 minutes until lightly golden and just tender, then add to the casserole.

4. Simmer together and finish

Fold the vegetables together gently and simmer partly covered for 15-20 minutes, until aubergine is completely tender and the sauce is thick rather than watery. Uncover toward the end if liquid needs to evaporate. Remove bay and woody thyme stems and stir in basil off the heat. Taste before adjusting seasoning. Divide into 6 side portions. This is a spoonable vegetable stew, not a baked spiral of thin slices.

Cook’s note

Aubergine should be tender right through, without a spongy raw centre. Use two pans to control water and texture, but avoid stirring so vigorously that everything becomes purée. No sugar is required in this version; ripe tomatoes provide the balance.

Substitutions

Use all red pepper if green pepper is unavailable, keeping the combined trimmed pepper weight 350 g / 12.35 oz. A drained chopped canned tomato version is possible at 600 g / 21.16 oz including some juice; simmer to a thick sauce rather than adding extra liquid. Omit basil if necessary and retain thyme.

Storage

Cool promptly in shallow portions and refrigerate at 4°C / 40°F or below within 2 hours. Use within 3 days. Reheat only the portion needed once to 74°C / 165°F throughout. Freeze cooled portions for up to 2 months for best quality; thaw in the refrigerator before reheating. Freezing softens courgette and pepper, but the stew remains suitable as a cooked vegetable side. Serve chilled only after proper refrigeration.

Allergens: No major allergen listed

Check stock, breadcrumbs, mustard, vinegar, cheese and substitutes for additional allergens where used. Stock may contain celery; mustard, vinegar and prepared products may contain sulphites. Check cheese rennet if a vegetarian product is needed. Unlisted accompaniments are excluded.

Approximate nutrition per portion: 160 kcal | Protein 3.5 g | Carbohydrate 17.2 g | Fat 9.9 g

Approximate values per stated portion. Ingredient brands, edible yield and absorbed frying oil affect the result.

Ratatouille





1. Cut the vegetables into even chunks and measure three portions of oil.



2. Soften onion and peppers, then simmer with tomato, garlic and herbs.



3. Cook aubergine and courgette separately before adding them to the base.



4. Simmer gently until tender and finish with torn basil.

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Chapter 8

Potatoes, grains and hearty sides

Aligot

Aubrac-style aligot with fresh tome

Aligot combines hot mashed potatoes, cream, butter and fresh tome into a smooth elastic ribbon. Fresh tome for aligot is important: a mature hard cheese does not melt in the same way.

6 rich side portions of stretchy potato and fresh cheese

Prep 25 min | Cook 50 min | Wait 0 min | Total 75 min

The 75-minute estimate adds 25 minutes of preparation and 50 minutes for heating water, cooking potatoes, mashing and melting the cheese. Slice tome while potatoes simmer. The dish is served immediately after it forms a smooth ribbon; there is no separate resting stage.

Equipment: Saucepan for potatoes; Colander; Potato masher or food mill; Heavy saucepan; Sturdy wooden spoon.

Ingredients

Potatoes

Floury potatoes peeled weight, cut into even chunks	1000 g / 35.27 oz
Garlic peeled	8 g / 0.28 oz
Water approximately, for boiling and draining	2000 ml / 67.63 US fl oz

Cheese and cream finish

Fresh tome for aligot fresh unaged tome from Laguiole/Aubrac, rindless, thinly sliced	400 g / 14.11 oz
Crème fraîche	200 g / 7.05 oz
Unsalted butter	60 g / 2.12 oz
Fine salt	5 g / 0.18 oz
White pepper	0.4 g / 0.01 oz

Method

1. Prepare cheese and potatoes

Cut fresh tome into very thin slices or small pieces. Keep it covered and cool while preparing potatoes; take it out only while the potatoes cook rather than leaving it warm for hours. Put potato chunks and peeled garlic in a saucepan and cover with cold water. Bring to a simmer and cook for 20-25 minutes until potatoes are completely tender.

2. Mash while hot

Drain thoroughly, retaining garlic with the potatoes. Steam-dry in the warm pan for 1-2 minutes. Mash by hand or pass through a food mill into a heavy saucepan. Work in butter, crème fraîche, salt and pepper with a sturdy wooden spoon. Warm gently, stirring, until the mash is smooth and hot. Do not use a high-speed blender on the cooked potatoes.

3. Melt and stretch the tome

Keep the pan over low heat. Add cheese in 3-4 additions, stirring firmly as each begins to melt. Continue lifting and folding with the spoon for about 5-8 minutes until the mixture becomes glossy, cohesive and elastic and stretches in a continuous ribbon. Keep it gently hot, without hard boiling or prolonged scorching against the pan base.

4. Serve immediately

Taste before adding extra salt, since cheese varies. Lift and fold once more, then divide directly into 6 rich side portions while the aligot is hot and stretchy. Do not wait for a browned crust or bake it as a gratin. Sausage, grilled meat or salad can accompany it but are not included in the recipe or nutrition.

Cook’s note

Use fresh unaged tome sold for aligot, not a wedge of fully matured Laguiole with a firm rind. Cheese age, acidity and moisture affect the stretch. This recipe gives 6 side portions; the same pot may be served as fewer, larger main portions, which changes nutrition per portion.

Substitutions

If fresh tome is unavailable, an approximate home cheese-mash variation can use 300 g / 10.58 oz well-drained mozzarella plus 100 g / 3.53 oz young Cantal. It is not traditional aligot and may stretch or release moisture differently. Check dairy and cheese labels, including rennet if vegetarian suitability matters.

Storage

Cool promptly in shallow portions and refrigerate at 4°C / 40°F or below within 2 hours. Use within 3 days. Reheat only the portion needed once to 74°C / 165°F throughout. The cheese texture changes after chilling; freshly made gives the best stretch. Freezing is not recommended for the intended texture. Reheat gently with a small spoonful of water if necessary while still reaching the leftover temperature; the original fresh texture is not guaranteed.

Allergens: Milk

Check prepared stock, pasta, cheese, vinegar and substitutions for additional allergens where used. Stock may contain celery; crozets may contain egg and commonly contain wheat even if partly buckwheat. Cheese may use animal rennet. Vinegar and prepared products may contain sulphites. Unlisted accompaniments are excluded.

Approximate nutrition per portion: 515 kcal | Protein 19.1 g | Carbohydrate 31.3 g | Fat 34.9 g

Approximate values per stated portion. Ingredient brands, edible yield and absorbed frying oil affect the result.

Aligot





1. Slice the fresh tome thinly and boil peeled potatoes with garlic.



2. Drain and mash hot potatoes and incorporate butter and crème fraîche.



3. Add tome gradually over gentle heat and work until glossy and stretchy.



4. Serve immediately in rich side portions while the cheese forms ribbons.

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Chapter 9

Bread and pâtisserie

Butter croissants

French laminated butter croissants, two-day home method

Layered butter croissants made over two days. Measured cold rests and gentle proofing keep butter between the dough layers, giving a crisp shell and a light interior.

12 large butter croissants

Prep 100 min | Cook 30 min | Wait 920 min | Total 1050 min

The 1050-minute plan adds 100 minutes of active work,30 minutes of baking and 920 minutes of waiting:60-minute first rest,480-minute overnight chill,30-minute butter lock-in chill,45 and 45 minutes between turns,60 minutes after the third turn,20-minute sheet rest,150-minute final proof and 30-minute cooling. Butter-block chilling overlaps the overnight rest. Cooler proofing or extra dough-relaxing pauses extend the plan.

Equipment: Scale; Mixing bowl; Rolling pin; Ruler; Baking paper; Covered refrigerator space for flat dough; Sharp knife; Two baking trays; Pastry brush; Racks; Food thermometer.

Ingredients

Yeast dough

White bread flour	500 g / 17.64 oz
Water cool	140 ml / 4.73 US fl oz
Whole milk cool	140 ml / 4.73 US fl oz
Caster sugar	50 g / 1.76 oz
Fine salt	10 g / 0.35 oz
Instant yeast	7 g / 0.25 oz
Unsalted butter melted and cooled	40 g / 1.41 oz

Lamination

Unsalted butter cold but pliable, preferably about 82% fat	250 g / 8.82 oz
White bread flour for light rolling dust, excess brushed away	35 g / 1.23 oz

Egg wash

Eggs 1 large egg without shell, beaten	50 g / 1.76 oz
Whole milk	10 ml / 2 tsp

Method

1. Make the dough on day one

Mix dough flour, yeast, sugar and salt. Add cool water,140 ml / 4.73 US fl oz milk and the separate 40 g / 1.41 oz melted, cooled butter. Knead for 5-6 minutes until smooth enough to hold together, without intensive bread-style kneading. Flatten into a thick rectangle, cover and leave at cool room temperature for 60 minutes. Press out large bubbles, wrap with room to expand and refrigerate at 4°C / 40°F or below for at least 8 hours.

2. Make the butter block

During the cold rest, put the 250 g / 8.82 oz lamination butter between sheets of baking paper and tap and roll into an even 20 ×20 cm / 8 ×8 in square. Refrigerate. Before locking it into dough, let it become flexible enough to bend slightly without cracking, while still cold. Dough and butter should feel similarly firm; greasy melted butter cannot form separate layers.

3. Enclose the butter

On a lightly floured surface roll cold dough to 22 × 42 cm / 9 × 16 1/2 in. Set butter over one half, leaving a narrow dough border. Fold the other half over and pinch edges closed. Brush away loose flour and wrap. Chill for 30 minutes before rolling so the package relaxes. Use only the separate 35 g / 1.23 oz rolling flour as needed.

4. Give three single turns

Roll the package gently to about 22 × 66 cm / 9 × 26 in, keeping edges straight. Fold the lower third over the centre and the upper third over that, like a letter: this is one turn. Wrap and refrigerate 45 minutes. Rotate a quarter-turn, roll and letter-fold again; chill 45 minutes. Repeat once more for 3 turns total, then chill for 60 minutes. If butter softens or dough springs back strongly, pause for additional refrigeration rather than forcing it.

5. Roll and cut twelve triangles

Roll the chilled laminated dough into an even rectangle about 36 ×72 cm / 14 ×28 in and 4-5 mm /about 3/16 in thick. If it resists, chill and return after a few minutes. Cover and refrigerate flat for 20 minutes. Cut across the long side into 6 rectangles about 12 ×36 cm / 5 ×14 in, then cut each diagonally into 2 triangles, making 12. Cut a shallow 1 cm / 3/8 in notch at the middle of each short base and gently ease the base corners apart and straighten the tip before rolling.

6. Shape and proof gently

Starting at the short base, roll each triangle toward its tip without pulling so tightly that layers compress. Place tip underneath on two parchment-lined trays,6 per tray, leaving generous space. Cover loosely and proof at about 21-24°C / 70-75°F for 2-3 hours, until visibly expanded, light and slightly wobbly when the tray moves. Keep away from heaters and never use a hot proofing box that melts butter. The 150-minute allowance is a planning estimate, not a limit.

7. Egg-wash and bake

Preheat the oven to 200°C / 390°F conventional during proofing. Beat the separate egg with 10 ml / 2 tsp milk. Brush tops lightly, avoiding thick pools on cut edges, and discard unused wash. Bake for 10 minutes, lower to 190°C / 375°F and continue for 15-20 minutes until deeply golden with dry visible layers and a baked, not gummy, centre. If baking both trays together, leave air space and swap their positions carefully after about 15 minutes; ovens vary. The interior should reach about 93°C / 200°F.

8. Cool and portion

Move croissants to racks and cool for at least 30 minutes before serving. Do not squeeze hot croissants to judge their crumb. Serve one large croissant per portion for the stated nutrition. The sheet edges and egg wash are conservatively included in the estimate even if some flour or wash is discarded. No chocolate, almond filling or sugar glaze is included.

Cook’s note

Keep butter cold yet pliable throughout lamination. Cracked butter creates uneven layers; melted butter becomes absorbed into the dough. Extra short cold pauses are preferable to forcing the rolling pin, but they extend the stated plan. This is a large 12-croissant batch, not twelve miniature pastries.

Substitutions

Use an unsalted butter with suitable lamination strength if European-style butter is unavailable; very soft spreadable butter or low-fat spread is not equivalent. A dairy-free croissant needs a separately developed laminated formula. Shop-bought puff pastry is not a direct substitute for this yeasted croissant dough.

Storage

Cool completely before wrapping. Keep unfilled baked brioche or croissants at cool room temperature in a clean airtight container for up to 2 days, or freeze cooled portions for up to 2 months. Thaw covered; refresh croissants briefly in the oven to restore some crispness. Do not store raw egg wash at room temperature for later use. Discard any mouldy bread or pastry.

Allergens: Wheat, Milk, Eggs

Check flour, cheese, baking powder, vanilla, olives and substitutions for additional allergens where used. Olives and prepared products may contain sulphites. Cheese may use animal rennet. Financiers contain almonds; replacing them with hazelnuts still leaves a tree-nut allergen. Unlisted accompaniments are excluded.

Approximate nutrition per portion: 365 kcal | Protein 6.7 g | Carbohydrate 37.4 g | Fat 21.2 g

Approximate values per stated portion. Ingredient brands, edible yield and absorbed frying oil affect the result.

Butter croissants





1. Make the yeast dough, chill overnight and prepare the butter square.



2. Enclose the butter and complete three letter folds with cold rests.



3. Roll, cut twelve triangles, shape and proof gently until light.



4. Brush lightly, bake until deeply golden and cool on racks.

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Chapter 10

Desserts for the table

French crêpes

French wheat crêpes, sweet home version

Thin, flexible French crêpes served with a measured dusting of sugar and lemon juice. Resting the batter helps the flour hydrate so it spreads evenly in the pan.

16 thin crêpes, 2 per portion

Prep 15 min | Cook 35 min | Wait 30 min | Total 80 min

The 80-minute plan includes 15 minutes of active preparation, 35 minutes for melting butter, heating the pan and cooking about 16 thin crêpes, and a 30-minute batter rest. Pan size, thickness and burner strength affect cooking time; a smaller pan gives more crêpes and a longer batch.

Equipment: Mixing bowl; Whisk; Sieve if needed; 24 cm non-stick crêpe pan; Small ladle or measuring jug; Pastry brush; Thin spatula; Plate and clean cloth.

Ingredients

Batter

All-purpose flour	250 g / 8.82 oz
Eggs without shells, about 3 large eggs	150 g / 5.29 oz
Whole milk	500 ml / 16.91 US fl oz
Granulated sugar	20 g / 0.71 oz
Fine salt	2 g / 0.07 oz
Unsalted butter melted and cooled	30 g / 1.06 oz
Vanilla extract	5 ml / 1 tsp

Pan

Unsalted butter for light greasing across the batch	15 g / 0.53 oz

To serve

Granulated sugar	30 g / 1.06 oz
Lemon juice	30 ml / 2 tbsp

Method

1. Mix a smooth batter

Whisk flour, batter sugar and salt together in a bowl. Add the weighed eggs and about one-third of the milk, whisking from the centre to make a thick smooth paste. Whisk in the remaining milk gradually, followed by the cooled melted batter butter and vanilla. Scrape the sides; strain if lumps remain rather than beating for a long time.

2. Rest and prepare

Cover and refrigerate for 30 minutes at 4°C / 40°F or colder. Stir gently before cooking because flour can settle. Have a plate and clean cloth ready for stacking. Keep the 15 g / 0.53 oz pan butter separate from the butter already in the batter.

3. Cook thin crêpes

Heat a 24 cm / 9 1/2 in non-stick crêpe pan over medium heat. Brush with a trace of the separate butter. Lift the pan from the burner, add about 55 ml / 3 tbsp plus 2 tsp batter and immediately tilt in a circle to coat the base thinly. Return to the heat and cook for about 60-90 seconds, until the surface has set and the edges lift. Turn with a thin spatula and cook the other side for about 20-30 seconds, until no wet batter remains.

4. Finish the batch and serve

Repeat to make about 16 crêpes, stirring the batter occasionally and using the remaining pan butter sparingly. Lower the heat if the butter darkens or the crêpe burns before setting. Stack cooked crêpes under a clean cloth while finishing the batch. Divide the separate serving sugar and lemon juice across all 16, fold into quarters and serve 2 per portion. The measured topping is included in nutrition; extra jam or chocolate is not.

Cook’s note

The 55 ml ladle is a starting guide for the stated pan size. Spread immediately while the pan is tilted; a thick pancake left in the centre will not become a thin crêpe by cooking longer. This lightly sweetened adaptation differs from a neutral batter intended for savoury fillings.

Substitutions

For a plain version omit the lemon-and-sugar serving mixture; the stated nutrition then changes. Replacing wheat flour entirely with buckwheat needs a separate galette formula. Vanilla can be omitted without changing the batter structure.

Storage

Cool cooked crêpes promptly and refrigerate covered at 4°C / 40°F or colder within 2 hours. Use within 2 days, or freeze separated with parchment for up to 1 month. Reheat once until hot throughout, reaching 74°C / 165°F. Keep raw batter refrigerated and use within 24 hours; do not leave the bowl beside the stove for a prolonged service.

Allergens: Wheat, Egg, Milk

Check chocolate, prepared ice cream, vanilla, prunes and substitutions for additional allergens where used. Chocolate may contain milk, soy or nut cross-contact; ice cream may contain egg. Dried fruit may contain sulphites. Unlisted accompaniments are excluded.

Approximate nutrition per portion: 245 kcal | Protein 7.7 g | Carbohydrate 33.6 g | Fat 8.8 g

Approximate values per stated portion. Ingredient brands, edible yield and absorbed frying oil affect the result.

French crêpes





1. Whisk eggs and milk gradually into the flour, then add melted butter.



2. Rest the covered batter in the refrigerator and stir before cooking.



3. Tilt a lightly buttered pan to spread a thin layer, then turn once set.



4. Stack the crêpes, add the measured lemon and sugar and fold to serve.

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