



Photo: http://a.abcnews.com/images/Entertainment/abc_julia_childs_beef_bourguignon_tk_111228_wmain.jpg

Meals:

- **Breakfast:** or *le petit déjeuner* is a small morning meal consisting of coffee, bread with jam, and fruit. Other pastries like croissants and pan au chocolat are also extremely common.
- **Lunch:** or *déjeuner* is the largest and most time consuming meal of the day in France. Salads, soups, pasta, and meat are all extremely common French lunch items.
- **Dinner:** or *dîner* is a smaller meal, but consists of the same variety of food as lunch.

Frequently Used Foods:

- **Fruits and Vegetables:** Apple, banana, orange, melon, peach, pear, grapefruit, grape, tomato, carrot, chicory, courgette, lettuce, onion, garlic, potato, cauliflower, and artichoke.
- **Protein:** Beef, duck, veal, rabbit, chicken, lamb, goose, cod, sardines, mussels, and eggs
- **Spices:** Salt, Pepper, thyme, tarragon, bay leaf, basil, parsley, rosemary
- **Oils/Misc:** Butter, cream, cheese, vanilla, red wine vinegar, pasta

Ten Regional Favorite Dishes with Links to Interesting Recipes:

- **Moules à la crème Normande:** [[recipe](#)] [[images](#)]
- **Tarte Normande:** [[recipe](#)] [[images](#)]
- **Crêpes:** [[recipe](#)] [[images](#)]
- **Bœuf bourguignon:** [[recipe](#)] [[images](#)]
- **Coq au vin:** [[recipe](#)] [[images](#)]
- **Gratin dauphinois:** [[recipe](#)] [[images](#)]
- **Blanquette de veau:** [[recipe](#)] [[images](#)]
- **French Onion Soup:** [[recipe](#)] [[images](#)]
- **Crème brûlée:** [[recipe](#)] [[images](#)]
- **Croque monsieur:** [[recipe](#)] [[images](#)]

Religion: Roughly 51% of all French citizens are Christian, 31% are non-religious, and 3% are Islamic.

National Holidays and dietary Requirements:

- **Lundi de Pâques**, or Easter Monday, is a national holiday in France. This holiday signifies the end of the Lenten season. Easter Monday is a day of relaxation and family. Food is very important on this day, and children are commonly invited to help create the menu for the day, which usually includes a form of lamb leftover from Easter Sunday.
- **La Fête du Muguet, La Fête du Travail** (May Day/ Labor Day) is a national holiday celebrated on May 1st that recognizes workers' rights. On this day, it is also customary to present a lily of the valley or dog rose flowers to loved ones.
- **Bastille Day** is celebrated on July 14th every year and is France's National day, commemorating the beginning of the French Revolution. This holiday is celebrated with parades, festivals, fireworks, picnics, and drinking wine.
- **Armistice de la Première Guerre mondiale** (Armistice Day) is recognized on November 11th in remembrance of those who died or were injured during WWI and other wars. Armistice Day is most commonly a very solemn occasion.

- **St. Stephen's Day**, occurring on December 26th, is a religious holiday in honor of the life of Saint Stephen. Many French citizens attend special church services on this day and spend time with family and close friends.

Etiquette: Food Presentation and manners are extremely important for the French. Hands are kept on the table when one is not eating, napkins placed around the knees, and meals typically do not begin until the host of the meal declares "bon appétit". While eating, the fork is kept in the left hand and the knife in the right.

Reaching for food on the table is very impolite in France. Also, one should never talk with a mouthful of food or blow on hot food.

Food History: For centuries, French cuisine has exemplified excellence. Toward the end of the 17th century, the development of "haute" cuisine ushered in a revolution in French cooking, shifting culinary pursuits from abundance to quality. Enlightenment occurred following the French Revolution, where chefs began to experiment more and more with a variety of ingredients and dishes. Today, France is internationally renowned for its' cuisine, and contains some of the world's best culinary institutions.

Additional information and acknowledgements:

<http://www.personal.psu.edu/srh122/French.htm>

<http://frenchfood.about.com/>

<http://www.french-culture-for-visitors.com/history-of-french-cuisine.html>