

FRANCE MENU DECODER

By Clotilde Dusoulier, author of *Clotilde's Edible Adventures in Paris*

BudgetTravel

GENERAL TERMS

manger/boire to eat/to drink
petit déjeuner breakfast
déjeuner lunch
dîner dinner
couteau knife
fourchette fork
cuiller or **cuillère** spoon
assiette plate
verre glass
serviette napkin
entrée first course, or appetizer
plat dish, or main course
boisson beverage
plat du jour today's special
carte menu
menu a selection of dishes for a set price
formule a limited selection of dishes for a smaller price
dégustation tasting
droit de bouchon corkage fee
addition check
pourboire tip
ouvert/fermé/complet
open/closed/fully booked
serveur/serveuse
waiter/waitress

OTHER FOOD TERMS

cru/cuit raw/cooked
mi-cuit half-cooked
rôti/fumé/frit
roasted/smoked/fried
à la vapeur/poché/au four
steamed/poached/oven-baked
saignant/à point/bien cuit
rare/well done/very well done
chaud/tiède/froid/glacé
hot/warm/cold/chilled
épice/épicé spice/spicy
AOC (Appellation d'origine contrôlée) certified origin, mainly for wine, cheese, and butter
(fait) maison homemade
fermier farm-made
bio or **biologique** organic
frais/affiné fresh/aged
farcé stuffed
croûte crust
confit any preparation that's cooked slowly until very soft
croustillant any crisp or crunchy preparation
brochette a skewer, or any dish of skewered items
mille-feuille any layered preparation, most notably, the napoleon pastry

POPULAR DISHES

charcuterie cured meats, most often pork
terrine a loaf-shaped dish, or any meat/fish/vegetable preparation cooked in it
pressé a pressed terrine
œuf cocotte an egg baked in a ramekin
pot-au-feu a beef stew with potatoes, carrots, turnips, leeks
bœuf bourguignon a beef and onion stew cooked in red wine
blanquette de veau a creamy stew of veal and vegetables
cassoulet a stew from southwestern France of duck, pork, and white beans
choucroute garnie sauerkraut with potatoes, cured meats, and sausages
bouillabaisse a chunky fish soup from Provence
ratatouille a vegetable stew from Provence made with tomatoes, zucchini, eggplants, onions, and garlic
gratin a casserole
boudin blanc/noir white/blood sausage
brandade salt cod mashed with olive oil and milk, and sometimes potatoes
croque-monsieur a grilled ham and cheese sandwich
velouté a soup that is milled and strained so it's entirely smooth (*velours*, velvet)
ragoût/civet/daube stew
tourte a meat, fish, or vegetable pie
tartine open-face sandwich
galette a savory crepe made with buckwheat flour
quenelle an oval dumpling, often fish-based
foie gras liver (**foie**) from a fattened duck or goose
ris sweetbread

STAPLES

pain bread
sel/poivre salt/pepper
huile oil
ail garlic
œuf egg
volaille poultry
poulet chicken
canard duck
bœuf beef
veau veal
porc/cochon pork/pig

jambon ham
agneau lamb
lapin rabbit
gibier game
escargot snail
bar sea bass
cabillaud/morue cod
daurade sea bream
lotte monkfish
Saint-Pierre John Dory
fruits de mer shellfish

Saint-Jacques sea scallop
homard lobster
crevette shrimp
huître oyster
moule mussel
fromage de vache/chèvre/brebis
cow/goat/sheep milk cheese
crème fraîche thick and slightly sour cream

beurre salé/doux
salted/unsalted butter
fromage blanc smooth, fresh cheese, similar to yogurt
légumes vegetables
pomme de terre
potato
aubergine eggplant
courgette zucchini
poireau leek

champignon mushroom
chou cabbage
haricot bean
petit pois green pea
navet turnip
viande meat
côte/côtelette chop
entrecôte rib steak
gigot/souris d'agneau leg of lamb/lamb shank

DRINKS/DESSERTS

eau plate/gazeuse/du robinet
still/sparkling/tap water
vin rouge/blanc/rosé red/white/rosé wine
vin sec/moelleux dry/sweet wine
bouteille/pichet bottle/jug or pitcher
apéritif/digestif predinner/after-dinner drink
bière beer
café/déca espresso/decaf espresso

café allongé espresso with extra water
café crème coffee with milk
thé/infusion tea/herbal tea
lait milk
gâteau cake
biscuit/sablé cookie/shortbread
glace ice cream
baba au rhum rum-infused sponge cake

charlotte fruit layered with custard and ladyfingers
clafoutis fruit baked in a light custard
financier small almond cake
riz au lait rice pudding
macaron almond meringue cookie, sometimes with a creamy filling
pain perdu French toast