

HOW TO USE THE A-Z OF FRENCH FOOD:

Each culinary speciality is described under its own name. For example, for *salade niçoise*, see under *Niçoise*; *à la boulangère* will be found under *Boulangère*; *beurre Colbert*, under *Colbert*; *sauce hollandaise*, under *hollandaise* etc.

KEY TO ASTERISKS:

- * a term defined elsewhere in alphabetical order.
- ** a term referring to wine.
- *** a French expression based on culinary language or associated with the names of dishes or preparations.

A

A l' (à la): sauces, garnishes or preparations beginning in French with *à l'* or *à la*, as in *à la Normande*, *à l'Albigeoise* etc., (see under specific names such as *Normande* and *Albigeoise*).

A point: cooked medium rare.

Abalone: the large abalone marine snail. A much appreciated gastronomic delicacy, its ear-shaped shell yields mother-of-pearl.

Abats: organ meats other than poultry giblets.

– **blancs:** white organ meats (spinal marrow, brains, feet, sweet-breads, heads etc).

– **rouges:** red organ meats (heart, tongue, liver, lungs, spleen and kidneys).

Abattis: poultry giblets.

Abignades: a preparation of goose giblets from the Landes region.

Ablette: bleak. Small, white-fleshed river fish for frying. Its scales are used to make imitation pearls.

Abondance: cow's milk cheese (Savoie).

– **Tomme d'Abondance:** dry grey rind and fruity flavour.

– **Vacherin d'Abondance:** smooth brick-coloured rind; wrapped in spruce-tree bark.

*** **Abondance de biens ne nuit pas:** store is no sore; plenty is no burden.

*** **Vivre dans l'abondance:** to live in plenty.

Aboukir: (town on the Mediterranean coast of Egypt). A sandwich sponge cake filled with chestnut cream and coated with coffee icing.

– **amandes aboukir:** a sweet **petit four* made with a blanched almond encased in marzipan and topped with icing.

Abricot: apricot.

Absinthe: wormwood; absinth(e), a very strong green liqueur made from a wormwood plant, *Artemisia absinthium*, and other herbs. The absinth drink is now illegal in France because of its high toxicity, although the plant is still used as a bitter flavouring in drinks such as **Vermouth* and for making a fortifying tea.

A.C.: see *Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée*.

Acacia: the acacia tree, the blossoms of which are used for making fritters or as a flavouring in home-made liqueurs. Moses is said to have built the Ark of the Covenant with acacia, which was a sacred wood for the ancient Hebrews.

Acajou: cashew nut.

Accommoder: to cook, dress or prepare food.

Accompagnement: side dish or garnish.

Acerbe: bitter, tart, to the taste (as with unripe fruit).

** said of a harsh wine that tastes of unripe apples.

Achards (de légumes): a strongly-spiced chutney condiment composed of small vegetables, fruits and aromatic seeds marinated in vinegar.

Ache: wild celery. Also called water parsley, or smallage, from which cultivated garden celery was developed. Its leaves are used in salads (see *Céleri*).

Acide: acid, sharp, to the taste.

- Acidulé:** acidulated (as of mineral waters charged with carbonic acid).
 – **bonbon acidulé:** acid drop; boiled candy sweet.
- Addition:** bill (check) in a restaurant.
- Affinage:** final stage in maturing of cheese, when rind is formed and it acquires its texture, aroma and taste.
- Affiné:** said of a cheese that has been fully matured.
- Africaine (à l'):** garnish of small buttered potatoes and two other vegetables, such as cucumber, aubergine (eggplant) or courgette, served with roast mutton and herbs.
- Agaric champêtre:** the common field mushroom.
- Agave:** the agave plant. Of Mexican origin, it is also called American aloe. Its pulp is fermented to make an alcoholic beverage called *pulque*, or distilled to make a strong liquor, *mescal*.
- Agneau:** lamb.
 – **chilindron:** sauté of lamb with potatoes and garlic (Basque country).
 – **de lait:** milk-fed lamb.
- Agnelet:** baby lamb.
- Agnelle:** ewe lamb.
- Agressif:** aggressive.
 ** said of a wine with too strong a taste.
- Agrumes:** citrus fruits.
- Aiado:** roast lamb shoulder stuffed with parsley, chervil and garlic (Provence).
- Aiglefin (Aigrefin, Eglefin):** fresh haddock (unsmoked).
- Aigo bouido (Aigo bouido):** garlic soup, served over slices of bread (Provence).
- Aigo-sau d'ïou:** "water salt" in Provençal; a fish soup made with water and salt, plus a mixture of small white fish, onions, potatoes, tomatoes, garlic, herbs and olive oil (Provence).
- Aigre:** sour-tasting.
 – **-doux:** bitter-sweet; sweet-and-sour.
 *** **Tourner à l'aigre:** (literally, to turn sour) said of a situation that takes a nasty turn.
 *** **Un ton aigre-doux:** a cattish tone.
- Aigrefin:** synonymous with **Aiglefin*.
 *** *Aigrefin* is used as a colloquial term for a dubious character, sharp operator, crook.
- Aigrelet(te):** sourish, tart (of fruit, sauce, etc).
- Aigreimoine:** the agrimony plant, the astringent leaves of which are generally used for making herbal tea.
- Aiguillette**
 – **de bœuf:** top rump of beef or thinly-sliced fillet of beef.
 – **de canard:** thin slice of duck breast cut lengthwise.
- Ail:** garlic.
- Aile:** wing.
- Aileron:** wing tip; shark's fin.
- Aillade:** southern French preparation including garlic, such as garlic **vinaigrette* or toasted garlic bread sprinkled with olive oil. In some regions synonymous with **aioli*.
- Aillé:** flavoured with garlic.
- Ailler:** to flavour with garlic; to stud a roast or rub bread with garlic.
- Aioli (Ailloli)**
 – **plat:** Provençal dish composed of cold, boiled fish or snails or cold meat, served with *aioli* sauce (see below) and garnished with potatoes, other vegetables and hard-boiled eggs.
 – **sauce:** a sort of mayonnaise made from crushed garlic and olive oil, mixed in a mortar bowl.
- Airelle:** a general term applied in France to the *Vaccinium* genus of berry shrubs, in particular the British bilberry (whortleberry), or the American blueberry (huckleberry). It also includes the cranberry

- (*airelle rouge*), the common name of which is *canneberge*. All slightly bitter, these berries are often served with game (boar or deer) or with smoked fish.
- Aisy cendré:** a soft, tangy cheese made from cow's milk. It has a strong aroma and is ripened in the ashes of burnt vine stems (Aisy, in Burgundy).
- Akvavit (Aquavit):** grain-based **eau-de-vie*.
- Albacore:** yellow fin or Alison tuna fish.
- Alberge:** the brown-spotted, clingstone apricot.
- Albigoise (à l'):** garnish made with stuffed tomatoes and **croquette* potatoes.
- Albuféra, sauce:** **bêchamel* sauce with sweet peppers.
- Alcool:** alcohol. An alcoholic drink is usually referred to as *boisson alcoolisée*.
- Alcoolisé:** alcoholic (as in drinks).
- Alevin:** fry or bait; young fish for stocking rivers and lakes.
- Algérienne (à l'):** garnish composed of sweet potatoes with crushed garlic and tomatoes.
- Algue:** alga; seaweed.
- Alicot (Alicuit):** poultry griblet stew.
- Alicuit:** (see *Alicot*).
- Aligot:** potato mashed or puréed with fresh **tomme* cheese and garlic (Auvergne).
- Aligoté**
 ** a white Burgundy wine; the white grape from which it is made.
- Aliment:** food; sustenance.
- Alimentaire:** pertaining to food.
- Alimentation:** food, nourishment; nutrition; groceries.
- Alimenter:** to feed, nourish, supply.
 *** **Alimenter la conversation:** to keep a conversation going.
 *** **Alimenter une querelle:** to add fresh fuel to a quarrel.
- Alise:** the bitter-tasting service berry, fruit of the wild service shrub (*Sorbus torminalis*). Used for making **eau-de-vie* or cider. Not to be confused with the sorb apple, which is *corne*.
- Alisier (Alizier):** **eau-de-vie* with the taste of bitter almonds, made with the wild red service berries found in local forests (Alsace).
- Alkékenge:** the small, yellow or red strawberry tomato. A fruit of Mexican origin, it is also called winter cherry and is used in fruit salads or jams.
- Allemande (à l'):** in the German manner; a preparation with **sauce allemande*.
 – a German marinated game dish.
 – **sauce allemande:** a white sauce made with veal or poultry stock or fish stock and mushrooms.
- Alliacé:** pertaining to garlic.
 ** said of a wine that smells and tastes of garlic.
- Allonger:** to dilute by adding liquid.
- Allumettes:** matches.
 – strips of puff pastry, with sweet or savoury fillings.
 – **pommes allumettes:** French fries cut as thin as matchsticks.
- Alose:** shad, silvery fish related to the herring, though smaller. Appreciated as the finest of white fish.
- Alouette:** the lark; often referred to as **mauviette* when served at table or used to make lark pâté.
 – **sans tête:** a rolled and stuffed slice of meat, larded and braised. Also called **paupiette* or **oiseau sans tête*.
 *** **Miroir aux alouettes:** a lure to trap a gullible person.
- Aloyau:** loin area of beef; beef sirloin (butcher's cut that includes the rump and **contre-filet*).
- Alsacienne (à l'):** dishes characteristic of France's Alsace region in their use of white wine, sauerkraut (pickled cabbage), cured