

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).

Aigremoïne: 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.

Alliade: southern French preparation including garlic, such as garlic **vinaigrette* or toasted garlic bread sprinkled with olive oil. In some regions synonymous with **aioli*.

Allié: flavoured with garlic.

Allier: to flavour with garlic; to stud a roast or rub bread with garlic.

Aioli (Aioli)

– **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.

Albigeoise (à l'): garnish made with stuffed tomatoes and **croquette* potatoes.

Albuféra, sauce: **béchamel* 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 *corme*.

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