



Culinary Institute
of America

Bistros and Brasseries

Best of Boot Camp



Learning Objectives

- Discuss the defining elements and characteristics of American and French-style bistro cuisine
- State characteristics of quickbreads, scones, breakfast pastries, crepes and other griddled items
- Describe the method for producing omelets and poached eggs, and state quality criteria for both preparations
- Explain the fundamentals of soup, salad, and sandwich preparation
- Discuss and prepare classical and contemporary bistro-style dishes

Bistros, Bouchons, and Brasseries in France

In France, styles have distinct personalities

Bistros

- Origin of word varies
 - Term bistro first appeared in French language in late 1800s
 - Etymology often attributed to Russian word bistro, meaning “quick”
 - When Russia occupied Paris (1815) Russian troops used similar term to demand fast service
 - Bistro may also be an abbreviated version the French word, bistrouille, a mixture of coffee and brandy
- Bistros throughout France are typically small neighborhood restaurants - max 60 seats
- Have loyal clientele
- Ambiance is uncomplicated, warm, friendly, and convivial



Bistros, Bouchons, and Brasseries

Bistros

- Food
 - Generally simple, unpretentious, and local
 - Ingredients and dishes tend to be fragrant, earthy, and seasonal
 - Common items include cold meats, cheese, and wine

Bistros, Bouchons, and Brasseries

- **Bouchons:** Small bistros in Lyon
- **Brasseries**
 - Origins
 - Influenced by Germany (originated in Alsace); essentially beer halls
 - Today
 - Ambiance
 - By the turn of 20th century, became elegantly decorated cafes
 - Larger than bistros - up to 200 seats
 - Food
 - Like bistros, serve simple fare; Commonly offer specialties from various regions of France

Bistros and Brasseries in the United States

- Terms *bistro* and *brasserie* generally used interchangeably
- Have come to represent just about any food that's simple, affordable, casual, and fresh

Quick Breads

- Tender and delicate texture
- Pourable batter or a soft dough
- Leaveners
 - Most often chemical
 - Baking powder, baking soda
 - Less often physical
 - Steam from butter or whipped egg whites
- Mixing methods
 - Straight
 - Creaming
 - Rubbing
- Examples
 - Muffins and loaves
 - Pancakes, waffles, and crêpes
 - Scones and biscuits

Griddled Items

- Pancakes
- Waffles
- Crêpes
- French Toast

Crêpes

- Quality characteristics
 - Light and tender
 - No color to lightly golden brown
 - Thin with an even thickness
- Straight Mixing method
- No Leavener
- Variations
 - Sweet – Blintz
 - Savory



Specialty Egg Dishes



- Scotch Egg

- Frittata



- Quiche

- Soufflé



- Tortilla Española

- Eggs Benedict



- Toad-in-the-Hole

Method for Preparing Omelets

1. Blend eggs with liquid, if using
2. Heat pan, then add the oil or butter over high heat or in a hot oven; add any appropriate fillings or garnishes at this time
3. Add eggs and cook until eggs are properly set; add any additional fillings or garnishes, if desired
 - Stir eggs constantly in beginning for even cooking
 - Shake pan to spread eggs uniformly for best presentation
4. Season omelet, if desired
5. Evaluate the quality of the finished omelet

Method for Preparing Poached Eggs

1. Bring water, vinegar, and salt to a simmer (180°F)
 - Make sure liquid deep enough
 - Can be poached in other liquids such as wine
 - Vinegar helps eggs to set and prevents excess spread
2. Break the eggs into cups
3. Add the shelled egg to the simmering liquid
 - Work in batches to keep water temperature steady
4. Remove eggs when done
 - Use a slotted spoon, skimmer, or spider
 - Hold in ice water until service; reheat in simmering water before serving
 - Trim eggs before serving if ragged
5. Evaluate the quality of the poached egg

Quality Criteria: Poached Eggs

- Tender, fully cooked white
- Runny, yet warm yolk
- Delicately set
- Compact, oval shape
- Neat, uniform appearance
- Served hot



Soup Categories

Clear Soups

- Broth
- Consommé
- *Hearty broth*

Thick Soups

- Cream soup
- Chowder
- Purée soup
- Bisque

Other Soups

- Specialty soups
- Cold soups

Cooking Soups

- Soups are simmered, **NOT** boiled
 - Boiling causes:
 - Separation
 - Cloudiness
 - Meats to toughen
- Avoid overcooking
- Taste soups during cooking process
 - Check vegetables for doneness
 - Check flavors and adjust as necessary

Green Salads

- Also known as tossed salad, mixed salad, or garden salad
- Character of salad depends on:
 - Greens
 - Dressing
 - Vinaigrette; Emulsified vinaigrette; Creamy
 - Must be appropriate for the greens selected
 - Garnish
 - Vegetables; croutons, crisps
 -

Lettuces

- Lettuce varieties classifications
 - Leaf, romaine, butterhead, or crisphead
- Storage and Handling Information
 - Thoroughly wash lettuce - dirt and grit tend to hide between leaves
 - Never submerge lettuce in water for extended period
 - Dry lettuce well after washing (use a salad spinner if available)
 - Store lettuce in refrigerator in tubs or containers loosely covered with damp paper towels; do not stack deep or will bruise
 - Once clean, use within 1 to 2 days

Composed Salads

- Salad with an additional item as the attraction
 - Tossed greens with tuna salad; Mesclun with Grilled Chicken
- Components of composed salads
 - Main Item
 - “Featured” item of the dish (grilled tuna of a Niçoise-style salad)
 - Green
 - Salad greens, vegetables, or legumes - single variety or combination
 - Dressing
 - Right balance and correct proportion to greens
 - Garnish
 - Any item added to salad besides components listed above
 - Should be complimentary in flavor, texture, color, size, height, shape, and temperature

Dressings: Vinaigrettes

- Vinaigrette
 - Temporary emulsion
 - General ratio: 3 parts oil to 1 part vinegar
 - Oils can be subtle or intensely flavored
 - Vinegar can range from wine to fruit juice to malted barley, etc.
 - Various levels of acidity and tartness
 - Herbs/spices used as additional flavoring agents
- Emulsified Vinaigrette
 - Vinaigrette with the addition of an emulsifier
 - Eggs, mustard, garlic, fruit or vegetable puree
 - Emulsifier helps to stabilize sauce and contributes flavor

Dressings: Creamy

- Mayonnaise and/or dairy based
 - Mayonnaise-based
 - Can be “lightened” with the addition of whipped cream
 - Dairy-based
 - Made from sour cream, crème fraîche, mascarpone, yogurt, buttermilk, ricotta, or other soft cheeses
 - May be mixed with mayonnaise
 - Can be used as dressings or dips
- Additional flavoring ingredients
 - Citrus, vegetables, pickles, herbs, spices, etc.

Sandwiches

- Versatile
 - Elegant or casual
 - Open or closed
 - Hot or cold
 - Small (served as hors-d'oeuvre), large (served as entrée)
 - Exemplify global cuisine
- Built from four elements:
 - Bread, spread, filling, garnish

Sandwiches

- Cold sandwiches
 - Standard deli-style
 - Made from sliced meats or mayonnaise-dressed salads
 - Club sandwiches/ Triple-decker sandwiches
- Hot sandwiches
 - Hot fillings (hamburger or pastrami)
 - Grilled (Reuben or melt)
 - Hot filling may be mounded on bread and sandwich topped with a hot sauce

Sandwich Spreads

- Provide barrier - prevent bread from getting soggy
- Add moisture and help hold sandwich together
- Some fillings include spread in filling mixture no need to then add a spread like ham salad
- Lend flavor and richness
- Can be simple and subtle, or add texture and flavor

Sandwich Accompaniments & Side Dishes

- Options
 - Green salad or side salad (potato salad, pasta salad, and coleslaw)
 - Lettuce and sprouts
 - Sliced fresh vegetables
 - Pickle spears or olives
 - Dips, spreads, or relishes
 - Sliced fruits
 - French fries or onion rings

Any Questions?