



Culinary Institute
of America

A Taste of France

Pays de La Loire

Centre Val de Loire

Nouvelle-Aquitaine

Occitanie



Learning Objectives

- Identify the French regions of Pays de la Loire, Centre Val de Loire, Nouvelle-Aquitaine, and Occitanie.
- Understand the influence of geography and climate on regional cuisine.
- Recognize the major foods produced and used in each region.
- Describe the flavor profiles and cooking techniques of each region.
- Identify popular dishes typical of each region.
- Prepare a variety of dishes representative of these areas using standardized recipes.

Pays de La Loire

Atlantic Coast: seafood, salt production

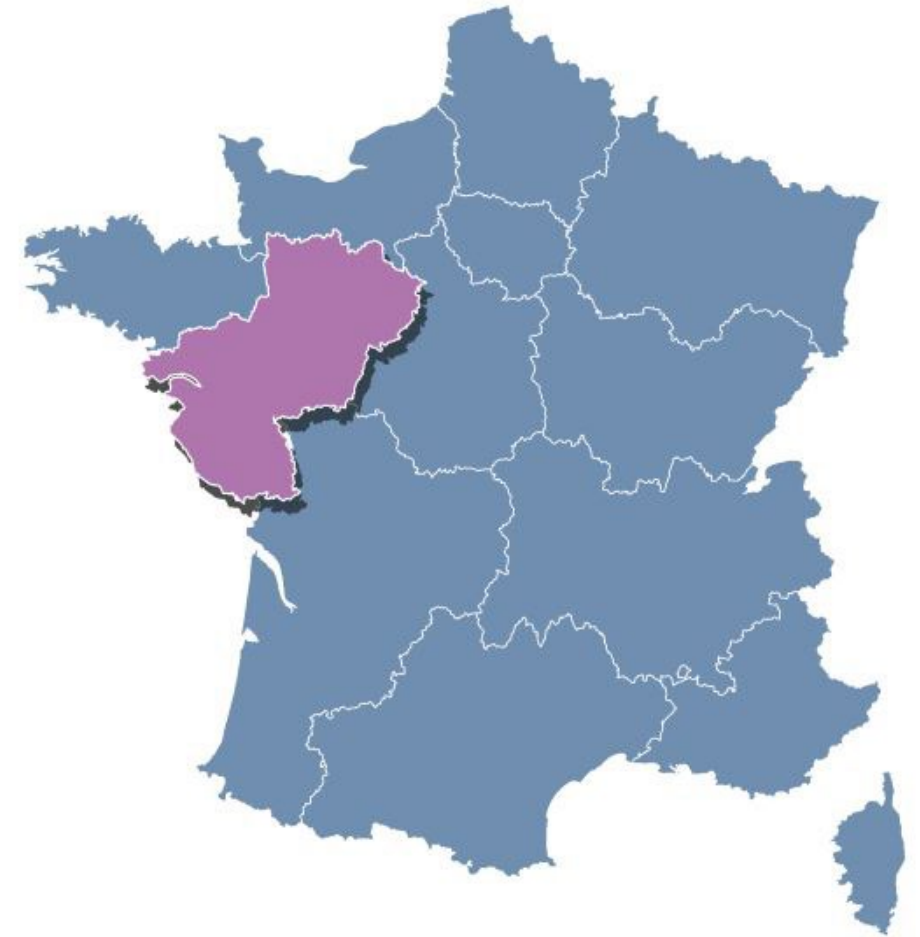
Plains, forests, hills: dairy farming, game hunting, pastures

Loire River: fresh fish

Loire River Valley: produce, farming, vineyards

Sub-Atlantic climate

- Mild winters, warm summers: extended growing seasons for produce
- Moderate precipitation: fertile lands for produce, vineyards, farming



Key Ingredients



Cheese: *Curé Nantais, Port Salut, goat cheeses*

Fish/seafood: perch, pike, eel, sardines

Grains: wheat, corn, barley

Meat: beef, pork, poultry

Produce: apples, pears, prunes, new potatoes, Lamb's lettuce, white beans

Wine: *Muscadet, Cabernet Franc, Cointreau*

Flavors



Inland: rich, rustic, fatty meat dishes

Coastal: fresh fish with buttery sauces (*beurre blanc*), oysters

Buttery, creamy: in pastries, sauces, meats

Subtly tangy: mustard use

Earthy, creamy: cheeses

Acidic: white wine, vinegar

Herbs: thyme, rosemary, bay leaves, chives

Spices: thin, flaky salt (*fleur de sel*), black pepper

Cooking Techniques

Braising, stewing: slow-cooked meats

Poaching: delicate cooking, fish

Grilling: seafood

Curing: meats, sausages

Reductions: wine-based sauces
(*beurre blanc*)

Confit: poaching meat in fat (*confit canard*)



Popular Dishes



Pork Spread
(Rillettes de Porc)



Roast Duck
(Canard de Challans)



Pike in Butter Sauce
(Brochet beurre blanc)

Centre Val de Loire

Lakes, Loire river: freshwater fish

Countryside, valleys: fertile agriculturally, goat pastures

Forests: game hunting

Oceanic, continental climate

- Mild temperatures: extended growing season for produce
- Moderate rainfall: fertile lands for produce, vineyards, farming



Key Ingredients



Cheese: *Crottin de Chavignol, Sainte-Maure de Touraine, Valena, Selles-sur-Cher*

Freshwater fish: perch, pike, eel

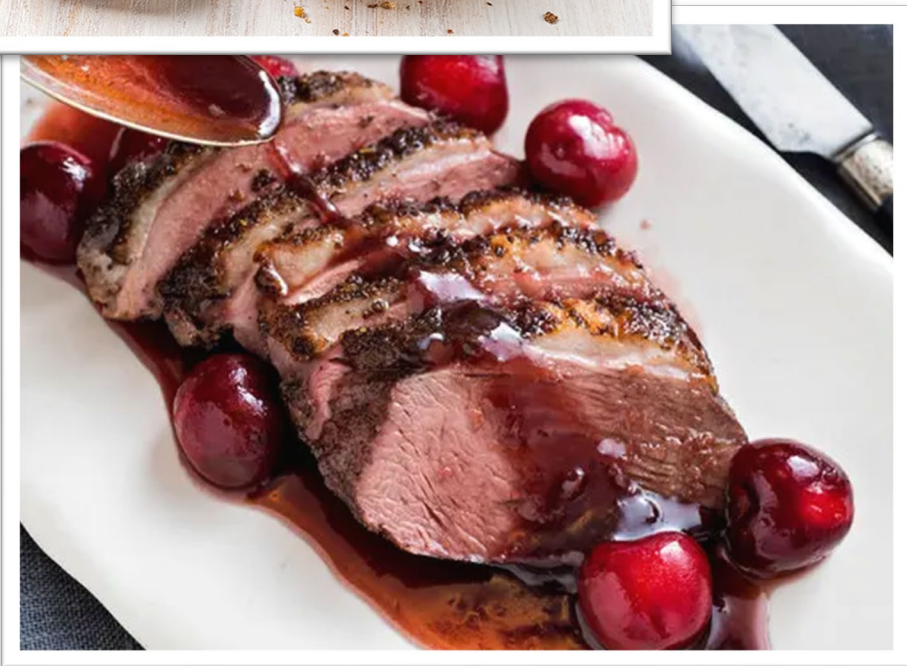
Grains: wheat, corn, barley, sorghum

Meat: pork, wild game, duck, cured ham (*Jambon d'Amboise*), white sausage (*Boudin blanc*)

Produce: apples, pears, cherries, plums, potatoes, onions, peas, cauliflower, cabbage, mushrooms

Wine: *Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Noir, Chenin Blanc*

Flavors



Balanced: rich and fresh elements

Savory, sweet: meat with fruit

Subtly smoky: wines, cheeses, meats

Creamy, tangy: goat cheese, sauces

Herbs: parsley, thyme, bay leaf, chervil, tarragon

Spices: nutmeg, black pepper

Wine-infused dishes: local red, white wines

Cooking Techniques

Braising, stewing: slow-cooked meats (*rillettes de tours*)

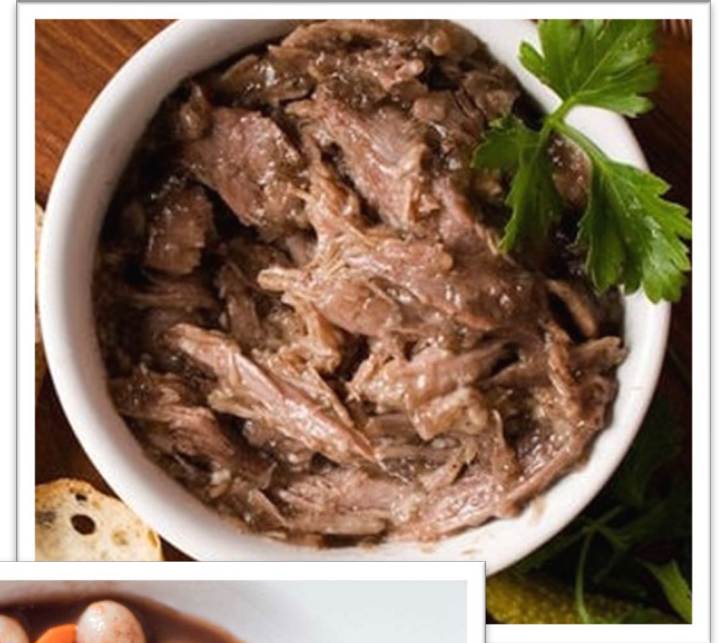
Roasting: meats, vegetables

Poaching: delicately cooked, eggs or fish (*oeufs en meurette*)

Sautéing: fast-cooked meats, vegetables

Reductions: local wine-based sauces

Baking: tarts



Popular Dishes



**Hare Stew with
Red Wine**
(Civet de lièvre)



Meat Pies
(Pithiviers)



**Venison in Red Wine
Sauce**
*(Filet de Chevreuil
Sauce Grand Veneur)*

Nouvelle-Aquitaine



- Historical regions:** Aquitaine, Limousin, and Poitou-Charentes
- Atlantic Coast:** fresh seafood, oyster farming, mussel beds
- Pine forests:** truffles, game
- Pyrenees Mountains:** sheep, goats
- Temperate, varied climate**
 - Generally mild winters, warm summers, high rainfall
 - Extended growing season for produce

Key Ingredients

Alcohol: *Bordeaux, Bergerac, Madiran, Côtes de Duras, Cognac*

Cheese: *Ossau-Iraty, Capelou, goat cheese*

Grains: wheat, corn

Meat: duck, goose, cured ham (*Jambon de Bayonne*), *Bazas* beef, veal, foie gras

Produce: strawberries, black cherries, apples, mushrooms, truffles, walnuts, plums, melons, tomatoes

Seafood: sea bass, oysters, mussels, caviar



Flavors

Coastal: fresh, vibrant, briny

Inland: hearty, bold

Rich, indulgent: truffles, foie gras, caviar

Savory, salty: cured meats

Nutty, earthy: walnuts

Smoky: smoked duck and meats

Spices: black pepper, red chiles (*Piment d'Espelette*), nutmeg

Herbs: thyme, bay leaves, parsley, tarragon,

Fruity: local wines, fruits



Cooking Techniques



Curing: meats, caviar

Grilling: seafood

Roasting: meats, vegetables
(*canard à l'orange*)

Smoking: uses local wood;
duck, meats

Braising: slow-cooked meats

Confit: poaching meat in fat

Reductions: wine based sauces
(*bordelaise*)

Popular Dishes



Basque fish stew
(*Ttoro*)



**Duck cooked in
own fat**
(*Confit de Canard*)



**Mussel stew with
cream, garlic, saffron,
cognac**
(*Mouclade de moules*)

Occitanie

Historical regions: Languedoc-Roussillon and Midi-Pyrenees

Mediterranean Coast: fresh seafood

Plains, farmlands: produce, farming, vineyards, olive groves

Pyrenees Mountains: sheep, goats

Mountain climate: cold, moderate rain

- Cheese production, foraging

Oceanic climate: hot, dry, cooling winds

- Fertile olive groves, herbs



Key Ingredients



Cheese: *Roquefort*, sheep cheese

Grains: wheat, corn

Meats: wild boar, mild pork sausage (*Saucisse de Toulouse*), duck, lamb

Produce: stone fruit, mushrooms, chestnuts, tomatoes, peppers, white beans, lentils

Seafood: cod, anchovies, mussels, squid, oysters, mussels

Wine: *Picpoul de Pinet*, *Fitou*, *Banyuls*, *Languedoc Montpeyroux*

Extras: Olive oil, honey

Flavors



Coastal: Mediterranean influence

Inland: rustic, hearty

Bold, savory: stews, braises

Smoky, subtly spicy: paprika, Espelette pepper

Bright, citrusy: citrus, olive oil, vinegar

Nutty, earthy: almonds, hazelnuts, fennel

Herbs: thyme, rosemary, basil, marjoram, (*herbes de provence*)

Spices: saffron, black pepper

Cooking Techniques

Pureeing: vegetable based
(*aligot*)

Braising: slow-cooked for
meats, vegetables

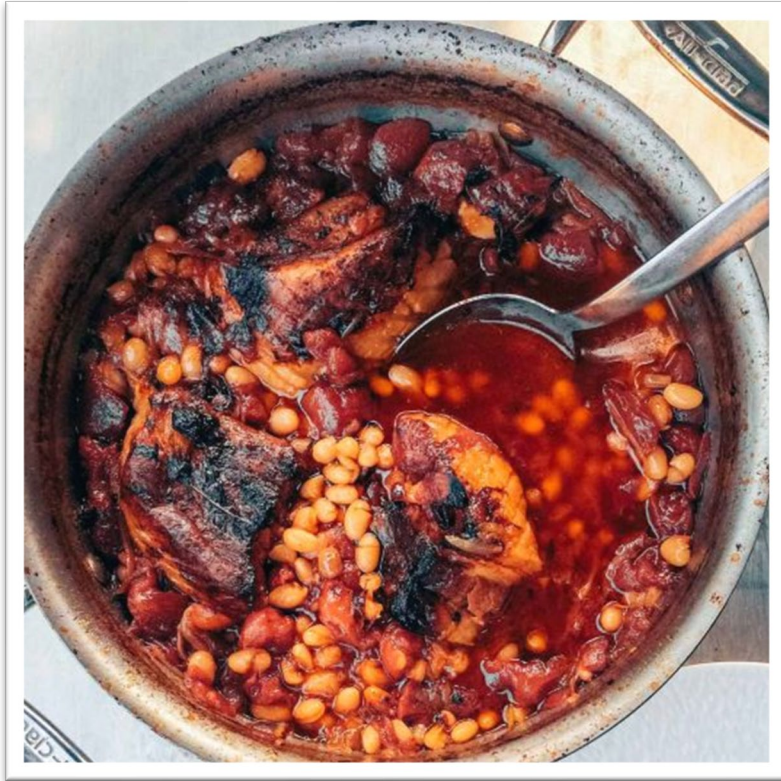
Curing: meats (*charcuterie*)

Confit: poaching meat in
fat

Grilling: meats, seafood,
vegetables



Popular Dishes



**Bean and Meat
Casserole**
(*Cassoulet*)



Salt cod purée
(*Brandade de morue*)



**Bouillabaisse with
fish, potatoes,
pimento**
(*Bouillinaide*)



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Any Questions?