



Culinary Institute
of America

A Taste of France

Bistros and Brasseries



Learning Objectives

- Describe the origins of bistros and brasseries.
- Explain the differences between bistro and brasserie dining experiences.
- Describe the characteristics of bistro and brasserie cuisine.
- Name and describe popular dishes produced in bistros and brasseries.
- Prepare and critique a variety of dishes representative of bistro and brasserie style cuisine.

Bistros: Origin

- First bistros appeared in the 1820s
- "Bistro" comes from the Russian word "bystro," meaning "quickly"
- Russian soldiers occupying Paris in 1814 demanded faster service by shouting "bystro!"



Dining Experience



Size: smaller, less than 60 seats

Atmosphere: intimate, casual, warm, friendly, homey, soft lighting, rustic décor

Service: informal, slower, relaxed

Price range: more affordable, ranges €10-€20 per dish

Customers: loyal, frequent regulars, some tourists

Cuisine

Menu: French home-style comfort food, limited options, changes frequently

Alcohol: limited local wines that pair with dishes

Cooking style: simple, rustic

Flavor profile: fresh, local/seasonal ingredients, hearty, rich



Coq au Vin



Traditional, rustic French stew
Ingredients: chicken, red wine, lardon, mushrooms, garlic

Flavor profile: savory, earthy, slightly acidic

Cooking method: braising

Herbs, spices: thyme, oregano, bay leaf

Cassoulet



Slow cooked casserole, typically with meat and beans

Ingredients: white beans, pork, duck confit, sausage, garlic onions, carrots, herbs, stock

Flavor profile: savory, rich, subtly creamy, earthy

Cooking methods: simmering, layering, baking

Herbs, spices: thyme, bay leaves, black pepper parsley

Croque Monsieur

Traditional French sandwich

Ingredients: ham, Gruyère cheese, béchamel, mustard

Flavor profile: savory, rich, nutty, slightly salty, tangy

Cooking methods: grilled, baked

Herbs, spices: black pepper, parsley



Salade Niçoise

Originates from the city of Nice

Ingredients: tomatoes, hard-cooked eggs, potatoes, olives, green beans, tuna

Flavor profile: tangy, refreshing, savory, briny

Cooking methods: boiling, searing

Herbs, spices: salt, black pepper, parsley



Brasseries: Origin

- Meaning “to brew”
- First appeared in 17th century Alsace, France
- Focus on brewing beer and offering hearty meals for factory workers



Dining Experience

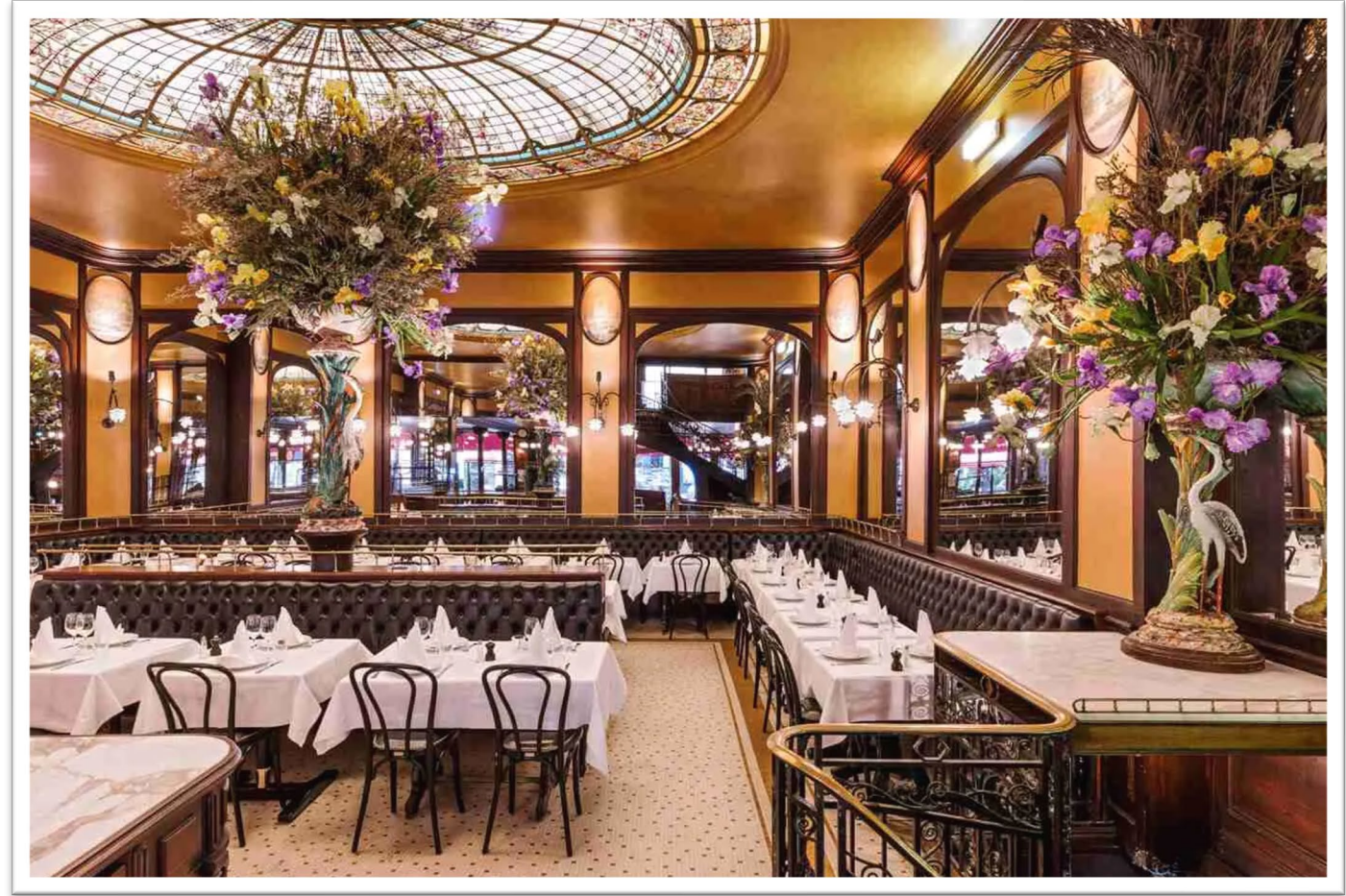
Size: larger, 80+ seats

Atmosphere: comfortable, lively, refined, inviting, warm, soft lighting, classic yet polished décor

Service: fast, professional, more formal

Price range: more expensive, ranges €20-€30+ per dish

Customers: mix of tourists, regular locals



Cuisine



Combines a casual eatery with luxury dining

Blend of traditional/modern

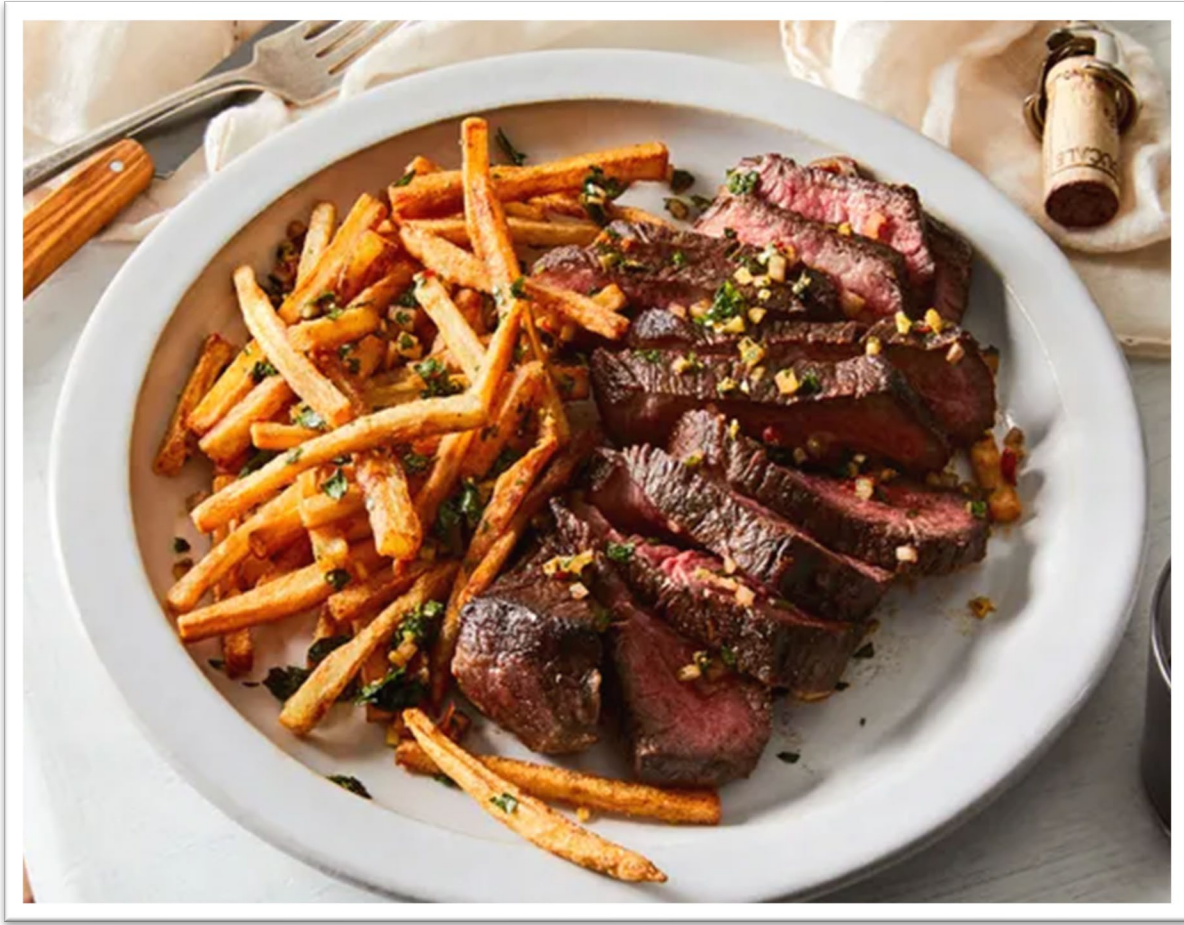
Menu: wider variety of dishes, more expansive, classic French

Alcohol: large selection of wine, beer, sometimes spirits

Cooking style: Simple, varied, more refined

Flavor profile: fresh, local produce, diverse, mix of hearty, rich and light, delicate

Steak Frites



Fresh steak served with French fries

Ingredients: steak, butter, garlic, potatoes, oil

Flavor profile: rich, salty, crispy, slightly smoky

Cooking methods: searing, frying

Herbs, spices: thyme, rosemary, salt, black pepper

Bouillabaisse



Classic French seafood stew

Ingredients: fish, shellfish, tomatoes, onions, leeks, fennel, garlic, olive oil, white wine, fish stock

Flavor profile: rich, savory, mild heat, mild citrus

Cooking methods: sautéing, simmering

Herbs, spices: saffron, thyme, bay leaves, orange peel, black pepper, cayenne

Steak Tartare

Dish of raw minced beef

Ingredients: raw beef, egg yolks, Dijon mustard, Worcestershire sauce, lemon juice, shallots, capers, cornichons

Flavor profile: rich, herbal fresh, salty, tangy

Cooking method: served raw

Herbs, spices: parsley, black pepper, salt



Moules Frites



Fresh steamed muscles, served with French fries

Ingredients: mussels, butter, shallots, garlic, white wine, lemon zest, potatoes, oil

Flavor profile: briny, sweet, crispy, salty

Cooking methods: sautéing, steaming, frying

Herbs, spices: parsley, thyme, black pepper, salt



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Any Questions?