

Glossary of French Cooking Terms

Aïoli: Emulsion of garlic, salt, and olive oil, often made with egg yolks or lemon juice.

a la Carte: Menu style where each dish is priced and ordered separately, rather than part of a set meal.

a L'Anglaise: Foods that have been prepared "the English way;" refers to foods that have been breaded, fried, or poached.

a la Minute: Restaurant production approach in which a dish is not prepared until ordered; literally "at the minute."

a la Mode: Literally, "in the style of," usually followed by "de" and a descriptive phrase.

Allumette: Vegetable cut, usually referring to potatoes cut into matchstick shapes; also called *julienne*.

Appareil: Prepared mixture of ingredients used alone or in another preparation.

Bain-Marie: Hot water bath used to gently cook foods; also refers to a double boiler.

Batonnet: Cut into pieces larger than a *julienne*, 1/4" by 1/4" by 2 to 2.5" long; literally, "stick" or "small stick."

Béarnaise: Butter emulsion, like hollandaise, made with egg yolks, white wine, shallots, and tarragon; butter finished with tarragon and chervil.

Béchamel: White sauce made of milk, a pale roux, and white mirepoix; often used in lasagna, gratins, and croque monsieur; one of the "mother sauces."

Beurre Blanc: Rich, emulsified butter sauce made with white wine, vinegar, shallots, and cold butter; typically served with fish; literally, "white butter."

Beurre Manié: Paste made of equal parts flour and softened butter, used to thicken soups and sauces; literally, "kneaded butter."

Beurre Noisette: Browned butter; butter that has been heated until browned to a hazelnut color; literally, "hazelnut butter."

Bisque: Soup made from crustaceans or a vegetable puree, classically thickened with rice.

Blanc: Preparation of water, flour, onion, cloves, a *bouquet garni*, salt, and lemon juice, used to keep cooking vegetables white.

Blanquette: White stew made with light-colored meat, typically veal, but sometimes chicken or lamb, which is simmered without browning in a white stock or broth. It is served with a sauce thickened with a *liaison*.

Bouillon: Broth; referring to cubes and powders of concentrated, dehydrated broth to be reconstituted with water.

Bouquet Garni: Fresh or dried herbs tied together with cooking string or twine in a bundle used to flavor soups and stews.

Brunoise: Vegetable cut; a *julienned* vegetable stacked and diced into 1/8" cubes.

Canapé: Bite-sized hors d'oeuvre consisting of a small piece of toasted bread and garnished with a savory spread or topping; literally, "couch."

Charcuterie: Art of preserving meats, usually pork, with salting, cooking, and curing methods.

Chaud-Froid: Food prepared hot but served cold, coated with sauce, then glazed with aspic.

Chiffonade: Knife technique for cutting leafy herbs or greens into thin, ribbon-like strips, often used for garnishes or salads.

Chinois: Cone-shaped strainer constructed with a fine, metal mesh.

Compote: Dish of fresh or dried fruit cooked in syrup, flavored with spices or liqueur.

Concassé: Crushed; coarsely chopped; most applied to peeled, seeded, and chopped tomatoes.

Confit: Meat, usually goose, duck, or pork, cooked gently and preserved in its own fat; can also involve fruits, nuts, and vegetables.

Consommé: Stock that has been clarified using ground meats, egg whites, and other ingredients and concentrated.

Coulis: Smooth, thick sauce made from puréed and strained fruits or vegetables, commonly used as a garnish or base for a dish.

Court Bouillon: Lightly flavored poaching liquid made with water, wine or vinegar, herbs, and vegetables, used for cooking fish or seafood; literally, "short broth."

Crème fraîche: Cultured cream with a rich, tangy flavor and thick texture, often used in sauces, soups, or desserts.

Cuisson: Shallow poaching liquid including stock, *fumet*, etc. that may be reduced and used as a base for the poached item's sauce; also refers to the doneness of a dish, particularly meat; literally "cooking."

Déglacer: To deglaze; the process of adding liquid, like wine, stock, or vinegar, to a hot pan to loosen and dissolve browned food residue, forming the base of a sauce.

Demi-glace: Concentrated sauce made from equal parts of *espagnole* and brown stock; literally, "half-glaze."

Dépouillage: To skim the impurities from the surface of a simmering liquid such as stock or sauce, to clarify and refine the flavor.

Doré: Coated with egg yolk; cooked to a golden brown.

Duxelles: An *appareil* of chopped mushrooms, shallots, and herbs sautéed in butter, often used in stuffings, fillings, or as a garnish.

Émincer: To slice thinly; commonly used for meats, onions, or vegetables to ensure even cooking and refined presentation.

en Croute: Foods that are wrapped in pastry dough and baked; literally, "in crust."

Entrecôte: Premium cut of beef steak taken from between the ribs, like a ribeye, prized for tenderness and flavor.

Entrée: In French cuisine, the starter or first course; In American cuisine, the main course.

Espagnole: Brown sauce made from a dark roux, brown stock, tomato paste, and mirepoix; one of the five French "mother sauces."

Farce: Seasoned mixture used for stuffing vegetables, poultry, or pastries; typically includes meat, breadcrumbs, herbs, and sometimes eggs; literally, "stuffing."

Feuilleté: Dish made with puff pastry, either savory, filled with cheese, seafood, etc., or sweet filled with fruit or cream.

Fines herbes: Finely chopped mixture of fresh parsley, tarragon, chives, chervil, and sometimes marjoram.

Flambé: Foods containing strong alcohol such as brandy, cognac, or rum, which are ignited. The flame extinguishes as the alcohol cooks out of the dish.

Fleurons: Small, decorative puff pastry shapes, often crescent or leaf-shaped, baked until golden and used as garnishes for soups, stews, or fish entrées.

Foie gras: Fattened liver of a force-fed duck or goose, prized for its rich, buttery texture and delicate flavor, often served as a pâté, mousse, or seared slice.

Fond: Browned bits stuck to the bottom of a pan after cooking meat, deglazed to make sauces; also refers to a rich stock base.

Fricassee: Rustic, stew-like dish where the meat, usually chicken or veal, is sautéed without browning, braised, and served in a thickened, creamy white sauce.

Fumet: Concentrated stock, usually made from fish or mushrooms, used to intensify flavor in sauces and soups.

Ganache: Preparation of chocolate and heavy cream, and sometimes butter, sugar, or other flavorings, used as a sauce, glaze, filling, or to make confections.

Garni: Describes dishes accompanied by vegetables or potatoes; literally, "garnished."

Glacé: Glazed or iced.

Gratiné/ au Gratin: Cheese or breadcrumb topping browned in an oven; a forcemeat in which some portion of the dominant meat is sautéed and cooled before it is ground.

Galette: Pastry made with a round, free-form crust that is folded over a savory or sweet filling.

Gougère: Baked savory pastry made of choux dough mixed with cheese.

Haricot: Literally, "bean."

Hollandaise: Emulsion sauce made with a vinegar reduction, egg yolks, and melted butter, flavored with lemon juice; one of the French "mother sauces."

Hors d'oeuvre: Small, savory dish served before the main course of a meal, typically as an appetizer; literally, "outside the work."

Jardinière: Dish or garnish made with a mixture of fresh, diced vegetables, often cooked lightly to retain their color and texture.

Julienne: Knife technique where vegetables or other ingredients are cut into thin, matchstick-sized strips; often used for garnishes, salads, or stir-fries.

Jus: Natural juices released from meat during cooking, often served as a light sauce or glaze to enhance flavor; literally, "juice."

Jus lié: Sauce made of *jus* that has been thickened slightly by adding a starch to create a smooth, lightly thickened gravy.

Lardon: Small strips or cubes of fatty pork, often bacon or salt pork, that are typically sautéed or rendered to add flavor and texture to various dishes.

Liaison: Mixture of egg yolks and cream used to thicken and enrich sauces, soups, or custards without curdling.

Liqueur: Sweet, flavored alcoholic beverage made by infusing spirits with fruits, herbs, spices, or other flavorings, often enjoyed as a digestif or used in cocktails and desserts.

Matignon: Edible mirepoix, typically including a 1:1:1:2-part ratio of onions, celery, leek, and carrots, often containing one part ham, bacon, or mushrooms.

Meunière: Classic cooking method where fish is lightly coated in flour, sautéed, and finished with a sauce of browned butter, lemon, and parsley.

Mirepoix: Combination of chopped vegetables, gently cooked to release their flavors, used in soups, stews, and sauces; usually contains a 2:1:1-part ratio of onions, carrots, and celery.

Mise en Place: Preparing and organizing all ingredients and tools before cooking begins; literally, "everything in its place."

Monté au Beurre: Technique of finishing a sauce by whisking in cold butter to create a smooth, glossy texture and richer flavor.

Mousse: Foam made by folding whipped cream or egg whites into a flavored base, resulting in a smooth, fluffy texture; can be sweet or savory.

Mousseline: Mousse; a sauce made by folding whipped cream into hollandaise; a forcemeat based on white meat or seafood lightened with cream and eggs.

Nappé: Sauce or liquid thick enough to coat the back of a spoon, indicating the proper consistency for glazing or covering food.

Nature: Ungarnished; plain.

Noisette: Small portion of meat cut from the rib; butter browned to a nutty aroma and color; literally, "hazelnut."

Oignon Brûlé: Onion halved and charred on the cut side, then added to stocks or sauces to enhance color and add a smoky flavor.

Oignon Pique: Onion studded with whole cloves, used to flavor stocks, sauces, or soups by infusing them with a mild, aromatic taste.

Paillard: Thin, flattened piece of meat, typically veal, chicken, or beef, quickly cooked by sautéing or grilling.

En Papillote: Cooking method where food, usually fish or vegetables, is wrapped in parchment paper or foil and baked, allowing it to steam in its own juices and retain moisture and flavor.

Pâte: Noodles or pasta; a dough, paste, or batter.

Pâté: Rich forcemeat or meat, game, poultry, seafood, and/or vegetables, baked in pastry or mold, served hot or cold.

Pâte à Choux: Dough made from flour, water, butter, and eggs, used to create hollowed pastries like éclairs, cream puffs, and profiteroles.

Pâte Brisée: Short crust pastry dough made from flour, butter, water, and sometimes egg commonly used for tarts and pies.

Pâte de Campagne: Country-style pâté made from coarsely ground pork or chicken liver mixed with herbs, spices, flavored with brandy, and baked.

Pâte en Croute: Pâté baked encased in a pastry crust.

Pâte Feuilleté: Puff pastry, made by repeatedly folding and rolling dough layered with butter to create a light, flaky, and crisp texture when baked.

Pate Sucre: Sweet short pastry dough used for tart shells, pies, and filled cookies.

Paupiette: A fillet or scallop of meat or fish that is stuffed, rolled, tied, and poached or braised.

Paysanne: Vegetables cut into thin, small, flat pieces, typically squares or triangles, to allow even cooking, often used in rustic-style dishes.

Petit Four: Bite-sized confectionery or pastry, typically served with coffee or tea and often decorated; can be sweet or savory.

Pincé: Tomato paste or ingredients that have been sautéed to deepen color and enhance flavor in sauces or stocks.

Poêlé: Food cooked in its own juices, along with aromatics and butter, in a covered pot, usually in the oven; also called butter roasting.

Pot-a-feu: A boiled dinner made by slowly simmering beef, vegetables, and aromatics in water. The broth is often served as the first course, then the meat and vegetables.

Provençal: Referring to the cuisine or style of cooking from the Provence region of France, characterized by the use of fresh herbs, garlic, olive oil, tomatoes, and Mediterranean flavors.

Purée: To process food by mashing, straining, or chopping it finely to make it a smooth paste; also, the product created using this technique.

Quatre épices: A finely ground spice blend typically consisting of black pepper, cloves, nutmeg, cinnamon, and sometimes ginger, used to season meats, soups, and sauces; literally “four spices.”

Ragout: A slow-cooked, hearty stew made with meat, vegetables, and a flavorful sauce, often thickened and seasoned to create a rich, comforting dish.

Remouillage: A secondary stock made by reusing bones and other ingredients from a previous stock to extract additional flavor, typically lighter and less concentrated than the first stock.

Rillettes: A French preparation of meat, typically pork or poultry, slow-cooked in fat until tender, then shredded and mixed with the fat to create a spreadable, flavorful pâté-like dish.

Rondeau: A wide, shallow, heavy-bottomed cooking pot with straight sides and two loop handles, used for braising, stewing, and simmering.

Roux: A mixture of equal parts flour and fat (usually butter) cooked together and used as a thickening agent for sauces, soups, and stews.

Sachet d'épices: A small pouch, usually made of cheesecloth, filled with herbs and spices, and used to flavor stocks, soups, and sauces, then removed before serving; literally, “bag of spices.”

Sauce vin blanc: A white wine sauce made by reducing white wine with hollandaise, velouté, or diced butter, and typically served with fish or seafood dishes.

Sauté: A cooking method where food is cooked quickly in a small amount of hot fat over high heat, often in a shallow pan, to develop flavor and color while preserving texture.

Sauteuse: A shallow, wide, and slightly curved sauté pan with a long handle, designed for tossing and sautéing food evenly; referred to as a sauté pan.

Sautoir: A heavy, straight-sided skillet with a wide base and two small handles, ideal for frying, searing, braising, and sautéing.

Soufflé: A preparation made with a savory or sweet sauce base, whipped egg whites, and flavorings baked until puffed and golden; literally, “puffed.”

Sous vide: A cooking technique where food is vacuum sealed in a bag and cooked slowly in a water bath at a low temperature.

Tarte: An open-faced pastry consisting of a shallow, straight-sided pastry crust filled with sweet or savory filling, baked until the filling is set and/or the crust is crisp.

Terrine: A loaf of forcemeat like a pâté but cooked in a covered mold in a bain-marie; also, the mold used to bake such items, usually an oval shape, made of ceramic.

Tournée: A knife cut that shapes vegetables into small, football-like, 5 to 7-sided pieces with blunt ends, typically about 2 inches long.

Tranche: A slice or cut of meat, fish, or poultry cut on a bias to visually increase the appearance of a cut.

Tuile: A thin, wafer-like cookie or food cut to resemble this cookie, shaped while warm using molds or rolling pins; literally "tile."

Velouté: A sauce made by thickening white stock, such as chicken, fish, or veal, with a blond roux; one of the five "mother sauces;" a cream soup made with a *velouté* sauce base and flavorings, usually finished with a liaison.

Vol-au-Vent: A puff pastry cup or shell used to serve meats, vegetables, or fish, often with a cream sauce, or custards with fruit; literally, "flight of the wind."