



38 Isère Agriculture is predominant and diversified, with a number of regional specializations. In the upland and mountainous areas to the east, dairying and forestry are widespread, whereas in

the lowland regions of Bresse, Dombes, and Bas-Dauphiné, cereals are more important. Farther west, on the fringes of the Massif Central, beef cattle are raised in Loire and sheep in Ardèche. In Voiron near Grenoble, Carthusian monks of the Grande Chartreuse monastery distil their famous liqueurs.

The Walnut, in the past, provided domestic oil for cooking and lighting, nut wines, cakes, bread, medicines and dye production. The walnut goes with many foods, such as cheese, honey and chocolate. It can be eaten as an aperitif, in a salad, crushed in certain dishes or at the end of a meal, with cheese, honey or bread. There are three walnut varieties; the Franquette, the Mayette and the Parisienne

Chartreuse comes in several varieties, including the original Green Chartreuse (55% ABV) and yellow Chartreuse (43% ABV) Chartreuse is best appreciated as a digestif, served neat or with ice.

Bleu du Vercors-Sassenage is a mild cheese with a creamy taste and a hint of hazelnut. A meltingly soft, light yellow centre.

Wines from Isère include Côte-Rotie, Condrieu, Château Grillet, Balmes Dauphinoises, Coteaux du Grésivaudan, Vienne, Balmes Dauphinoises.

Côte-Rôtie are from the right bank of the Rhône and are affected by the extreme steepness of the hillside vineyards.

Vienne Wines are mainly produced around Seyssuel including vin de pays from Sotanium.

Balmes Dauphinoises are produced in the territories of Crémieu, Morestel, Bourgoin-Jallieu, Verpillière and Tour-du-Pin.

Saint-Marcellin is a cheese that comes in two varieties - either dry or soft. Dry cheese has a firm texture, while the soft one is matured for a longer time to develop more intense aromas and a creamier texture. Both have a taste of fruit,

honey, milk, mushrooms and are slightly salty. Goes well with dry white wines, baguettes, crackers, fresh fruit such as apples or persimmons.

Raviole du Dauphiné is tiny, thin squares of pasta with a tender base made of wheat flour and stuffed with crème fraiche. They are delicious on their own, with melted butter, grated cheese, or fried, served with meat, foie gras, truffles or fish.

Brioche Saint Genix consists of a leavened brioche base that is enriched with crushed pink pralines, sugar-coated nuts. It is usually formed in a large round loaf, while the top is decorated with whole pralines and pearl sugar.

Gâteaux au Noix de l'Isere

Preparation time; 15 mins, Cooking time; 40 mins, Serves 6

Ingredients

4 eggs

50 g plain flour

175 g walnut kernels

6 tbsp brown sugar

70 g butter

1 sachet of vanilla sugar

1 tablespoon of rum

1 pinch of salt

Nuts kernels

Icing sugar

Method

Preheat the oven to 200°C.

Chop the walnut kernels, not too finely.

In a bowl, mix 2 whole eggs and 2 egg yolks, reserve the whites.

Add the flour and vanilla sugar.

Melt the butter and add it to the mixture.

Incorporate the crushed walnuts, vanilla sugar, salt and rum.

Beat the egg whites until stiff, gently fold them into the mixture.

Butter and flour a mould and transfer the mixture. Bake in hot oven for 40 minutes.

When the cake is cold, un mould it.

Decorate with a few walnut kernels and icing sugar.

Serve with vanilla custard.

Gratin Dauphinois

This recipe makes the ultimate potato side dish.

Note: Traditional Dauphinoise in France does not contain cheese, but you can add if you wish.

Serves 4

Ingredients

1kg potatoes (e.g King Edwards)

200ml single cream

600ml milk

50g butter

Cayenne pepper

Clove garlic

Method

Preheat the oven to 180°C. (fan 160C)

Peel and wash the potatoes and cut into 3mm thick slices (use a mandolin if you have one).

Add milk to a pan and bring to the boil. Season as you like and leave to stand for 5 minutes.

Lay sliced potatoes with the milk in the saucepan. Bring to the boil and cook for 5 minutes.

Season the cream with garlic, salt and a pinch of Cayenne pepper.

Butter a gratin dish (approx. 5cm high).

Spread a third of the potatoes in the dish and pour over a third of the cream.

Repeat the above for a second and third layer.

Melt the butter and pour it over the top.

Cook in the oven for 30 minutes or until the potatoes in the middle are soft.

If adding cheese, bake for a further 10 to 15 minutes until the cheese is golden and bubbly.

Chartreuse Ice Cream

Green-coloured Chartreuse liqueur is made by Carthusian monks in Isère from more than 130 local herbs and plants.

The strong flavour is softened when added to this ice cream.

Ingredients

8 egg yolks

300g sugar

1l milk

1tsp crème fraîche

250ml green Chartreuse

Method

Beat egg yolks, sugar and cream.

Add the crème fraîche and green Chartreuse.

Chill in the freezer