



49 **Maine-et-Loire** is a department in the Loire Valley in the Pays de la Loire region of Western France. It is named after the two rivers, Maine and the Loire flowing through it.

Animal husbandry dominates agriculture, and the région is a leading producer of milk, beef, pork, and poultry. Dairy farming is

particularly important in the région's western fringe.

Soils in the north tend to be acid and heavy and lime and fertilizers are widely used. Viticulture is concentrated around Saumur and Angers and in Loire-Atlantique to the south of Nantes, where muscadet, a dry white wine, is produced. Cereals such as wheat, corn (maize), and barley are increasingly cultivated, especially in the eastern part of the région, often for use as animal feed.

Rillauds consists of pieces of pork belly that are placed into a salty, herby brine to soak before being cooked in lard. Once done, rillauds are served warm often in the shape of a pyramid topped with the pig's tail. Serve with a fresh green salad on the side.

Belle Angevine is a very large and heavy pear with a green skin which becomes yellow, and then red when ripe. It is usually cooked and used in the preparation of various desserts.

Cabernet d'Anjou is a bright and clear wine, typically deep pink with salmon hues. They are vibrant, dense, velvety, and smooth, while typical aromas include red fruit and roses.

Coteaux du Layon are sweet Chenin Blanc (Pineau de Loire) wines, well-balanced with acacia flowers, honey, and yellow fruit such as apricot or quince flavours. They are a perfect match to blue cheese, foie gras, and tangy frangipane or fruit-based desserts.

Crème de Menthe is a mint(menthe) flavoured liqueur. Although, typically bright green, it also comes in a colourless (white) version.

Cointreau is a triple sec distillation from sweet and bitter orange peels creating a slightly sweet, fresh liqueur with incredibly concentrated flavour. It is mainly used as the essential ingredient in various cocktails such as the classics Sidecar, Margarita, or Cosmopolitan.

Crêmet d'Anjous is a dessert made from a mixture of whipped cream, beaten egg whites and sugar, to which a pinch of salt, mint or lemon can be added as well as strawberries, blood peaches and mirabelle plums.

Anjou-Style Veal Haunch (cul de veau à l'angévine) is made from veal haunch roasted before being slow-cooked in a casserole dish with vegetables and white wine. In Montsoreaux, it is prepared with braised celery hearts or morels in cream.

Fricassée d'Anjou

Cooking Time: 35 mins, Serves: 4

Ingredients

1 medium-sized, free-range chicken

50g butter

24 button mushrooms, cleaned

24 pearl onions or very small, round shallots, blanched and peeled

1 bottle Anjou wine (e.g Rose d'Anjou or a Chenin Blanc)

200ml double cream

Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

Parsley to garnish, finely chopped

Method

Joint the chicken into even-sized pieces and season.

Heat the butter in a sauté pan and brown the chicken on a medium heat.

Add the mushrooms and onions and stir them through the fat.

Pour in enough wine to just cover the chicken (any extra is chef's treat)

Cover the pan, and simmer gently for 35 mins.

Once the chicken is cooked, stir in the cream and season to taste.

Plate up the chicken and vegetables

Pour over some of the sauce and sprinkle over some parsley to serve.

Pâté aux Prunes

Ingredients

125g water

500g flour

100g sugar

250g butter

1 egg

A pinch of salt

1.5kg Reine Claude plums

Method

Preheat the oven to 180C (fan 160C)

Make the pastry by mixing the flour, sugar, butter, egg, salt and water together.

Leave to rest in a cool place.

Grease a tart tin.

Roll out just over half of the pastry with a rolling pin and line the tin, allowing 1-2cm to overflow at the edge.

Sprinkle with sugar.

Arrange the plums on top.

Make the pie lid with the remaining pastry.

Place it on top of the plums, closing it at the edges.

Brush with egg.

Make an opening of 3cm in the centre in the shape of a cross.

Place in a hot oven to cook (180°C) for 35-40mins.

Enjoy with a glass of Coteaux du Layon.