



**64 Pyrénées-Atlantiques** is situated in Basque country (in the Aquitaine region) in the far south-west of France on the border with Spain. The department has a different character in the east, where it runs into the mountains of the Pyrenees, and the west, which is essentially a coastal region.

Traditionally, agricultural activity in Aquitaine was associated with polyculture (the raising of fish and

aquatic plants), but modernization led to far greater specialization in aquaculture.

Farm production is dominated by corn (maize) and fruits, particularly grapes, which are used to produce the famous wines of the Bordeaux region (e.g., Médoc, Sauternes, Saint-Emilion, and Pomerol). Vegetable crops are also important. Walnuts are extensively cultivated in Dordogne. Lot-et-Garonne is one of France's main tobacco-growing areas. Périgord is world-famous for its highly prized black truffles. Some livestock is raised in Aquitaine, mainly for meat. A significant number of farms raise ducks and geese for the production of foie gras.

Regional Cuisine features trout, mushrooms, and cheese from sheep's milk.

**Tourin** is a soup of onions, tomatoes, and garlic

**Cousinette** is a soup whose ingredients include mallow, chard, sorrel, and chicory.

**Jurançon** produces renowned white wines.

**Madiran** is an outstanding red wine from Gers.

**Calamars à la Basquaise** is usually made with squid, onions, garlic, tomatoes, bell peppers, white wine, olive oil, chorizo sausage, salt, and pepper. The bell peppers, onions, and garlic are sautéed in olive oil until they soften. White wine is added to the pan and the mixture is simmered until the alcohol evaporates. The tomatoes, chorizo pieces, and squid rings are placed into the pan, and the dish is then simmered for a few more minutes before serving.

**Merlu Koskera** is prepared with hake (merlu), peas, mussels, asparagus, carrots, shallots, white wine, butter, garlic, eggs, thyme, bay leaves, and parsley. The hake is cut into fillets, then cooked with the other ingredients. It is served with crusty bread or new potatoes on the side.

**Thon Basquaise** is made with tuna steaks, olive oil, onions, garlic, tomatoes, and red bell peppers. The steaks are seasoned with salt and pepper, then fried and topped with the sautéed vegetables. Serve with white rice and a fresh salad on the side.

**Piperade** is made with tomatoes, onions, green peppers, Espelette pepper, garlic, ham, and eggs

**Gâteau Basque** consists of two layers of shortcrust pastry and either a filling made with black cherry preserve or vanilla-flavoured pastry cream. Flavorings also include lemon zest, rum, or almond extract.

**Poulet Basquaise** is made with chicken legs or thighs spiced with Espelette pepper, an authentic French pepper variety. Another ingredient is Bayonne ham, the salty, air-dried ham which gives a smoky flavour to the stew.

## **Thon Basquaise**

Originally the Basque tuna is a recipe from Luzienne. The tuna festival is celebrated every year at the beginning of July in Saint Jean de Luz, the last stronghold of the kascarots who traded fish at the port to sell it in Bayonne.

Serves 6 persons

## **Ingredients**

6 tuna steaks or slices  
6 green Anglet peppers (or green peppers failing that)  
4 large tomatoes, peeled and cut into large cubes  
1 large onion, minced  
4 cloves of garlic, peeled and cut into strips  
1/3 teaspoon of Espelette pepper.

### **Method**

In a large sauté pan, heat two tablespoons of olive oil with Espelette pepper and brown the strips of green Anglet peppers for 5 minutes, turning regularly.

Add the garlic, onion and 5 minutes later the tomatoes, Espelette pepper, salt and pepper.

Cook over low heat until partially evaporated.

The green Anglet peppers must remain soft.

In another skillet, brown the tuna in olive oil with Espelette pepper, 2 minutes per side, with the bay leaves.

Then place it in the sauté pan with the vegetables.

Let simmer for ten minutes.

Serve hot with white rice.

## **Gâteau Basque**

Preparation Time: 1 hour, Cooking Time: 45 mins, Servings: 8 slices

### **Ingredients**

#### **Cake Mix**

160 g unsalted butter  
150 g sugar  
2 eggs  
240 g all-purpose flour  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
1 egg yolk  
60 ml whole milk

#### **Pastry Cream**

1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
1 orange zested  
300 ml whole milk  
1 egg yolk  
1 egg  
65 g sugar  
30 g all-purpose flour  
15 g cornstarch

### **Method**

Start with the Pastry Cream.

Bring the milk to a boil in a medium saucepan along with the orange zest.

In a separate mixing bowl, mix together the vanilla extract, egg, extra egg yolk, flour, cornstarch, and sugar.

It should form a paste.

Add the milk mixture to the mixing bowl and stir thoroughly to combine.  
Pour back into the saucepan, place back over heat and continue to whisk.  
Bring back to a boil and simmer for 3-4 minutes or until slightly thickened, whisking the whole time.  
Strain through a sieve into a sealable container and chill in the fridge.

### **Prepare the cake**

Mix the flour and baking powder together in a large mixing bowl.  
In a separate bowl, beat the butter and sugar until smooth and creamy.  
Add the eggs (not the extra yolk) one at a time, continuing to beat.  
Gradually add the flour mixture and mix until smooth and completely combined.  
Transfer to a piping bag.  
Grease and line an 18-cm cake tin.  
Lightly dust the base and sides of the tin with flour after lining with baking parchment.  
Take the piping bag and carefully pipe a spiral of gateau mix to completely cover the base of the tin.  
Pipe a single circle around the outside of the tin to a height of just over 50mm.  
Fill the centre of the tin with the pastry cream, smoothing down evenly.  
Pipe the remaining cake mix over the top of the pastry cream to seal, making sure the top is smooth and even. Place in the fridge to chill for at least 15 minutes  
Preheat the oven to 180°C (fan 160C) 350°F .  
Take the tin out of the fridge.  
Combine the remaining egg yolk and 50ml of milk, whisking slightly to mix evenly.  
Brush evenly over the top of the cake and use a fork or knife to score a faint diamond pattern on top.  
Place in oven and bake for 45 minutes.  
Remove from oven and allow to cool.  
Serve by itself or with a fruit jam!