



**76 Seine-Maritime** is mostly lowland belonging to the Paris Basin and is drained by the Seine River. The coastline of chalk cliffs is cut by valleys that shelter a number of towns. The climate is humid; in fact, the Seine valley is frequently shrouded in mist, while the Rouen area is one of the wettest in France, with an average of about 120 rainy days per year.

Agricultural production is divided approximately equally between arable farming and cattle raising.

Highly productive cereal farms are found in the east, while dairying predominates in areas such as the Pays de Bray in Seine-Maritime and the Pays d'Ouche and Lieuvin in Eure.

Dieppe is an important fishing port. Among the numerous seafood products available, there are lobsters, brown shrimps, periwinkles and whelks, sole, turbot, brill, plaice, mackerel, sea trout, cuttlefish, whiting, velvet swimming crabs. The most popular products are scallop and herring. Those two products give rise to popular food events which take place in autumn in the coastal towns to celebrate the opening of the fishing season.

**Butter and Cream** are the lifeblood of Norman cuisine, and they give it its generosity and pleasantness.

**Apples** offer endless variations and a wide range of different alcoholic drinks, from cider brandy to apple juice not to forget a thousand sweet and savoury delicacies.

**Neufchâtel Cheese** among all the Norman cheeses, Neufchâtel might not be the most famous one, but its character and its quality make it one of the tastiest cheeses.

**Watercress** needs good quality water to flourish. In Veules-les-Roses it thrives in the spring water of the smallest river in France.

**Herring** just salted, smoked whole, kippered, dried, or marinated. Herring has been salted and smoked since the dawn of time.

**Scallops** from Dieppe the leading port in France for scallops. It is fished from 1st October to 15th May, but it is at its best from December to March.

**Seafood:** Fishermen bring in high quality fish and shellfish every morning.

**Markets:** The most famous ones are in Dieppe, Rouen (Place St Marc), Buchy (live animals), Fécamp or and Sotteville-les-Rouen - the largest market in Normandy.

**Duckling à la Rouennaise:** Rouen ducks result from a cross between wild ducks and domesticated ducks. It is cooked while still bleeding, roasted with mustard, and then served with a sauce thickened with the blood from the pressed carcass. This dish represents the Seine Valley's culinary expertise.

## **Seafood Platter**

Preparation Time; 45 mins, Serves 4

### **Ingredients**

1 lobster | cooked, cut in half, and cleaned

4 Moreton Bay/Balmain/slipper lobster | cooked, cut in half, and cleaned. If very large you may only need ½ per person

8 jumbo prawns/shrimp | cooked

16 small/medium prawns/shrimp | cooked

24 oysters | shucked and served on the shell

1 tin/jar caviar of choice

8 crab lettuce cups

Sauces, Condiments, and Sides

Marie Rose sauce

homemade mayonnaise

mignonette dressing

Tobasco sauce

lemon wedges

cucumber salad

### **Method**

It is important to have all your seafood cleaned, lemons cut, sauces, dressings, and any salads made before plating the seafood platter.

Plating the seafood platter should be at the last moment and hit the table as soon as it is all together and ready.

Cover a large serving platter with crushed ice.

The size will depend on how much seafood you have.

If feeding a big crowd you may need two platters.

Place any large seafood on the platter first, starting with lobsters, then crabs and bugs.

Next, add any bowls. that contain caviar, sauces, or dressing that you want on the platter.

Ideally, serve the majority of the dressings on the side (that way they can be passed around easily), but it visually looks appealing to have at least one sauce/dressing on the platter.

Then add any large prawns followed by oysters.

Followed by the smaller prawns.

These can be strategically poked into gaps.

Fill any remaining gaps with fresh sprigs of dill (or another herb of choice), and lemon/lime wedges.

## **Mignonette Dressing**

### **Ingredients**

2 French eschallots finely diced

200 ml white wine or chardonnay vinegar

Freshly cracked pepper and sea salt to taste

### **Method**

Combine eschallots and vinegar in a small serving bowl.

Leave to rest, allowing the eschallots to macerate until they are paler in colour and absorb the flavours of the white wine/chardonnay vinegar.

Season to taste with pepper and salt before serving

## **Comte Sesame Twist**

Makes 32 twists

### **Ingredients**

400g package all-butter puff pastry

120g grated Comté cheese

2 tablespoons sesame seeds

1 large egg, lightly beaten

Flaky sea salt

### **Method**

Preheat the oven to 200°C.

Line two baking sheets with parchment paper.

Transfer the puff pastry to a lightly floured surface, and roll into a 50cm x 25cm rectangle 4 mm thick.

Sprinkle the Comté and sesame seeds on one long half of the dough rectangle, leaving a 6mm border around the edges.

Fold the other half over the cheese-and-sesame filling.

Cut the dough crosswise into 32 strips each about 17mm by 12cm.

Transfer the strips to the prepared baking sheets and, working with one strip at a time, brush lightly with the beaten egg.

Twist each strip and sprinkle with salt.

Bake until deeply golden brown, for 18 to 25 minutes.

Serve warm or transfer to a cooling rack to cool completely, which should take about 15 minutes.

## **Baked Camembert**

Serves 4 – 6

### **Ingredients**

One 10cm to 12cm wheel of Camembert, cut into 25mm pieces

8 pitted dates, torn into pieces

1 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves

Piment d'Espelette Oil or chilli oil, for drizzling

Crackers or crusty bread, for serving

### **Method**

Preheat the oven to 180°C

Tuck the Camembert pieces into a 10cm to 12cm oven-proof baking dish and add the dates in the spaces between the cheese.

Sprinkle with thyme and bake until the cheese is bubbling, 25 to 30 minutes.

Drizzle with the piment d'Espelette oil and serve with crackers or crusty bread.

## **Roast Chicken with Prunes**

Serves 6

## **Ingredients**

One 1.4kg to 1.8kg chicken  
Fine sea salt  
Freshly ground black pepper  
1 head garlic, halved crosswise  
1 lemon, halved crosswise  
680g very small waxy potatoes  
180g prunes (15 to 18), pitted  
30g salted capers, soaked, rinsed, and drained  
60 ml extra-virgin olive oil  
2 tablespoons red wine vinegar  
1 bay leaf

## **Method**

Preheat the oven to 150°C.

Pat the chicken dry with paper towels and season inside and out with salt and pepper.

Place one of the garlic head halves and one lemon half in the cavity of the chicken.

Tie the legs together with kitchen twine.

Arrange the potatoes, prunes, and capers in a casserole or large cast-iron skillet.

Drizzle with 2 tablespoons of the oil and the vinegar.

Season with salt and pepper.

Toss to coat, then make a space in the centre big enough for the chicken.

Add the remaining garlic half (placed cut-side down) and the bay leaf in the centre of the skillet, then place the chicken, breast-side up, on top.

Drizzle the chicken with the remaining 2 tablespoons of oil.

Roast until the potatoes are very tender and the chicken is deep golden brown, 2½ to 3 hours.

Transfer the chicken to a cutting board and set aside to rest for 15 minutes.

Squeeze the juice from the second lemon half over the potato-prune mixture and toss to coat.

Season with salt and pepper. Serve warm.

## **Cherry Galette**

Makes one 300mm galette

### **Ingredients**

#### **Crust**

210g all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting

1 tablespoon sugar  
½ teaspoon fine sea salt  
½ lemon, zested  
110g unsalted European butter, chilled and cubed

### **Filling**

570g fresh cherries, stemmed and pitted  
2 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon sugar  
1 tablespoon corn starch  
½ lemon, zested  
½ teaspoon vanilla extract, or 1 vanilla bean, split and scraped, pod reserved for another use  
½ teaspoon fine sea salt  
1 egg, lightly beaten  
¼ teaspoon flaky sea salt  
Heavy cream, chilled, for serving

### **Method**

#### **To Make the Crust**

In a food processor or large bowl, combine the flour, sugar, and fine sea salt.  
Add the lemon zest and cubed butter and pulse, or use your hands to press together until pea-size pieces form.  
Add 3 to 5 tablespoons [45 to 80 ml] of ice water and mix just until a dough forms.  
Gather into a ball and wrap in plastic or cling film.  
Refrigerate for at least 1 hour and up to 3 days.

#### **To Make the Filling**

In a large bowl, combine the cherries, 2 tablespoons of the sugar, corn starch, lemon zest, vanilla, and fine sea salt.  
Toss to combine.  
Preheat the oven to 200°C  
On a lightly floured piece of parchment paper, roll out the dough into a 38 cm circle.  
Slide the parchment onto a large rimmed baking sheet and use a pastry brush to brush the dough with the beaten egg (reserving some egg to finish).  
Mound the prepared cherry filling in the centre of the dough, leaving a 50mm to 75mm border.  
Gently fold the edges of the dough up and over most of the fruit, pressing the folds gently to seal.  
Brush the folded edges of the galette with the remaining beaten egg  
Sprinkle with the remaining 1 teaspoon of sugar and flaky sea salt.  
Bake for 20 minutes.

Lower the oven temperature to 180°C and continue baking until the crust is golden brown and the filling is bubbly and nearly set, 40 to 50 minutes.

Let the galette cool on the baking sheet on a cooling rack (the liquid will continue to set as it cools). Serve warm or at room temperature, drizzled with cold cream.