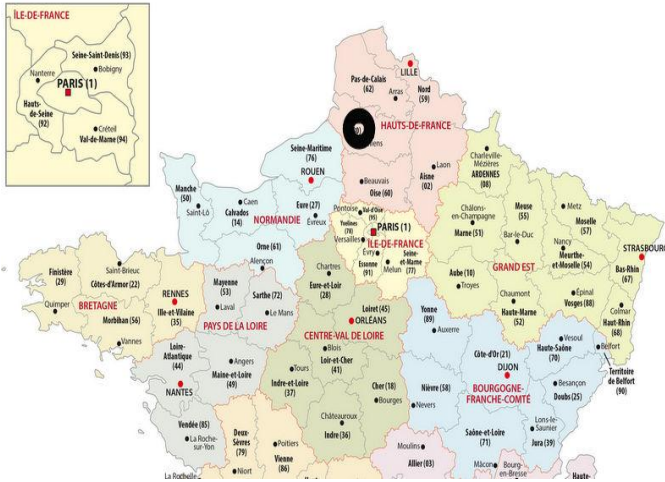


80 Somme



80 Somme is a department of France, located in the north of the country and named after the Somme river. It is part of the Hauts-de-France region. The north central area of the Somme was the site of a series of battles during World War I, including the particularly significant Battle of the Somme in 1916. The region belongs to the Paris Basin and is essentially flat, with elevations below 300 metres

The calcareous plateaus of Laon, Soissons, and Valois rise to the east. The Somme River flows from the east to the northwest across much of the area. The estuary of the Somme River and the bay of the Somme occupy a large part of the low-lying coast. The Aisne River flows from east to west to join the Oise River, which flows south westward across the region.

Agriculture is highly mechanized and productive. The average farm is large for France, approaching 80 hectares. Crops include sugar beets, wheat, barley, and potatoes. Animal husbandry is of less importance. Traditional industries, such as weaving at Saint-Quentin and the production of mirrors at Saint-Gobain, which dates from the 17th century, are in decline.

Ficelle Picarde is thin savoury pancake wrapped round a slice of ham stuffed with sliced mushrooms. The stuffed pancake is then browned in the oven in a creamy sauce.

Fruit and vegetables come from market gardens along the Somme, particularly in the fertile soil of the Hortillonnages (marsh gardens). Radishes, cauliflowers, turnips, lettuces, leeks, artichokes, blackcurrants, red currants, even melons are just some of our local produce.

Hortillons Soup and Leek Flan are two very traditional local dishes that more than typifies the area. The Ponthieu and Santerre regions are responsible for 3/4 of national chicory production. This vegetable can be used raw in salads, braised or wrapped in ham and baked in a cheese sauce.

La Rabote is a dessert made with a peeled and cored apple, filled with sugar and baked in a square of puff or short crust pastry.

Gâteau Battu is a type of brioche, tall and cylindrical in shape, golden yellow inside with a lovely brown crust.

Amiens macaroons are made with almonds, sugar, honey, egg whites, sweet almond oil and bitter almond essential oil.©

Coquillade de la Baie de Somme is made with scallops, potatoes, carrots, onions, fish or vegetable stock, olive oil, salt, and pepper. The onions are sautéed in olive oil and mixed with the stock, potatoes, carrots, and seasonings. The mixture is simmered until tender. The scallops are added and cooked over low heat for a few minutes

Guerbigny or Coeur de Marie is a cheese made from raw cow's milk. Underneath its sticky washed rind, the texture is soft and smooth. The aromas and flavours are strong. It matures in heart shaped moulds. Good with a glass of Sancerre.

Coquilles St Jacques

Preparation Time; 5 mins, Cooking Time; 15-20 mins, Serves 6

Ingredients

6 large dive-caught scallops, in the shell, cleaned

2 tbsp butter

2 banana shallots or 4 round ones, peeled and finely chopped

150ml white wine

5 tbsp double cream

For the topping

2 tbsp butter

1 small garlic clove, peeled and flattened

10 tbsp dried breadcrumbs

6 tbsp finely chopped parsley

Clean the scallops using a sharp knife to gently detach them from their shells, then pull off and discard the frill and black stomach sack. Save the shells for another use.

Method

Melt a tablespoon of butter in a small saucepan over a medium-low heat, add the shallots and sweat until soft.

Add the wine and bring to a simmer, stir in the scallop meat and cook for a minute, turning once halfway through, then scoop out and set aside.

Simmer the wine until it's almost evaporated, then take off the heat, stir in the cream, and season to taste.

Sweat chopped shallots in butter until soft, then add the wine and reduce.

Poach the scallops in the mix for a minute.

Meanwhile, melt the remaining butter in a small pan with the garlic clove, then lift out and discard the garlic. Whizz together the breadcrumbs and parsley in a food processor until green (or vigorously chop them together with a knife), then add the butter, stir and season.

Heat the grill to medium-high.

Divide the creamy shallots between the reserved half-shells and put the scallops on top, followed by the breadcrumbs.

Grill for about three minutes, until golden and bubbling on top, and serve at once.

Goes well with a white burgundy

Amiens Macarons

Macarons are made with finely ground almonds, confectioners' sugar, and egg whites. They are the most delicious soft cookies with crispy edges. I finally perfected the technique and wanted to share it. Pipe your

choice of filling or frosting on a cookie and sandwich another cookie on top.

Preparation Time: 30 mins, Cooking Time: 10 mins, Additional Time: 1 hr 30 mins

Serves: 16, Yield: 16 macarons

Ingredients

3 egg whites

50g white sugar

200g confectioners' sugar

110g finely ground almonds

Method

Line a baking sheet with a silicone baking mat.

Beat egg whites in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a whisk attachment until foamy.

Add white sugar and beat until egg whites are glossy, fluffy, and hold soft peaks.

Sift confectioners' sugar and ground almonds in a separate bowl; quickly fold almond mixture into egg whites, about 30 strokes.

Spoon a small amount of batter into a plastic bag with a small corner cut off and pipe a test disk of batter, about 35mm in diameter, onto the prepared baking sheet.

If the disk of batter holds a peak instead of flattening immediately, gently fold batter a few more times and retest.

When batter is mixed enough to flatten immediately into an even disk, spoon into a pastry bag fitted with a plain round tip.

Pipe batter onto the baking sheet in rounds, leaving space between the disks.

Let piped cookies stand out at room temperature until they form a hard skin on top, about 1 hour.

Preheat the oven to 140 C (fan 120C), 285 degrees F

Bake cookies in preheated oven until set but not browned, about 10 minutes.

Let cookies cool completely before filling, about 30 minutes.

Cook's Notes:

If you do not have a sifter, you can use a blender or food processor to thoroughly mix the almonds and confectioners' sugar. Just blend or pulse for 30 seconds. Remember that because the consistency of the mix is like cake batter, you're going to have to be quick piping it onto the silicone mat. Hold the pastry bags sideways between piping so it doesn't spill.