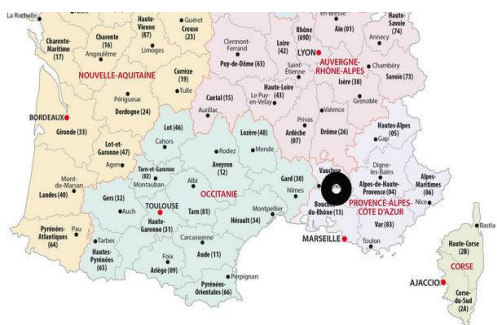


84 Vaucluse



84 Vaucluse is where the heart of Provence beats. The light-filled region of the Vaucluse is a small part of south eastern France with incomparable riches of outstanding variety

Unmissable features include Avignon, a past papal city famous for its international theatre festival, Luberon

and its hilltop villages, Isle sur la Sorgue and its antique dealers and Upper Vaucluse, redolent with lavender, truffles and wine and laces. Places like Vaison le Romaine with its unique Gallo-Roman ruins, the Enclave des Papes, the Mont Ventoux and Sault, or the vineyards of the Rhône Valley are all unique to this area. Vaucluse is one of the largest French wine departments producing almost half of Cotes du Rhone. It offers a very wide range of Appellations and local wines. The red wines are Grenache, Syrah, Carignan, Mourvedre and Cinsault while the white wines are Grenache, Roussane, Marsanne, Viognier, Clairette and Bourboulenc. The southern flank of the Alps dominates the région and rises abruptly from the eastern coast, which is the Côte d'Azur.

The plains of Comtat, Crau, and Camargue lie to the west and are drained by the lower Rhône River. Other principal rivers include the Durance, Var, and Verdon.

A Mediterranean climate prevails along the coast, but in winter the cold, dry northerly wind known as the mistral may bring sudden cold spells to a significant portion of the région.

Agriculture is of limited importance in the economy but has become increasingly specialized, with irrigation playing a major role.

The focus is on the production of fruits, vegetables intensively cultivated especially in the Comtat-Venaissin to the east of Avignon, as well as in the major river valleys such as the Durance. The vineyards of the Côtes du Rhône in Vaucluse are renowned for such wines as Châteauneuf-du-Pape. Rice is grown in the marshy delta below Arles, known as the Camargue.

Flower crops, including lavender, roses, and jasmine, are also significant and are used by the perfume manufacturing industry centred in Grasse. The raising of sheep and dairy cattle has become less important.

Carpentras Strawberry production quickly took root in the Comtat Venaissin.

Cherry orchards spread out at the foot of the Ventoux, in the Val de la Nesque, on the Venasque mountains and in the Calavon valley.

Melon appeared in Provence as early as the Middle Ages.

Muscats are the jewels of this land between the Ventoux and the Dentelles de Montmirail where one finds the wines of Beaufort-de-Venise.

Cereals (wheat, small spelt) are widely consumed in the form of bread and pastries at breakfast and as an aperitif.

Fougase is the slightly thick bread dough cake, topped with toasted bacon and olive oil. is savoured.

Vegetables that were long grown in private garden are served in salads and soups

Asparagus is grown in Vaucluse in the Durance valley up to Cavaillon.

The Potato of Pertuis whose culture goes back to the 18th century.

The Tomato. Vaucluse is in second largest producer of tomatoes in France.

The Truffle. Vaucluse provides 70% of the region's production.

Lamb from the Luberon and the Pays de Sault is traditionally present at the meal of the Easter festival.

Pork from Mont Ventoux raised on the Sault plateau.

The Olive, star of the Vaucluse, symbol of Provence, is delicious as an aperitif, in a salad or in cooking.

Magret de Canard aux Figs

Preparation Time; 20mins, Cooking Time; 30mins, Serves 2

Ingredients

2 duck breasts of 200 g each

4 dried figs

1 tablespoon of balsamic vinegar

2 tablespoons of acacia honey

2 small sprigs of rosemary

1 small cinnamon stick

A little caster sugar

Method

Crisscross the skin of the duck breasts with shallow cuts with a sharp knife.

Sprinkle the breasts with salt and pepper on the flesh side.

Heat a casserole dish (preferably oval cast iron) over medium heat.

Lay the duck breasts skin side down and cook for 10 minutes, basting the flesh side with any fat released during cooking.

Preheat the oven to 240°C (fan 220C).

Roll the figs in honey then put them in a dish, sprinkle them with sugar and cinnamonPlace them in the oven for a few minutes to caramelize.

After 10 minutes of cooking the duck breasts, discard the fat.

Flip the duck breasts flesh side down and cook for 3 minutes, pricking the crispy skin several times with a fork.

Remove them and discard the fat.

Pour the vinegar and remaining honey into the pan and turn off the heat.

Put the duck breasts skin side down in the pan, cover and leave to rest for 10 minutes.

Chop two figs.

Place the duck breasts skin side down on a board.

Pour a tablespoon of water into the pot.

Slice the duck breasts and arrange them on two plates.

Pour the juice released during cutting into the casserole dish and add the two crumbled figs.

Cover the slices of duck breast with this sauce, surround them with the rest of the crumbled figs and serve decorated with sprigs of rosemary.

Candied Melon and Raw Ham Salad

Ingredients

1 melon

1 green salad

pine nuts

slices of raw ham

vinaigrette flavored with raspberry vinegar

Method

Preheat the oven to 80C

Cut the melon in half and remove its seeds.

Cut it into strips 1cm thick.

Arrange on a baking sheet and place in oven for 90 minutes

Remove and let cool

Meanwhile, cut the raw ham into julienne strips then mix it with the vinaigrette.

Then arrange the slices of candied melon in a fan shape all around the raw ham