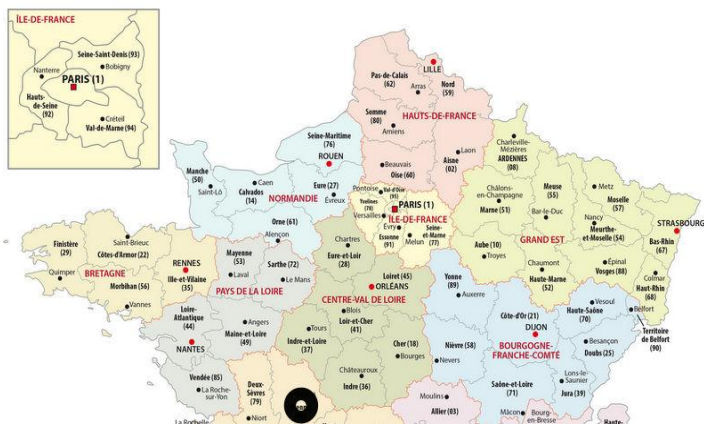


86 Vienne



86 Vienne is one of the four departments that make up the former region of Poitou-Charentes now part of the larger Nouvelle Aquitaine region, Vienne is named after the river that meanders lazily through the lush green countryside.

Now situated in Nouvelle Aquitaine, the mainly rural department is surrounded by the departments of Charente, Deux-Sevres and Haute-Vienne.

Positioned between the Atlantic coast and the centre of France, the department is an active farming area with rolling fields full of cheerful yellow sunflowers, and is an ideal place for soaking up the pleasures of rural France. Known for its mild summers and winters,

An above-average number of people work in agriculture, although in general the activity is not highly productive. Wheat, barley, and especially corn (maize) are widely cultivated, with the lowlands around Poitiers and the central and southern parts of the region specializing in these crops. Sunflowers are also a key crop in these areas. Brandy, especially cognac (named for a town in the Charente River valley), is produced in Charente and Charente-Maritime. Beef cattle are raised on the Massif Central and the Massif Armoricain, and dairy cows are raised in southern Deux-Sèvres and in central eastern areas of the region. Sheep are grazed extensively in the Montmorillon area of Vienne, while goat cheese is produced around Melle in southern Deux-Sèvres.

Pâté de Pâques consists of a stuffing of pork and shallots wrapped round whole eggs and encased in a flaky pastry with Cognac to enhance the flavours. It is best served with a green salad and a rosé wine. **Le Farci Poitevin**, eaten as a starter or as a side to roast meat dishes. It is a stuffed herb pâté consisting of spinach, cabbage, onions, chives, parsley, goat's cheese, crème fraîche, eggs and butter.

Chabichou du Poitou are rounded, full flavoured soft cheeses classically made from fresh, full fat goat's milk. **Tourteau fromagé** is a soft round cake made with goat's cheese, eggs, flour and sugar, the springy sponge is hidden in a crisp pastry crust. It is eaten for dessert, with an apéritif or as a snack. It has a vaguely sweet taste and creates a lovely fresh sensation in the mouth

Broyé du Poitou resembles shortbread and is usually cooked in a large, flat round. It is an incredibly buttery biscuit decorated with almonds and sweet to the taste

Montmorillon is known for its macarons made from almonds, sugar and egg whites, quickly spread to many cities throughout France.

Haut Poitou Melon has a firm and juicy orange flesh. Eaten with an apéritif, for dessert or as a snack, it has a wonderfully sweet, fragrant flavour.

Haut Poitou wine creates a feeling of freshness and lightness in the mouth.

Haut Poitou White Wine is a pale yellow colour, with aromas of citrus, grapefruit, exotic fruits and blackcurrant bud. Perfect as an apéritif or with seafood such as shrimps and oysters.

Haut Poitou Red Wine has a flavour reminiscent of raspberry, morello cherry and blackberry. Older wines develop

prune and licqorice flavours. Perfect with Poitou dishes such as snail sauce, leg of lamb with mogette beans and mature goat's cheese.

Haut Poitou Rosé Wine has aromas of ripe fruit, strawberry, raspberry and peppery spiciness with a touch of freshness that creates a certain elegance. Goes well with mixed salads, grilled meats, black pudding, andouillettes and farci poitevin. It can also be served with a snack of broyé du Poitou or torteau fromager.

Pâté de Pâques

Preparation Time; 15mins, Cooking Time; 30mins, Serves 6

Ingredients

parsley

pepper

salt

nutmeg

1 puff pastry

150 g minced pork and veal

3 eggs

Method

Preheat the oven to 200C (fan180C)

Cook the eggs until they are hard.

Roll out the puff pastry.

Mix the meat, parsley and spices.

Make a sausage of meat in the middle of the dough.

Once the eggs are cold, cut them in half and place them on the meat.

Close the puff pastry on the side, so that it is airtight.

You can brush the pâté with egg yolk.

Pierce a few holes in the top and cook for 30 minutes