

## 94 Val-De-Marne



**94 Val-De-Marne** is located in the southeast of the capital, in the inner suburbs. On the natural side, the Bois de Vincennes and the river Marne are amongst its attractions. There are many sites of heritage in the Val - de - Marne

including the Château de Vincennes, d'Ivry-sur-Seine, the Rose Garden of L'Hay-les-Roses, and the Fragonard Museum of Maisons-Alfort. The Rungis international market, which visits one Friday per month, is also located in this department.

The région's fertile loams support the cultivation of wheat, corn (maize), barley, sunflowers, rapeseed, legumes, and sugar beets. Fruit, vegetables, and flowers are also grown.

In Val-d'Oise between Pontoise and Montmorency, mushrooms are grown on a large scale in limestone caves.

Owing to the great urban sprawl of Paris, agriculture is concentrated in the outer areas of Île-de-France, particularly in the *département* of Seine-et-Marne. In general, farm holdings are large, highly mechanized, and produce high yields, yet they employ only a very small percentage of the workforce.

**Deep-Fried Gudgeons** (friture de goujons) In this dish, gudgeons (small freshwater fish) are eaten deep-fried and very crispy, with lemon quarters, chopped parsley, bread and butter. The whole thing is generally served with a glass of nice cold white wine.

**Escargots** are presented in their shells and stuffed with a mouth watering combination of garlic, herbs, butter, Roquefort, truffle, and even curry-based sauces.

**The Crêpe** is a treat to indulge in when it's time for an afternoon snack. Be sure to pick a stand that cooks crêpes to order and makes them thin. Traditional filling is beurre-sucre for the true, unadulterated crêpe experience.

### **Goujons of Lemon Sole with Parmesan Breadcrumbs**

There is not a better fish for goujons than lemon sole – its flavour seems to complement speedy deep-frying in a breadcrumb coating perfectly – but all of the cheaper flat fish, such as flounder, plaice and dab are improved by deep frying. The word 'goujon' is French for the small freshwater fish, the gudgeon.

Serves 4

### **Ingredients**

450g skinned lemon sole fillets

100g fresh white breadcrumbs

25g parmesan cheese, finely grated

½ tsp cayenne pepper

Sunflower oil, for deep-frying

50g plain flour

3eggs, beaten

Sea salt

Lemon wedges, to serve

### **Method**

Cut each lemon sole fillet diagonally across into strips about the thickness of a man's finger – about 25mm across.

Mix the breadcrumbs with the grated parmesan and cayenne pepper and set aside.

Heat some oil for deep-frying to 190°C/375°F or until a cube of day-old bread will brown in about a minute.

Line a baking tray with plenty of kitchen paper.

Coat the goujons a few at a time in the flour, then in beaten egg and finally in the breadcrumb mixture, making sure that they all take on an even coating and remain separate.

Drop a small handful of goujons into the oil and deep-fry for about 1 minute until crisp and golden.

Lift out with a slotted spoon on to the paper-lined tray to drain and repeat with the remainder, making sure the oil has come back to temperature first.

Pile the goujons on to 4 warmed plates and garnish with the lemon wedges.

If you like, serve with a mixed whole leaf or herb salad, dressed with a little extra virgin olive oil and some seasoning.