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## EDITOR'S LETTER

# WONDERLAND



France is the most visited country in the world – it is statistically confirmed every year, where a number of tourists is increasing continuously, especially among those who desire to “take in the sights” of Paris. It is conventional, that others make merry about it, because such a short period of stay reserved by them for Paris cannot cover any significant sightseeing. They only wander around the city watching the surroundings listlessly and tiredly. Their appearance features something sacrificial. However, I can understand their desire to get in touch with culture. I do not mean any specific culture, but I mean culture as is in its most general sense.

Chinese people impress distinctively. According to official statistics, 150 million Chinese citizens have visited

foreign countries during the last year. Globally and financially it equates to 300 billion euros!

Almost 3 million Chinese tourists visited France in 2018. It is recognised, that they are also the most spendthrift people in the world: each of them spends around 3,500 euros during a trip to France. France is the most preferred European country among them.

However, when it comes to percentage, the Russians even outstrip the Chinese in their passion for France. Last year a million Russians visited France that is 30% higher than, let's say, in 2016. But particularly for Paris, a number of Russian visitors increased by 40%.

French citizens also explain it through simplification of obtainment of Schengen visas from the French consulate. Following the profound crisis of 2015, applicants needed to wait up to ten days against present two days.

An impressive number of Russian tourists contradicts the idea of France being the country preferred by oligarchs. But one million visitors does not consist solely of oligarchs, they are real middle class tourists.

*Victor Loupan*

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HIGHLIGHTS

# BASTILLE DAY AND THE 'YELLOW VESTS'

*For the French people,  
Bastille Day is a mythologised event*

VICTOR LOUPAN,  
*Head of the Editorial Board*

For modern French, July is the most significant month in their history.

On 14 July 1789, a mob of insurgents stormed the ominous fortress-prison of Paris that symbolised the 'nature of autocracy' for the people. The fact that this huge prison contained only seven inmates confused nobody – and it still confuses nobody. It is noteworthy that the infamous writer and pervert Marquis de Sade had been imprisoned at the Bastille since 1783. Several days before the storming of the Bastille by the insurgents poor de Sade shouted out from his cell to the crowd and on 4 July he was transferred to the insane asylum at Charenton, where he died in 1814 following a series of releases and imprisonments. Had he not shouted on further ten days, he would have been discharged together with all other inmates, namely four forgers, two lunatics and one murderer. Of course, the most famous prisoner of the Bastille was Voltaire! Both times he served short terms for minor crimes, but these events resonated.

Bastille Day for the French people means a mythologised event, the role of which is to unite the nation and the people around one fundamental and unifying idea of 'liberty, equality, fraternity'. Now the entire history of the state is interpreted as a prelude, a long introduction to the Revolution of 1789. I recall how history was taught in Soviet schools. It strongly reminds me of the way French history is taught in French schools. A long train of wars, suffering, servitude, colonisations, and exploitation of people.

But the French Revolution is especially notable for giving rise to the trend towards ideologising absolutely everything (and it is much alive today). Having become citizens (previously they had been subjects), the children of the Revolution secured a right to have their personal opinions and judgments. Since the humans were social creatures, they recognised new dogmatics and ideology that allowed them to define acceptability or inappropriateness of different views and even murder others 'for the good cause' without suffering pangs of remorse.

Before the French Revolution, the Church had been the institution that had defined good and evil, truth and falsehood. Thousands of innocent clerics were brutally executed. Nuns would stand in front of the scaffold as if they queued for bread... They were beheaded in great numbers. It is described in the play *Dialogues des Carmelites* by the great French author Georges Bernanos along with an opera with the same name by Francis Poulenc. Cathedrals and churches were ravaged and desecrated. A civil war broke out. People were led to special barges and then executed by drowning in the middle of the River Loire. The Revolutionary Committee mercilessly suppressed any uprising. There was even an order to wipe the revolting city of Lyons off the face of the earth. Their victims were tied to the mouth of a canon which then was fired to kill as many people as possible in a short space of time. Over the first five years of the French Revolution, the revolutionaries murdered

dozens of times as many people as had been killed over the many centuries of French history before them.

Beyond all doubt, this is not what the French people celebrate. Instead, they remember the declaration of the republic and signing of the Declaration of the Rights of the Man and the Citizen.

For classical Marxists, the French Revolution was a model. The comprehension of its history was as important for them as the reading of the Gospel is for Christians. Thus the Bolsheviks viewed their revolutionary terror as just an inevitable process of 'cleansing', and the civil war – as an event that was speeding up the establishment of the proletarian rule. In their efforts to exterminate the Church and the clergy in Soviet Russia the Bolsheviks simply imitated the French revolutionaries who had done the same before them.

The French properly believe that what they celebrate on 14 July is the birth of our modern world with its democratic principles. But the French intentionally ignore that the French Revolution also gave the idea of 'nation' and, therefore, the idea of 'nationalism', against which



the advocates of 'human rights' and 'a borderless world' are struggling very vigorously today.

Another fruit of the French Revolution is the 'right-left divide', with people being split into two opposing 'camps'. In addition, this Revolution brought about chauvinism, which is named after Nicolas Chauvin, a soldier noted for his extreme fight for 'people's rule'. *La Marseillaise*, a revolutionary song that became France's national anthem, breathes a chauvinistic hatred for the 'impure blood' of foreign 'enemies of the people'.

The French Revolution is perceived today as a symbol of dreams of general happiness, of the concretisation of lofty impulses of the soul, of the possibility of the impossible, of the struggle for something that we cannot completely understand.

Such incomprehension was dramatically reflected in interpretation of the long-running 'yellow vest' crisis. Macron's 'progressive' (according to them-

selves) government members publicly called the protesters the 'brown plague' like fascists, providing no further comment. Evidently, there was nothing fascist in the 'yellow vest' movement. Fascism is a famous ideological formula supported by a concrete practice. The government members defiled this movement, because it was too similar to the initial stage of the French Revolution. The revolutionaries also reacted to increase in prices and taxes with simultaneous drop in the living standards. They also robbed and ignited. Their government also manhandled and crippled. However, there was also a big difference – the 'yellow vest' movement still suffers from a lack of leader being able to state the ideological platform.

Probably, it all would lead us to the conclusion of everything being wrong in France. But this is far from being the case. France is a beautiful country still maintaining great and genuine culture, offering high living standards notwith-

standing a loss of a former greatness and, what is more important, its influence.

I love France because it continues opposing the dominant dogmatics too. Today it shows 'yellow vests'. But let us remember millions-strong demonstrations against legalisation of same-sex marriages. Or 2005 referendum against European Constitution. Today they fight aggressively through the intellectual struggle against legalization of euthanasia. It has no respect for demonstration of reaction. But France is one of the very few European countries seeing continuous intellectual and moral fight for advances of civilization. According to Nikolay Berdyaev, 'essence of conservatism is not its prevention of onward and upward movement, but its prevention of backward and downward movement...'

Since the French Revolution, the French maintain their faith in reason and passion for opposition as a method for definition of the truth but not just a principle or mechanics.

## NEWS

# RUSSIAN HELICOPTERS RETURN TO PARIS

MAXIM PYADUSHKIN

output grew from 4% in 2014 to 40% last year. “We plan to continue moving in this direction to reach the figure of more than 50% in 2020,” Boginsky says.

With a maximum take-off weight of 3,600 kg, Ansat can carry five



Russia's aircraft manufacturers are taking part in the 2019 Paris Air Show which kicked off at Le Bourget airport. Russia has not participated in the show since 2014 due to Western sanctions.

The international air show in Le Bourget is one of the largest and oldest air shows in the world. It takes place every two years at the Le Bourget airport, 12 kilometers from Paris. Russia is a regular participant at the show. The first Russian aircraft presented in France was the Tupolev ANT-35 in 1936. In 1965, the Soviet Union showed the Mi-6, Mi-8 and Mi-10 helicopters for the first time at the Paris Air Show.

Russian helicopters have returned to Paris, following a two-show hiatus. The Kamov Ka-52 attack helicopter was shown at Le Bourget in 2013. This year, Russian Helicopters Company is

showing Ansat light twins in VIP and medevac configurations. The former will take part in flying display while the latter can be seen only at the static.

The aircraft here are graced with a special white-blue-red livery, colors matching the national flags of Russia and France. In addition, the fuselage of each helicopter is painted with a curly gymnastic ribbon to symbolize the beauty and harmony of rotorcraft flight. To strengthen this impression, the static display of Ansats will be supported by special performance of the rhythmic gymnastics team from Tatarstan, a Russian region where this type is being manufactured at the Kazan Helicopters factor, a Russian Helicopters subsidiary.

But Ansat's participation at the Paris Air Show also means business. The Russian manufacturer is making a serious effort to promote the type

for export, as a platform flexible for local customization. “The European premiere of Ansat is especially important for us, as it will demonstrate our competence in the field of civilian helicopter building at one of the most prestigious air shows in the world... We managed to increase the share of civilian helicopters in our total output from 5 percent in 2014 to 40 percent in 2018,” said Director General of Russian Helicopters Andrey Boginsky. He added: “We plan to continue moving in this direction in order to reach the figure of more than 50 percent in 2020.”

The Russian company has been traditionally known as a manufacturer of military helicopters. But the peak of the Russian military purchases has been passed, so the company plans to expand commercial deliveries. The share of commercial rotorcraft in total

passengers and two pilots. Powered by a pair of Pratt & Whitney Canada PW207K turboshaft engines, the helicopter can fly up to 505 km with a cruise speed of 220 km per hour.

Ansat was initially developed with fly-by-wire flight control system that was lately replaced with more tradi-

tional hydro-mechanical controls. The latter variant was certified in Russia in 2013, with the passenger version approved a year later. Russian Helicopters says it has the widest passenger cabin in its class, making it attractive for both VIP and medevac missions. The first commercial deliveries of both variants started in 2015.

Russian Helicopters delivered 12 Ansats in 2018, mostly for medical services. It used a Russian-made medical module for domestic deliveries. But at the air show, Ansat will feature a new medical module developed by Air Ambulance Technology. This Austrian

specialist already supplies medical equipment for Russian Mil Mi-8 heavy transport helicopters. Its application for Ansat is destined for the European market as it meets all international air ambulance standards. “We show that our [Ansat] platform is rather flexible for installation of local equipment,” Boginsky explains.

Ansat's international debut took a place last year when Russian Helicopters brought the aircraft to Airshow China and conducted a subsequent demonstration tour across South East Asia. The firm received an order for 20 aircraft from the Chinese Emergency and Disaster Relief Association. The validation of the type certificate in China is currently being finalized, with deliveries are planned for 2019–2020.

The manufacturer is also eyeing EASA certification of the Ansat helicopter.



## HISTORY

# WHY WAS FRENCH SPOKEN IN RUSSIA?

OLEG YEGOROV, RBTH

In the 18th century French “conquered” Russia, becoming the unofficial language of the aristocracy.

Today we explain why in the Russia of the 18th and 19th centuries high society spoke French almost more than Russian.

Leo Tolstoy’s novel War and Peace remains one of the most difficult books for pupils on the school syllabus in modern Russia, and not just because of its impressive four-volumes. “When I opened the first pages and saw that about half of the text was in French, I thought: Well, I’d better read a brief summary instead,” says 23-year-old Muscovite Alexei about his school experience of reading Tolstoy.

Indeed, the dialogues between members of the St. Petersburg nobility in the salon of high-society hostess Anna Pavlovna Scherer that War and Peace opens with are half composed of French phrases, and this is not the author’s invention but a reflection of the mores of the early 19th century (the first volume of War and Peace describes the events of 1805). As Tolstoy observes one of his characters: “He spoke in that refined French in which our grandfathers not only spoke but thought.” In the 18th century French “conquered” Russia, becoming the unofficial language of the aristocracy. Why?



Ekaterina Lobanova

### *Facing the West*

It all started with the reforms of Peter the Great, who ruled Russia from 1682 to 1725. Peter, the third of the Romanov tsars, drastically changed the direction in which the country was moving – his dream was to turn Russia into a European power. To achieve this, he not only engaged in wars but also destroyed the patriarchal ways of old Russia: He forced nobles to cut their beards, wear European dress, and travel to the West to study. As a result, noblemen at high-society

gatherings in the 18th century started conversing in foreign languages.

Of all the Western languages it was French that dominated during that period, not just in Russia but in Europe as a whole. “French was the first language which introduced the notion of a single set of norms,” is how psycholinguist and translator Dmitry Petrov explains the success of the French language. France’s

First Minister Cardinal de Richelieu should be thanked for this, Petrov says. In 1635 Richelieu founded the French Academy which dealt with the creation and regulation of a set of language norms. In the end, French gradually squeezed out Latin as a language of international communication.

### *The French wave*

The French Revolution (1789–1799) gave an additional impetus to the French

language’s spread among the Russian nobility. Many aristocrats fled the country after it was engulfed in rebellion and found refuge, inter alia, in Russia. The number of émigrés in that period reached 15,000.

The government of the Russian Empire treated any revolution with suspicion and welcomed monarchists in their country. Some of them achieved high positions serving the Russian throne – such as Armand-Emmanuel Richelieu, a descendant of the famous cardinal, who became governor of Odessa (now Ukrainian territory). Others, not so successful, became governors in rich families and taught dancing and fencing to the children of noblemen.

### *Gallomania and Gallophobia*

Long before Tolstoy, journalists and writers had noted the Russian nobility’s wholesale infatuation with everything French – and there were heated debates about the craze. Some people thought that loans from the French enriched Russian culture and added refinement to the language, while others believed they led nowhere. “We will drive our own language into total decline,” commented People’s Education Minister Alexander Shishkov, who campaigned for the purity of Russian.

In his comedy “Woe from Wit” (1825), the writer Alexander Griboyedov referred ironically to Russians who worshipped everything French while being unable to string two words together in the language, summing up the phenomenon in the phrase: “A mixture of French and Nizhny Novgorod” (Nizhny Novgorod is a provincial town 401 km east of Moscow). And yet all the nobili-



ty conversed in French – it was a courtly language associated with chivalry and exalted feelings. A study of the correspondence of the most famous Russian poet, Alexander Pushkin, who is regarded as the founder of the modern Russian language, revealed that about 90 percent of his letters to women were in French.

### *Decline of Francophony*

During the Napoleonic Wars, in which Russia and France fought on opposite sides, the popularity of French began to wane. Patriotic sentiments compelled the nobles to speak more in their native tongue – and sometimes it was a matter of survival. Poet and hero of the War of 1812 Denis Davydov recalled that the peasants (who knew no French and were frequently illiterate) at times “mistook [aristocratic officers] for the enemy because of their foreign accent in Russian” and could attack them with an ax or take a shot at them with a firearm.



## HISTORY

## FRANCE AND RUSSIA



*The trip by General Charles de Gaulle, in June of 1966, marked the beginning of a time of privileged relations between the two countries*

The first real manifestations of the influence of France in Russia date from Russia's first political opening toward Europe, undertaken by Peter the Great (r. 1682–1725) and further advanced by Catherine II (r. 1762–1796). In the first instance, this influence was cultural. The adoption of the French language as the language of conversation and correspondence by the nobility encouraged access to French literature. The nobility's preference for French governesses and tutors contributed to the spread of French culture and educational methods among the aristocracy. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Russian nobility still pre-

ferred French to Russian for everyday use, and were familiar with French authors such as Jean de la Fontaine, George Sand, Eugene Sue, Victor Hugo, and Honoré de Balzac.

The influence of France was equally strong in the area of social and political ideas. Catherine II's interest in the writings of the philosophers of the Enlightenment – Baron Montesquieu, Jean Le Rond d'Alembert, Voltaire, and Denis Diderot – contributed to the spread of their ideas in Russia during the eighteenth century. The empress conducted regular correspondence with Voltaire and received Diderot at her court. Convinced that it was her duty to

civilize Russia, she encouraged the growth of a critical outlook and, as an extension of this, of thought regarding Russian society and a repudiation of serfdom, which had consequences following her own reign.

The support of Catherine II for the spirit of the Enlightenment was nonetheless shaken by the French Revolution of 1789. It ceased entirely with the execution of King Louis XVI (January 1793). The empress was unable to accept such a radical challenge to the very foundations of autocratic rule. From the close of her reign onward, restrictions on foreign travel increased, and contacts were severely curtailed. Despite this change,

however, liberal ideas that had spread during the eighteenth century continued to circulate throughout Russia during the nineteenth, and the French Revolution continued to have a persistent influence on the political ideas of Russians. When travel resumed under Alexander I (ruled 1801–1825), Russians once again began to travel abroad for pleasure or study. This stimulated liberal ideas that pervaded progressive and radical political thought in Russia during the nineteenth century. The welcome that France extended to political exiles strengthened its image as a land of liberty and of revolution.

During the nineteenth century, travel in France was considered a form of cultural and intellectual apprenticeship. Study travel abroad by Russians, as well as trips to Russia by the French, shared a common cultural space, encouraging exchanges most notably in the areas of fine arts, sciences, and teaching. Because they shared geopolitical interests vis à vis Germany and Austria-Hungary, France and Russia were drawn together diplomatically and economically after 1887. This resulted, in December 1893, in the ratification of a defensive alliance, the French-Russian military pact. At the same time, French investment capital helped finance the modernization of the Russian economy. Between 1890 and 1914, numerous French industrial and banking houses established themselves in Russia. French and Belgian capital supplied the larger part of the flow of investment funds, the largest share of which went into mining, metallurgy, chemicals, and especially railroads. The largest French banks, notably the Crédit Lyonnais, made loans to or invested in Russian companies. Public borrowing by the Russian state, totalling between eleven and twelve billion gold francs, was six times greater than direct investment on the part of the French.

On the eve of 1914, there were twelve thousand French nationals in Russia. Forty consuls were in the country looking out for French interests. French newspapers had perma-

nent correspondents in St. Petersburg. In 1911, l'Institut Français (a French institute) was created there to help spread French culture in Russia. In fact, from the 1890s onward, France's cultural presence in Russia was consistently viewed as an adjunct to its policy of industrial and commercial implantation.

Following the close of the nineteenth century, the role of France as a land that welcomed political exiles and refugees had a reciprocal influence on the countries from which they came. When they returned to Russia, some of these individuals brought back ideas as well as social, pedagogical, and political experiences. For example, the experience acquired by Maxim Kovalevsky (1851–1916), professor of law and sociology, as the head of the Ecole supérieure russe des sciences sociales de Paris (the Russian Advanced School for Social Sciences in Paris), founded in 1901, served to organize the Université populaire Shanyavsky in Moscow (the Shanyavsky People's University), founded in 1908.

After the October Revolution of 1917, Paris, along with Berlin and

Prague, was one of the three principal cities of Russian emigration in Europe. A hub of intellectual activity from the 1920s onward, the French capital was among the leading centers abroad for publishing Russian newspapers and books, of which a portion subsequently made its way into Russia, thereby helping to bind the emigrant population with Soviet Russians back home. The suspension of scientific and cultural relations between the USSR and the rest of the world, starting in the mid-1930s, put an end to this exchange.

The cultural influence of France did not disappear, however. Beginning in 1954, new attempts were made to bring France and the USSR closer together, beginning with cultural exchanges. During that year the Comédie française made a triumphant tour of the Soviet Union. Later, the trip by General Charles de Gaulle, in June of 1966, marked the beginning of a time of privileged relations between the two countries. A joint commission was created to foster exchange, and numerous cultural agreements were signed, some of which remained

in effect during the early twenty-first century. French teaching assistants were appointed in Soviet universities, the teaching of French was expanded at the secondary school level, and agreements were signed for the distribution of French films in the USSR.

In the end, in the perception of the Russian people, France has remained the country of the Revolution of 1789 and the homeland of the Rights of Man. From the 1960s onward, French intellectuals outside of Russia strengthened this image by supporting the cause of Soviet dissidents.



*Catherine II's interest in the writings of the philosophers of the Enlightenment – Baron Montesquieu, Jean Le Rond d'Alembert, Voltaire, and Denis Diderot – contributed to the spread of their ideas in Russia during the eighteenth century.*

## LITERATURE

## THE FRENCH TASTE

ALICE DANSHOKH

Not only the military translation cast a pall over the students' life. Numerous socio-political disciplines, without which wouldn't do any ideology front fighter, got in the way of my full dedication to linguistics, language history, methodology and psychology, or theoretical phonetics that was delivered to us by our wonderful Vera Sergeevna Sokolova. At the Parisian Sorbonne her pronunciation was approved with the verdict: "It leaves behind the local radio and television broadcasters".

Vera Sergeevna gave me a topic for my diploma and admonition: "Right

pronunciation is the best trademark". I've been using this trademark for many years; besides it serves as a perfect reference. I'm frequently asked: "Where did you study in France?" And I answer with a voice of unconcealed triumph: "I studied in Moscow. You know, we've got an excellent linguistics school".

Admittedly, the French friends made fun of me: "One can tell immediately that you are a foreigner. Your French is too careful and bookish". Sure thing! Our classes with Irina Lvovna Filimonova on her own book for senior students of higher education language

institutes empowered us with such knowledge, skills and experience that we were ready to jump into any philosophical action. And the most important is that Irina Lvovna made us work on our mistakes carefully. That's the thing I do so far.

Irina Lvovna, besides having plenty of accomplishments, was particularly energetic and incredibly vigorous. She was in charge of cultural and mass work at the faculty, and under her leadership we constantly took part in something, visited events at the Library for Foreign Literature, stood in queues for ex-

hibitions, cinema weeks and guest performances from France.

She also maintained dangerous contacts with the French Embassy, and in return all the faculty had an opportunity to enjoy undubbed films once a month.

I remember a scene from a provincial life melodrama with detached Jean Gabin. A wife learned that her husband had a lover. On a concert in a local castle she examined for some time the naked back of her rival in a luxurious evening dress and then put out an unfinished cigarette upon her, thereafter Jean Gabin's character returned to his wife, and as for me, I don't wear dresses with a back cut-out, just in case.

At our faculty there was a serious seething cauldron of emotion not less then during old films viewing. So to say, it was amour toujours in full play. For one thing, each autumn

call to a collective farm for harvesting finished with a mixed Franco-English marriage, i.e. someone of us, "French mademoiselles", brought an English linguistics faculty student to the Civil Registry Office, whereas to marry a foreigner was an absolutely different story. Such a deed was equal to betrayal of the Motherland and punished with severity. First of all, the traitress was out from the All-Union Leninist Young Communist League, and then automatically – from the institute.

One day a huge announcement of an unscheduled faculty komsomol meeting appeared at the entrance hall. On the agenda there was a personal case examination of a fourth year studentess. We were gathered together in the assembly hall with rows arranged in an amphitheater manner, like the Roman circus. We occupied seats on benches at tables, or rather desks with flap lids.

Down at the stage there was the faculty leadership who sat at a long table with a green cloth and a carafe of water. The meeting was opened by the party bureau secretary. He tarred with a brush the girl who was going to marry a capitalist country subject that meant to tear down the principles of the socialist regime and throw a shadow on the whole ideologically based institute.

Such a betrayal demanded a unanimous condemnation and expulsion from the Soviet pedagogic paradise. All the rest of statements hardly differed from the first one and ended with the same verdict. All we had to do was raise our hands in a common impulse with decisive approval.

Probably, everything would have happened like that if it was not for Valeriya Novodvorskaya's interjection that nobody expected. Before the meeting Lera was known only by her fellow students, who considered her to be intelligent and well-informed, and who let her gratefully get into endless arguments with the CPSU history professor. On that day Lera took advantage of a unanimity and agreement demonstration that was suggest-

ed. But she pronounced quite another thing. Lera started speaking about love in a deep, penetrating tone. It was a speech about beautiful, tender, selfless and thrilling feeling without which life in the world was impossible and under the influence of which were all of us including Marx, Engels and Lenin. She quoted not only their statements of love, but also thoughts by Saint-Simon, Thomas More, Maurice Thorez, and of course, she remembered to mention the Moral Code of the Builder of Communism.

Each word was changing the audience vibes against the Soviet ethics defenders. The dean's attempt to interrupt Lera's eloquence came to grief. At first someone began and then all the audience continued flapping the desk lids, chanting: "Love! Love! Love!" Through the unthinkable noise the bureau members were calling for an end to that outrage and shrilling outcry of the accused girl: "But he is a communist! I'm going to marry the French communist!" I don't know anything about her further destiny, but I know something about another Russian lady who married a French communist.

One day, at the Brezhnev stagnation times, I was hurrying home. We were waiting for a guest from Paris, Elizabeth Magnan, called Elizaveta Ivanovna Prokofieva in Russian. In far back twenties young Lisa arrived in Moscow from her native Staraya Russa. Her luggage was an acute intelligence, determined character, appealing appearance and foreign language skills. The lady was employed in Comintern, at one of the congresses of which she met a young, charming and very kind Marius Magnan, assistant of Marcel Cachin, the French communist leader of those times. It was love at first sight and a happy, hectic life, full of trials and anxiety.

Elizabeth and Marius took part in the Popular Front movement, defended Republican Spain, fought with the German invaders in the French Resistance. The historic events whirligig didn't prevent them from having three



sons either: Serge, Alain and Yves. The elder one was tried for refusal to fight in Algeria. In jail he fell seriously ill and was released by sheer active interference of the French public. The second son studied in Moscow, was certified as an engineer and worked in Africa for many years. The younger son appeared before me on that Moscow spring evening.

First, I lost my power of speech, then thought that the young man in a velveteen jacket, sky-blue roll-neck, porter trousers, i.e. jeans, and with clean hair, unusually long for a Soviet person, looked like an overseas prince. And only on the following day I understood that a day before I met Le Grand Meaulnes from the homonymous heart-rending story by Alain-Fournier about a young man with inclinations of a wanderer and adventurer who escaped from the prose of existence in a French province. Of course, Le grand Meaulnes was notable for his handsomeness, strength and tall height. When making a screen of the novel, the film director could hardly find an actor for the role of Meaulnes. Yves Magnan perfectly matched it, besides he loved theatre and an actress, for whose sake he gave up his studies and found a job as a stage worker, as a result making his mum sad.

In the post-war period Elizaveta Ivanovna forged and strengthened cultural relations between our countries with her peculiar temper and energy. She is one of the friendship society "France-Russia" founders, It was with her involvement that the first guest performances of the Moscow theatres, concerts by famous musicians and meetings with authors took place. She translated the Soviet plays, wrote for "Literaturnaya Gazeta" (Literature Newspaper). Her house is always open to guests. All the Moscow cultural circles were in Elizabeth Magnan's flat in Paris. She received guests in the generous Russian manner, sparing no expense for food, wine and gifts. A modest pension of the Resistance participant, all her fee, was spent on the maintenance of friendly relations.

Thanks to the USSR Union of Writers, that allotted an annual pass to the Art Center in Koktebel or the Baltics.

Always cheery, sharp-tongued and ready to rush to friends' help at break-neck pace, Elizaveta Ivanovna never was cast down nor made complaints. Elizaveta Ivanovna arrived at the age of 97, and Yves Magnan got his own way – he married that actress and was happy. I never wanted to marry an actor. But I'd liked theatre since childhood, participating in all kinds of

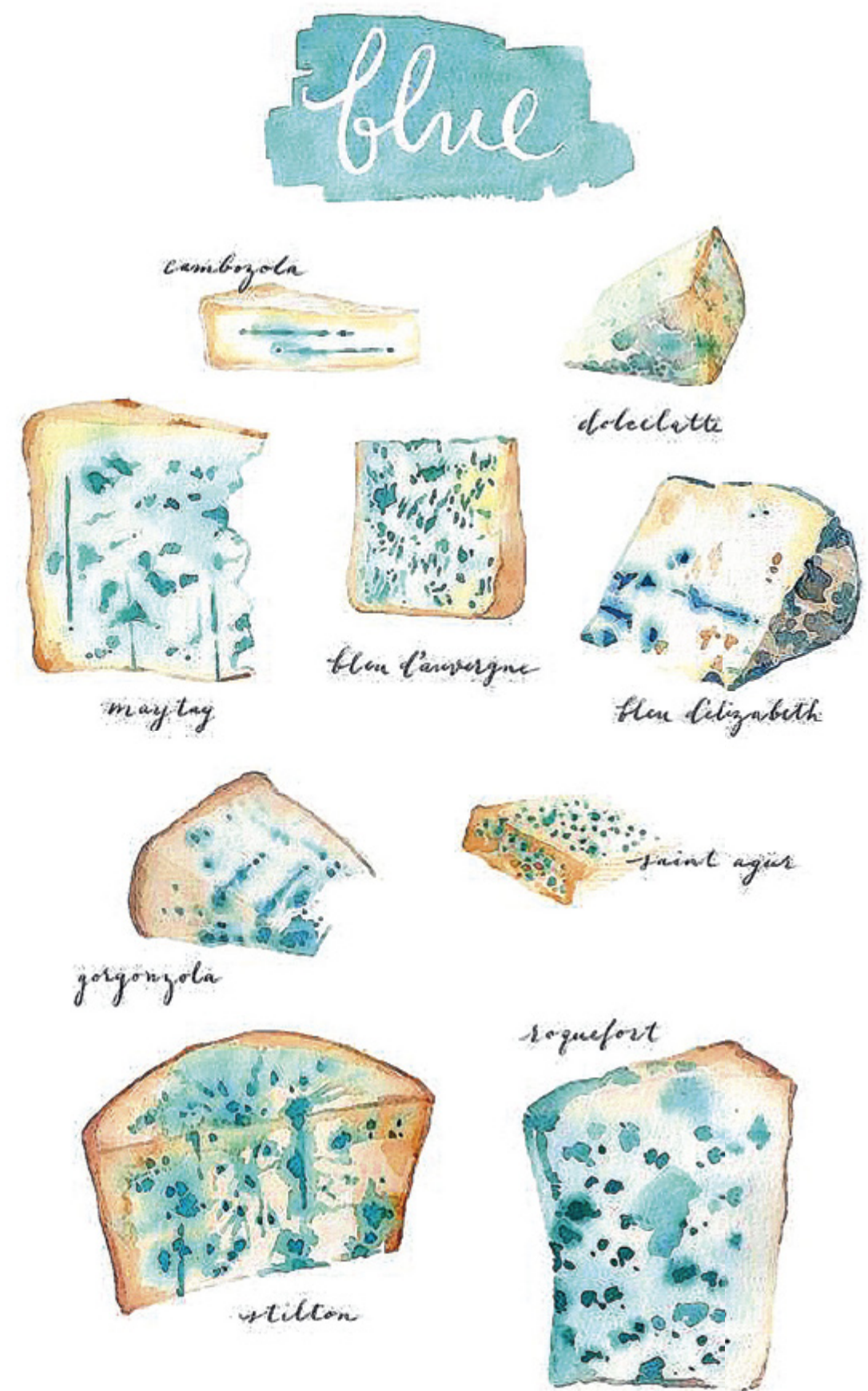


amateur performances. I was particularly successful in the role of Argon's mean younger daughter in "Le Malade Imaginaire" by Moliere. After each performance my sleek hair was moistened with beer as a fixator and curled with curlpaper. On stage I shook the ringlets in time with the words, giving out the "Zhigulyovskoe" beer smell and proudly showed lacy knee pan-talettes, sewn by my granny. At senior school I was entrusted with role of Cerubino in "The Marriage of Figaro" due to my athletic forms. We played a

scene when the page tried on a dress in the Countess room. But Cid's monologue from the homonymous play by Corneille became the top of the theatre career. I didn't put a men's suit like Sarah Bernhardt, nor copied the best Cid of all times – by magnificent Gerard Philipe. I recorded the monologue speaking with ardour, emotion and clear articulation so that my student, listening to that tape, could learn by heart the words of passion and love without mistakes, with pronunciation mostly approximate to the French one.

The result exceeded all expectations. A young man of about two meters height and dressed in a light white suit with a sword hanging on his side, rushed into the hall in the presence of the foreign languages faculty professors of the Russian Academy of Theatre Arts GITIS, fellow students and audience. On the following fifteen minutes he was scurrying about the stage, rumpling his hair with palm, either clutching his heart or head, or catching at the weapon handle; or rolling his eyes, or madly rotating them. Such diverse gestures were accompanied with equally diverse sounds. A loud whisper from time to time was turning into a ferocious roar, mixed with disconsolate cry and changed by an eloquent silence that looked like the text forgetfulness. All what was happening meant fight of duty against the protagonist's feelings: the revenge of an aged parent demanded immediate blood of an offender, who was a beloved lady's father. To kill him at a duel meant to lose everything, not to avenge – bring a lifelong shame upon himself and all the same lose love of wonderful lady Jimena. The audience's strain reached its heights when the future star of the Russian stage tried to pass a steel blade through himself and thereby resolve all the problems. But the examinee couldn't unhook the sword off the waistband and disappeared behind the curtain in an unfeigned despair.

The department highly appreciated our work on Cid's character. My student, native of a small Belorussian



# LES FROMAGES FRANÇAIS

- FRENCH CHEESES -



VALENÇAY



MORBIER



ROQUEFORT



SAINT-AGUR



CROTTIN DE CHAVIGNOL



MAROILLES



COMTÉ

CAMEMBERT



BRIE



FOURME D'AMBERT

Nathalie Ouederni

town, got the top mark and I understood that the most difficult in the theatre was to speak of love sincerely and convincingly. Few actors cope with this feeling. Formerly the play "Pocket Theatre" by Jean Cocteau ran on the minor stage of the Moscow Lenin Komsomol Theater. Five monologues about love were delivered by Irina Alfeyorova, Elena Shanina, Oleg Yankovsky, Alexander Zbruyev and Alexander Abdulov. The performance has been out of the repertoire long, two actors departed this life, and as for me, the reminiscence and the words of two Alexanders still make my flesh crawl. The latter ended his own life at the end of his monologue with abundance of feelings to a woman who had stopped loving him. Oh, women! It's all along of you. Whatever whenever happens – *cherchez la femme!* The French, who created the famous exclamation: "Look for the woman!", first of all meant their compatriotesses, admiring them as extraordinary and alluring creatures, who had the necessary aplomb, and knew how to fascinate. It's possible to resist them only in theory. In short, they endowed women with charm, that seemed to pass on us, dedicated to French, in some measure through the language and culture, and if you were dressed in a thing with 'made in France' label, charm value in your blood multiplied.

In my modest 'garderobe' (French garder robe – "guard a dress") there was something. Our close acquaintance was receiving parcels from her relatives in Paris. Sometimes a received thing was so small that fit only me, and I paraded in blouses from the Printemps department store ("Spring"). One day I was lucky to get a wonderful pair of white varnished shoes, so cool, and both were for the left foot. Clothes sense is an important but not the only one chapter in the great book *Savoir vivre* ("The Art of Living"). Century by century, generation by generation, the French have been writing in this book recites for "how to live", foreseeing that nobody else but them could cope with advice,

as only they and only in their country have all the necessary things and of the highest quality, to start with liberty, equality and fraternity and to finish with wine, culture and, certainly, food. The French are so sure of their superiority, that let their Michelin stars light up and go out above the restaurants around the world, selected by the French themselves. They have no doubt that only in France the cooks prepare such dishes, that clients are ready to pay any price.

The local paysanne, in spite of the economic difficulties, continue supplying foie gras of the highest quality and scrumptious cheese to the global market, some of them reach our home supermarkets. But it was not always like that. There was only one kind of cheese for sale in the Moscow shops in my childhood – Roquefort. It strongly smelled, had strange colour with green-black marbling of mold, and specific taste, besides it wasn't expensive. When I asked to weight 150 grams of "Roquefort", the people of the queue threw quizzical glances at me. They didn't know that when the cheese was put on a piece of Borodinsky bread and butter it went perfectly well together with freshly brewed coffee. Buying from time to time "Roquefort" in the "Dieta" ("Diet") shop in the Old Arbat street, I couldn't even imagine that, apart from that, there were plenty of other cheese kinds existing in France. I heard the truth only at the institute during the first in my life exams.

At the exam of the French history my knowledge didn't fully satisfy the professor, and he asked me an additional question: "How many cheese kinds are produced in France?" I didn't know the answer, and could neither ask for the audience help, nor call a friend, but there was an enhanced scholarship on the line. I had to take the risk. In my mind I ran an eye over the cheese display in the grocery store "Eliseevsky" and, recounting them: "Sovetsky", "Latviysky", "Gollandsky", "Shveytsarsky", "Kostromskoy", "Rossiysky",

sausage-like, smoked from the Baltics, sheep cheese, the melt cheese "Druzhba" together with "Volna" and "Yantar", and of course, "Roquefort" – I added around two tens more, to be on the safe side, and declared the result: "There are thirty of them". The sarcastic sniggle of the examiner, wise from overseas experience, passed a wet sponge over my hopes for the additional government aid. "There are more. Ten times more", – he said and drew the "four" figure in my grade book.

I didn't believe him much and got quite offended. Is there anything in common between cheese and Napoleon's constitution or Academy of Karl the Great? I counted myself abased and insulted, considered the question ill-posed, and the professor – unpedagogic. So, when a young, as usual, studentess, in whose sake he left his original wife, packed him in, I could only affirm: "There is justice in the world. Serves him right." However, the cheese question was popular. I asked that to my friends, acquaintances and relatives, but nobody could give the right answer, thus the material damage that I suffered was compensated by the moral superiority – advantage of valuable information.

Like Moliere's Bourgeois gentleman, I exclaimed: *Quelle est belle chose de savoir quelque chose!* ("How pleasant it is to know that you know something!"). *Quelque chose* (French – "something") was accumulating and multiplying, it was funny, moving, sad, enlightening, connected with all spheres of human activities, with people, their feelings and destiny. Step by step that "something" was making up a puzzle of the French life, or, as the French say, *civilisation française* ("the French civilization"), in the way it's seen from the outside perspective. So, if you are interested, my dear reader, I will gladly share with you my impressions, observations and results of contact with the splendid civilization, that made a massive impact on me, to which I'm obliged a lot and which I love.

## TRADITIONS

# GIFTS AND SOUVENIRS TO BRING HOME FROM PARIS

You are visiting Paris and you wish to bring home some gifts and souvenirs for your loved ones to share your experience? Or maybe you simply want to treat yourself a little something? Here's a list of more or less cliché souvenirs that you can bring from Paris.

### A Béret

There are many clichés about France and one of the most famous ones is that French people always wear Bérêts. This knitted woollen hat is often associated with Parisian artists. And even if French people don't wear it that often, it remains a strong symbol and a great gift to bring home from the French capital city. You can find some cheap ones "Made in China" in pretty much every gift shop in Paris; however, getting one manufactured in France will make it more appealing.

### A Marinière

A Marinière is a long-sleeved jersey that was originally worn by the French Marine since the 19th century on. Before, it was strictly blue and white, and had with 21 white stripes of 20mm, and 20 or 21 blue stripes of 10mm. The "Tricot Rayé" (Striped Jersey) became popular ever since Coco Chanel introduced it to the fashion industry. Other fashion designers followed this trend, such as Yves Saint Laurent, and Jean-Paul

Gaultier who completely took it over to make it an imaginative, sometimes eccentric, fashion statement.

### Macarons

These small pastries made of almond powder, egg whites and sugar, is called Parisian Macaron when it is upgraded with a ganache in between its two biscuits. Whether you are quite adventurous or like classic flavors, you will always find some to suit your taste buds. It is the favorite French dessert of most foreigners, and they are quite right. It's hard to resist to the spell of



sweets but these ones are definitely worth tasting, so just go for it!

### Wine

Wine is France's ultimate symbol! We produce wine in almost every region and it is logically the most consumed alcohol in France. Moreover, there are so many different types that it can fit almost every taste buds, for

any budget, so there is no need to hesitate. Go to a wine store and try some! Whether it's a red, a rosé, a white or a yellow one, you will definitely find a bottle that will suit you and your loved ones.

### Champagne

It is the most festive alcoholic drink in France! This drink originated from the Champagne Region is now consumed everywhere in France and in the world. If you want to share one with friends to memorialize an important event (or not), a bottle of champagne would be a perfect gift for your friends and family who love to celebrate, or simply who like to treat themselves.

### A Saucisson

This is one of the numerous French culinary specialties. Saucisson is basically a sausage that can be cooked or dried. This delicacy, usually made of pork meat, or sometimes boar meat, donkey meat, beef or even poultry, will probably surprise you. Taste it just once with some French baguette and you won't be able to get enough of it. Why not share some with your friends?

### Cheese

In France, it is said that there are over 365 types of cheese, which means



that we can savour a new one every day of the year. Even if it seems a bit too hard to taste them all while you are staying in Paris, you should still try to discover as much as possible and gift your favorite ones to someone.

### Foie Gras

If you spent December the 25th in France, you probably have already tried one the most essential dish of the year-end holidays: the Foie Gras. This French delicacy is basically made of the liver of a goose or a duck; it can be eaten fresh, semi-cooked, or cooked. It is almost a tradition for French people to eat some at Christmas. So, it will be the best gift you can think of if you want your loved ones to taste the magic of French Christmas celebrations.

### Beauty Products

In France there are many unique soaps and skincare products that foreigners love and wish to find in their home country. Bioderma, La Roche-Posay, Avène, L'Occitane... These products are quite accessible in France, however, in other countries they are way less affordable. So, when you come to Paris, it is the right opportunity for you to take advantage of those attractive prices and let your friends discover some new French brands.

### Mustard

Mustard, or Moutarde in French, is one of the most used condiments

in the world; however, nothing can outshine the ones that you can find in France. You can find so many different types that you won't know which one to choose. There are stronger ones like the Dijon Mustard, sweeter ones, or ones that are favored with many different tastes. You will definitely find one to your liking.

### Salt

In France, there are many different varieties of salt that are all very different from each other, but are all really good. You can bring home for your friends salts from different regions of France, such as the Sel de Guérande which is the most famous one, but also flavored salts, truffled ones, or colored ones.

### Herbs and Spices

To enhance the taste of your meals, you will find every sort of spices and aromatic herbs you've ever dreamed of in the capital city. There will be some Persillade (parsley, garlic and olive oil mixed together), some Herbes de Provence (a mix of basil, thyme, bay leaf, rosemary, tarragon and many other dried herbs), some Bouquets Garnis (a mix of dried thyme, bay leaf, sage, garlic and a few more herbs), or other spices



such as Piment d'espelette (Espelette pepper). These spices will bring life to your plate.

### Madeleines

There are one of the most liked food by children and adults when comes the "goûter" (afternoon snack time). These small pastries have such a peculiar shape and are well-known worldwide ever since Marcel Proust talked about it Du côté de chez Swann (Swann's Way). If you offer some to your loved ones, you will be to share and to create great memories with them.

### Chocolates

Chocolate is one of the greatest Parisian culinary specialty. It is the reason why there are so many talented chef chocolatiers. Here, you can find chocolate in all possible forms, possible scale and for every possible taste. You cannot stay in Paris without being tempted by some delicacies.

### Hot Chocolate

While you are in Paris, you will probably head to one of the numerous Cafés of the Capital City to drink a delicious hot chocolate (especially if you come during wintertime). You can share this experience with your close friends and family by bringing home a French hot chocolate mix. They will be delighted by this drink and its unique Parisian taste.



# TOP 10 FRENCH FOODS

French food is known globally for its finesse and flavour. Guide your palate through this list of top 10 French foods, with do-it-yourself recipes of delicious French cuisine.

Traditional French food relies on simple combinations that enhance the rich, natural flavours of basic ingredients. Many French chefs have earned international acclaim for turning French food into haute cuisine and influencing the gastronomic scene worldwide. Food in France has become such an integral part of French culture that it was added to UNESCO's world list of intangible cultural heritage in 2010.

Anyone's first step into the world of French cuisine should start with experimenting with diverse French cheese and wine. France is renowned for some of the world's best wines and cheeses, and wine and food pairing is taken seriously in France, even at informal dinner parties. In many French restaurants you can order a platter of soft, semi-cured, pressed and blue cheeses, although in France it is typically served after the main course and before dessert.

Beyond French wine and cheese is a mixture of traditionally peasant and bourgeois French dishes, many of which come with detailed history, regional variations and modern adaptations. From simple, traditional recipes to complex dishes, it's not difficult to find a top French food to suit your taste. Many French recipes are surprisingly simple as well, and it's not as hard as you would think to intro-

duce French food specialties into your weekly menu. Here is a list of top 10 French foods you simply must try.

Bon Appetit!

## 1. Soupe à l'oignon

This is a traditional French soup made of onions and beef stock, usually served with croutons and melted cheese on top. The soup's origin can be



traced as far back as the Romans – it was typically a poor dish – although the current version dates from the 18th century. The remarkable taste in French onion soup is from the caramelisation of the onions, to which sometimes brandy or sherry is added at the end of the slow-cooking process. The liquid is typically meat stock, although variations include using just water, adding milk or thickening it with eggs or flour.

For another popular French soup, try the traditional fishermen's soupe de poisson à la rouille from Marseille,

characterised by a dollop of garlic and saffron mayonnaise (rouille) on top.

## 2. Coq au vin

This quintessential French food was popularised by Julia Child through her television show and book and seen as one of her signature dishes. It is a dish of chicken braised with wine, mushrooms, salty pork or bacon (lardons), mushrooms, onions, often garlic and sometimes with a drop of brandy. Although the name translates as 'rooster



or cock in wine' – and braising is ideal for tougher birds – the recipe usually uses chicken or capon. A red Burgundy wine is typically used, although French regional variations exist using local wines, for example coq au vin jaune (Jura), coq au Riesling (Alsace), coq au pourpre or coq au violet (Beaujolais nouveau) and coq au Champagne (Champagne).

## 3. Cassoulet

Cassoulet is a comfort dish of white beans stewed slowly with meat, typically pork or duck but also sausages,



goose, mutton or whatever else the chef has around. This peasant dish originates from southern France and is popular in Toulouse, Carcassonne and Castelnau. The name of the dish comes from the pot (cassole) it's traditionally baked in, which is typically shaped like an inverted cone to give a crust shape. This is a rich, hearty meal perfect for colder months.

## 4. Beef bourguignon

Boeuf bourguignon is a traditional French meal that has become internationally well-known. Coming from the same region as coq au vin – Burgundy (or in French, Bourgogne) in eastern France – beef



bourguignon has several similarities. The dish is a stew made of beef braised in red wine, beef broth and seasoned with garlic, pearl onions, fresh herbs and mushrooms. This recipe is just one example of how traditional peasant dishes have been adopted into haute cuisine; the method of slowly simmering beef in wine was likely developed to tenderise tough (or cheap) cuts of meat. Traditional preparation time is two days to tenderise the meat and intensify the flavours. In Burgundy in late August, the Fête du Charolais (in French) celebrates the prized Charolais beef with music, meat and boeuf bourguignon.

## 5. Chocolate soufflé

The word soufflé derives from the French verb to 'blow out' and is an airy, egg-baked dish with origins dating back to early 18th-century France. Soufflé is eaten savoury or sweet in France, and you've likely found chocolate soufflé on dessert menus worldwide. The crispy chocolate crust with



an oozing, creamy chocolate centre gives this dessert a sweet surprise.

## 6. Flamiche

Flamiche means 'cake' in Flemish and this dish originates from northern France, near the border with Belgium.



It has a puff-pastry crust filled with cheese and vegetables and resembles a quiche. The traditional French filling is with leeks and cream. There is also a pizza-like version of flamiche, which is without the top crust of the pie. For a southern French twist, try the thin crusty pissaladière which is topped with anchovies, onions and olives.

## 7. Confit de canard

Confit de canard is a tasty French dish of duck – although goose



and pork can also be used – and is considered one of the finest French dishes. The meat is specially prepared using a centuries-old preserve and slow-cooking process (confit), where the duck meat is marinated in salt, garlic and thyme for up to 36 hours and then slow-cooked in its own fat at low temperatures (an alternative to deep-frying). It is typically served with confit roasted potatoes and garlic on the side. Today this French dish is served all over France, although it is considered a specialty of the Gascony region.

#### 8. Nicoise salad

Salade niçoise is a typical French salad from the Provence region, which can be served as a side dish or a light meal on its own. It's typically



a combination of lettuce, fresh tomatoes, boiled eggs, (canned or fresh) tuna, green beans, Nicoise Cailletier olives and anchovies, although many variations exist.

#### 9. Ratatouille

Ratatouille is another internationally recognised French dish, hailing from the southeastern French region of Provence. It is a stewed vegetable recipe that can be served as a side dish, meal or stuffing for other dishes, such as crepes and omelettes. The vegetables are generally first cooked in a shallow



pan on a high heat with a small amount of fat, and then oven-baked in a dish. French chefs continually debate the correct way to cook ratatouille: some do not agree with sauteing all the vegetables together, such as Julia Child, and argue that the vegetables should be cooked separately and layered into a baking dish. The ingredients consist of tomatoes, garlic, onions, zucchini, eggplant, carrots, bell peppers, basil, marjoram, thyme and other green herbs. A similar dish popular in the French Basque country is piperade, which typically adds ham and sometimes eggs to the stewed vegetable mix.

#### 10. Tarte tatin

They say this French apple tarte was made by mistake in 1898 by Stephanie Tartin when trying to make a traditional apple pie. When she accidentally left the apples in sugar and butter too for long in the pan, in a hurry to rescue the dessert she put the pastry base on top of the burning fruit and placed the pan in the oven. She supposedly served the upside-down tart to her guests at Hôtel Tatin and the result turned into the hotel's signature dish. Although the tarte's origin is disputed, the delicious result is not.



## FOOD MATTERS

# RAYMOND BLANC'S CASSOULET

Raymond Blanc's rustic cassoulet is rich and warming – slow cooking at its best

#### Ingredients

- 140g pork rind
- 140g smoked streaky bacon
- 300g garlic sausage
- 600g dried haricot bean, soaked overnight in 3 times their volume of water
- 1 celery stick
- 1 small onion, preferably a white skinned mild one
- 1 large carrot
- 6 garlic cloves
- 2 ripe plum tomatoes
- 25g goose fat or 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 bouquet garni
- 8 pinches of sea salt
- 2 pinches of freshly ground black pepper
- 1 clove, lightly crushed
- 2 tsp lemon juice
- 4 confit ducks legs
- 60g goose fat or 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 40g dried breadcrumb
- 1 garlic clove, finely chopped
- a handful of fresh flat leaf parsley, coarsely chopped



*Raymond Blanc*

#### Method

1. To cut the meats, roll up the pork rind like a Swiss roll. With the seam underneath, use a very sharp knife to cut the roll across into thin slices, then chop the rolled-up slices across into dice. Chop the bacon into small cubes (lardons). Cut the garlic sausage into 1cm thick slices.

2. Drain the soaked beans and discard the soaking water. Tip the beans

into a large saucepan, add the diced pork rind and lardons and cover with fresh cold water. Bring to the boil and blanch for 15–20 minutes. Drain the beans, rind and lardons into a colander, and discard the cooking water.

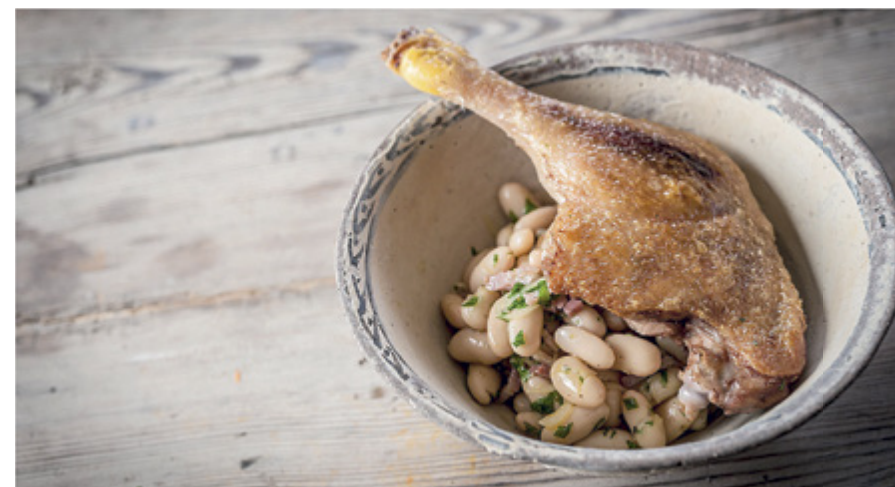
3. Roughly chop the celery, onion and carrot. Peel the garlic cloves but leave them whole. Cut each tomato into eight wedges. (You never see tomatoes in a traditional cassoulet, but chef Raymond Blanc likes them for their colour and sweetness, so he puts a couple in.) Preheat the oven to 120C/fan 100C. (If cooking in a gas oven, use mark 2.)

4. Heat the goose fat or olive oil in a 26cm flameproof casserole or deep overproof sauté pan over a low heat and sweat the celery, onion, carrot and garlic for 5 minutes. Add the tomatoes and bouquet garni and cook slowly to get a sugary caramelisation (about 5 minutes). Add the sausage, beans, pork rind and lardons and pour in 1.2 litres/2 pints water. Bring to the boil, skim off the scum, then add the salt, pepper, clove and lemon juice.

5. Transfer the casserole to the oven and cook, uncovered, for 2 hours, stirring every hour. At the end of this time, the beans will be soft and creamy in texture and the juices should have thickened. You may need to cook it for longer than 2 hours (say up to 2½ hours) to get to this stage – it depends

6. Remove the cassoulet from the oven. Bury the duck legs in the beans and sprinkle over the goose fat or olive oil, breadcrumbs and garlic. Return to the oven and cook for a further 2 hours. Serve the cassoulet in bowls, sprinkled with chopped parsley.

*Recipe from Good Food magazine*



TRAVEL

# TIPS ON WHAT TO DO AND NOT DO IN FRANCE

FREDERIC BIBARD

Every year, France continues to be among the most visited countries in the world. France has a lot to offer including many of the world's most popular landmarks and tourist spots as well as the legendary French cuisine.

Before planning your trip and packing your bags, however, you should know that France has a very rich and unique culture. To fully enjoy it at its finest, you need cultural insights and the right dose of tourist tact.

Below are 10 do's and don'ts to help you become an ideal tourist in beautiful France.

## The Do's

### 1 Do learn some basic French words and phrases

Whether you're off to France for the weekend, for a week or for a month-long rendez-vous, you should never forget to pack with you some basic French words and phrases. Remember that you're in a foreign land and while many French people speak English, you'll never know when the phrases will come in handy.

### 2 Do know when to greet with a kiss or with a handshake

When in France, you should know about how the French people say hello. In Paris, it's expected for friends to greet each other with a kiss while strangers shake hands. They also kiss when saying goodbye and it's not just any kiss either. It's usually a double kiss on both cheeks.

When visiting small villages, expect to see complete strangers greet each other "Bonjour!" on the streets but never in Paris or in big cities. In fact, if you try to greet French people on the streets of Paris or Lyon, you'll rarely, if not never, get any response in return. No matter how friendly you come off, the French are not the type to get comfortable with strangers.

### 3 Do take time to dress up

Because you're going to France where Paris is the fashion capital of the world, you need to turn up your fashion sense a notch higher. Never wear sweatpants or short shorts when strolling through the streets of Paris. More importantly, never wear aforementioned clothes when dining in restaurants.

Rarely will you see people in France in their gym clothes or jeans, shirts and flip flops. French people don't go overboard but they do love stylish and sensible clothes and shoes. They love the colours black, navy and grey, and they don't go big with accessories or make-up.

### 4 Do explore the iconic Eiffel Tower

You've never really gone to France until you've paid the iconic and world-famous Eiffel Tower a visit. For tourists, it is some sort of ritual, an unspoken rule that you should do as proof that you've indeed stepped foot in Paris. Don't just settle with looking at this gorgeous structure from afar or from your hotel room. Nothing com-



pares to the sensation of reaching the pinnacle of this tower.

Explore it by going up to the top by taking the lifts or stairs. All in all there are three lifts, and they are located in the North, East and West pillars which will take you up 15 m high. If you really want to go to the very top at 275 m, you need to change lifts at the second floor. In case you're up for some serious exploring, take the stairs. This way, you'll experience the tower in every angle and view.

### 5 Do ride the metro at night and take the bus occasionally

Another must-do in France is to take a ride on the metro ideally at night when the views are majestic and the city is sparkling with its lights. It is also one of the best ways to feel like a local. Just remember that the metro does not run 24/7. So, if you're plan-

views while on the road. Bus stops are pretty much all around the city so you might as well try it to feel and look more local.

### 6 Do go shopping

If you have a small fortune allotted for shopping, good for you! If you vis-

stores. In other words, you'll pretty much find everything in Paris. Yes, including bargain finds for budget shoppers and high-end haute couture for the rich.

However, don't expect stores to be open 24/7. Though rare, there are some stores which close during lunch hour (noon to 2:00 PM) and also on weekends.

If you're up and ready for a day of shopping, some of the best streets to explore are Rue de Rivoli, Boulevard Haussmann, Rue St Honoré, Avenue Montaigne and Boulevard Saint Michel among others.

### 7 Do understand basic French dining etiquette

As one of the world's sought-after gastronomic destinations, France has the most delicious, sumptuous and mouth-watering food selection as discussed in detail by our 50 French Food for All Seasons article. Before indulging though, it's proper etiquette to learn basic French table and dining manners.

Once seated, immediately place your napkin in your lap and keep your hands on the table while elbows are off the table during the meal. You should also note that wine glasses are filled only ever half way and never to the brim. Bread is broken and never cut. Salad is folded using your fork and never cut with a knife or fork. When eating fruits, peel and slice it first. When slicing cheese, do not do it off the point.

Coffee and tea are often ordered for breakfast but seldom for other meals of the day. If you must drink one for lunch or dinner though, you should order it after dessert and not with your dessert.

ning some late night travelling which necessitates riding the train in the wee hours, better check the schedule first.

Aside from minding the schedule, you should also remember to hold on to your ticket until the exit station. Losing your train ticket will prompt the Metro Police to fine you €35 on the spot. Not good!

When you're not riding the metro, you should try the bus, too. It's less crowded than the metro and it provides just as endearing scenic

ited Paris for the sole purpose to shop till you drop, even better. The city is like a mini world full of all kinds of boutiques including luxury and designer stores as well as sprawling chain



Rue de Rivoli

Finally, eating on the go is never appreciated in France though this is gradually changing. The French still prefer and love to take time to savour every bite and sit when eating. If you want to experience what all the fuss about French cuisine is, you should follow their lead.

8 Do bring a gift for your host when invited over

If you happen to make some friends while in France, lucky you! Some French people love to invite guests over but don't expect a grand tour, especially in the kitchen. But when you do get invited over for dinner or a party, remember to bring a token of thanks to your host. Bring a bottle of wine or a bouquet of flowers as a gift and make sure to arrive on time and dressed up.

When seated, do not start eating until your host says, "Bon appétit!" Keep in mind proper dining manners as mentioned above and the biggest compliment you give your host is to finish everything on your plate.

9 Do tip your waiter when ordering in cafes and restaurants

Unlike in America, tipping in France, particularly in Paris, works out differently. When dining in restaurants and cafes, the tip is already included in your check as required by French law. It is the 15% service charge or "service compris" you see in your check. Giving a little extra tip to your waiter, however, is highly encouraged and appreciated. You are not obligated to do so but it's common courtesy nonetheless.

Giving tips to taxi drivers, restroom attendants, and usherettes are also encouraged. An extra tip doesn't have to be big, just a couple of euros as your way of saying thank you.



10 Do loosen up and bring an adventurous spirit when in France

To fully enjoy the beauty that is France, loosen up and live a little. Even if it's your first time in the country, you have nothing to worry about if you bring with you an adventurous spirit. This is your time to explore and have fun. So, go ahead and just do it.

### The Don'ts

1 Do not talk about politics, religion and other sensitive topics

By all means you should express your opinions. After all, French people love a good debate once in a while. But as a tourist and not a local, it makes perfect sense to stay clear from sensitive topics such as politics or religion especially if you're not exactly well versed with the subject matter at hand. Rarely do the French advertise their religious beliefs and as common courtesy, you are expected to do the same.

2 Do not complain about long waits and slower service

As a country who love to savour their food, their drinks and their time with friends, do not expect the service to go efficiently when in restaurants or cafes. French people love their cup of coffee but rarely, if not never, will you see someone buying it to go. More

than enjoying their drinks, they love the social aspect of dining in cafes and restaurants.

Because people in France are not in a rush, you will notice that service is slower which may irritate you if you're used to a fast service. However, since you're the tourist, do not complain about long lines or long waits when buying your coffee in cafes.

3 Do not take cabs everywhere

When exploring the city, walk as much as you can and stay away from cabs. If you can, do not take cabs at all. But if you must ride, take the metro or the bus instead. Not only are cabs expensive in France but they also take the joy and fun out of strolling leisurely. Paris, for instance, is a lovely city, which spans over about 6 miles. You can walk from one landmark to another without trouble, or you can take the metro to one Metro stop then walk again.

4 Do not talk loud in crowded and public places

This particular "don't" is pretty universal. Talking loudly whether in a restaurant or in a subway is frowned upon in France just like in most countries around the world. It's not only rude and offensive but it's distracting for other people. Remember, you may be on vacation, but others are not. It's understandable that your excitement is at an all time high but that's not an excuse to babble and talk loud especially in public and crowded places.

5 Do not talk in English right away when speaking with a Frenchman

One thing you should know about French people is that many speak English, but they are not very good at it. When you speak with a Frenchman in English, don't be surprised if you're not getting any response. That's not them being rude but them preferring not to look like a fool.

When speaking with a Frenchman for the first time, try using some of the French phrases and words you've packed with you. You can start with saying "bonjour!" to break the ice then add some more French words. Even if you mess up the pronunciation, that's perfectly fine. They'd still appreciate the effort and if they sense that you're in trouble finding the right word in French, some will come to the rescue by talking to you in English albeit bad.

6 Do not order only one dish at restaurants

Because French cuisine is in a league of its own, you should avoid ordering just one dish when dining in restau-



rants. Since you're in a land where gastronomic pleasure is at the heart of its culture, you should go all out and indulge in a full meal which usually includes multiple courses.

Make sure to put aside enough time to enjoy and savor every course. The classic dining experience would typically last two to three hours and consist of a three or four course menu including a starter (une entrée), main course (le plat principal), cheese course and dessert. For evening din-

ing, it may take even longer as it may include five or six courses.

You should know that dining out in France is not just about eating to satisfy your hunger. It is an event in itself which many restaurants in France adhere to.

7 Do not expect ice on your drinks

Whether you're ordering soda or any other drinks, don't expect it with ice. French people or Parisians in particular are not fond of adding ice to their drinks, which means cafes and restaurants do not provide ice.

Do not complain or demand ice. You won't get some anyway. Instead,

just enjoy how refreshingly fancy or wonderfully chilled your drink is even without ice.

8 Do not expect to be always right

When restaurant staff, for instance, deem your viewpoint incorrect, said staff consider it their duty to correct you. Say you ask for your food to be prepared in a manner that deviates from what the chef recommends, ex-

pect to hear an explanation on why the chef's way is better for the flavour of the food you ordered.

I'm not saying that you can't voice your opinion or order what you want. It's just the French way of doing things and since you're in France and not on your home turf, you might as well listen and trust that they know what they're talking about.

9 Do not just stick with touristy spots and destinations

It's only natural for tourists visiting France to hit up the popular tourist spots and destinations. After all, how can you not when these awe-inspiring and jaw-dropping sights are what make the country? Among the first iconic spots to visit are Chartres Cathedral, Dune of Pyla, Palais des Papes, Chateau de Chambord, Gorge du Verdon, Mont Saint-Michel, Palace of Versailles and of course, the world-famous Eiffel Tower.

Once you've had your fill of the popular sights, you should veer away from common tourist itineraries. You can experience France your way by exploring the uncommon tourist paths. That would mean heading to villages and towns where traditional French charm abound. Get to know the locals and mingle with them to truly immerse yourself in the country's culture.

10 Do not be intimidated by all the rules

With so many do's and don'ts to remember, it might get overwhelming at some point. You don't have to memorize each one. Don't be intimidated or frightened of the rules. At the end of the day, you just need to be yourself in order to fully enjoy France.

The key is to show just the right amount of respect to the culture, ways and traditions as with every country you visit. Once they see that you are committing faux pas because of lack of information while still remaining tactful, the French people will be more likely to disregard your mistakes.



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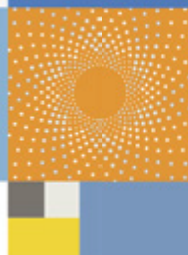


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LEGAL ADVICE

## STUDENTS WRONGLY ACCUSED OF CHEATING ENGLISH LANGUAGE EXAMS

EMIL MANASYAN



Majority of the visa applications to the UK require evidence of a sufficient level of English language (to a varying level of proficiency) on the part of the applicant. Applicants from a majority English speaking country (such as the United States, Canada, Australia etc.) or with a taught degree in English are exempt from this requirement. Everyone else is required to undertake and pass a Secure English Language Test with an approved licensed test centre.

In 2014 investigation by the BBC uncovered large scale systematic fraud by some of the approved language centres, which allowed applicants to cheat their way through the exams by for example using “fake sitters” or having examiners read out the correct answers during the test. In response, the Home Office moved to investigate the test providers implicated by the BBC using data from the US-based educational testing and assessment or-

ganisation, Education Testing Service (ETS), which was one of the organisations licensed to provide the tests by the Home Office at the time. ETS reviewed all the exams taken in the UK between 2011 and 2014 using voice recognition software and declared that 97% of the UK results were either invalid or questionable.

As a result, the Home Office pursued 25 criminal convictions, took more than 35,000 enforcement actions against applicants accused of cheating and revoked licences of 75 colleges and one university.

However, the recent study by National Audit Office found that it was impossible to estimate accurately how many people had been wrongly accused of cheating and unfairly removed from the UK. The researchers found a number of errors in the ETS files and found that the Home Office did not carry out any independent checking or testing of the

data ETS provided. The report states that the Home Office in any event did not have the expertise to validate the results and its conclusion that virtually all tests were suspicious was not plausible.

The Home Office is now reviewing the result of the report and should announce if any measures will be taken in this regard.

The UK's immigration policy is clearly becoming increasingly harsh and this appears to be yet another example of the “hostile environment” policy implemented by the government to reduce the net migration.



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