

Top 15 easy French meals you can make yourself

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CROQUE MONSIEUR

Ingredients

- 200ml milk
- 20g plain flour
- 20g buttersalt and pepper
- 4 freshly cut slices white bread
- 1 tbsp Dijon mustard
- 4 slices carved ham
- 4 cheese slices, such as emmental or gruyère
- 80g/3oz cheddar, grated

Directions

- Pour the milk into a pan, add the flour and butter, then slowly bring up to the boil, whisking continuously to a thick, smooth and glossy sauce.
- Reduce the heat and simmer for 3-5 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the flour has cooked out. Remove from the heat and season with salt and pepper. Set aside.
- Heat the grill to high and the oven to 220C/200C Fan/Gas 7. Place the bread on a baking tray and toast one side under the grill until golden.
- Turn the bread over and spread each slice with a thin layer of mustard, followed by a layer of white sauce. Cover the sauce with a slice of a cheese and a slice of ham.
- Stack the slices into two sandwiches, then spread a thin layer of white sauce over the top and sprinkle with grated cheddar.
- Bake in the oven for 10-15 minutes until golden and bubbling. Leave to cool for 3-5 minutes before tucking in.

PREPARATION: 30MIN

COOKING: 10MIN

SERVES: 2



QUICHE LORRAINE

Ingredients

- 170g ready-made shortcrust pastry, flour, for dusting
- 1 tbsp butter1 small onion, finely chopped
- 85g bacon, chopped
- 120ml milk
- 120ml single cream
- 2 free-range eggs1 free-range egg, yolk only
- 55g/2oz mature cheddar, grated
- salt and freshly ground black pepper

Directions

- Preheat the oven to 220C/200C Fan/Gas 6.
- Roll the pastry out on a clean work surface until it's slightly larger than a 20cm flan ring. Line the flan ring with the pastry and prick the base all over with a fork. Cover with cling film and chill in the fridge for at least 30 minutes.
- Meanwhile, heat the butter in a frying pan and gently fry the onion until soft but not coloured. Add the bacon and fry until cooked through. Drain off any excess liquid. Set aside.
- Remove the cling film from the pastry case, line with parchment paper and fill with ceramic baking beans or rice. Bake the pastry case in the preheated oven for 20 minutes, then remove.
- Reduce the oven temperature to 150C/130C Fan/Gas 2.
- Mix the milk, cream and eggs together in a bowl. Add the onion and bacon mixture along with the cheese. Season with salt and freshly ground black pepper.
- Pour the egg mixture into the pastry case, return to the oven and bake for 45 minutes to one hour until the filling is set.

PREPARATION: 30MIN

COOKING: UP TO 1 HOUR

SERVES: 4

CLAFOUTIS

Ingredients

For the cherries

- 450g ripe cherries
- 3 tbsp caster sugar
- 3 tbsp kirsch (optional)

For the batter

- 20g unsalted butter,
- 2 free-range eggs
- 3 tbsp caster sugar,
- ½ tsp vanilla extract
- 1 heaped tbsp plain flour
- 50g whole milk
- 75g whipping cream
- pinch sea salt

PREPARATION: 2 HOURS

COOKING: 30 MINS

SERVES: 4

Directions

- Gently mix together the cherries, sugar and kirsch and leave to macerate for two hours. (The sugar will slowly permeate the cherries and intensify their flavour.)
- Preheat the oven to 180C/350F/Gas 4. Grease a baking dish with butter and sprinkle with sugar. Shake the sugar around the dish so that it is evenly coated, then tip out any excess.
- For the batter, heat the butter in a small pan until it turns a pale hazelnut colour - this is called a *beurre noisette*. Do not allow the butter to burn or it will become bitter and carcinogenic. Remove the pan from the heat and set aside in a warm place.
- In a large bowl whisk together the eggs, sugar and vanilla until creamy.
- Add the flour, whisk until smooth, then slowly incorporate the milk, cream, salt and *beurre noisette*.
- Mix the macerated cherries and their juice into the batter and pour into the prepared baking dish.
- Bake in the oven for 30-35 minutes, or until the top is slightly domed and the blade of a knife inserted in the middle comes out clean.
- To finish, sprinkle with caster sugar and serve warm.

EASY FRENCH MEALS TO MAKE



CRÊPES

Ingredients

- For the crêpes
- 125g plain flour
- 1 free-range egg 1 tsp melted butter
- 300ml milk butter, for frying

Directions

- For the crêpes, place the flour into a bowl. Add the egg, melted butter and milk and whisk to a smooth batter. Set aside for at least one hour, preferably overnight.
- Heat a frying pan until medium hot, melt a little butter in the pan, then add a ladle of batter and swirl to coat the bottom of the pan. Cook for 1-2 minutes, then flip and cook for a further minute.
- Slide the crêpe from the pan and place on greaseproof paper. Repeat with the remaining batter, layering the crêpes with greaseproof paper as you go. The crêpes can be chilled or frozen at this point and used later.
- To serve, spoon the crêpes onto serving plates and add your fav toppings

PREPARATION: 15 MINS

COOKING: 30 MINS

SERVES: 4

EASY FRENCH MEALS TO MAKE



BOEUF BOURGUIGNON

Ingredients

- 900g beef shin or stewing beef, cut into 6 large chunks
- 2 tbsp plain flour
- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- 50g lardons or cubes of smoked bacon
- 10 button onions or shallots,
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed flat
- 1 bay leaf, bunch parsley, sprig of thyme, sprig of rosemary
- 3 cloves
- 10 peppercorns, crushed
- 500ml red wine
- 1 tbsp tomato purée
- 1 tsp sugar, 1 tsp salt
- 10 chestnut mushrooms
- parsley leaves, chopped

Directions

- Preheat the oven to 150C/300F/Gas 2.
- Dust each piece of meat with flour.
- Heat the oil in a large casserole over a high heat and fry the meat in batches until browned.
- Remove each batch, keeping the oil, then fry the lardons, onions and garlic in the same pan until golden brown.
- Add in the herbs and spices and return the meat to the pan. Add 300ml water, the wine, tomato paste, sugar and salt. Scrape up the caramelised bits as they will add flavour.
- Cover, place in the oven and cook for three hours or until the meat is tender and almost falling apart.
- About 20 minutes before the stew is ready, add the mushrooms into the stew and season with salt to taste.

PREPARATION: 30MINS

COOKING: 2-3 HOURS

SERVES: 4-6



EASY FRENCH MEALS TO MAKE

RATATOUILLE

Ingredients

- 1 medium onion, diced
- 1 tsp chopped garlic
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 1 aubergine,
- 1 courgette, diced
- 1 red pepper, diced
- pinch chilli powder
- 2 tomatoes peeled, de-seeded
- 1 tbsp fresh coriander leaves,
- $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp saffron strands (soaked 1
tbsp warm water)
- squeeze lemon juice
- salt and coarsely ground black
pepper

Directions

- Sprinkle aubergine with salt and set aside for 15 minutes before rinsing and patting dry with a cloth (to draw out any bitter juices).
- Soften the onion and garlic in the olive oil over a gentle heat.
- Add the diced aubergine, the diced courgette, diced red pepper and chilli powder. Stir and fry for 5-10 minutes until softened, season with salt and the coarsely ground black pepper.
- Stir in the chopped tomatoes, heat through for five minutes.
- Add the chopped coriander and soaked saffron strands.
- Sharpen with lemon juice, re-season with salt and freshly ground black pepper and serve.

PREPARATION: 30 MINS

COOKING: 30 MINS

SERVES: 4



EASY FRENCH MEALS TO MAKE

SALADE NICOISE

Ingredients

- 450g fresh tuna or 4 x 175g tuna steaks,
- 8 new potatoes, cooked
- 4 plum tomatoes, roughly chopped
- 15g extra fine French beans, t
- 4 little gem lettuce hearts, quartered lengthways
- 1 red onion, finely sliced
- 4 eggs, cooked for 6 minutes
- 6 anchovy fillets c
- 16 pitted black olives
- 8 basil leaves, ripped
- And a DRESSING

Directions

- To make the DRESSING whisk together the red wine vinegar, olive oil, parsley, chives, garlic, salt and pepper.
- Place the tuna in a shallow dish and pour over half of the dressing. Cover and chill for 1-2 hours to allow the fish to marinate. Toss in the marinade from time to time.
- Heat a ridged griddle pan on the hob or a hot barbecue for 5 minutes. Remove the tuna from the marinade. Cook the tuna steaks for 2-3 minutes on each side, depending on how rare you like your fish.
- Lay the lettuce leaves onto a large plate and add the lettuce, onion, tomatoes, potato, tuna, beans and anchovies. Drizzle over the remaining dressing then finish by adding the eggs, olives and ripped basil leaves.

PREPARATION: 1 HOUR

COOKING: 30 MINS

SERVES: 4



COQ AU VIN

Ingredients

- 400g shallots, peeled
- 2 carrots, cut into chunky pieces,
- about 2½cm sticks celery
- salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 100g smoked, dry-cured lardons
- 2 tbsp plain flour
- 4 whole chicken legs, cut into thighs and drumsticks
- 1 fresh bay leaf a few sprigs fresh thyme,
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 1 tbsp tomato purée
- 300ml full-bodied red wine
- 100ml good quality chicken stock
- 150g mushrooms,

Directions

- Put the shallots, carrots and celery into a slow cooker, and season with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Fry the lardons in a large frying pan over a low heat for 10 minutes until crisp, golden and the fat has run from the meat. Remove from the pan and tip most of the fat into a heatproof bowl.
- Meanwhile, put the flour into a food bag or bowl, season with salt and freshly ground pepper, then toss the chicken pieces in the flour to coat.
- Fry the floured chicken in the residual bacon fat until golden-brown, about five minutes each side. Put the chicken on top of the vegetables in the slow cooker and scatter with the lardons, bay leaf and thyme sprigs.
- Add a little more fat to the pan if needed, then add the garlic and tomato purée. Cook for a minute, then add the wine and bring to the boil for two minutes. Add the stock, return to the boil, season with salt and freshly ground black pepper, then pour over the meat and vegetables. Cover with the lid then cook on low for six hours, until the chicken is very tender.
- Just before serving, heat a little fat in a frying pan and fry the mushrooms over a high heat, until golden-brown. Scatter over the chicken and serve.

PREPARATION: 30 MINS

COOKING: 2 HOURS

SERVES: 4



TOMATES FARCIES

Ingredients

- 5 beef tomatoes
- 1 shallot, finely chopped
- 500g lamb mince
- 25g fresh breadcrumbs
- 300g button mushrooms,
- 3 tbsp chopped fresh tarragon
- salt and black pepper
- 25ml olive oil

For the sauce

- 8 medium tomatoes
- 50ml rapeseed oil
- 2-3 garlic cloves, finely chopped

Directions

- Preheat the oven to 200C/400F/Gas 6 or prepare a barbecue.
- Slice the tops off the beef tomatoes, reserving the tops to use as lids later. Scoop out the flesh and seeds from the centre and place into a saucepan.
- Mix the shallot, mince, breadcrumbs, mushrooms and tarragon in a bowl. Season with salt and freshly ground black pepper.
- Stuff the tomatoes with the mince mixture (do not overfill as the mixture will expand when cooking and could split the skin), drizzle with oil and place the lids on top.
- Place the stuffed tomatoes onto a barbecue for 10-15 minutes, or until the mince is fully cooked. Alternatively bake in the oven for the same time.
- To make the sauce, add the tomatoes to the saucepan containing the flesh from the beef tomatoes, then add the oil and garlic. Season with salt and pepper and bring to the boil. Simmer for 10 minutes.
- To serve, place the stuffed tomatoes onto a large serving platter and drizzle around the sauce.

PREPARATION: 30 MINS

COOKING: 30 MINS

SERVES: 5

EASY FRENCH MEALS TO MAKE



OMLETTE

Ingredients

- 6 fresh eggs
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon cold water
- 1/4 cup unsalted butter, divided
- 2 pinches cayenne or white pepper to taste (optional)

Directions

- Whisk eggs, salt, and water together in a mixing bowl. Whisk until mixture is very liquid and whites are completely blended in, 1 or 2 minutes.
- Heat 1 1/2 tablespoons butter in a 9- or 10-inch non-stick skillet over medium-high heat. As soon as butter melts and before it starts to sizzle, pour in the whisked eggs. Stir in a circular pattern with a heat-proof spatula, lifting and "scrambling" eggs, shaking pan to keep leveling out the mixture, and scraping down the sides. Continue stirring until shaking the pan no longer levels the eggs.
- Reduce heat to low. Using the spatula, smooth the surface of the eggs to move runny eggs to less runny spots, working toward an even thickness. As soon as surface is wet but not runny, remove from heat.
- Starting at the handle side of the pan, use the spatula to begin rolling the omelette into a cylinder shape, about 3 rolls until omelette is about 2 inches from opposite side of pan. Use spatula to fold the last flap of egg over the top of the cylinder leaving the seam side up. Add cubes of the remaining 1/2 tablespoon butter to pan. Gently push the butter as it melts under the omelette.
- Slide omelette to edge of pan. Flip onto a plate with the seam side down. Dust with cayenne pepper.

PREPARATION: 10 MINS

COOKING: 15 MINS

SERVES: 2



SOUFFLÉ

Ingredients

- melted butter, for greasing
- 4 tbsp finely
rated parmesan cheese
- 300ml milk
- 1 bay leaf
- 50g butter
- 50g plain flour
- 5 free-range eggs, separated
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- 2 tbsp chopped
fresh tarragon leaves
- 100g Gruyère cheese, grated

Directions

- Preheat the oven to 200C/390F/Gas 6. Brush the inside of a large soufflé dish with the melted butter and dust with the grated parmesan, shaking out any excess cheese.
- Bring the milk to the boil in a saucepan with the bay leaf, then remove from the heat and set aside.
- Melt the butter in a heavy-based saucepan and stir in the flour. Cook for 2-3 minutes, until the mixture turns a deep ivory colour and thickens. Pour in the warm milk, stirring or whisking until you have a smooth sauce that is free of lumps. Simmer gently, stirring from time to time, for about ten minutes.
- Remove the sauce from the heat and remove the bay leaf. Whisk in the egg yolks, one at a time, and stir in the mustard and tarragon leaves. Season with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Gently stir in the Gruyère, until melted and well combined.
- Beat the egg whites until soft peaks form when the whisk is removed from the bowl. Gently fold the egg whites into the cheese sauce with a large metal spoon, until just combined.
- Gently spoon the mixture into the buttered soufflé dish and bake in the oven for 25-30 minutes, until the soufflé has risen and is golden-brown on top.
- Remove from the oven and serve immediately.

PREPARATION: 30 MINS

COOKING: 45 MINS

SERVES: 4



EASY FRENCH MEALS TO MAKE

GRATIN DAUPHINOIS

Ingredients

- 1 garlic clove, crushedbutter
- 450g/1lb waxy potatoes, thinly sliced (such as Desirée, Golden Wonder or King Edward)
- 300ml double cream
- salt and freshly ground black pepper

Directions

- Preheat the oven to 170C/325F/Gas 3.
- Rub a gratin dish liberally with the garlic and butter.
- Layer the potatoes into the dish, making sure each layer is seasoned.
- Pour over the cream and cook in the oven for 1¼ hours.
- Turn up the heat to 200C/400F/Gas 6 and cook for a further 15 minutes until the top is golden.
- Serve.

PREPARATION: 30 MINS

COOKING: 1-2 HOURS

SERVES: 4



LYONNAISE SALAD

Ingredients

- 4 cups frisée lettuce, torn into large bite-size pieces
- 2 pieces regular sliced bacon, chopped into small pieces
- 1 tablespoon white vinegar
- 2 large eggs
- 1 medium shallot, finely minced
- 1 tablespoon red wine vinegar
- 1/2 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Directions

- Place the frisée into a large mixing bowl.
- Place a small skillet over medium heat and cook the bacon pieces, stirring occasionally, until golden brown. Carefully remove from the pan from the heat and use a slotted spoon to transfer the bacon pieces to a paper towel to drain and cool. Keep the pan and its rendered fat.
- To poach the eggs, fill a saucepan with 4 inches of water and add the white vinegar. Bring the mixture to a gentle simmer. Break each egg into small bowl. With a slotted spoon, stir simmering water to create a whirlpool, then slide the first egg into a eye of the swirl. Using the back of the spoon, immediately push the solidifying whites around yolk, coaxing them to stay close to the yolk. Repeat with the second egg. Simmer the eggs for 2 to 3 minutes. Gently remove each egg with the slotted spoon and reserve in a bowl of warm water. Trim off any straggling pieces of cooked egg white.
- Reheat the skillet with the rendered bacon fat over medium heat. Add the shallots and cook, stirring, for 30 seconds. Add the red wine vinegar and mustard and swirl to combine. Add the bacon pieces and swirl. Immediately pour the hot dressing over the greens and toss. Season with salt and pepper, to taste.

PREPARATION: 30 MINS

COOKING: 1-2 HOURS

SERVES: 4

TARTIFLETTE

Ingredients

- 1kg Charlotte potatoes, peeled
- 250g bacon lardons
- 2 shallots
- 1 garlic clove
- 100ml white wine
- 200ml double cream
- sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 whole Reblochon cheese (about 450g), sliced

Directions

- For the tartiflette, preheat oven to 200C/400F/Gas 7.
- Cook the potatoes in a saucepan of salted boiling water for 5-10 minutes, or until tender.
- Drain and set aside to cool slightly.
- Meanwhile, heat a frying pan until hot and fry the bacon, shallots and garlic for 4-5 minutes, or until golden-brown. Deglaze the pan with the white wine and continue to cook until most of the liquid has evaporated.
- Slice the potatoes thinly and layer into an ovenproof gratin dish with the bacon mixture. Pour over the double cream. Season with salt and lots of freshly ground black pepper. Layer the Reblochon slices on top.
- Bake in the oven for 10-15 minutes or until the cheese is golden-brown and bubbling.

PREPARATION: 30 MINS

COOKING: 30 MINS

SERVES: 4



TARTE AUX POMMES

Ingredients

For the tart

- 200g ready-made puff pastry
- 2 tbsp stewed apple, or sweet apple sauce6 apples (Cox or Granny Smith), peeled, quartered and cored
- 2 tbsp caster sugar
- 40g butter, cubed
- 1 free-range egg yolk, beaten

For the Chantilly cream

- 250ml double cream
- 1 tbsp icing sugar
- 1 vanilla pod, seeds scraped out

PREPARATION: 30 MINS

COOKING: UP TO 1 HOUR

SERVES: 8-10

Directions

- Preheat the oven to 200C/180C Fan/Gas 6.
- Roll the puff pastry out on a clean work surface to a large sheet, 3mm thick. Using a bowl or plate, cut a circle about 25cm/10in in diameter. Crimp the edge before turning the whole sheet over and laying it directly onto a flat baking tray. Chill in the fridge for at least 10 minutes.
- Remove the pastry from the fridge and spread the apple compôte all over the base of pastry, leaving a 1cm/½in border at the edge.
- Slice the apples the thickness of a two-pound coin and place them onto the pastry sheet, fanning them out, starting from the outside and working in. The apples should overlap each other. Use the largest slices on the outside and place the smallest slices in the middle of the tart.
- Once all the apples have been laid out, sprinkle over the caster sugar and dot with the cubed butter. Brush the border with the beaten egg and bake in the oven for about 30 minutes, or until golden-brown and risen around the edge.
- For the Chantilly cream, whisk the cream, icing sugar and seeds from the vanilla pod in a bowl until very soft peaks form and set aside until ready to serve.