



FR/CU 370 – FRENCH CONVERSATION: CULTURE AND CUISINE OF PARIS

IES Abroad Paris

DESCRIPTION:

This course offers students the opportunity to explore one of the most iconic and globally recognized aspects of French culture: French cuisine.

Sessions will alternate between presentations on the importance of French cuisine, discovering local cuisines, hands-on tastings, and food-related outings. Students will be invited to discuss French recipes and cultural differences in cooking and approaches to food. The French language will not be forgotten, and we will work on the linguistic points needed to discuss this topic.

We will also discuss the historical and cultural reasons that have shaped different cuisines, ingredients, and culinary practices across the country, not to mention the importance of regional specialties, particularly Parisian cuisine and the capital's unique eating habits.

CREDITS: 3 credits

HOURS: 45 hours

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: French

PREREQUISITES: This course is intended for students with an intermediate or advanced level of French.

ADDITIONAL COST: €85

TEACHING METHOD:

France is renowned for the quality of its cuisine, the excellence of its ingredients, its remarkable wines, centuries of art and history, and a unique ability to elevate the simplest things.

We will explore ingredients, kitchen utensils, vocabulary related to meal preparation, idiomatic expressions about food, and many other aspects (grammatical, cultural, etc.).

The course will include classroom discussions, student presentations, program-related outings, hands-on workshops, tastings, and an in-depth understanding of how, with a dash of creativity and a true sense of adaptability, the French have been able to transform simple ingredients into products of great value.

REQUIRED WORK AND EVALUATION METHOD:

1. **Class participation** – 15%
2. **Midterm exam** – 25%
3. **Final paper** – 20%
4. **Oral presentation** – 25%
5. **Group video** – 15%

Midterm exam

The assessment will consist of multiple-choice questions, true/false questions, and short-answer questions.

Final essay – final exam

During the final exam, students will be required to write an essay on one of two topics related to French cuisine, which will be provided in advance. They will be expected to demonstrate their knowledge of the chosen topic. On the day of the final exam, they will write a handwritten essay of **800 words**. Please note: on this day, you will not be allowed to bring any documents with you; you may only bring writing materials.

Oral presentation

Each student will present a personal research project carried out throughout the semester on a specific topic of interest, in accordance with the instructions given by the teacher.

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Group video

The video project is a group assignment, the details of which will be explained in class by the teacher.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Illustrate the main techniques of French cuisine and use the appropriate vocabulary for foods and culinary preparations;
- Describe French culinary traditions and eating habits related to the preparation and consumption of meals;
- Identify the different regions of France, their typical specialties, the main regional culinary preparations, and their historical origins;
- Analyze elements of French food culture based on selected press articles.

CONTENT:

Week	Content	Assignments
Week 1	1. Introduction to the course 2. History of French cuisine: understanding French food culture, culinary habits, and regional specificities Functional objective: recounting in the past tense	• On va déguster Paris. François-Régis Gaudry & ses amis, Marabout, 2022 pp. 20-36, 40-43 • Also read the articles and/or watch the videos available on Moodle
Week 2	3. Recipes and stories: traditions related to food shopping, seasonal products, local products, shopping habits, and the importance of markets (DOP and IGP labels) Functional objective: Describe products 4. Visit to the Enfants Rouges covered market	• On va déguster Paris. François-Régis Gaudry & ses amis, Marabout, 2022 pp. 20-36, 40-43, 122-127 • Also read the articles and/or watch the videos available on Moodle
Week 3	5. Bread and pastries Functional objective: explain a process 6. Tasting workshop and discussion on the production of bread and pastries	• On va déguster Paris. François-Régis Gaudry & ses amis, Marabout, 2022 pp. 112-115, 150-151, 184, 252, 354-357 • Also read the articles and/or watch the videos available on Moodle
Week 4	7. Eating on the go Functional objective: talking about what you feel like eating 8. Street food and other sandwiches	• On va déguster Paris. François-Régis Gaudry & ses amis, Marabout, 2022 pp. 41, 48-49, 324-325 • Also read the articles and/or watch the videos available on Moodle
Week 5	9. The French art of living: French dining and rules of etiquette Functional objective: advising someone 10. Chocolate: differences between countries, between industrial chocolate and artisanal chocolate Functional objective: to compare	• On va déguster Paris. François-Régis Gaudry & ses amis, Marabout, 2022 pp. 376-377 • Also read the articles and/or watch the videos available on Moodle

Week 6	11. Parisian pastries 12. Crêpe workshop at La Sablière	- On va déguster Paris. François-Régis Gaudry & ses amis, Marabout, 2022 pp. 358-361 - Also read the articles and/or watch the videos available on Moodle
Week 7	13. Midterm exam review and update on ongoing projects – presentation, video, 14. Midterm exam	
Week 8	15. Wine: production process and cultural significance 16. Food and wine pairing: practical tastings and sensory experiences (aromas, work on the five senses) Functional objective: describing sensations, expressing emotions	- On va déguster Paris. François-Régis Gaudry & ses amis, Marabout, 2022 pp. 250 - Also read the articles and/or watch the videos available on Moodle
Week 9	17. The invention of the restaurant	- On va déguster Paris. François-Régis Gaudry & ses amis, Marabout, 2022 pp. 62-75 - Also read the articles and/or watch the videos available on Moodle.
Week 10	18. Lunch at Bouillon Chartier 19. Cheese: history, production process, serving rules, cheese tasting Functional objective: explain a production process	- On va déguster Paris. François-Régis Gaudry & ses amis, Marabout, 2022 pp. 37-39, 366-367 - Also read the articles and/or watch the videos available on Moodle
Week 11	22. Visit to the living cheese museum	
Week 12	23. Oral presentation: "Create your own recipe" 24. Paris and cuisine: regional influence Functional objective: arguing in a structured manner (I)	- On va déguster Paris. François-Régis Gaudry & ses amis, Marabout, 2022, pp. 96-105 - Also read the articles and/or watch the videos available on Moodle

Week 13	25. Paris and cuisine: international influence Functional objective: arguing in a structured manner (II)	• On va déguster Paris. François-Régis Gaudry & ses amis, Marabout, 2022 pp. 186-225 • Also read the articles and/or watch the videos available on Moodle
Final session/EXAM	26. Video project submission: the project will focus on an ingredient or food of your choice. All aspects must be covered (history, quality, characteristics). Group discussion on the projects 27. Handwritten essay in progress: 800-word essay on one of the suggested topics related to French cuisine.	

**COURSE-RELATED VISITS:**

- September 18, 2025: Marché couvert des Enfants rouges (covered market visit)
- October 16, 2025: Crêpe workshop at La Sablière restaurant (date subject to change)
- November 18, 2025: Lunch at Bouillon Chartier
- November 25, 2025: Musée vivant du fromage (cheese museum visit)

BOOK TO BUY:

- *On va déguster Paris*. François-Régis Gaudry & ses amis, Marabout, 2022.
- Articles and other materials to consult on Moodle (before class)

RECOMMENDED READING:

- *Histoire du Paris gastronomique*, Patrick Rambourg, Perrin, 2023