

Food culture =

Level 2

GREAT AMERICAN

recipes



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Blueberry*
muffins? Pecan
pie? Jambalaya*?
Six classic
recipes for
a culinary tour
of the USA

Europeans can be snobs* about American food, but the truth is we love it. After* all, France may be the home of haute cuisine, but 85% of the country's restaurants have burgers on their menu.

Just like the country itself, America's food is the product of immigration – different culinary cultures meeting and mixing*. When you add* in American business sense, a uniquely US style of food emerges: fast and practical,

simply indulgent* and instantly satisfying*. These are the foods they have exported across* the world, often back to the countries that inspired them in the first* place, like the hot dogs and burgers that returned to Germany. When we eat a pizza in France, after all, we are not eating the original Neapolitan dish* so* much as the American reinvention of it. And it's the same for many other popular foods.

Americans invented the modern supermarket, plus the “bad” stuff

like ready-made* meals, snacks and sodas. So, in fact, we're living in a world of American cuisine without realizing it. And, despite* our snobbery*, it's not all bad. Here we celebrate six typically American dishes that are delicious, easy to make and impossible not to love.

! LE PLUS : **dish** signifie un plat, mais aussi une assiette creuse. Si on trouve une personne **dishy**, elle est à notre goût (délicieuse même) ! Trop en rajouter ? = **to make a meal of something** (en faire tout un plat).

VOCABULARY P.1

across the world:
dans le monde entier
add in (when you):
quand on ajoute à cela
after all: après tout

blueberry: myrtille
despite: malgré
dish: plat
(voir aussi note jaune)
first place (in the):
à l'origine

indulgent: gourmand
jambalaya: plat à base
de riz, emblématique
de la Louisiane
mix: interagir, mélanger

ready-made meal:
plat préparé
satisfying: gratifiant
snob (to be a ... about):
avoir une attitude snob,

dédaigneuse
snobbery: snobisme
so much as:
mais plutôt

! LE PLUS : La cuisine **Tex-Mex** désigne une cuisine du Texas et du sud-ouest des États-Unis influencée par la gastronomie mexicaine. Les plats les plus emblématiques sont les fajitas, le chili con carne, et les enchiladas, nachos et burritos.

Guacamole

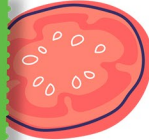
The Aztecs were already making guacamole (or “avocado sauce”), when Europeans first arrived in the Americas. In the 20th century, it spread* across the USA as part of the Tex-Mex* culinary trend* together with tacos, burritos, enchiladas and more. More recently, it has become a favourite with hipsters, vegans and Instagrammers. As a result, Mexican avocados became a multi-billion-dollar business, attracting the attention of the country’s drug cartels.

This year, the USA suspended all imports of Mexican avocados after a government official responsible for checking them for pests* was threatened* by the cartels. The good news is that in Europe we get most of our avocados from other parts of the world. So, enjoy!



- 2 ripe* avocados
- 1 tomato
- ½ red onion, finely chopped*
- 1 small red chilli, finely chopped
- 1 handful* coriander leaves, chopped
- juice of one lime* (or lemon)

1. Mash* the avocado flesh* with a fork in a bowl.
2. Remove* the seeds from the tomato, chop* the flesh and add* to the mashed avocado.
3. Add the remaining* ingredients, season* with salt and pepper, and enjoy with tortilla chips!



Caesar salad

In the 1920s, an Italian immigrant chef named Caesar Gardini had a popular restaurant in San Diego, California. It was so popular, in fact, that one day – the 4 July, or Independence Day – the kitchen ran* out of food. Desperate* to feed his customers, Caesar had to invent something with whatever* he had available. The result has become the definitive American salad – delicious and satisfying, but very high in calories!

You can put almost anything else you want in a Caesar salad (cold chicken, tomato, avocado, bacon...), but it must have these essentials:

- crisp lettuce, sliced*
- 2 cloves* of garlic
- garlic* croutons
- 1 teaspoon* mustard
- 100g parmesan, shaved*
- 2 teaspoons red wine vinegar
- 2 egg* yolks
- 4 anchovies*
- 100ml olive oil

1. Put the lettuce, croutons and any other ingredients you want in a salad bowl.
2. Blend* the egg yolks, anchovies, garlic, mustard and vinegar with an electric mixer.
3. Continue blending, and add the olive oil slowly to obtain a liquid, creamy sauce. If it is too thick* add a little hot water.
4. Combine the sauce with the salad, and add the parmesan on top.



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VOCABULARY P.2

add to: ajouter à
anchovies: anchois
blend: mixer
chop(ped): hacher, haché

clove of garlic: gousse d’ail
desperate: prêt à tout
egg yolk: jaune d’œuf
flesh: chair
garlic: ail, à l’ail
handful: poignée

lime: citron vert
mash: écraser
pests: insectes ou maladies
remaining: restant

remove the seeds: retirer les graines
ripe: mûr
run out of (p. ran out of): être à court de

season: assaisonner
shaved: en copeaux
sliced: tranché
spread across: répandre
teaspoon: petite cuillère

Tex-Mex: abréviation de Texas Mexicain (voir note jaune)
thick: épais
threaten: menacer

trend: tendance
whatever he had available: tout ce qu’il avait sous la main



Margoe Edwards/Shutterstock

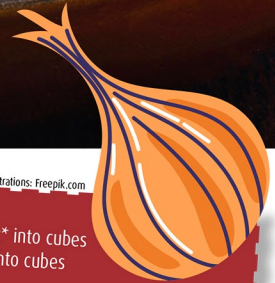
Jambalaya

The southern state* of Louisiana has a distinct local cuisine derived from Creole and Cajun cooking. Both have their origins in the French community that settled* here after the British forced them out of Canada, mixed with influences from the Caribbean and the Spanish communities that were already in New Orleans. The difference between them is difficult to define, but Creole is basically the more sophisticated – an urban version of rural Cajun food. It has a wider* variety of ingredients, including tomatoes or butter, while Cajun food is typically based on seafood*, game*, pork and generous seasoning*. It’s said that this signature* dish takes its name from an old Provençal word “jambalaya”, meaning “to mix* up”, but it combines influences from Louisiana’s French, Spanish and Caribbean communities. The recipe varies between New Orleans and other parts of the state, but it’s always just as good...

- 2 chicken breasts*, cut* into cubes
- 1 chorizo sausage cut into cubes
- 1 onion, chopped*
- 1 pepper* (green, red or a mix)
- 2 sticks* of celery, chopped
- 2 tablespoons* garlic*
- ¼ teaspoon* cayenne pepper*
- 260g white rice
- 1 litre chicken* stock
- 3 bay* leaves
- 2 teaspoons Worcestershire Sauce
- 1 teaspoon hot* pepper sauce
- salt and pepper*

1. Heat* some oil in a large pot and sauté the chicken and sausage pieces for five minutes.
2. Add the onion, peppers, celery, cayenne pepper, salt and pepper. Cook for five more minutes.
3. Add the rice, chicken stock and bay leaves. Bring* to a boil, then reduce* the heat, cover the pan and let it simmer* for 20 minutes.
4. Add the hot pepper sauce and the Worcestershire Sauce (you’ll find it in the international section of most French supermarkets). Enjoy!

illustrations: Freepik.com



VOCABULARY P.3

bay leaf: feuille de laurier
bring to a boil: porter à ébullition

chicken stock: bouillon de poulet
chopped: haché
cut into cubes: découper en dés
game: gibier

garlic: ail
heat: faire chauffer
hot pepper sauce: sauce piment
mix up: tout mélanger

pepper(s): poivron(s), poivre, piment
reduce the heat: baisser le feu
seafood: fruits de mer

seasoning: assaisonnement
settle: s’installer
signature dish: plat signature

simmer: mijoter
state: État
stick of celery: branche de céleri
tablespoon: cuillère à soupe

teaspoon: petite cuillère
wider: plus grand



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Blueberry* muffins

Bread-making* is as old as human civilization, but America revolutionised it with the creation of baking* powder in the late* 18th century. Baking powder made baking a cake a far* quicker, simpler and more successful* process.

The recipe that uses baking powder here is for blueberry* muffins – a truly* American form of cake in that the blueberry is native* to the Americas. They were a favourite fruit of the Native Americans, and historians believe they were part of the first Thanksgiving* feast when European settlers* arrived on the continent. Indeed, the nation's first recipe book, *American Cookery*, published in 1796, included* a recipe for American-style muffins. They've been a problem for anyone trying to lose* weight since.

- 200g plain* flour
- 100g white sugar
- 2 teaspoons* baking* powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 80ml vegetable oil
- 80ml milk
- 1 egg
- 150g blueberries*
- paper muffin* cups

1. Heat* the oven to 200C. Mix* all the ingredients together and fill* your muffin cups to the top (sprinkle* a little sugar and cinnamon* on top for some extra indulgence*).
2. Bake* for 20-25 minutes.



illustrations: Freepik.com

VOCABULARY P.4

bake: cuire au four
baking powder: levure (chimique)
blueberry: myrtille
bread-making: faire du pain

cinnamon: cannelle en poudre
far quicker: bien plus rapide
fill (to the top): remplir jusqu'en haut
heat the oven:

préchauffer le four
include: figurer
indulgence: gourmandise
late (18th century): à la fin du 18ème siècle

lose weight (since): perdre du poids (depuis cette époque)
mix together: mélanger ensemble

muffin cup: cassolette
native to: endémique
plain flour: farine de blé
settler: colon
sprinkle: saupoudrer

successful: réussi
teaspoon: petite cuillère
Thanksgiving feast: repas pour fêter la récolte
truly: authentiquement

Breakfast pancakes

In the movies, American families having breakfast always have a pile of thick*, freshly-made* pancakes on the table. Why? Because you can eat them with anything – butter, maple* syrup, jam, fruit, bacon, eggs and more. Which is why they are an essential part of a Sunday brunch – another American food concept that has been exported around* the world. There are numerous styles of American pancake and they were even part of the Native American diet* before the modern era*, but this recipe is for the basic version. They're easy to make – the difficulty is deciding what to put on them. So you will need to make yourself a lot of pancakes...



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- 225g plain* flour
- 2 eggs, beaten*
- 1 teaspoon* white sugar
- 300ml milk
- 30g butter, melted* but cool
- salt
- butter for frying*

1. Blend* the ingredients in a mixer*, then put the batter* in a jug* for pouring*.
2. Melt* butter in a heavy* frying pan.
3. Pour a little of the batter into the pan. It should be thick*, not thin* like a crêpe.
4. When the pancake starts to bubble* on top, turn* it over and cook for about one minute more. Eat immediately!



Pecan pie

This is an essential element of traditional Thanksgiving celebrations in the USA and pecan nuts are native to Florida, so you can't get a more American dessert than this! It's extremely sweet* and rich, but sort* of irresistible. The Americans use corn* syrup to make it, but any other kind of syrup, or even honey*, will give a similar result.



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Untashable/Noun Project

- 1 shortcrust* pastry base
- 250ml corn* syrup
- 3 eggs
- 200g sugar
- 50g butter, melted*
- 1 teaspoon* vanilla extract
- 375g pecans

1. Heat* oven to 180C.
2. Mix* the syrup, eggs, sugar, butter and vanilla in a bowl.
3. Put about 40 pecan nuts to one side, then chop* the rest and add them to the mix.
4. Place the pastry* in a shallow* tart dish and pour* in the mixture. Decorate the top with the pecans you reserved.
5. Bake* for 60 to 70 minutes.
6. Cool for two hours or more before serving.



VOCABULARY P.5

around the world: dans le monde entier
bake: cuire au four
batter: pâte à crêpes
beaten: battu
blend: mixer

bubble: crépiter, mousser
chop: hacher
corn syrup: sirop de maïs
diet: régime alimentaire
era: époque
freshly-made: fraîchement préparé

fry: frire
heat oven: préchauffer le four
heavy frying pan: poêle à frire à fond épais

honey: miel
jug: carafe
maple syrup: sirop d'érable
melt: faire fondre
melted: fondu

melted but cool: fondu mais refroidi
mix: mélanger
mixer: robot de cuisine
pastry: pâte

plain flour: farine
pour: verser
shallow: peu profond
shortcrust pastry: pâte sablée
sort of: quelque peu

sweet: sucré
teaspoon: petite cuillère
thick: épais
thin: fin
turn over: retourner