



French  *Cuisine*

MADE SIMPLE

THE SIMPLE FRENCH KITCHEN

HOW TO EAT LIKE A FRENCH
WITHOUT MOVING TO FRANCE

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Bonjour et Bienvenue (Welcome) !

I am an American mama who has been living in France with my Frenchie husband and two children for the last 14 years. Through the years, I have been blessed to learn the art of French cooking and I would love to share it with you!

In this book, I share my love for cooking and French culture with you all while adding a little "Oh la la" into your cooking. The recipes presented are tried and true, and much loved by both my French and American families!

Outside of my little kitchen, I love reading, hunting for mushrooms in our forests, and traveling around France and the world.

Merci beaucoup (thank you so much) for taking the time to learn about French food culture and I hope you enjoy this small piece of France from my kitchen to yours.

Bon Appétit and Á Bientôt!



Emilie Anne Le Blanc



Welcome to The Simple French Kitchen How to Eat Like a French, Without Moving to France, where we learn to gently let go of the idea that French cooking has to be complicated, time-consuming, or even remotely stressful.

This book is written to help build your confidence as a cook in the kitchen, with simple French recipes and ideas to add that extra “oh là là” into your kitchen. I want to make French cooking and French life accessible and enjoyable to everyone through this little book.



Ok, so let's get real. The French aren't standing over the stove for hours every day. Most of the time they are simply opening the fridge, pulling together a few good ingredients, and making something simple that just works.

No pressure, no perfection, just good food, and enjoyed often. Sound easy enough?

The Simple French Kitchen is your invitation and encouragement to do the same: to cook simply and to cook French.

You've got nothing to lose!

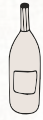
So let's stop overthinking meals and start trusting the idea that a warm piece of bread, a slice of good cheese, a fresh salad and an omelet can be more than enough for a yummy healthy lunch.

Let's take a breath, lower your expectations (just a little), and get ready to cook the French way: simple, delicious, and effortlessly satisfying!



Chapter 1 :

THE LAZY FRENCH COOK



WHY SIMPLICITY MATTERS

I have to be honest. Despite the stereotypical view on French cooking, most French homes do not put much effort into cooking.

Meals are often simple, repetitive, and based on what's already in the kitchen. The goal at meal time is to eat well without making it complicated.

The secret isn't in doing more, it's doing less, yet better. In trying just two to three of my simple French recipes a week, you will be well on your way to becoming a French cook!



WHAT A LAZY FRENCH COOK MEANS

Being a lazy French cook means keeping things simple:

1. Fewer steps: It means choosing simplicity, almost all the time. Instead of long, complicated recipes, rely on just a few ingredients that naturally taste good together. A ripe tomato, a drizzle of olive oil and balsamic vinegar, a touch of basil, and a pinch of salt. Nothing fancy, but everything works.
2. It also means letting go of the idea that every meal has to be new or impressive.
3. Repeat what you love, and build a small collection of easy, reliable meals and come back to them again and again.

LAZY, NO FUSS FRENCH RECIPES

French Tomato Salad, French Onion Pasta, French Sweet Pea Soup, French Detox Soup, Sweet Crêpes, French Chocolate Mousse



THE LAZY FRENCH COOK MINDSET SHIFT

Instead of asking, *“How can I make this impressive?”*
Ask, *“How can I make this easy and still delicious?”*

Repeat meals you love. Repeat what works. Don't aim for perfection.



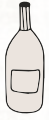
THE ART OF DOING LESS, WELL

Cooking “lazily” removes the pressure and makes daily meals easier to maintain. It's not about lowering standards, but being realistic.

When things stay simple, French cooking becomes something you can do easily and consistently.

Chapter 2 :

THE FRENCH GROCERY LIST



A STROLL THROUGH THE ESSENTIALS

Grocery shopping in France looks very different from the overloaded carts you might be used to. It's not about buying more; it's about buying better and smarter.

The French don't shop with long, complicated lists or stock up on everything "just in case." Instead, they keep it simple, intentional, and flexible, making everyday cooking feel so much easier.

This is where your French kitchen really begins, not at the stove, but at the store.



WHAT A FRENCH GROCERY LIST MEANS

The French grocery list is short, focused, and built around real food, but that doesn't mean it's limited. It simply includes staple and versatile ingredients you will use again and again.

After seeing this list, you may be thinking, "Hey! That's what I buy already?!" Well then, mon ami, you're on the right track!

Here's an example of a French-style grocery list:

FRESH PRODUCE:

- Garlic, onions, shallots
- Carrots, zucchini, eggplant
- Leeks, green beans, mushrooms
- Tomatoes (fresh and/or cherry)
- Potatoes
- Salad greens (lettuce, arugula)
- Seasonal vegetables

PROTEIN:

- Whole chicken or chicken pieces
- Fish (salmon, cod, or what's fresh)
- Lentils or beans
- Ground meat or a simple cut of beef from the butcher
- Ham or cured meats

FLAVOR BOOSTERS:

- Fresh herbs (parsley, thyme, rosemary, basil)
- Garlic and lemon (used constantly)
- Olives
- Local honey and homemade jam
- A bottle of wine (for cooking and enjoying)
- Chocolate (ok, this is really a soul booster!)

PANTRY STAPLES:

- Olive oil
- Vinegar (apple cider, balsamic)
- Dijon mustard
- Pasta
- Rice
- Flour
- Sugar
- Canned tomatoes
- Broth or bouillon
- Quality fresh bread

DAIRY & EGGS:

- Butter
- Eggs
- Milk
- Cream (for sauces or coffee)
- Yogurt (plain or lightly sweetened)

FRUITS :

- Fruits: Apples, pears, bananas
- Seasonal fruits
- Citrus (lemons, oranges)

CHEESE:

- Comté or Gruyère
- Camembert or Brie
- Strong blue cheese (Roquefort)
- Goat cheese
- Shredded cheese

With these ingredients, you can mix and match endlessly and make simple soups, roasted vegetables, omelets, salads, pasta dishes, or a fun crêpe dinner.

WHAT THE FRENCH AVOID

Just as important as what you buy, is what you don't buy. This doesn't mean that convenience can't be enjoyed, it just means it's chosen carefully, not by default.



A French grocery approach naturally avoids:

1. Overly processed or pre-packaged meals
2. Excess snacks and "just in case" items
3. Bulk buying (sorry Costco!)
4. Complicated specialty ingredients

SIMPLE STARTER RECIPES FOR YOUR FRENCH-GROCERY LIST.

French Garden Peas, French Chili, Quinoa Salad, Roasted French Potatoes, Nutty Nutella Cookies, French Asparagus, French Wild Berry Cake

THE FRENCH GROCERY MINDSET SHIFT

Instead of walking into the store thinking you need to "stock up," start thinking in terms of a few simple meals like the ones listed above.

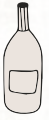
You're not shopping for every possibility, you're shopping for a handful of easy, flexible dishes you know you'll enjoy. That's enough.

STOCKING IT WITH CONFIDENCE

All you need are just a few good ingredients, some simple French recipes, and the confidence that you can make something delicious from there.

Chapter 3 :

SIMPLY FRENCH BREAKFASTS



THE SIMPLICITY OF FRENCH MORNINGS

Breakfast in France is simple, relaxed, and often surprisingly light, but always delicious. The French start their day with foods that are easy to prepare, satisfying, and full of flavor, without spending lots of time in the kitchen.

You don't need to make an elaborate spread or master fancy pastries to enjoy a French-style breakfast. With just a few staples, you can bring that effortless, morning charm into your own kitchen.



WHAT A FRENCH BREAKFAST MEANS

Common French breakfast staples include:

- **Fresh bread or a baguette** with butter or homemade jam or honey
- **Croissants or pain au chocolat** lightly warmed in the toaster
- **A piece of seasonal fruit**
- **Yogurt** with fresh fruit or a drizzle of honey
- **Coffee, tea or hot chocolate** often enjoyed slowly

The idea is to combine a few of these elements for a balanced and enjoyable meal. Even something as simple as a croissant with butter, good jelly and a cup of coffee can feel authentically French when savored.





SIMPLE STARTER FRENCH BREAKFASTS

French Breakfast Brownie, French Wild Berry Cake, French Apple Cake, Gourmet French Hot Chocolate, Gluten-free Almond bread, French Cinnamon bun Cake, French Cocoa Coffee Cake



THE BREAKFAST MINDSET SHIFT

Instead of thinking breakfast has to be buffet style, shift to:

"What simple foods can I enjoy that start my day off well?"

You don't need dozens of ingredients or complex recipes. Focus on a few fresh, high-quality items that you genuinely like. Rotate them throughout the week to keep things interesting without overcomplicating your morning.



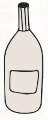
CARRYING CALM INTO YOUR MORNING

By keeping your morning routine minimal, using fresh ingredients, and enjoying each bite, you can start your day the French way: calm, satisfying, and effortlessly delightful.



Chapter 4 :

SIMPLY FRENCH LUNCHESES



RETHINKING THE MIDDAY MEAL

Lunch in France isn't about complicated dishes or long restaurant menus, it's about enjoying a satisfying, balanced meal without taking over your whole day.

French lunches are often simple, fresh, and quick, yet still feel a little special. They're designed to nourish, energize, and give you a moment to pause, without the stress of elaborate cooking.



WHAT FRENCH LUNCHESES MEANS

Simple French lunches are all about combining a few fresh, quality ingredients in ways that feel effortless.

A typical French-style lunch might include:

1. A fresh baguette or bread with a slice of cheese or ham
2. A salad with seasonal vegetables, olive oil, and balsamic
3. A simple protein like eggs, chicken, tuna, or lentils
4. A piece of fruit or yogurt for dessert

The charm comes from letting the ingredients shine and keeping it light, clean, and fresh. Even a basic omelet with herbs or plate can feel very French. The key is versatility: the same ingredients can be rearranged to create new combinations, so you never get bored.



SIMPLE STARTER FRENCH LUNCHES AND DESSERTS

Southwest French Frittata, French Foresty Frittata, Protein-rich Fresh Salad, Stuffed Tomato Farci, French Pizza Muffins, Coconut Cookie Balls

THE LUNCH MINDSET SHIFT

Think: *"What simple combination of good ingredients can I enjoy right now?"*

You just need a few basics such as bread, vegetables, protein, and something fresh for dessert. **This mindset takes the pressure off.**

Lunch becomes an opportunity to refresh, recharge, and enjoy a moment of simple pleasure in the middle of your day.

BRINGING BALANCE TO YOUR AFTERNOONS

With quality ingredients, simple combinations, and a bit of creativity, you can turn lunchtime into an easy, French, satisfying pleasure.



Chapter 5 :

SIMPLY FRENCH DINNERS



AS EVENING FALLS

Dinner in France is relaxed and satisfying, centered on simple, quick meals and made with fresh ingredients.

With just a few basics and easy techniques, you can create comforting, elegant dishes without spending hours in the kitchen.



WHAT FRENCH DINNERS MEAN

Simple French dinners are about combining versatility with flavor.

They often include:

1. A protein such as chicken, fish, eggs, or lentils
2. Seasonal vegetables, roasted, sautéed, or in a salad
3. A starch like potatoes, pasta, or rice
4. A simple sauce, cream, or drizzle of olive oil to elevate the dish
5. Bread and cheese, for a touch of tradition



Even a basic roasted chicken with vegetables or a simple pasta with fresh herbs can feel like a special French dinner.

Leftovers can often be reinvented into the next day's lunch, keeping things practical and stress-free.



SIMPLE STARTER FRENCH DINNERS & DESSERTS

French Chick Pea Feta Bake, Salty Crêpes, Roasted French Veggie Pasta, French Bread Pizza, The Ultimate French Brownie, French Strawberry Vanilla Cake



THE DINNER MINDSET SHIFT

Instead of thinking dinner has to be complicated, multi-step, or “worthy of a restaurant,” shift your perspective to:

"What simple combination of fresh ingredients can I enjoy tonight?"

You don't need perfection; you need flavor, balance, and enjoyment.



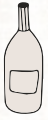
SAVORING THE NIGHT

Simple French dinners are about ease, quality, and enjoyment, not extravagance. With a few fresh ingredients and a relaxed mindset, you can create comforting, satisfying meals.

Dinner becomes less about stress and more about pleasure.

Chapter 6 :

FRENCH ENTERTAINING SIMPLIFIED



GATHERING AROUND THE TABLE

Entertaining the French way isn't about lavish spreads or always about complicated recipes. It's about the charm of the dish, good conversation, and enjoying food without stress. At home, French hosts focus on creating a relaxed, welcoming atmosphere where the food is simple, seasonal, and shared with friends or family.

You can easily bring this style into your own home. It's less about perfection and more about ease, flavor, and connection.



WHAT FRENCH ENTERTAINING MEAN



French entertaining relies on simple, flexible meals and thoughtful touches rather than formalities.

This entertaining flow of courses has now become second nature to me and effortless to do as I keep things simple but delicious.

French meals are often served in sequential courses, each with its own purpose.

Even a casual dinner usually follows this flow.

Typical elements of a meal with guests include:

1. APÉRITIF (APPETISER)

- This is a pre-meal drink and light nibble to start the evening
- Drinks: wine, champagne, kir (wine and fruit liqueur), a soft drink or fruit juice
- Snacks: olives, nuts, charcuterie, chips or small finger foods
- Purpose: to relax, socialize, and stimulate the appetite

2. ENTRÉE (STARTER)

- The first course of the meal
- Can be hot or cold: salads, soups, quiches, or pâté
- Usually light, to prepare for the main course

3. PLAT PRINCIPAL (MAIN COURSE)

- The centerpiece of the meal
- Often includes protein (meat, fish, or vegetarian option) plus vegetables and a starch (potatoes, rice, or pasta)
- Flavor is kept simple and elegant, relying on fresh, quality ingredients

4. FROMAGE (CHEESE) & BREAD

- Cheese is a classic French course served with bread
- A shared platter of 3-4 cheeses is shared
- Bread accompanies both the main course and cheese

5. DESSERT

- Sweet course to finish the meal
- Can range from fruit, yogurt, or tarts to crème brûlée or pastries
- Portions are usually moderate, focusing on flavor and presentation

6. CAFÉ / TEA

- The meal often ends with coffee or tea
- Sometimes accompanied by some chocolate or biscuits
- This signals the conclusion of the meal and allows for lingering conversation



SIMPLE STARTER DISHES FOR FRENCH ENTERTAINING

Blanquette de Veau, Cucumber Salad, French Roasted Carrots, Shrimp Croissants, French Raspberry Yogurt Cake, Triple Chocolate Brownie



THE ENTERTAINING MINDSET SHIFT

Instead of thinking: "I need a perfect, multi-course dinner to impress,"
shift to:

"How can I make this gathering relaxed, enjoyable, and full of flavor?"

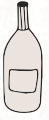


ENTERTAINING WITH EASE

French entertaining is about relaxed elegance and simplicity, focusing on a few well-chosen dishes, seasonal ingredients, and a welcoming atmosphere where good food and company make it memorable.

Chapter 7 :

SLOW LIVING & EATING THE FRENCH WAY



AN INVITATION TO SLOW LIVING

In France, meals are more than just fuel, they are moments to savor, connect, and slow down. Slow living is a way of life that embraces quality over quantity, presence over hurry, and enjoyment over rush. Applying this philosophy to your meals can transform how you cook, eat, and experience food.



WHAT SLOW LIVING MEANS

Slow living and eating are about taking time to enjoy the process and the people around the table. It means:

- Choosing fresh, seasonal ingredients and letting them shine.
- Cooking with intention, even if the recipe is simple.
- Eating without distractions: no phones, no rushing, just mindful enjoyment.
- Sharing meals with family or friends, making the experience social and joyful.

In France, this lifestyle shows up in everyday routines. Many people take 1.5–2 hour break in the afternoon for lunch and rest, a time when stores, bakeries, and even some offices close.

Meals are savored slowly, often accompanied by conversation, wine, or coffee. Even a simple lunch becomes a moment to pause and recharge.



SIMPLE FRENCH SLOW LIVING DISHES

Classic French Lentil Soup, French Green Beans, French Brussels-Bacon, Salad, French Fruit, Crumble French Style, Zucchini Bread



THE SLOW LIVING MINDSET SHIFT

The Slow Living Mindset Shift Instead of asking, "How quickly can I get dinner on the table?" "How can I enjoy this meal, the flavors, and the moment?"

Slow eating lets you savor flavors and appreciate ingredients while creating space for connection.



A LIFE WELL SAVORED

Slow living and eating is a mindset that turns meals into moments of joy, relaxation, and connection, without needing elaborate recipes or a perfect setting. By slowing down and savoring each bite, even simple meals feel richer, more satisfying, and distinctly French, letting both body and mind recharge.

CONCLUSION : EMBRACING THE SIMPLE FRENCH KITCHEN

This book has taken you on a journey through the heart of French home cooking, showing that the charm of French cuisine isn't in complexity.

With these principles, anyone can cook, eat, and live a little more like the French: with joy, ease, and delicious simplicity.

MY CHALLENGE FOR YOU!



In all that was learned, you have seen that having a *Simple French Kitchen*, is quite, well, simple. The best way to start is by choosing your recipes and planning your grocery list. I challenge you to:

CHOOSE TWO NEW FRENCH RECIPES TO TRY A WEEK.

Building a repertoire of simple French recipes helps with meal planning, as well as brings the joy of being able to look forward to a delicious meal, dessert or side dish. So, get out a pen and paper and click over to [French Cuisine Made Simple](#) and see whets your appetite.

BON APPÉTIT !

Emilia LeBeau

*“This is my invariable advice to people:
Learn how to cook, try new recipes,
learn from your mistakes, be fearless,
and above all have fun!”*

Julia Child

Let keep French cooking together!

I hope you've enjoyed these simple French living tips and recipes. If you want more easy, delicious meals, come sign up for a free French cooking email at my website French Cuisine Made Simple.

WWW.FRENCHCUISINEMADESIMPLE.COM

You'll get new recipes and inspiration delivered straight to your inbox. Remember, cooking should always be joyful and stress-free!

WANT MORE?

Follow me on social media. For more inspiration, tips, and behind-the-scenes fun and French life.

I'd also love to see your French cooking creations so tag me at **@FrenchCuisineMadeSimple** and be part of our growing family of home cooks bringing a little French “oh là là” into the kitchen.

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