

À Table: A Political History of French Cuisine

by

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Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to discuss the ongoing evolution of French cuisine from the seventeenth to the twenty-first century, which often parallels with events in France's political history. Each chapter analyzes the cuisine's digressions to its advancements. The first chapter explores how François Pierre La Varenne defines French cuisine and began to popularize the term, "haute cuisine," the importance of guilds, and the unequal distribution of food between classes as France catapulted into a revolution. The second chapter discusses the major events of the subsequent two centuries and the contributions of two iconic chefs and codifiers, Marie-Antoine Carême and Georges Auguste Escoffier, as well as the impact of the World Wars on culinary traditions. Finally, the third chapter concentrates on health and dietary issues, partly due to "malbouffe," the integration of fast food eateries in France, and how "McDonaldization" affects France. Concluding remarks include an analysis of future trends and possible solutions that may reverse negative trends.

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Introduction

European cuisine during the Middle Ages remained homogenous in France until around the seventeenth century. During this time period, there is no clear definition to French cuisine.

During the Middle Ages, high nobles held feasts in order to show off their wealth. At these feasts, peasants who were invited to them sat on benches while the nobles ate at special tables, each one provided with an individual chair (Wheaton 3). The cooks prepared food with a focus on quantity over quality. The diners responded to a dish based on its visual appeal in regards to the colors of the dish, instead of how it tasted.

Due to the limited amount of technology and knowledge people had during the medieval period in regard to food, the food was often inedible, even toxic. People often died of diseases transmitted by inedible meat, produce that had been tainted, and contaminated water (Wheaton 16-7). The consumer was not fully aware on how edible meat was supposed to look like. "Meats were displayed for sale hanging outside shops, exposed to dust and flies, and game was customarily scarce and often contaminated" (Wheaton 17). Kitchen utensils that were not properly sanitized or used correctly also transmitted disease. During the medieval time period, many kitchens used tinned copper utensils. In order to use these utensils correctly though, cooks were warned that the lining should be in good condition or else poisoning would occur (Wheaton 17). Since some cooks did not follow proper procedure, diners were poisoned.

The use of heavy seasonings, use of bright colors and the addition of multiple flavors in a dish define medieval cuisine. "Aromatic and pungently flavored herbs were highly regarded" (Wheaton 15). Some of these spices and herbs included saffron, mints,

ginger, mustard, cardamom, coriander, scallions, and chives, all considered to be heavily flavored seasonings (Wheaton 15). The dish had to look appealing by being bright. “Visual effects were as important to the medieval diner as flavor—or more... Vivid colors were highly prized and were often achieved at the expense of flavor” (Wheaton 15). At this time, a dish did not have to taste great in order to be great.

One of the first texts that influenced French cuisine during the Middle Ages originated with Guillaume Tirel, also known as Taillevent. Tirel was a “*maître-queux*” (known today as a chef de cuisine or a master cook), who created one of the earliest recipe collections, a handwritten manuscript, during this period (Trubek 4). This collection of recipes is a representation of European types of cooking, not specifically French. His masterpiece, *Le Viandier*, was written in the early fourteenth century for Charles V, whom he provided his services to as a professional chef. Like most works of this type, his intended audience was the nobility. *Le Viandier* consisted of recipes that included a variety of ingredients that would not have been served to peasants because of how expensive they were. His work includes an “array of recipes for a wide variety of game, fish, and fowl, seasoned with plenty of spices” (Truman 5). His manuscript is indeed intended for chefs who worked for the upper class.

The flavors, styles, and types of cooking methods were similar to the ones found in Italy and Spain. Supposedly, French cooking derived from Italian influences, especially from the cooks of Cathérine de Medici (1519-1589), the future Florentine bride of Henry II. According to experts of French cuisine, Barbara K. Wheaton and Stephen Mennell, this theory is largely unreliable due to its lack of evidence.

From Barbara K. Wheaton's book, *Savoring the Past*, she states that the theory in which Medici's cooks "refined" French cuisine is largely incorrect for two reasons.

French haute cuisine did not appear until a century later and then showed little Italian influence; and there is no evidence that Catherine's cooks had any impact on French cooking in the early sixteenth century. Indeed, French sixteenth-century cooking was very conservative and in general continued the medieval traditions. (Wheaton 43)

For these two reasons, there is no proof that Medici's cooks had an impact on French cuisine. There is simply no proof that French cooking notably improved during the time she reigned in France.

This thesis focuses on certain time periods in French cuisine beginning from the seventeenth century to important contemporary events. Certain events have parallels concerning political history and issues of social status of its time. Starting with the seventeenth and eighteenth century, the first chapter analyzes important culinary events and political figures. These political figures are briefly mentioned as this thesis favors more toward French culinary figures.

There are many influential contributors to French cuisine, such as Grimod de la Reynière (writer for *Almanach des Gourmands*, "*Almanac for Gourmands*"), François Vatel (chef de cuisine for Nicolas Fouquet and Louis II, who committed suicide over a missing shipment of fish for a banquet, even though it arrived shortly after his demise), Jean-Anthelme Brillat Savarin (writer of *The Physiology of Taste*), to only name a few. This thesis focuses on arguably the three most pivotal figures of French cuisine: François Pierre La Varenne, Marie-Antoine Carême, and Georges Auguste Escoffier.

The first few paragraphs of the primary chapter talk about François Pierre La Varenne's (1615-1678) contributions to French cuisine, specifically on how he first defines "haute cuisine." Stephen Mennell, writer of *All Manners of Food: Eating and Taste in England and France from the Middle Ages to the Present*, describes exactly how La Varenne contributes to French culinary identity through his talents:

Indisputable literary evidence of the emergence of a distinctively French style of cooking is not found until the publication in 1651 of La Varenne's *Le Cuisinier François*, the cookery book which is generally accepted as first showing both a clear break with medieval food and the recognizable beginnings of the modern cuisine. Not only La Varenne's food but the format of his book set patterns for later development. (71)

Since he is the first chef to establish an identity for French cuisine by the seventeenth century, Varenne is the first chef to be mentioned. His contributions to French cuisine, specifically his methods and choice of ingredients, are analyzed as well.

In the following paragraphs, emerging styles of "haute cuisine" are considered. Haute cuisine, as mentioned by many authors, is a type of "high level" cooking first implemented by French chefs to the aristocracy such as La Varenne and Escoffier. These types of dishes are elaborately prepared and served in numerous courses. Due to the cost and elaborate nature of each dish, only the higher nobility could afford this type of cuisine. Even though certain authors (Mennell and Wheaton) will mention other terms such as "classical," "grande" or "fine" cuisine in the citations, these terms will remain as they are also used to define haute cuisine. Haute cuisine started to take shape by the

seventeenth century, but was still evolving during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries at the hands of Carême and Escoffier.

I also analyze the importance of guilds. “French guilds primarily controlled the labor force via an apprenticeship system and maintained standards of quality” (Trubek 34). These guilds, though, were abolished in 1791, two years before the French Revolution (Fitzsimmons 1), even though others may argue a different date, such as Barbara K. Wheaton, writer of *Savoring the Past*. How the guilds helped produce more quality items and how they helped the populace are examined as well. A discussion of how and why they were abolished after the Revolution follow.

Individuals like Carême and Escoffier made culinary impacts on French cuisine, as did major events like the French Revolution. King Louis XVI (1754-1793) did not make the most rational or popular decisions during his reign in France. His decision to raise taxes and hoard grain in order to trade with foreign nations led his citizens to starve and then, rebel against him. Eventually, the populace learned of the King’s grain reserves and, taxed to the hilt, revolted. Bread, or the lack thereof, incited a revolution.

To the surprise of most French citizens, the Revolution sparked culinary achievement. In order for chefs to survive during the Revolution, they had to cater to other types of people since most of the nobles they served were either fleeing the country or being sent to the guillotine. Their new diners came from the lower classes who, before the French Revolution, did not have the money to hire a chef who could cater to their needs. These chefs found new audiences, which then led to more creativity and the creation of more restaurants as well. Also, in the absence of a king, citizens decided to

change their dietary habits, the majority of whom had followed strict rules as Roman Catholics.

Marie-Antoine “Antonin” Carême (1784 -1833), abandoned as a young child during the Revolution, also led France to a new culinary modernization was. To survive, he found work in restaurants and bakeries. His talents also landed him a job with Charles Talleyrand, another grand chef, with whom he broadened his experience. He also had the opportunity to work with other talented cooks and cater to exclusive clients (Czar Alexander I and Prince Regent for example) (Mennell 145).

Carême further established his reputation as a codifier. His streamlining of recipes led to modern nineteenth-century updates that included new technology, such as the temperature controlled ovens invented by American inventor Benjamin Thompson (Mennell 147-8). To Mennell, “no previous work had so comprehensively codified the field nor established its dominance as a point of reference for the whole profession in the way that Carême’s did” (149). Exactly how he simplified his recipes are explained in the second chapter. His “pieces montées” (centerpieces), are mentioned. Nonetheless, with Carême’s culinary codifications to French recipes, remains a constant evolution in cooking and its technologies.

Georges Auguste Escoffier (1846-1935), chef and famous hotelier, made further contributions in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Escoffier first gained experience by working with his uncle at one of his restaurants. His reputation then earned him a position at more exclusive hotels such as Hotel Ritz. His most famous work, *Guide Culinaire* (1903), is one of his most noteworthy works that shows culinary progress within the French tradition. Principally, Escoffier was trying to further

streamline Carême's recipes and show the progressions and differences in flavors from the nineteenth into the twentieth century. Escoffier also contributes to advances in kitchen organization. Escoffier modified his service to cater to the new modern nineteenth century customer who now lived in a time when every minute of the day counted.

Along with the developments these two codifiers made, there are also two events that influenced France's culinary identity: World War I (1914-1918) and World War II (1939-1945). Both wars are mentioned in this thesis. In World War I, some of the most exclusive items, such as certain alcohol and milk products, were not consistently produced. As most of the country's resources had to be used for war, French citizens were forced to ration their items to more equally divide any supplies left for the citizens.

World War II had a lasting negative impact on French cuisine. France provided many resources to the German army. I examine the black markets and the new dietary regulations to which French citizens were exposed. The reflections of Stanley Karnow, an American journalist recognized for his works based on the aftermaths of war in both Vietnam and Paris and writer of *Paris in the Fifties*, are also considered. This final part of the second chapter then leads to the last chapter concerning the twenty-first century.

The third chapter mentions contemporary changes, such as the new eating and dietary habits as well as the new type of food taking over France. Also, I address two of France's beloved products, cheese and wine. The new trend leaves less time to eat and prepare food at home. Instead, people are being led to eating "malbouffe." "Malbouffe," in simpler terms, is junk food (Taylor 52), anything from a fast food restaurant, or any frozen items.

Other reports, such as from Gira Conseil (a food consultancy agency), and health information, from Francis Delpeuch, for example, co-author of *Globesity: A Planet Out of Control?*, are utilized in order to show the health and weight trends among the French. Some of these reports are added in order to discuss the dietary habits of the younger generation. Also, the actions that some food activists and government officials are taking against fast food restaurants, like those of Jean-Marie Le Guen and José Bové, are considered.

It is important to mention how José Bové, who led a protest against McDonald's in Millau, France in 1999, convinces McDonald's to improve their marketing campaign. Instead of abandoning their fast food eateries in France, because of one protest, McDonald's ultimate decision is to make its product more "French," meaning, more organic and fresh. Now, France stands in second place, behind the United States, with regard to the number of McDonald's franchises. Further explanation of how they implement their new marketing campaign is mentioned, as well as the current "McDonaldization" trend.

"McDonaldization" is a theory that the principles of Max Weber help elucidate. George Ritzer elaborates by claiming that other companies, such as Starbucks and Walmart, manifest similar characteristics to McDonald's industrial organization. The term, McDonaldization, is not something exclusive to McDonald's; it is also used in reference to other fast food corporations. The five main themes of Weber's socialization: efficiency, calculability, predictability, increased control, and the replacement of human by non-human technology are defined and explained in reference to the McDonaldization phenomenon that is taking over France's culinary habits.

Chapter I: The Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century

Common consensus indicates that, during the earlier part of the seventeenth century, France maintained the same medieval cooking methods while neighboring cultures improved on their cuisines. It was not until the mid-seventeenth century that a chef decided to change that. The first chef who placed France on the culinary map was François Pierre La Varenne. It was his own style of “haute cuisine” that revolutionized the definition of “la cuisine française.” At the time, French cuisine was not clearly defined. Haute cuisine simply espoused the idea of using the freshest ingredients possible while allowing the simplicity of those ingredients to dominate. Another transformation that accompanied the French Revolution also altered the culinary structure of France. This related to the dissolving of the guilds and the creation of new dishes for a different consumer centered on the lower classes, such as the peasants and the workers. This chapter addresses how the famous chef trendsetter, François Pierre La Varenne, transformed French cuisine.

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, some traces of medieval techniques and styles still asserted themselves in French cuisine. The principal chefs had not yet codified their cuisine, having little to no previous documentation to help them. However, in the mid-seventeenth century, France did indeed become one of the leading culinary examples with the help of one specific chef. This chef proved to be exceptional by succeeding in providing a clear definition for French cuisine, distinguishing it from other European fare. Were it not for his “traités,” his cookbooks, especially *Le Cuisinier François*, the notion of French cuisine would mostly likely have remained elusive. The

works of François Pierre La Varenne provided strong evidence that France was heading towards a more modern and particular style of cooking.

François Pierre La Varenne, a well-known French chef who gained most of his popularity by preparing banquets for the nobles, had a line of successful cookbooks including *Le Patissier François* (*The French Baker*), and *Le Cuisinier François* (*The French Chef*), sometimes known as *Le “Vrai” (True) Cuisinier François*, published in 1651. According to Esther B. Aresty, author of *The Exquisite Table*, many cookbooks from other European countries had already been published, but the French started out much later in publishing their own brands. La Varenne’s cookbook was the first to gain much attention and thus became a guide for most French chefs and culinary enthusiasts. Aresty states that this cookbook was intended for a specific audience, professional chefs, not commoners and wives during the century. La Varenne did not consider them as his potential audience members because he knew that most of the food specialties for the lower classes consisted of bread and watery dishes with spices, known commonly as soup or “potage” (Mennell 63).

La Varenne was the first chef to successfully publish a cookbook about French cuisine that clearly pointed out its distinguishing characteristics. One of the main reasons this book attained so much popularity was because this French cookbook “gave the cuisine form. La Varenne’s cuisine was most decidedly not Italian, English, or German. It was at once apparent that French cuisine was lighter and more delicate than others. But like all cuisines at the time, it was fairly simple, bound by cooking methods that had scarcely changed since medieval days” (Aresty xii). As Aresty states, La

Varenne was able to show his own creative dishes by also representing France's culinary tastes. Another critic, Stephen Mennell, author of *All Manners of Food*, also noted,

Indisputable literary evidence of the emergence of a distinctively French style of cooking is not found until the publication of 1651 of La Varenne's *Le Cuisinier François*, the cookery book which is generally accepted as first showing both a clear break with medieval food and the recognizable beginnings of the modern French cuisine. Not only La Varenne's food but the format of his book set patterns for later development. (71)

Aresty and Mennell both agree that La Varenne's work evolved to a pivotal point in French cuisine, but both agree that La Varenne still chose to cook some of his recipes in a medieval way. "Nevertheless, one should not exaggerate the suddenness or completeness of La Varenne's break with the past. Medieval survivals can be found...in the spices used, and in the mixture of ingredients strange to modern palates" (Mennell 72). Even if La Varenne still stuck with certain medieval techniques in his recipes, there is still evidence of how he shows the evolution of the cuisine. His cookbook, *Le Cuisinier François*, highlights the transformation of French cuisine and its unique style. In the next paragraphs, I will explain how he defines it.

First of all, La Varenne differentiates his own work from previous endeavors by a new variety of cooking methods. La Varenne advised his readers that it is better to "cook [dishes] just long enough" (Aresty 8), meaning that he, as a French chef, had already noted and distinguished a difference in flavor between properly cooked dishes and overcooked foods. One Italian chef, Bartolomeo Scappi, still advocated overcooking

methods (Aresty 8). This served as further proof of how the French palate was advancing.

La Varenne proved himself exceptional as well in his organization of recipes, as well as carving out separate sections for stocks and sauces. As noted by Mennell, “The book begins with tables of foods in season throughout the year” (71). La Varenne demonstrates that he wanted to categorize his recipes by seasons, unlike other cookbooks, in which recipes appear with no clear organization. “There are lists of what is in season at different times of the year and what dishes are appropriate for each course of a meal” (Wheaton 116). This helped in discerning what kinds of dishes a person should serve for each season, and became a book that also helped people know which fruits and vegetables were in season.

His different kinds of sauces are also divided between meat and fish stocks. “He used just two basic stocks, one for most meat-day dishes and one principal fish stock for fast days” (Wheaton 116). La Varenne had to make clear the separation of these two types of stocks because he knew that the majority of his audience would be French, meaning they would also be Roman Catholic. This separation of recipes becomes further evidence of how La Varenne clearly identifies and breaks away from other types of cuisine, showing the country’s religious ideologies.

His organization of French pastries also became recognizable. His masterpiece, *Le Pâtissier François*, is a prime example of how La Varenne was able to cultivate a dessert book, something chefs had not yet developed. “It is essentially a collection of pastry and egg recipes, beginning with some useful introductory remarks about procedures and, most unusually, definitions of weights and measures” (Wheaton 120).

His book implemented exact measurements of how the ingredients should be measured when baking. During the Middle Ages, only a list of ingredients were given in a recipe. The directions and mentioning of exact measurements in baking were two things never listed in other texts. To this day, most of his recipes are still used and considered as examples of fine French cuisine. One example is his recipe of the modern ladyfinger (in his book he calls it a “biscuit à la cuillère”). “It is made with sugar, flour, and eggs (but no butter) and spiced with anise or coriander” (Wheaton 120). His French version though is made from a shortbread mixture instead of the light, airy texture the Italian version has. Another example is his recipe of pastry shells. They are small dessert shells used to serve bite-sized appetizers that still, are used today. The recipe Aresty cites from La Varenne’s book includes sugar, shortening, baking powder, and extracts in exact measurements (Aresty 195). Even though some modifications have been made by chefs that followed, his recipes still hold strong influence in French pastries.

La Varenne’s popularity among the bourgeois made *Le Cuisinier François* a best-seller. He catered to many important French politicians and higher elites. Those elites hired chefs from reputable guilds that were known to be very skilled and dedicated to their work. At the time, a chef could only be popular by serving the nobility, which is the major reason he catered to the bourgeois. Other changes, unnoticed by La Varenne, were developing through the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The innovative changes that were occurring during these two centuries introduced a new style of cooking sometimes referred to as “haute cuisine,” or, in occasion, “classical” or “fine” cuisine. It is necessary to point out that other chefs, not just La Varenne, further defined this type of cuisine. “French haute cuisine developed in the

seventeenth century in the large kitchens of the aristocracy and subsequently was chiefly practiced in the kitchens of wealthy houses, in restaurants and clubs, and on ocean liners” (Wheaton 95). Even though haute cuisine developed in the seventeenth century, it became popular during the French Revolution when more chefs were able to develop and modify it for larger audiences. Changes made to French cuisine include: the amounts of food served to the diners, and the types and amounts of ingredients and seasonings allowed in the dishes. The amount of food set on the table was the first and most noteworthy change. In medieval times, mountains of food greeted guests. Most of the food that was served, however, took the form of huge pieces of overcooked meat that modern food consumers would have considered inedible. Portions also became smaller as well.

Throughout the centuries, though, the amount of meat dishes served to French consumers changed drastically from the sixteenth to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. One such example is the “roast” dish. According to Jean-Louis Flandrin, author of *Arranging the Meal: A History of Table Service in France*, the amount of “rôts” decreased. He uses this term from another source in order to describe this type of meat: “*The Dictionnaire de Trévoux* defines them [roasts] as ‘meat roasted on a spit,’ served ‘at the midpoint of the meal’” (4). This type of cooking method was often used for cooking meats in France. “By the sixteenth century...the number of roasts had expanded, with some menus listing three, four, or even six of them—an average of more than two per meal. But this multiplication of roasts was no more than a passing trend: in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, only one roast course remained in both meat-day and meatless meals” (78). As Flandrin notes, French citizens were tired of this kind of

meat and cooking style. Now, they desired for more types of flavors. This is further evidence in how the French evolved and modified their palates throughout the centuries.

The reduction of sugar use in all types of food became an additional major culinary revolution that occurred in French cuisine. In *Le Cuisinier François*, La Varenne includes sugar in his various meat, appetizer and soup recipes as well. Adding sugar, it was thought, added flavor to the dish, but this changed later in the eighteenth century. Unfortunately, a high sugar tax during the seventeenth and eighteenth century prompted bourgeois chefs to exclude sugar for economic reasons (Aresty 147). According to Flandrin, “Starting in the seventeenth century, ...some foods could be seasoned only with salt, and others only with sugar. Furthermore, sweetened dishes increasingly gravitated toward the last two courses of the meal” (80).

From the sixteenth to the seventeenth century, there is evidence by Flandrin that there was a decrease in the number of French recipes that contain sugar. Further proof of the decreased amounts of sugar in French recipes are shown below (see figure 1.1). Flandrin’s research, based on the sample of fifteen books containing French recipes from the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries, shows an increase of sugared recipes from the fifteenth to the sixteenth century by nine percent (Flandrin 80). By the seventeenth century, sugared recipes plummeted back down to only fifteen percent overall. As a result of the continuous reduction of unsugared recipes, only five percent of recipes contained sugar by the eighteenth century.

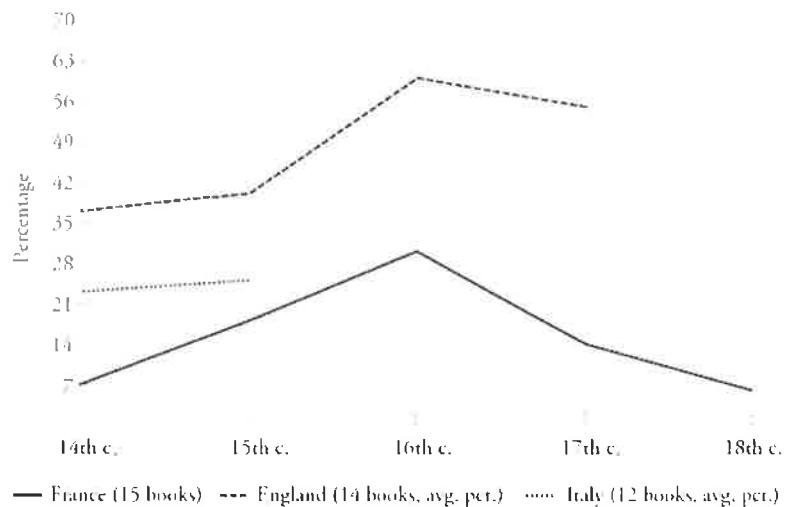


Fig. 1: Estimated Percentages for Sugared Recipes in French Cookbooks: 14th: 7%, 15th: 14%, 16th: 30%, 17th: 14%, 18th: 5%. Graph by Jean Louis Flandrin, from *Arranging the Meal: A History of Table Service in France* (Berkeley: U of California, 2007. 81. Print).

Another observation by Flandrin indicates a reduction of sweetened meat and fish dishes found in French cookbooks that were written during the five past centuries, “Although the proportion of recipes containing sugar was on the increase until the sixteenth century, the percentage of sugared meat and fish reached its peak in the fifteenth century” (80). Flandrin’s graph below shows that the biggest increase in the amount of sugar happens in the fifteenth century. However, by the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, sugared meat and fish recipes decrease again (81). The sharpest decrease in the use of sugar appears from the sixteenth to the seventeenth century. The amount of sugar dropped from thirty-two percent in the seventeenth century to nine percent in both meat and fish dishes by the turn of the eighteenth century. More rapidly, sugared fish becomes the least popular than sugared meat overtime.

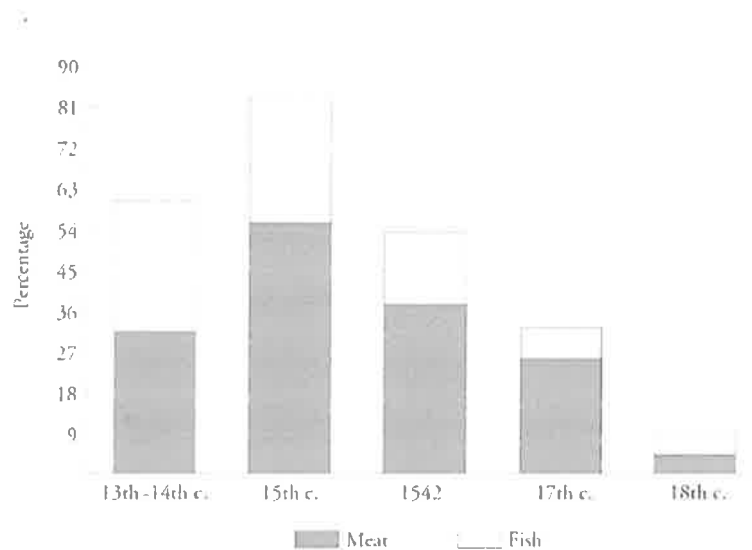


Fig. 2: Estimated Percentages for Both Meat and Fish Recipes Containing Sugar for Each Time Period: 13th-14th: 59%, 15th: 83%, 1542: 53%, 17th: 31.5%, 18th: 9%. Graph by Jean Louis Flandrin, from *Arranging the Meal: A History of Table Service in France* (Berkeley: U of California, 2007. 85. Print).

The other category of dishes that have been reducing in its amounts of sugar are soups. Sugary soups were no longer a common part of the French gustatory tastes by the seventeenth century. From the thirteenth to fifteenth century, twenty-seven percent of soup recipes contained sugar (see figure 1.3). By the seventeenth century, around fifteen percent of sugary soups remained. Finally, in the eighteenth century, 10.8 percent of soups still contained a great amount of sugar.

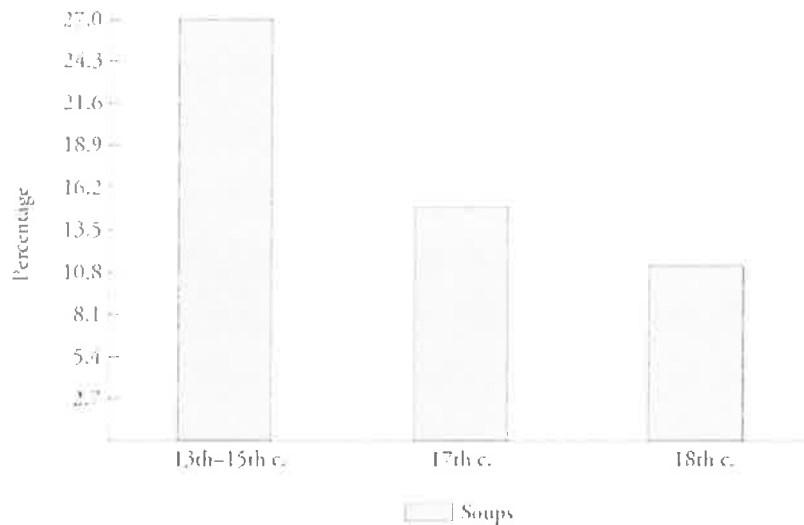


Fig. 3: Estimated Percentages for Sugary Soups: 13th-15th: 27.0%, 17th: 14.85%, 18th: 10.8%. Graph by Jean Louis Flandrin, from *Arranging the Meal: A History of Table Service in France* (Berkeley: U of California, 2007. 85. Print).

By reducing the amount of sugar in savory dishes, sweet and savory became more distinct categories. According to Flandrin, the separation of these two types of dishes came about in the seventeenth century, first, because people wanted simpler flavor combinations. People wanted sweet with sweet, and savory flavors combined with other similar flavors.

Since the French were also developing their palates and wanted to move on from a medieval-style cuisine, the use of spices in most dishes changed. As Mennell states, “There was also a gradual trend away from the use of the old strongly flavored exotic spices, and an increase reliance on common herbs, especially parsley and thyme,” (73). The use of fewer spices in foods meant that diners did not want to taste over-spiced pieces of meat. The public wanted simpler dishes in which one could actually taste the ingredients. Using herbs and other “greener” spices also indicated the evolution of lighter seasonings. These new tastes for lighter flavors, concentrated on the ingredients,

not on the seasonings of a dish, formed a fundamental part of what makes haute cuisine. People were developing different tastes. As Mennell puts it, “the prefaces to these books [from bourgeoisie chefs] show clearly for the first time that people were conscious of changes taking place in culinary taste” (73).

Another culinary change appears in the order and the amount of dishes served at the dinner table, beginning with the soup dish. In the sixteenth century, the soup was served after the entree, but during the early years of the eighteenth century, the order shifts. Flandrin states that the desserts now came last. He also states that “from the seventeenth century to at least the end of the nineteenth century and even the early twentieth, the sequence of dishes was rearranged so that the sweet ones were always eaten after the savory” (80). Even though these changes start in the seventeenth century, the order of which dish came first was a slow evolution. These types of rules and orders were first initiated by bourgeois chefs working for the guilds.

Before the French Revolution, the chefs answered to guilds. These guilds, in Amy B. Trubek’s terms, contributor to the book *Haute Cuisine*, are considered to be “the primary ‘corporate’ organization of the victualing trades in both France and England until the nineteenth century, and from the earliest days of such organization, training, quality and control of the productive process were important” (34). Anyone who wanted to become a chef was required to join a guild in order to receive help, and gain experience. As importantly, the guilds then served as a sort of health department. Wheaton cites one example of how guilds protected the general public; “a pastry cook who was found to be selling unwholesome food—meat, for example, that had been kept for three days and was declared to be corrupt and stinking—had to pay a substantial fine, and the offending

article was publicly burned in front of his shop” (Wheaton 72). Guilds ensured that only high quality goods were being sold to the public. Only those who were truly good at their jobs received a mastership.

Masterships granted a chef prestige, especially in Paris. “By limiting the number of masterships, the guild statutes assured a monopoly to those who held them” (Wheaton 72). The rarity of the title allowed masters to set remarkably high fees for their services. But, the guilds existed, first and foremost, to ensure public safety. A chef had to go through a guild first in order to sell any type of food item at an establishment. Anyone who did not follow the strict rules or tried to profit without first consulting these guilds, faced confiscation of all of his products, putting him out of business. The guilds also monitored unregulated food pricing. “Regulations forbade the sale of meat pies for less than four deniers apiece because it was not possible to make them for less except by using tainted meat, and these cheap pies were bought by the poor and by children who got sick” (Wheaton 72). In the eyes of the guild, inexpensive products could not possibly be “quality” products. Management on price regulation was often done by the guilds based on a belief of unnecessary and unrequired market competition.

The guilds were also led through a theory called the “zero-sum society.” This theory involves an economic belief that the total amount of wealth was “finite” (Wheaton 72), meaning that wealth was to be distributed equally among between the local vendors, none having the opportunity to make more money than others. It was believed that if one person had more wealth than the rest, another person might end up with nothing. Although this ensured every guild worker received an equal share of the monetary gains, most of the time these same guilds held back many chefs from being

more creative and resourceful with their products. The only way a chef could have succeeded and become more relevant was by working for elite society.

Even though guilds had been a part of regulating French commerce for various centuries, they were abolished in 1791 due to political unrest, two years before the French Revolution in which organized labor, a tradition in place for centuries, was destroyed (Fitzsimmons 1). For centuries, the French National Assembly has been trying to restore the guilds back to France. Michael P. Fitzsimmons debated the idea and initiated an open debate about the matter in his book, *From Artisan to Worker: Guilds, the French State, and the Organization of Labor, 1776-1821*. Based on the perspectives many of his colleagues had mentioned from Auburn University, at Montgomery, Alabama, the Industrial Era had indeed destroyed any possible notion to reestablish the guild system due to the need of mass producing certain goods, even those produced by French cooks (255-6).

The French Revolution was one of the most important historical events, changing France not only politically, but also culinarily. The famine that had been afflicting citizens all over France during the French Revolution culminated in a pivotal moment in French history, owing to all of the political and social injustices. The first event that instigated the Revolution was the attack on the Bastille Prison on July 14, 1789 which only led to more fueled attacks and high death tolls. Many people thought French cuisine was something that would be forgotten. Instead, French cuisine grew stronger. Its king at the time, Louis XVI (French king during the Revolution), known to have reserved for himself most of the nation's grain, had strained relations with his subjects.

The lower classes became the new types of customers to which chefs were catering. Changes in societal views began taking place after the French Revolution. In the hunt against the bourgeoisie and other members of elite society, the peasants and workers were making indiscriminate arrests in order to send them to the guillotine in the name of political justice. Since most of the chefs at that time were working for the nobility, most of them decided to flee and return at a safer time, while others could not. The ones who stayed decided to use their culinary skills to save themselves from death. Some of the higher class chefs decided to serve a new type of customer, the lower class peasant.

The startlingly high price of bread, served as another catalyst. King Louis XVI made it difficult for French citizens to afford bread. For the French citizens, “‘Bread was considered a public service necessary to keep the people from rioting,’ Civitello writes. ‘Bakers, therefore, were public servants, so the police controlled all aspects of bread production’” (Bramen). Lisa Bramen, writer for the Smithsonian and the article, When Food Changed History: The French Revolution, quoted from Linda Civitello, writer of *Cuisine and Culture: A History of Food and People*. At that time, bread was one of the few food items available and the food that citizens most enjoyed eating. Bread also became an integral part of French tradition and a symbol of national identity (Bramen). Whatever the cost, the French needed bread.

The kings of France caused the cost of wheat to increase tremendously. None of the French kings really wanted to help its citizens. They instead wanted to make a profit off of wheat. French kings increased the price of bread numerous times throughout the eighteenth century. One such example involves King Louis XV (1710-1774). In 1752,

“France’s Louis XV orders that grain surpluses be stored as a reserve against famine, but government grain buying drives up bread prices. Thousands of Frenchmen are reduced to starvation and suspicions arise that Louis is making millions of francs in profit from grain speculations” (Trager 161). King Louis XV hoarded grain, exacerbating the problem of famine. Most French citizens protested against the king and one unknown person placed a sign showing his displeasure towards his majesty in Paris stating, “Under Henry IV bread was sometimes expensive because of war and France had a king; under Louis XIV it sometimes went up because of war and sometimes because of famine and France had a king; now there is no war and no famine and the cost of bread still goes up and France has no king because the king is a grain merchant” (Trager 168). This hostility towards the king also contributed to the French Revolution.

Famine and the high price of bread became a vicious cycle. In *Hunger and History* by E. Parmalee Prentice, “in France the lack of food, following the short crops of 1788, was one of the moving causes of the great Revolution of 1789,” (9). Another account on the correlation between wheat and bread prices by Lisa Bramen, states, “According to Sylvia Neely's *A Concise History of the French Revolution*, the average [eighteenth] century worker spent half his daily wage on bread. But when the grain crops failed two years in a row, in 1788 and 1789, the price of bread shot up to eighty-eight percent of his wages,” (Bramen). Having very low supplies of wheat caused bread prices to soar and people to revolt against their government that was supposed to be providing them with at least the basic necessities needed for survival.

Not only did they revolt against their government, they also revolted against the bakers who were selling them the bread. One account of that time indicates that a baker

was replacing wheat with chalk, “Some of the bakers who have little conscience (and we have found many such) put in lime or ground earth or chalk. Sometimes they fill the flour with tares and bran,” (Prentice 102-3). This blatant health hazard aggravated already appalling health conditions. This also led many citizens to believe that their own government, since bakers were also considered to be government officials, wanted to poison them. Trager notes another known famine in 1788, when wheat prices increased in France due to drought (183). Not only did the people think their government was willfully poisoning them, they also thought officials were shipping their wheat off to foreign countries. Citizens no longer believed and instead feared their own government. “Louis XVI’s Swiss-born finance minister Jacques Necker, 55, suspends grain exports. He requires that all grain be sold in the open market once again to allay suspicions that the endless lines of heavy carts seen to be carrying grain and flour are bound for ports to be shipped abroad” (Trager 183). With all the suspicion, no one believed the government. Trager notes that no one dared to bring their wheat to sell at the markets lest the king took it away from them. This led to no one selling and more people starving. Finally, the French people could not take any more from the king. On June 20, 1789, widespread rioting triggered rumors that the nobility and the clergy were planning to collect all of their grain in order to ship it overseas (Trager 184). Supposedly, all of the wheat was to be collected in order to distribute it equally. This led to a nationwide panic and the first to pay were the nobility and clergy themselves.

The consumption of meat increased as the population abandoned their religious convictions. It is worth mentioning that due to King Louis XVI’s religion being Roman Catholicism, many people were against him and were planning to abandon their faith.

Instead, the church decided to modernize their beliefs and allow people to eat meat on Fridays and Saturdays because before 1789, the Catholic Church had banned it (Flandrin 90). During the French Revolution though, most people could not afford to buy meat and instead stole it during the turmoil. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the consumption of red meat began to increase because religious beliefs no longer held them back from eating whatever they desired. Meat consumption, though, still gained more consumers slowly; it was not an instant process.

Even though there had been some slow increases in the amounts of red meat consumed, there were also some increases in fish consumption after 1789. Jean Louis Flandrin gives his input on what he discovered in the various menus from certain time periods.

I stated that from the sixteenth century until the Revolution, I found no fish on any menu except meatless ones, because Charles IX had issued an edict against eating meat and fish in the same meal. But the number of fish recipes for meat days in cookbooks—especially in the eighteenth century—raises doubts that this prohibition was strictly observed up to 1789. (Flandrin 91)

Because of his own preferences, Charles IX (1550-1574) prohibited the consumption of fish, a decision the populace reversed after their revolt. This decision became altered due to the Revolution and any negative ideologies they had towards their king and towards his religion. As Flandrin also states, fish integrated itself back to French cuisine as a regular food item (91). It no longer became prohibited to consume fish.

The better off a person was financially and politically, the more luxuries and basic necessities he could afford, such as food. Before the Revolution, the unequal distribution

of food was staggering. The higher social classes received more, while the lower classes had the leftovers. Experimental cooking became the new trend among the bourgeoisie, but the peasantry could not afford this luxury due to food scarcity. Mennell observes:

Differences in social standing were coming to be expressed not just through differences in the quantity or variety of food served at the tables of different strata, but more subtly through styles of cooking and serving. There was food to be emulated and food to be disdained. Food had become, in sociological jargon, a vehicle for anticipatory socialization on the one hand, and for the expression of social distance on the other. (75)

The bourgeoisie often asked for new recipes and styles of preparation, such as the exclusive use of a spice that is in fashion that would differentiate them as the elite. Time and time again, the bourgeoisie considered themselves as the priority, ignoring the fact that one day, the lower classes would rebel and take over, bringing mortal consequences.

With heavy death tolls in the Revolution, there are still some positive aspects the French Revolution brought to the cuisine. As Mennell states,

The Revolution is a culinary landmark because of the transformation which it permitted or precipitated in the cooking profession and its theatre of operations.

The age of the great French restaurants is usually reckoned to date from the Revolution, and their emergence proved an immense stimulus to still more rapid development of elaborate, refined and luxurious food. (134)

Since chefs had to find new customers in order to earn a living, their conclusive public was the lower class. The lower classes gave chefs the opportunity to open their own establishments, which then became known as restaurants, and instead cater to larger

audiences. Most chefs only served the higher elites because they were the only groups that could afford to buy a wide variety of ingredients, and the ones who could afford their services as well. “French food was either familiar or commonplace to any but a well-to-do minority” (Mennell 135). French cuisine no longer belonged exclusively to the bourgeoisie, it belonged to any French citizen.

Chefs did not have to cater exclusively to the nobility in order to gain popularity. Public opinion also became relevant as well. The chefs no longer catered to a single customer. They could now cater to more masses that could order different kinds of dishes. The bourgeois may have asked for something new once in a while, but were often held back to cooking with specific directions and techniques. This, too, did not lead chefs the opportunity to cater to people with different gustatory tastes. “The first great chefs of the post-Revolutionary era developed an even more elaborate cuisine out of the courtly food which had already established its prestige as a model to be emulated (Mennell 141). Chefs became more creative and no longer relied on a single perspective, but on several. This made for a development of more transformations that chefs led on could continue on through the next two centuries.

Chapter II: The Nineteenth and Twentieth Century

Another important chef who helped transform French cuisine was Marie-Antoine “Antonin” Carême, born in 1784. Either abandoned or orphaned during the French Revolution, he had to find ways to provide for himself. He chose a culinary path, thanks to the upbringing of Talleyrand, another important culinary figure of the eighteenth century. After the Revolution, Marie-Antoine Carême had the opportunity to showcase his creations due to the newfound respect the public had for its chefs. Although to some chefs, he was seen as a show-off even though they respected his culinary works and creativity. Carême had the opportunity to cook for many members of the French nobility, and important political figures like Prince Regent and Czar Alexander I, as well as for Parisian high society.

Even though Carême is a well-known chef, he became the first French codifier, a person who organizes and rewrites recipes in a certain order or style, often alphabetically in order to keep up with current culinary styles and methods. Carême updated and modified outdated versions of recipes into current methods in order to facilitate preparation. In Amy B. Trubek’s book, *Haute Cuisine*, she shows how Carême was able to transform medieval cuisine and give his own modern update. “His second edition of *Le Cuisinier Parisien*, or *L’Art de la Cuisine Française au Dix-Neuvième Siècle* compares menus and recipes of the ‘cuisine ancienne’ and the ‘cuisine modern’ to show the ‘vast superiority’ of the ‘cuisine modern’ because of its ‘simplicity, elegance, and sumptuousness” (Trubek 7). Thanks to his work in simplifying French recipes, chefs were allowed to continue cooking outdated recipes in their updated versions. Future chefs would also find it easier to duplicate his simplified recipes. “Carême was

considered by many subsequent professional chefs to be a great culinary artist who began to simplify the vestiges of medieval pageantry in the courtly haute cuisine” (Trubek 7-8). Even though the nobility was the group that most recognized Carême’s achievements, others were impressed as well.

Among his many successes are his “pieces montées,” marvelous centerpieces Carême usually used in order to decorate his tables. These displays were placed in the middle for everyone to admire. His masterpieces were inspired by architectural designs from the various places he saw in the countryside or in Paris (Lang 194). Most of his centerpieces were usually showcased for his guests of honor whenever he catered an exclusive event. He always wanted to show off his talents, especially to the nobles that had hired him. “It was a column of the most ingenious confectionery architecture, on which my name was inscribed in spun sugar” (Aresty 93), states Lady Morgan, one of the many nobles he was able to impress. He thought it was important to have something beautiful at the center of the table at every meal he served. This distinguished him well from other chefs as well. Today, most dinner tables include a centerpiece. Unlike his edible centerpieces, however, the modern centerpiece of today usually takes the form of a vase with bright flowers.

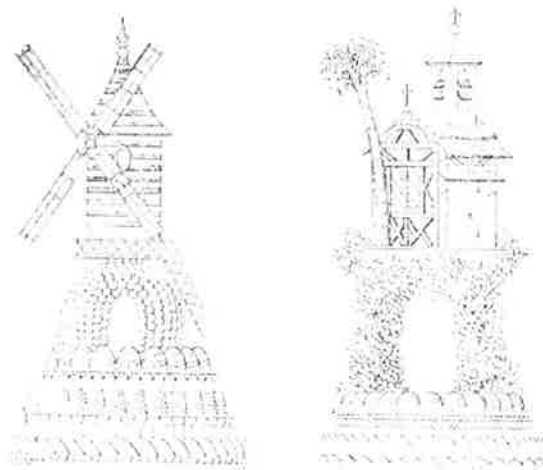


Fig. 4: Carême's designs for his confectionary works that showcase his artistic talent.

Drawing by Marie-Antoine Carême in his first book, *Le Pâtissier Royal Parisien*, 1815.

Used by Esther B. Aresty in *The Exquisite Table: A History of French Cuisine*.

(Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1980. 93. Print).

Even though Carême loved to show off with his “pieces montées,” his recipes utilized simple ingredients with elaborate preparations. Stephen Mennell defines his style as this:

Yet Carême's work...represents at one and the same time an advance in complication and movement towards simplification. The complication is the more obvious, but the simplification is there too. It consists in a codification of procedures, the elimination of the merely redundant, and in the pursuit of ideal blends of flavours rather than the harsh juxtaposition of contrasts. (147)

To Mennell, Carême did not care about how much an ingredient costed. All he cared to know was how to use it in a simple manner. An example of how Carême simplified his recipes was by using the same ingredients he started with in order to complement the dish, such as meat, fish, and even other foods one may not have considered, such as sweetbreads and cockscombs. (Mennell 147)

The “mother” sauces, “les sauces mères,” were essential to the development of Carême's recipes. He believed that by adding the right sauce to meat, poultry, or fish, the dish would taste even better. His three base sauces were: the espagnole, a classic brown sauce made from meat stock and vegetables such as carrots, onions, celery, and tomatoes; the velouté sauce, a white, creamy sauce made with chicken or fish stock, butter and

milk, and finally the béchamel sauce in which milk, flour, and butter are added, that can be also used to make macaroni and cheese.

The preparation of each of these [espagnole, velouté, and béchamel] fonds, though complicated by modern standards, represented considerable simplification of earlier practice. Each would be prepared in large quantities in the professional kitchen in the age of Carême and then used, with the addition of numerous other flavourings, as bases for a whole range of ‘compound’ sauces for particular dishes. (Mennell 147)

These mother sauces were later compounded in order to provide numerous flavor options. According to Mennell, Carême ended up making more than one hundred types of sauces (147). These sauces though usually differed by the addition or removal of one ingredient. They would later be used by twentieth and twenty-first century chefs, most notably by one chef named Georges Auguste Escoffier.

Escoffier led France to a new path with his many innovations and modifications to French cuisine. He is one of the principle chefs that elevated French cuisine at the beginning of the twentieth century by adapting haute cuisine and also by adhering to a higher and professional code of conduct in his kitchens. He started out by working with his uncle at a famous restaurant (Lang 421). He made important contributions to the French Army during World War I by providing food for the soldiers at his hotel. Escoffier also provided the culinary world with his own codification of Carême’s and other chefs’ recipes from the twentieth century. Due to Escoffier’s rising fame, as well as the allure his hotels displayed such as the Hotel Ritz, he managed to implement

restaurants that would provide faster and more reliable service with more glamour as well.

Escoffier first innovated the French kitchen by developing different organizational methods that Carême did not have the opportunity to change. Since Escoffier learned most of his trade in hotels, he learned to work mostly in fast-paced environments, leading him to publish a book called *Guide Culinaire*, a sort of bible for French chefs. This “bible” led to the development of many different types of kitchen stations used today. French food critic Michael Steinberger elaborates on how Escoffier changed the restaurant kitchen. “Until this point, kitchen stations essentially functioned as autonomous fiefdoms; each station was responsible for certain dishes and there was generally little interaction between stations...Escoffier kept the stations in place, but instead of assigning them specific preparations, he divided them by specific functions” (20). This new order was necessary for Escoffier’s businesses.

Escoffier first divided his kitchens into independent sections, with each chef already given a specific set of instructions to follow. This division of labor endures today with the dessert/pastry chef, the entrée chef, etc.

Escoffier organized his kitchen into five interdependent parties, each responsible not so much for a type of dish as for a type of operation. The parties were those of the garde-manger, responsible for cold dishes and supplies for the whole kitchen; the entremettier, for soups, vegetables and desserts; the rôtiisseur, for roasts, grilled and fried dishes; the saucier who made sauces, and the pâtissier who made pastry for the whole kitchen. (Mennell 159)

Thanks to this division, roles were better defined and teamwork was encouraged in order to keep up with demand. This new order of kitchen organization was necessary for Escoffier in order to be able to thrive in the hotel business his restaurants needed. This also resulted in speedier service than fast-casual, and fast food restaurants started implementing in their own restaurants. Instead of a dish taking an hour to prepare, with every chef's help, the dish now took less than half the time. His clients, though, still demanded faster service at their tables.

As efficient as he was in organizing his cooking stations, he also needed to apply time management in his kitchens. As he said himself, "We must carry culinary simplicity to its outer borders...The hectic times we live in demand it" (Aresty 187). He now had to cater for people who were accustomed to a faster pace of life, no longer taking the time to sit down patiently to wait for a half-day long meal.

The speedier service required by a less-leisured clientele, arriving perhaps after the theatre and expecting their supper served promptly within minutes of ordering. Long gone were the days when it was common to order one's meal at a restaurant early in the day or the day before. Escoffier was very conscious of the social changes which were necessitating changes in the style of cookery as well as service." (Mennell 159)

Noticing the faster pace to modern life, it was his duty in providing the best quality service he could offer to his clients. This new pace though would get much faster in the next century as well. It was not something that could be ignored, instead, it was something that required constant modifications to keep up with the times.

Acknowledging his popularity and efficiency in managing his hotels, Escoffier also proved himself a culinary leader by building connections with other chefs and hotel owners at an international level. Escoffier did not find out until later on that he had influenced other future hoteliers to develop more elegant hotels that provide great service to their customers. Mennell states:

This was a new age when the great international hotels sprang up. Escoffier was one of the central figures—others who may be especially mentioned include his friends and collaborators Philéas Gilbert, Prosper Montagné, and Prosper Salles—in a network of influence connecting the kitchens of leading hotels and restaurants in all the major cities of the Western world. (157)

Escoffier knew that by gaining more connections in the culinary and hotelier world, these networks would gain him more access to new innovations. To keep up with faster demand, he also simplified the food he served at his establishments.

Thanks to Carême's codifications of French recipes, Escoffier was able to perfect them further, making them more common and popular among other professional cooks. Even though Carême integrated details and instructions into his recipes, Escoffier thought it was too much for modern chefs. New renovations were necessary. "In philosophy and method Escoffier was closer to La Varenne than to Carême. He stripped away many of the excesses that had grown out of the Carême school" (Aresty 187). Escoffier was aiming for speed and simplicity, while Carême did not have to worry about time constraints and so, the directions that were included in his recipes had to be simplified again. For Escoffier, there were too many details with which to work. Most people were no longer enjoying a dish simply because of how time-consuming and

elaborate it was. Many in the twentieth century and today are eating food as a necessary task. People still want to enjoy a good dish every so often, but more efficiently.

Even with the many culinary advances Escoffier and Carême brought to the French table, the world wars brought many setbacks as well. World War I, also known as the Great War, did have some consequences for French cuisine, but not as many as World War II brought. I will first explain what consequences World War I brought to France, followed by a discussion the enduring effects World War II brought, especially in Paris.

World War I was the first global war centered in Europe. It began on July 28, 1914 and ended in November 11, 1918 affecting thirty million soldiers. The catalyst that initiated this war was the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand a month before the war started. France, along with the British Empire, the United States and Italy as the “Big Four,” joined the Allied Powers and won. Unfortunately, some sacrifices had to be made so France could help out in the war and win. Such factors included the reduction and further production of certain goods.

The reduction and outlaw of certain items had a distressing effect in France. Due to the justification that alcohol was needed for gunpowder production, certain alcoholic beverages were outlawed in 1915 due to the volume of alcohol they required for manufacture (Trager 412). Trager also notes that certain types of alcohol were halted for ten years in order for France to recover. In 1916, France gained more control over milk products such as butter and cheese, oil cakes, and wheat prices. Unfortunately, more restraints on French goods continued on after the war including a ban on the manufacture and sale of all confectionery items. The increase of wheat prices soared to thirty-three francs per two-hundred twenty pounds. Even with the price increases and outlawing of

certain goods, France still had to find ways to be economical and ensure all of their soldiers were being fed properly.

To ensure that supplies were equally divided between French soldiers, the French Army decided to take the United States' advice by creating ration packs for their soldiers. These ration packs included "a three hundred gram can of boiled beef, three hundred grams of hard biscuits, called 'war bread,' eighty grams of sugar, thirty-six grams of coffee, 50 grams of dried soup, two ounces of liquor and one-hundred twenty five grams of chocolate as a treat, according to author Silvano Serventi in his book *La cuisine des tranches*" (Landauro).

Most of the soldiers were accustomed to eating fresh food, but the new types of packaging such as canned goods, were new technologies the French decided to get accustomed to. The reason why canned goods became popular in France was due to how economical they were, and how they helped foods last longer (Landauro). This type of new technology became more popular that even French citizens were eluded to having this new discovery to themselves. So, in order for corporations to make money, they decided to sell this new product to consumers. "Industrialists with new factories producing the packaged food were all eager to sell their products to the general public so they launched ad campaigns after the war" (Landauro). With canned goods becoming more popular in France, French citizens decided to find more types of technologies that helped conserve their goods. Other industrial products also made their way into French markets.

In order to preserve food items while retaining their freshness, citizens decided to adopt more types of technologies that could help preserve their foods. "Industrially

produced food such as stock cubes and pasta, which weren't that common before the war, became more widespread as the development of industry made manufactured goods cheaper and people became accustomed to eating packaged food" (Landauro). Since people still had to ration their food items and wanted to preserve them in case of severe food shortages, they thought that resorting to these technologies would benefit them in the long run since they were also considered to be economical as well.

World War II, though, became a depraving time for France. On September 1, 1939, Hitler first invaded Poland, marking the beginning of a new world war. A few months later, Nazi Germany invaded France, which brought grievous consequences. Once France was saved by the Allied Powers, they joined in September along with the British Empire, Russia, Greece, and the United States. After the war finished and treaties were signed, it took many years for France to recover.

The black markets in Paris proved essential for French citizens to make fair trades. Dr. Cynthia D. Bertelsen, writer of French cooking, calls this system of trading, "le système D," or "débrouillage, in English meaning, "resourcefulness." "The change encouraged the French to form new networks that they might not have ever attempted prior to the war, for social and class reasons. People with money generally fared better than those without, but people with ties to the countryside survived well, too, even without money, because their country cousins often sent them food packages" (Bertelsen). This new way of trading goods led to many more networks and ways to communicate to outside France.

These black markets evaded government intervention at all costs, especially from Nazi Germany. The Germans that invaded France saw the opportunity to get a hold of

French goods, known to all as the best in the world. According to Bertelsen, “The Germans requisitioned food not only for troops, but also for their civilian populations. Rations were much higher in Germany than in France.” In a table found from Dr. Bertelsen’s research, she finds the following results. As the results below show, German citizens, although not by much, were allotted a higher caloric diet rather than French citizens who themselves in past centuries had enjoyed the many delicacies their cuisine offered.

Table 1

Food Rations Between German and French Citizens (February 1941)

	Germany	France
Food Items	Daily Consumption Intake (in grams)	
Bread (daily allotment)	340	300
Meat (weekly allotment)	500	360
Fats/oil (weekly allotment)	270	100
Sugar (monthly allotment)	1,200-1500	500

Source: Bertelsen, Cynthia D. "Rationing and the Black Market in Nazi-Occupied France: Some Thoughts." *Cynthia D Bertelsens Gherkins Tomatoes*. WordPress, 22 Feb. 2012. Web. 20 Mar. 2016.

Due to a better trading of goods for the local farmers in France, black markets thrived. In Bertelsen’s research, goods were better off sold in black markets than in the official channels due to really low selling prices. If a producer was caught engaging in black market negotiations, he or she faced many fines and penalties (Bertelsen). The table below reflects price differences between official and black market pricing of goods:

Table 2

Food Pricing During World War II

Food	Official Price	Black Market Price
Beef for roasting (kg)	72.00 F	150 – 250 F
Milk (liter)	4.60 F	12–30 F
Butter (kg)	78.00 F*	450–600 F
Eggs (piece)	3.60 F	8-10 F
Cooking oil (liter)	50.00 F	1000 F
Charcoal for cooking (kg)	46.00 F	500–1300 F

- a. Note: F represents francs, the currency used in France during World War II.

Source: Bertelsen, Cynthia D. "Rationing and the Black Market in Nazi-Occupied France: Some Thoughts." *Cynthia D Bertelsens Gherkins Tomatoes*. WordPress, 22 Feb. 2012. Web. 20 Mar. 2016.

It was advantageous for farmers to sell their goods on the black market rather than to sell them to the government, from which they garnered barely any profit.

The first main reason France no longer had the same amount of supplies than before the war was due to the Allied Invasion of North Africa in 1942, in which France was cut off from any supplies coming from the colonies and trading partners they already had (Bertelsen). The after effects of World War II were grievous throughout France. The Allied invasion stripped France of its supplies, just as the German forces had done. In order for German forces to provide for their soldiers during the war, they dried up all of the food supplies and other resources needed for the army in every country they

occupied, including France. In his work, *Paris in the Fifties*, Stanley Karnow explains the effect the war had on France. His book is a firsthand account of what was happening in France in the wake of the war. It reflects his views on France's living conditions after the Liberation. "Bread and other food staples are rationed, and consumers pay premium prices to obtain more than their allotted rations" (500). Rationings still occurred, and it would still take many years for France to recover.

Stanley Karnow, an American journalist recognized for his works based on the aftermaths of war in both Vietnam and Paris and writer of *Paris in the Fifties*, talks about Paris after its liberation from Germany with the help of the U.S. Army. After its Liberation, Parisians were still struggling with most of their incomes going to food. Other necessities became secondary.

Severe food shortages crippled Parisians during the German occupation and they were still suffering when I arrived in France two years after the Liberation. Milk, butter, bread and other staples were rationed... They skimmed on clothing and entertainment, and with rents tightly controlled, spent a major percentage of their income on food." (Karnow 103)

The memory of spending more on food than on anything else still remains a part of French identity because in France, food is very much appreciated. Karnow also states that in order for French citizens to eat well, they had to get resources from the black market and parcels from other family members as well (Karnow 103). Also, French people do not mind spending more money for quality food. While Karnow was out getting groceries for himself at one of the local stores in Paris, he notices the situation most French citizens were facing at the time. "Such essentials as milk, bread, butter, cheese and eggs were rationed,

and even foreigners like me had to queue up with citizens at the ‘mairie’ of their arrondissement to be issued coupons by functionaries” (Karnow 7). French citizens at that time still had to wait in long lines in order to get rations of the supplies they needed. These items were largely unavailable to French citizens, so the need for black markets became necessary.

As for the many digressions French cooking faced, it did not really change throughout the twentieth century, except in its order and reduction in the amount of dishes. According to Flandrin, “throughout this period, the soup, hors d’oeuvres, and entrées were always served at the beginning of the meal, roasts and vegetables in the middle, the salad next, and the cheeses and desserts at the end” (106). Even though the order of the dishes served changed slightly, the number served to its connoisseurs still declined. The first example is an event in 1902 by the Association of Editors and the second in 1978 with Valéry Giscard d’Estaing, a prominent politician. The first event, serving ten dishes, took place at the beginning of the century while the second one, at the end of the twentieth century, only served six dishes. “Ten dishes—not counting coffee and liqueurs—appear in the 1902 menu, compared to only six in 1978. The two soups in 1902 could have been replaced by just one, but all of the other dishes were still requisite” (Flandrin 106).

Chapter III: The Twenty-first Century

With the many significant changes France has gone through, elements of its cuisine have remained relatively unchanged, even though two of France's chief products, cheese and wine, are declining in importance in French cuisine. It is identified, though, less with stay-at-home meals and more with fast food, also called "malbouffe." Junk food and fast-food restaurants, largely due to an acceptance of globalization, are also negatively affecting the French. One of the first people to speak on behalf of this issue was José Bové, a French food activist who, at the beginning, garnered a lot of media attention, but at the end was unable to fight against "McDonaldization" in French culture. "McDonaldization" is still affecting France today.

Two of the main products that are an important part in French daily life are cheese and wine. In France, around three hundred varieties of cheese are produced. Recently, cheese products in France have taken heavy declines in the amounts being produced and sold. Steinberger interviews entrepreneurial cheesemakers about one of its most famous cheeses, the "Camembert." Camembert is a soft, creamy, ripened cheese like Brie. According to Steinberger, the first reason there is a decline of Camembert is due to its regulation that cheese products cannot be produced with "lait cru," or raw milk, and needs to be pasteurized (Steinberger 121). To master cheesemakers in France, "Pasteurization denuded the flavor of cheese. Pasteurization involves heating freshly drawn milk in order to kill any viruses, bacteria, or other microorganisms—the same microorganisms that are believed to impart character and complexity to cheeses [including Camembert]" (Steinberger 121). Cheesemakers believe that these cheeses need good types of bacteria that can help transform cheese into excellent cheese. "Lait

cru Camembert now accounted for less than ten percent of the Camembert produced in France” (Steinberger 122). These types of natural cheeses are now being threatened due to their quality because cheesemakers are no longer permitted to sell them in their true, natural state. Unfortunately, since pasteurization destroys most of the bacteria needed to produce the cheese, cheesemakers decided to instead use “thermalization.”

Thermalization is a gentler way to heat milk in order to remove a few of the microorganisms, less than the process of pasteurization. This though still did not meet with the requirements of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration since they still believed it was produced with raw milk (Steinberger 122). The European Union, however, believes that thermalization does produce pasteurized cheese and can be sold for consumption. Forbidding the sale of Camembert in the United States made France lose many potential customers. These customers could be beneficial in order for Camembert, as well as other types of French cheeses, to thrive. This cheese though has changed in taste since the nineteenth century as writer of *Accounting for Taste: The Triumph of French Cuisine* Priscilla P. Ferguson states, due to the changing tastes.

We do not really know what Camembert tasted like forty years ago, much less this cheese as it first appeared in the Paris market at the end of the nineteenth century; and in the unlikely event that we resurrected a nineteenth-century Camembert, we would be tasting with twenty-first century palates formed by a modern range of sensory experiences, which, willy-nilly, includes Big Macs and cheese made with pasteurized milk. The tradition-in-the-making over the nineteenth century, the integrity and the individuality that it both assumed and promoted, turns out to be exceedingly vulnerable. (149)

Is it the consumer who no longer cares about the quality of cheese or is it simply the idea that Camembert is now being updated in order for modern palates to enjoy?

Another product that is declining in quality and consummation is wine. “Per capita wine consumption in France had dropped by an astonishing fifty percent since the late 1960’s and was continuing to tumble” (Steinberger 8-9). These percentages from 2008 show that there is less importance to wine. Wine is becoming an old fashioned trend that is most likely going to be replaced with some other alcoholic beverage. Wine is an exclusive product in France. With more modern technologies, French winemakers have more global competition. “A sharp, decades-long decline in domestic wine consumption, combined with the emergence of robust competition from abroad, had led to a collapse in prices at the lower end of the French wine market” (Steinberger 140). These factors resulted in unemployment among, leaving them with heavy amounts of debt. The Appellation d’Origine Contrôlée (Controlled Label of Origin) premium wine that did not sell well in France was instead converted into ethanol. The only types of French wines that were still able to remain on wine shelves were the ones that already attained global recognition, such as the Château Pétrus, “one of Bordeaux’s most illustrious states” (Steinberger 141). France did not see that global markets were now wanting to compete in the wine markets and instead thought that customers would still remain loyal to their products because they were French. Unfortunately, this did not go as thought. The wine shop owner of Caves Augé, Marc Sibard, agrees that French winemakers did not think of producing more quality wines because it was thought that the French wine already sold to markets was already good enough (Steinberger 147).

This type of thinking left French winemakers in terms of global marketing, by still entrusting their wines are best instead of finding more alternative ways to produce wine.

Due to the decreasing number of people that often eat at home, there has been an increase in the amount of fast food consumers. The new generation of consumers no longer have time to eat at home properly and often feel rushed nowadays. Steinberger states that “the average meal in France now sped by in thirty-eight minutes, down from eight-eight minutes a quarter-century earlier” (Steinberger 9). Not having enough time to eat well has less consumers worrying about eating properly as well. Francis Delpeuch, collaborator of the book, *Globesity: A Planet Out of Control?*, investigates eating trends in Europe. “A pan EU [European Union] study of attitudes to food reported that lack of time was a major influence on food choice due to such irregular working hours or a busy lifestyle” (39). Most European citizens, including the French, heat something in the microwave rather than prepare a proper meal due to the lack of time. Even during lunch breaks, French people do not get enough time to eat properly.

French people are now eating more frequently at fast-food franchises instead of eating at cafés and other “sit-down” restaurants. According to Gira Conseil, a food consultancy firm, fast-food chains account for fifty-four percent of all restaurants in France (Guttman). “The number of cafes in France has dropped from more than 200,000 after World War II to just 32,000 today, according to estimates from Gira Conseil” (Guttman). These startling facts only mean that while fast food restaurants are gaining more popularity, the number of traditional restaurants and specialized eateries has plummeted. Critic Michael Steinberger agrees with this statement. He has interviewed many chefs in France who say they were scared of losing their establishments due to

sharp customer decline. The upscale restaurants were spending more money to keep their restaurants open and only increasing their debts. Steinberger also believes it is more profitable to open a fast food chain rather than try to open a restaurant, resulting in faster openings of fast food franchises serving “malbouffe.”

“Malbouffe” is a common French term meaning “junk food” (bad food). This term is also used to define fast food such as food from the most famous fast-food franchise, McDonald’s. Ben Taylor, contributor to, *French Cultural Debates*, gives his perspective on when the definition was added officially to one of the most famous French dictionaries, the *Larousse*. “The term la malbouffe was included in *Le Petit Larousse* for the first time in the 2001 edition, endorsing the word’s currency as an expression of anxiety about the quality of certain types of contemporary food” (52). When the French added the word to the dictionary, they gave it importance and recognized it as a reality in French life. By the end of the twentieth century and towards the beginning of the twenty-first, “malbouffe” has lately become the current food trend. The younger French generation loves the term, but not their elders. The French consumers most adversely affected by “malbouffe” are children, teenagers, and young adults.

With current social trends, there is no time to sit down, chat and eat. For the younger generation, it is easier to pick up a sack of chips than to cook a wholesome meal. Time and money are the two main reasons. In a generation where one is counting every minute of his or her day, food is given less thought and importance. It is no longer leisurely to eat at a table; it has now become a task. Amy Guttman, journalist for NPR, talked to insurer Malakoff Mederic, who did a study in 2011 about food times for French employees.

The French lunch hour has collapsed from eighty minutes back in 1975 to just twenty-two minutes... That, in turn, has hurt business at traditional cafes, where offerings—like the typical thirteen euro (\$15) multicourse lunch—are still geared toward leisurely eating habits that are, increasingly, a relic of the past. (Guttman)

Less time to enjoy lunch also meant having to make some sacrifices, like settling for fast food in order to save some time.

Another factor time affects eating habits are that people break from healthier dietary habits and eat whatever is more immediately available. According to the National Programme for Nutrition and Health, a health organization in France, they compiled some research in order to find out the current food trends among its citizens. Its report in 2011 revealed that “fifty-seven percent of people in their sixties and seventies knew that one should eat five portions of fruits and vegetables [per day], one in four French citizens aged sixty-one to seventy-five actually manage to fill their daily quota” (Tömkvist). In the same report examined by Ann Tömkvist, journalist of *The Local: French Edition*, focusing on the younger generation, between the ages of twelve and thirty, “as many as seventy-one percent said they were aware of the guideline, but only six percent actually managed to fill their plates up with the right amounts of fruits and vegetables.” In its results on fish consumption, respondents did not fare so well either:

About eighty-two percent of the older generation knew what was recommended for fish consumption, while sixty-nine percent of the younger generation were aware of this guideline. The French are recommended to have two portions of fish in their weekly diet, and sixty percent of seniors implement that advice. Only

thirty-eight percent, however, of those aged between twelve and thirty did the same. (Tömkvist)

These statistics indicate a positive trend among the younger French generation. The older generation scored better in healthier food intake in those two areas. The young only surpassed their elders in the consumption of dairy products, but not by much. The average young person consumed 2.32 portions of dairy products such as milk, cheese, or yoghurt (Tömkvist). The older generation averaged only 2.14 portions. As the results show, the differences are insignificant. The second factor that also affects consumers in France is money. The other types of younger consumers affected health wise are children.

Children are indeed being the most affected by unhealthy, fast food consumerism. Overweight and obese children have doubled from fifteen to thirty percent in only a decade from 1995 to 2005 (Delpeuch 12). The graph below shows a list of the top European countries, from a selected group, the estimated percentages of children, ages seven to eleven, who are either obese or overweight. Based on the statistics, around twenty percent of children in France are obese or overweight. These results come from the International Obesity Task Force's research.

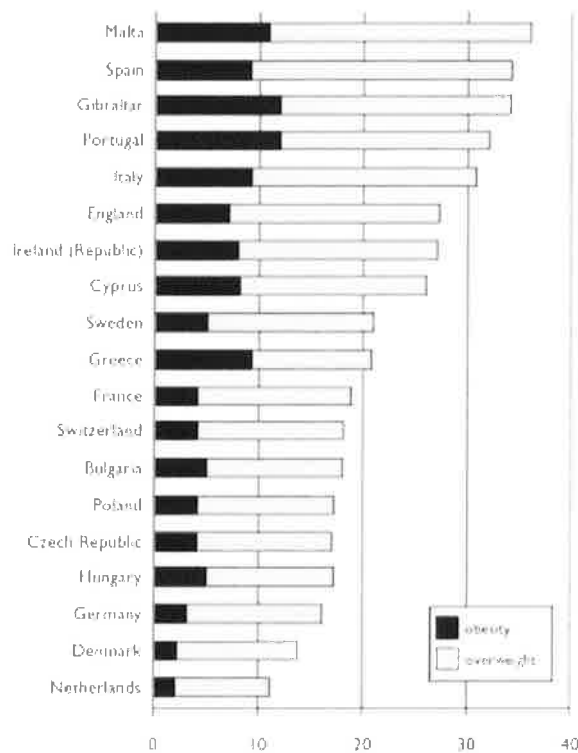


Fig. 5: Estimated percentages of children aged seven to eleven obese or overweight for selected European countries. Research conducted by IOTF (2005). Figure located in *Globesity: A Planet Out of Control?* by Francis Delpeuch. (London: Earthscan, 2009. 13. Print).

As demonstrated in the graph, France sits in the middle, neither showing that it is doing better nor worse than the other countries. Unfortunately, these results only reflect estimates from 2005. According to Delpeuch, these findings do not bode well for France. “Any remaining differences between the lifestyles of French and American youngsters seem to be vanishing fast, in a one-way direction” (Delpeuch 13).

More recent and future health statistics from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) now shows that the percentages of overweight or obese children will keep increasing. The OECD is an organization made up of countries

with democratic market economies that promote economic growth, wealth, and promote sustainability (“U.S. Department of State”). Both percentages show that there will be bigger increases of obese or overweight boys than of girls.

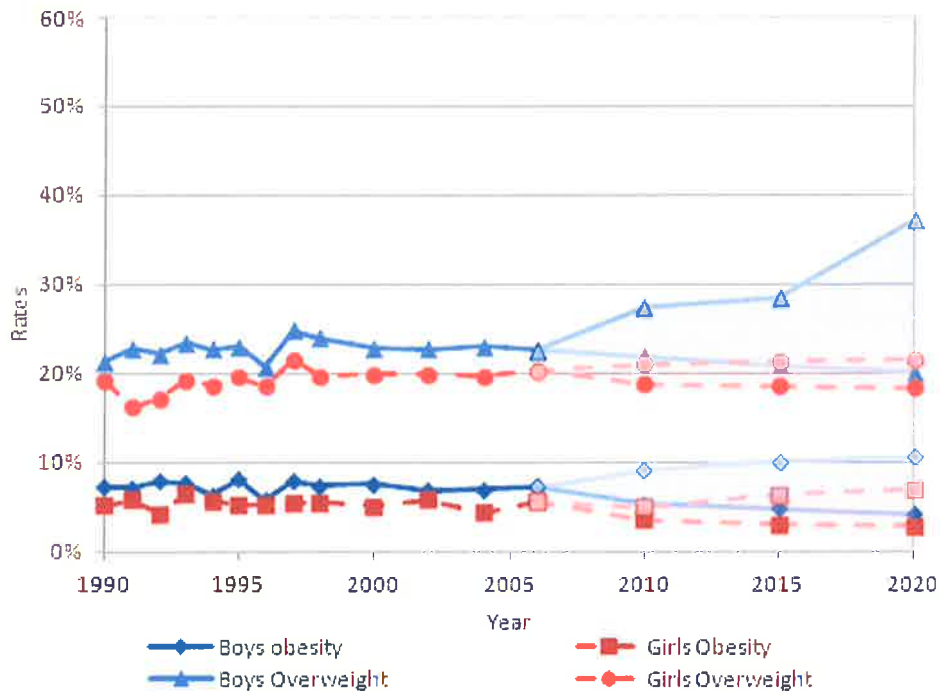


Fig. 6: Past and projected rates of child obesity and overweight, age 3-17, in France.

Research conducted by OECD. (OECD: Better Policies for Better Lives. Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2016).

For France to reduce costs somewhere in the school system, the French government decided to cut corners on its lunch programs. These cuts led to an increase of overweight children at public schools. In order to decrease the amount of overweight and obese children, France passed the Public Health Act in September 2005 (Delpuech 4). This law was created “to ban the presence of snack and fizzy drink vending machines on school premises” (Delpuech 4). Passing this act, though, emphasized the growing concern for overweight children which meant that more and more laws needed to be

passed in order to manage and promote healthier lifestyles for children. So instead, France decided to implement “watchdogs” that would ensure the health and safety of children in public schools.

The “watchdogs” are also known as l’Agence Française de Sécurité Sanitaire des Aliments (The French Agency of Health and Nutrition Security, AFSSA) created in 1999. These agents provide detailed reports of what French schools were serving to children. In one such investigation by the AFSSA, they researched that the meals schools were providing were often malnourishing. “In terms of nutrients, the proportion of lipids is most often described as excessive, iron and calcium are generally deficient, and protein content varies from study to study. In terms of food type, dairy products, fruit and vegetables tend to be under-represented” (Delpeuch 36). Children were still not provided with the proper amount of dietary servings that were recommended to them based on guidelines from French doctors. Delpeuch also mentions that these guidelines are not often followed at schools due to the pricing and costs of each meal that they need to be able to provide for each child (36). That is to say, children will still get bad lunches because the French school system needs to find a way to be resourceful with their decreasing budgets. One official that fought against this epidemic, though, is French Member of Parliament Jean-Marie Le Guen.

Jean-Marie Le Guen is a doctor who works for the French Socialist Party and is Member of the French National Assembly for Paris. His work in the National Assembly focuses on matters of health and the creation of new health laws. One such example is the new law he presented in March 2005 concerning new regulations for young children in an effort to counter obesity (Delpeuch 4).

Among the measures it envisaged was thirty minutes of compulsory exercise, every day, for every child in school; installation of free drinking-water fountains in schools, annual weight checks for children and the creation of a top-level commission dedicated to the fight against obesity, charged with making sure that convenience or processed foods stick to the rules governing maximum percentages of sugars, fats, and salt. (Delpeuch 4)

Of course, he wanted children to become healthier, but others did not see it that way. This bill did not pass because it sought to implement more dietary control, something the French are not fond of, over children. He was not the first to call out against health concerns in France; another activist before him questioned the morality of fast food eateries, especially of McDonald's.

José Bové is known as an important food activist against capitalization and globalization in France. He became one of the first to emphasize the negative effects globalization in France. In August 12, 1999, he led one of the first protests against the multi-million dollar company McDonald's at Millau, a southwestern province. Due to his arrest, his protest garnered a lot of media attention until around 2000. Many did agree with his stance due to the fact that McDonald's executives did not want to make any deals with any of the local farmers. Instead, McDonald's wanted to import their own products, such as hormone-induced beef, artificial foods, and genetically modified crops, foods of which the French were not very fond. These ingredients were not a part of French identity; to the French they are a model of disrespect to French cuisine. Food for the French citizen is not a trend; it is an entity ingrained into their culture and mindset; McDonald's signifies the complete opposite. Even though this McDonald's was stopped

from further construction, it did not impede the construction of other future franchises. Instead, McDonald's took what had happened with Bové and worked around its problem.

In order to appeal more to the French consumer, McDonald's itself became "French" by adopting French ideals. McDonald's was not popular with the French initially because, supposedly, McDonald's did not use locally-sourced and healthy food products. McDonald's first thought that they could sell their products the same way they did to American customers. The French demanded better. Michael Steinberger, writer of *Au Revoir To All that: The Rise and Fall of French Cuisine*, saw the new marketing campaign McDonald's had created as an effort to appeal to French audiences.

As a way to steer clear from the negative publicity McDonald's first received from Bové's protest, they decided to showcase a "greener," and healthier restaurant. The first place they showcased their new image was at the annual "Salon International de l'Agriculture" (International Show of Agriculture). This event was a convenient promotion venue for McDonald's due to the agricultural and organic themes it was known to showcase. "It was an opportunity for city kids to pet horses, chase chickens, and be flabbergasted by the amount of waste matter that poured out of cows. It was also an occasion to showcase the meats, cheeses, and wines that made the French countryside such a cherished source of sustenance" (Steinberger 104-5). It was, indeed, the perfect place to market, demonstrating support for the "French" way of life. However, to market well with the public, McDonald's itself had to find its "French" identity. Steinberger then takes a closer look at how McDonald's was selling its product:

As I moved closer, I discovered that no food was being sold; instead, McDonald's was feeding its guests corporate propaganda. Large, colorful placards ringed the

display, documenting the amount of French beef, poultry, and vegetables that McDonald's used, detailing the nutritional value of the food it served, and describing the company's eco-friendly practices. The words were accompanied by lots of pastoral imagery—cows, potatoes, sheaves of wheat. (Steinberger 105)

This display showed a different side of McDonald's, and at the time, it worked because McDonald's answered any doubts the French had concerning their food sources. By 2015, France stood in second place in the world, behind only by the United States, in number of McDonald's franchises. The continuous construction of McDonalds' franchises in France has led "McDonaldization" to integrate into France and French cuisine.

"McDonaldization" is a theory first developed by George Ritzer, claiming a culture will manifest the characteristics of a fast-food restaurant such as McDonald's. Max Weber (1864-1920) was a German sociologist who first theorized in his book, *Sociology of Civilizations*, that the "analysis of society was the process of rationalization in which traditional ways of thinking were being replaced by an ends/means analysis concerned with efficiency and social control" (Crossman), which is how George Ritzer develops it into "McDonaldization" Theory. Ritzer also believes that there will be a homogenization of cultures if fast-food restaurants take over. At this time, the French believe this to be a possibility due to the increasing number of McDonalds' franchises as well as others, mostly in the highly populated areas. French food will become predictable, and nothing will be innovative and unique. Most French citizens fear this trend.

“McDonaldization” recalls the five main themes, first developed by Max Weber and elaborated by George Ritzer: efficiency, calculability, predictability, increased control, and the replacement of human by non-human technology (Crossman). In France, as in the United States, McDonaldization has already taken hold. On the streets of Paris, customer-centered technologies have proliferated. Weber’s first theme, efficiency, is on full display.

The drive toward efficiency has led to the development of faster technology and self-service, when the customer ends up doing most of the work. In a way, he or she is paying for a privilege to complete a task themselves (Crossman). Due to the reduced lunch hour in France, there has been an increased number of self-service eateries because it takes less time to complete a food order rather than sitting down at a restaurant, requiring more than twice the amount of time. This has led to the French away from consuming their meals in a more leisurely manner to gorging food within tight time constraints. Since being more efficient means knowing how to manage one’s time, efficiency leads to calculability.

Calculability tends to “emphasize quantity over quality” (Crossman). For McDonald’s to serve its mass clientele and still make tremendous profits, executives decided to cut back on some elements, such as the quality of their meals. These cuts have adversely affected the consumer through low quality products and large portions. As a result, the French focus on quantity over quality. According to an interview Steinberger conducted with one of the owners of a Michelin three star restaurant, Alain Ducasse, at the Hôtel de Crillon, Ducasse himself appreciates the quality McDonald’s offers.

“McDonald’s offers speed and a good price; if the café owners offer good sandwiches at

a good price, with good bread, good butter, good ham, the young will come. Food has to evolve with changes in society” (Steinberger 118). This attitude coming from a Michelin restaurant owner sounded shocking. How could a chef such as himself praise McDonald’s? He praises it, because as a business man, he knows they are doing something right.

Predictability in France has settled into French culinary life. “Predictability refers to the attempt to structure our environment so that people know what to expect” (Crossman). This idea of knowing exactly what you are going to get, not only in food, but also in atmosphere, reassures the consumer. A person will often choose an item for its familiarity. “For example, the exportation of fast-food restaurants and American eating habits, with their emphasis on food as something to be consumed as quickly, efficiently, and inexpensively as possible, alters the way people eat and, thereby, ‘poses a profound threat to the entire cultural complex of many societies’” (Visconti). The consumer does not have to question it because he or she has already experienced it. This type of thinking only leads to less innovation. To appreciate French cuisine, the diner should not stick to the same kinds of foods they have already tried dozens of times; instead, one should be more open-minded.

McDonaldization also leads to the control and the replacement of human by non-human technology. This is “the replacement of human by nonhuman technology [that] is usually oriented towards greater control. When things are pre-packaged, pre-measured, and automatically controlled, the human employee is no longer required to think” (Crossman). The employee is often left with a certain set of instructions in order to accomplish a task, or can be easily trained by another employee. This has led to less

required job training for employees, saving companies millions. Sadly, this leads to more predictable menus, and less creativity. Cooks can no longer create new dishes in this kind of environment and, instead, their creativity is left untapped.

In essence, it is no longer a theory, but rather a fact that lunch times are decreasing, and indication that “McDonaldization” is affecting French culture and making it more homogenous. The five themes of McDonaldization no longer let potential chefs be creative. Instead, they are mass producing food items that have been measured and cooked to the specifications of fast food restaurants. All they are required to do is to follow instructions and push some buttons. This, in the future, does not bode well for French chefs.

With many chefs rejecting the idea of McDonald’s taking over France, there are others who disagree and applaud its success. Alain Ducasse and colleagues like Denis Courtiade, another restaurant owner, praise McDonald’s success and the way it is advertising to its customers. “He [Courtiade] said he treated his three children to McDonald’s every few months and that it was heaven for all involved. ‘They can run around and break things and have fun; they can’t do that in a bistro’” (Steinberger 117). The environments that McDonald’s are providing to their customers are reasons why French consumers, like Courtiade, are coming back for more. As McDonald’s is getting more and more customers in France, we can see that McDonald’s is not going anywhere. As more chefs and customers accept the idea of McDonald’s staying in France, we can see that McDonald’s will continue on being the future trend for French citizens.

As more fast food restaurants enter the market, these cuisines also affect the identity of French cuisine that past chefs worked hard to define. As Ferguson also states,

the global market cannot live without fast food restaurants, especially McDonald's because of the new generation of customers and because of global markets infiltrating into France.

However much we might prefer a world without McDonald's, the twenty-first century does not give us the option... The increasing and increasingly complex links to European and international markets work to obliterate the distinctive features of any particular culinary landscape. Current debate in France unquestionably plays on the fears of losing a unique French culinary identity (149-150).

As many more types of franchises and foreign restaurants enter France, French cuisine is represented less and less because it is, apparently, a cuisine that few customers are wanting.

Conclusion

François Pierre La Varenne was the first French chef to give a proper definition to “la cuisine française” thanks to his first masterpiece, *Le Cuisinier François*. Even if Stephen Mennell and Esther B. Aresty agree that La Varenne did not completely stray from medieval cooking methods, they do agree that his recipes showed he was breaking away from most medieval culinary customs. La Varenne’s legacy lies in the elegant simplicity that still endures today. He shaped the future of French cuisine with his clear organization of recipes, presented by season, and by demystifying “la pâtisserie” through the use of exact measurements. Chefs referred to his texts to know which recipes they should prepare for their bourgeois clients and which foods were in season. Knowing which foods were in season helped to ensure quality dishes and natural flavors. Another way he further categorizes his dishes is by dividing meat and fish stocks since the religion most French citizens followed was Roman Catholicism. As his intended audience was mostly French, he knew that for special religious observances, he needed to create recipes that chefs would be able to serve, for example, on Good Friday or Lent.

La Varenne also showed that French cuisine was ahead of its time by demonstrating how he implemented mathematical and precise measurements in his baking recipes, an element no other cook was integrating. Most medieval recipes only included a list of ingredients followed by a vague list of directions. Unfortunately, not everyone was able to taste La Varenne’s cuisine as he chose not to cater to the lower classes, knowing they would not be able to afford his services. Creating these types of recipes often costed a lot of money. Instead, he tried to simplify French recipes in order

to serve to his clients, especially the bourgeois. Nonetheless, without his ingenuity, there would most likely be a different definition for French cuisine.

Other chefs working for the upper classes also provided more “haute cuisine,” using simple flavors in one dish, changing the amount of spices one is allowed to use, the amount of servings offered to each diner, and the order in which each dish is supposed to be served. Chefs knew that these sets of guidelines were popular as the newfound method of cooking. These rules of “haute cuisine” were to be followed by every chef. Thanks to bourgeois chefs, France was able to define French cuisine. Medieval meat dishes, such as “rôts” (roasts), were quickly losing popularity because the French palate was evolving and no longer wanted heavily seasoned pieces of overcooked meats.

French cuisine also evolved with regard to sugar use. Chefs no longer wanted to add sugar to most of their recipes because they now wanted to differentiate savory from sweet. Soups, meat, and fish recipes no longer included sugar in the seventeenth century. The additional use of sugar was unnecessary to add in flavor. Instead, other spices that could combine well with these types of dishes were added, such as salt and pepper. Even La Varenne separated his dishes from sweet and savory.

Guilds mark another important moment in the evolution of French cuisine. Until the eighteenth century, guilds ensured three things: the quality of their goods, the proper supervision of workers, and the assurance of public safety by, for example, serving low-quality meat pies that could affect the consumer’s health. Guilds ensured that goods were regulated and that they were either not sold too cheaply or too expensively. Guilds also ensured equality among members. If one worker made more income than the other, another would suffer the consequences. Unfortunately, when these guilds were abolished

two years before the Revolution, these regulations were no longer enforced and high production demands precluded their reestablishment.

The French Revolution left a mark on the history of French cuisine by putting the star product at the center, bread. Politics, history, and national identity collided over this staple, an ingredient of French culture as important today as ever. It only became a matter of time that these hindrances would strike back against the government.

The French Revolution certainly transformed its culinary landscape. First, “haute cuisine,” the cuisine that was only served to the elites, was now served to lower classes. These lower classes now savored different kinds of dishes, giving them the opportunity to enjoy French cuisine. Second, the French Revolution highlighted unequal food distribution in France. At the time, French cuisine finally became something all of the French nation could enjoy.

Carême transformed the dining table and dishes served by him. He revolutionized French sauces, at the same time enriching dishes and streamlining their flavors. His “pieces montées” in his time were creations used to decorate the middle of the table made from different kinds of confectionary. These architectural designs transformed into simple centerpieces that to this day many restaurants, and even homes, now have, even though now it is usually a simple vase with flowers and is inedible. Carême then passed the torch to Escoffier, who made his predecessors’ dishes all the more accessible.

Escoffier knew that in order to survive in the restaurant business, he needed to update Carême’s recipes and explain his preparations with more clarity in order to have more simplification and refinement in his dishes. For example, the thick mother sauces that Carême is known for were changed by Escoffier by adding less butter to the recipes.

Less use of butter and other fats in the sauces created lighter and more delicate sauces his new customers desired.

Escoffier transformed not only iconic dishes, but the restaurant industry as well. His new organizational methods included kitchen stations in which each chef would be assigned a certain task. This new division of work labor advocated for more teamwork between chefs. This method of working also reduced the time needed for each dish to be made. Instead of a dish taking an hour to prepare, it now took half the time. Escoffier needed to make new changes to “haute cuisine,” just as Carême needed to do so because of the new clientele’s tastes, and because of its more rapid, evolutionary progress.

Globalization arrived in France during World War I, further transforming French cuisine. The introduction of canned goods and technology from the United States that could preserve food items proved useful to French citizens. During the war, canned foods became more popular and so, more companies distributed these and other types of preservative inventions because they were now made to ration their food items by the government in order to be able to send enough supplies to their soldiers as well. As these food preservative technologies enter France, we can see that these methods of preservation did not matter as much to French citizens as they were mostly accustomed to eating fresher foods.

During the German occupation, World War II proved a trying period for France. Germans procured many foods and resources from the markets in France. French citizens, once again, had to ration. These rationings though are lower compared to those of German citizens. Since rationing was in place, culinary innovations were not possible because people were limited in their resources. In order to survive, black markets were

necessary for French citizens to get the resources they needed. They could not rely on government markets regulated by the Germans. Food suppliers saw that they could sell their items at better prices than if they were to sell them to the government. After the war ended, it still took many years for France to recover from its damaged economic state. This chain of historical events ensured the continued evolution of French culinary tradition.

Modern times have seen the decline of products long considered iconic, such as wine and cheese. New regulations and ever-present globalization have led to a decrease in the number of artisans willing to produce them. Camembert, France's national cheese, has been put on the "endangered" list by cheesemakers because of the pasteurization method that is affecting its quality. Ferguson argues that Camembert may be a passing trend and that people will forget about this cheese just as they forgot how the original Camembert tasted.

Wine production is being affected in France because the number of consumers in France is decreasing, and there are also new global markets that are selling more outside France than inside. French winemakers thought that they no longer needed to make new versions of their wines because they thought the French would remain loyal to their brands. Unfortunately, it was not the case as results show that consumption is decreasing. This may show where French wine is going if French winemakers decided to do nothing about it, and still stand with the same versions they developed decades ago.

The new generation of consumers takes less time to eat and cook at home, and now resort to ordering "malbouffe" to save time and money. Today, it probably takes an hour or less to sit down and eat. Now, lunch hours are reduced to around half an hour.

People are resorting to buying more microwave meals and frozen foods in order to calm their appetites. Most do not have time to eat at fine dining restaurants because they often take long periods of time to serve food.

As malbouffe is taking over France, there is an increased correlation of obese or overweight children, and an increase of fast food restaurants. In 2005, France was among other European countries showing increasing percentages of obese children. Trends show that the numbers will only increase over time, affecting boys more than girls between the ages of three and seventeen. Other results show further proof that the consumers most affected by malbouffe are younger children. These concerning weight gains among children, and even adults, did not occur until fast food restaurants and junk food were introduced in France.

McDonald's had a rocky start in France, but ultimately prevailed thanks to its ability to evolve and adapt. Once vilified in France, McDonald's has then been revitalized, potentially encouraging other corporations to take on this market. McDonald's figured out that in order to market well to French people, they needed to market their products as healthy, using the freshest ingredients from local sources.

McDonaldization often results in a homogenous culture that France may be experiencing now. As more and more fast food restaurants implement predictability, the results will be more homogenous types of cuisines. McDonaldization also results in more globalization. As a result, France is becoming more homogenous and similar to the United States. Instead of getting a slice of quiche, people are sitting down to a cheeseburger. The acceptance of McDonald's as a part of French life leaves the

opportunity for other fast food restaurants to infiltrate France's cuisine. This leads to the closure of many fine dining establishments, and fast food franchises taking over.

Solutions are possible but require commitment. The establishment of guilds and new regulations will take time to implement, but could spare France the fate of other first world countries. Guilds can ensure the quality of products, and also adjust and monitor prices so that it would not affect consumers from trying to save more money, as the first chapter explains.

Some of the safety regulations that I have mentioned have already been implemented as laws in France, such as the prohibition of genetically modified foods that corrupt French eating habits. An important regulation that I have also mentioned is one that can protect children from eating unhealthy, greasy food lunches served in schools. If such a regulation is created where children can be served better quality, nutritious items, there can be possible decreases in the number of overweight or obese children.

The third solution of implementing a new VAT system can mostly benefit fine dining restaurants. Fine dining restaurants have to charge higher tax rates. This is partly the reason why many people are going to eat at fast food franchises rather than at classic French restaurants. If both types of restaurants has an equal tax rate, then maybe there could be an increase in the amount of people eating at fine dining restaurants.

The last solution is starting to be implemented at public schools. "La Semaine du Goût" is educating children and adults in where their local produce comes from. Instead of implementing this program once a year, it should be available at least weekly or monthly so more children can learn where their food comes from. Children knowing

where their food originates should be important because they can make more informed decisions about their dietary habits, and it could encourage them to eat in a healthier way.

As French citizens eat more frequently at fast food restaurants, French cuisine in the twenty-first century can result in a homogenous future. The French cuisine that chefs had worked on developing for centuries will no longer be a part of the nation's identity if it is not transformed and updated for its new generation of consumers. Even with French cuisine going downhill, there are still ways to reverse negative trends little by little, even though these solutions may take years to implement. The first is by establishing health and safety laws that can produce higher quality products. The second way that could help is by restoring guilds that can make sure the public is buying great quality goods, but at a reasonable price. The third way France can help is by creating a different VAT "Value-Added Tax" system for fast food eateries and restaurants. The final way France can address the issue is by including teaching programs to educate French children about their health.

To create higher quality goods that French people can safely eat, more health and safety regulations should be considered. The regulations that France should initiate are ones that educate and ensure healthier culinary habits. An example of how France is helping out its citizens is by implementing laws against genetically modified foods that corrupt healthier eating habits, such as those in France (Delpeuch 20). Another type of regulation that can be implemented is one that can ensure nutritious food is being served to children in public schools. This regulation can ensure that children are being taken care of and given something that will not negatively affect their health.

Another way to ensure higher quality goods is to restore guilds. Guilds are another way French citizens can ensure decent quality goods are being produced. Even though Fitzsimmons points the drawbacks of restoring guilds back to France will be, he still presents many positive points on why they should be restored. "Guilds asserted that reestablishing them would bring an end to 'insubordination.' They also argued that the reestablishment of guilds would restore quality and trust to manufacturing and commerce" (258). Specialized workers in guilds can be trusted in order to ensure quality goods and have a better control of the workers' environment. Even people within the government also found that guilds were beneficial for working conditions and manufacturing. "In internal communications republican officials and policymakers acknowledged that the suppression of corporations had substantially contributed to the deplorable state of commerce and manufacturing" (Fitzsimmons 258). Guilds can ensure that their employees have produced quality goods that attest to high standards.

Some of the negatives of having guilds implemented back into French society pertain to the high cost of goods and the high quotas guilds have to honor. As Fitzsimmons also argues, guilds can produce quality goods and promote healthier working habits, but it most likely would not be able to keep up with the high demands companies are used to. Also, in order to ensure better quality, more has to be invested into the product. In order to produce the same demand of goods needed today, but still ensure their quality, is by implementing machines and modern technology as well. That way, machines can still keep reduced costs. Even though the price of goods may increase, the quality and manufacturing of these goods would not be questioned, and the health of people would not be affected in a negative way.

The third solution that can ensure higher quality eating is by creating a different Value-Added Tax (VAT) system to both, fine dining and fast food restaurants.

Steinberger gives an explanation on why the VAT is encouraging more people to go to fast food restaurants instead. “A quick snack at a café, a ‘steak frites’ at a corner bistro, or a three-star feast automatically incurred a 19.6 percent VAT surcharge to the bill (along with the built-in fifteen percent gratuity...Fast-food restaurants had a lower VAT rate, just 5.5 percent, since they were classified as takeaway establishments” (52-3).

These VAT surcharges are extra taxes the consumers are required to pay, it is not optional. Fast food in France is beating fine dining cuisine because of the higher taxes that chefs, such as André Daguin, former two-star (out of three) chef, have to change in order to keep their restaurants open. The accumulation of these taxes convinces people to eat at fast food places rather than to eating at bistros and fine dining establishments. Instead, there should be an equal tax rate that both fine dining and fast food eateries can change.

The last possible solution is to teach children, and even adults, better ways to eat for their health. Something that France needs to do nationwide is to implement more health programs. The majority of young French consumers are forgetting where basic resources come from as most of them have supermarkets and fast food eateries to rely on for their gustatory needs.

This solution is possible because other governmental organizations have already taken this advice, by implementing “La Semaine du Goût,” or “Week of Taste” where children learn about their local produce, and about French cuisine. This event takes place

in Paris and in other schools throughout France during the month of October since 1990 by a French writer's initiative, Jean-Luc Petitrenaud (Ministry of National Education).

Cet événement a pour objectifs: d'éduquer au goût les consommateurs, notamment les enfants, d'éduquer à la diversité et au plaisir des goûts et des saveurs, d'informer de manière pédagogique sur les produits, leur origine, leur mode de production et leurs spécificités, d'informer sur les métiers de bouche, de transmettre des savoir-faire, d'encourager les comportements et consommations alimentaires s'inscrivant dans un mode de vie équilibré et durable (This event aims: to educate consumers about taste, including children, to educate about the variety of flavors, to teach about how to buy quality products by learning about their origins, their forms of production and their special features, to inform about the catering trade, to transmit knowledge, to encourage healthy behaviors, and to promote nutritious food consumption as part of a balanced and sustainable lifestyle, Ministry of National Education).

This event also includes expert chefs who teach children and adults healthier eating habits. Unfortunately, this program only takes place once a year, which others believe is not sufficient, as Perico Légasse mentions, journalist for the French newspaper *Marianne*, since a majority of young consumers do not know where ham comes from. These are the types of programs France should implement daily, or weekly in order to promote better living for its citizens. Even though the event, the "Week of Taste," has been drawing more attention to promote healthy dietary needs of French children, Légasse gives a further example of why these programs need to be implemented at least weekly into daily academia.

Rendue publique le 23 mai 2013, celle de l'Asef (Association santé environnement France) révèle que 87% des 8-12 ans ne savent pas reconnaître une betterave ou un poireau, ignorent si le yaourt contient du lait et ne peuvent pas dire de quel animal provient le jambon (Published on May 23, 2013, ASEF [The Health Association of the Environment in France] reveals that eighty-seven percent of eight to twelve year olds do not recognize a beet or a leek, do not know if the yogurt contains milk and cannot say which animal ham comes from. This is what tomorrow's consumers will be, Légasse).

France, as well as other countries, cannot let young consumers forget where their food items originate.

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