



NEW FOR SPRING 2010!

FRENCH COOKING & WINE COURSES

'In France, cooking is a serious art form and a national sport.'

JULIA CHILD

Mastering the Art of French Cooking, 1961



For the French, the appreciation of good food and wine is almost as important as breathing. So it is perhaps no surprise that our award-winning French chefs are just as enthusiastic as we are about our Gastro Academy programme for 2010 – the first of its kind and calibre in the Languedoc region.

Here is a unique opportunity to learn from master-chefs whose culinary expertise will guide you through practical creativity in the kitchen. When not instructing with the French House Party's hands-on classes, our chefs run their own renowned gourmet restaurants in Carcassonne and its surrounding area, which are recommended in the most prominent restaurant guides.

Their exhilarating success as long-experienced Chefs de Cuisine gives them something of a celebrity status in South-West France – television appearances and countless newspaper articles have ensured that their names and their signature dishes are synonymous with cooking innovation and flair.

OUR GASTRO ACADEMY CHEFS

Robert Abraham

Named the 2009 Midi-Pyrenees Chef of the Year, Robert Abraham has 26 years' experience of 'l'art culinaire'. Recently appointed Head Chef at the impressive Chateau des Ducs de Joyeuse hotel in Couiza, just south of Carcassonne, he previously held this position for five years at Le Ciel D'Or restaurant in the 4-star Relais Royal Hotel in Mirepoix, where, among other plaudits, his food was awarded the maximum 3 Michelin Guide 'fourchettes' for fine food quality.



He has appeared on TV, run restaurants in Paris and Ceret, and with his own St Malo restaurant – called 'Robert Abraham' – won many highly-prized star ratings from the most influential restaurant guides – from 3 Michelin 'fourchettes' to 'toques' from the Bottin Gourmand, the Champ erard and the Gault Millau, which awarded him the Cle d'Or.

Robert's 'signature' is incorporating the use of flowers and unusual spices into traditional dishes. Jonathan Meades of *The Times* remarked of the St Malo restaurant:

'The cleverest, most technically accomplished chefs are rooting through the trad repertoires of their provinces and are applying to the dishes of those repertoires the techniques they acquired as apprentices to the masters of nouvelle cuisine...borne out by the cooking of Abraham...thus, he flavours a galette of leeks, mussels and onions with coriander and sweetish curry power, a promise of some sensational cooking, a promise that is brilliantly fulfilled...The dinner I ate here was the finest I've eaten in France for years.'

Franck Putelat

The celebrated chef Franck Putelat has worked with such legendary masters as Philippe Legendre and Georges Blanc. Franck won his Michelin star when he controlled the Barbacane restaurant at Carcassonne's Hotel de la Cit  – the top hotel within the walls of Europe's largest medieval fortress.



In 2003, Franck took part in the Concours mondial de cuisine (world cooking competition), when he was awarded the famous Bocuse d'Argent prize, regarded by chefs as the most prestigious championship award for French cooking in the world.

Armed with these high honours, Frank built his own restaurant which opened in 2006: Le Parc Franck Putelat, situated below the battlements of the medieval city walls, sparkles in an oasis of parkland amid vineyards. It is a place which, he says, frees his culinary inspiration to produce adventurous reinterpretations of classic French dishes.

Jean-Marc Boyer

A native of Carcassonne, Jean-Marc Boyer is one of France's dynamic young chefs. While not a household name abroad, he is much feted in his homeland with awards – amongst them a Michelin Star in 2007 – and receives glowing reviews in numerous publications and restaurant guides. He also makes regular appearances on television, most recently featuring in an hour-long programme on the top French Channel TFI.



Having trained in Paris, Jean-Marc then spent more than 20 years in the capital city, working with some of the country's greatest chefs at Michelin-starred restaurants, including 12 years at the 3* Ambrosie under Bernard Pacaund and finally at the Ritz. Returning to the Languedoc, he now enthusiastically produces fine local cuisine at his restaurant Le Puits de Tresor in the ancient Cathar town of Lastours.

Jean-Marc sees himself as an artisan, talking of creating dishes spontaneously and instinctively, using the local and seasonal produce grown and reared in the area. He sums up his philosophy in three words: 'Quality, authenticity and rigour'.



the **French House Party**

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