



All-inclusive residential cookery
courses in Burgundy

Guide to the Course and Selection of Recipes

*with full details of the accommodation,
excursions and the surrounding region*

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COOKING WITH ROBERT ASH AT RUE DU LAC

I established my cookery course at rue du Lac in 2004 and have welcomed guests from Europe, the USA and Australia. In Burgundy, I aim to continue the traditions I established at London's original Blythe Road Restaurant –

- ◆ absolutely fresh ingredients
- ◆ meticulous preparation
- ◆ stylish presentation
- ◆ an abiding passion for delicious food and wine

MY COURSE at rue du Lac encourages guests to extend their cooking abilities (and most guests surprise themselves). My demonstrations are at the core, but at rue du Lac the hands-on cooking sessions are the key to success. Every working day of the course there are opportunities for guests to develop their existing skills, to explore new recipes and techniques and to get familiar with the restaurant chef's working methods. By the end of the course you'll have a personal folder crammed with memorable recipes, notes and tricks of the trade. More important, back in your own kitchen, you'll have the confidence and knowledge to cook at a higher level, to enjoy your cooking even more.

The Course in Detail

The course is different every week. Obviously, fresh produce changes with the seasons, but I also respond to my guests' interests and curiosity. With that in mind, consider the typical course on the next page...

...it's not all work, work, work

During the course there are opportunities to relax as well. We visit a lively produce market (usually Bourg-en-Bresse); a top-rate restaurant of the chef's choice; a local winery or two; the wine museum of Georges Duboeuf at Romanèche nearby; and of course the gardens at rue du Lac, lounge and games loft are at the guests' disposal. Your own bedroom is comfortably furnished - en-suite/private bathroom or shower facilities are also available. Partners and others



who are not participating in the course can enjoy golf, swimming, fishing, horse-riding, bird-watching, walking, micro-light flying, visits to further wineries - all within easy reach of the house (*please note that, while I am delighted to arrange them, these outside activities are not included in the course price*).

BOB SPITZ, noted US author, musician and bon viveur, spent a summer touring cookery schools in Europe, and said:

“Robert, I'd like you to know how much I appreciated - and learned from - the week of cooking we did. As you know, I went to fourteen cooking schools... but you were, hands down, the best cooking teacher I encountered and I probably learned more from you than the others combined. I got more out of that week than you can imagine, and I wanted you to know what a great teacher you are.”



The cookery course at rue du Lac

Day 1 Sunday

Guests will be picked up from Lyon (St. Exupéry) airport (approx 1 hour transfer time to rue du Lac), Mâcon-Loché TGV or Mâcon-Ville rail stations (approx. 15 mins transfer). Guests using their own transport should arrive by 6pm at the latest. You will be welcomed with a soothing drink by Chef Robert Ash. After you have settled in your room, a delicious supper will be served at 7.30pm. This meal, in common with all others at rue du Lac will be accompanied by selected wines from Burgundy and the Mâconnais region.

Day 2 Monday

Breakfast served from 8 to 9.30 am. At the beginning of the course, participating guests will be presented with a welcome pack including recipes, personalised folder and an apron (to keep). At the end of the course there will be a presentation of certificates of achievement. First hands-on class at 10am for lunch of Bar à la Crème de Fenouil avec ses Pommes Dauphinoises (roast fillet of sea bass, cream fennel sauce and potatoes Dauphinoise) followed by Tarte Tatin - plus an preparatory lesson for Confit de Canard (duck confit). Lunch will be served at the house at 1pm. The afternoon session features Saumon en Papillotte (salmon in paper parcels) and a selection of desserts including Italian Biscotti. Dinner will be served at 7.30pm.

Day 3 Tuesday

Breakfast. Morning practical class of Oeufs Carême (devised by Queen Victoria's personal chef) followed by Confit de Canard. The accompanying lesson is for Profiteroles au Chocolat. Lunch at the house at 1pm. Afternoon optional visit to le Hameau du Vin wine museum at Romanèche (about 10 mins away) for tour and tasting. Followed by a visit to Maison Jacoulot

nearby, makers of liqueurs and eaux-de-vie. Dinner at the house at 7.30pm.

Day 4 Wednesday

Breakfast. Set off early for Bourg-en-Bresse market for extensive displays of fruit, vegetables, cheese and livestock - including the celebrated Bresse chicken. There will be time for a full exploration of this busy market, followed by lunch in a typical regional restaurant in the area of the Dombes lakes. Back at the house, there will be a tasting of wines and cheeses. Chef's supper at the house at 8pm.

Day 5 Thursday

Breakfast. Morning class: preparation of lunch - Pintade Rôtie avec Pancetta, Rosti et Sauce Chanterelles (guinea fowl wrapped in pancetta with rosti potatoes and chanterelle sauce) followed by Millefeuille de Fraises (strawberry millefeuille) or Mousse au Chocolat Grand Marnier. Lunch at the house at 1pm. Afternoon optional trip to the wineries of Pouilly Fuissé and St. Véran. Dinner at the house at 7.30pm.

Day 6 Friday

Late breakfast and morning at leisure. The Chef will be available throughout the morning for review of the recipes and techniques. During the morning we shall return guests to Lyon airport or either of the Mâcon rail stations. Guests leaving by air can alternatively be taken to the centre of Lyon if requested - there is an efficient coach service from there to the airport, thus allowing several hours in this fascinating city before an evening flight. Guests using their own transport should ensure their departure by midday.

Availability and bookings

You can easily check availability on my web site www.cuisinecourse.com/bookings.html and selecting your prospective course date (courses run from April to September). I will rapidly respond with availability for that date and the cost of your course. There is absolutely no obligation to make a booking. You can also use this bookings page to ask me questions that are not covered in the rest of the web site.

I very much look forward to cooking with you at rue du Lac,

Robert Ash

Chef/patron

Recipe selection

This short selection is taken from the collection of recipes which formed the basis of the cooking régime at the Blythe Road Restaurant and are now in use at the **Robert Ash at rue du Lac** cookery school.

Note: cooking temperatures are shown thus: C°/F°/gas mark.

Weights and volumes are shown thus: metric/imperial/US where they differ.

Dressings

THE HOUSE SALAD LEAVES

Lollo Rosso, Oak Leaf, Curly Endive
Rocket and Baby Spinach

THE HOUSE DRESSING

75ml : 2½ fl.oz : ⅓ cup white wine vinegar

300ml : ½ pint : 1¼ cups vegetable oil

1½ teaspoons coarse grain mustard

1 teaspoon salt

2 teaspoons sugar

¼ onion or 1 shallot

Put all the ingredients into a beaker and blitz with a stick blender. Stop blending when smooth but before the dressing gets too thick. The dressing tastes better after a couple of days when the flavours have had a chance to blend together.

Sauces, accompaniments

PESTO

50g : 2oz fresh basil leaves

30g : 2oz toasted pine nuts (cashews work as well)

2 cloves of garlic

75ml : 2½ fl.oz : ⅓ cup olive oil

4 to 5 tablespoons of Parmesan or Pecorino cheese

Salt

GRENADINE ONION MARMALADE

250g : 9oz butter

1.5kg : 3lb 6oz onions, thinly sliced

3 teaspoons salt

2 heaped teaspoons pepper

320g : 11½ oz caster sugar

250ml : 8 fl.oz : 1 cup sherry vinegar

60ml : 2 fl.oz : ¼ cup grenadine or blackcurrant cordial

500ml : 1 pint : 2½ cups coarse red wine

1 teaspoon red food colouring (optional)

Heat the butter in a pan until it is just brown (beurre noisette), throw in the onions, salt, pepper and sugar. Stir. Cover and gently brown for half an hour, stirring now and again. Add the sherry vinegar, cordial, wine and food colouring. Cook gently uncovered for half an hour, stirring until like marmalade

Salads

MARINATED SMOKED MACKEREL WITH ROAST BEETROOT, HORSERADISH AND CRÈME FRAÎCHE SALAD

serves 2

2 smoked mackerel fillets

½ a red onion, thinly sliced

1 medium roast or boiled beetroot

1 teaspoon horseradish or made relish

4 tablespoons olive oil

1 tablespoon crème fraîche

2 large leaves lollo rosso

1 teaspoon chopped chives

Sprig of dill

Skin and slice each mackerel fillet into 3 diagonal pieces and place in a shallow bowl with the onion and olive oil, cover and let marinate in a refrigerator for a day. Cut the beetroot into 12 small cubes and mix with the horseradish, crème fraîche, salt and pepper. Place a large leaf of lollo rosso in the centre of a plate, spoon on top the beetroot mixture then

place on this the three mackerel pieces with the red onion and oil. Throw over some chopped chives and garnish with a sprig of dill.

Soups

BUTTERNUT SQUASH, LIME AND BASIL SOUP

serves 4

1 butternut squash

600ml : 1 pint : 2½ cups chicken stock

150ml : ¼ pint : ⅔ cup double cream

Zest and juice of 1 lime

Roast the squash in a baking tray in a 220°C : gas mark 7 : 425°F oven for 20 minutes. Tip into a blender. Add the chicken stock to the baking tray and de-glaze. Add the stock to the blender with the double cream, zest and juice, salt and pepper. Serve with roasted pine nuts pesto, crème fraiche and chopped basil.

Starters

EGGS CAREME

for one person

1 large globe artichoke bottom, leaves and choke removed, tossed in house dressing. Use tinned artichoke (in oil only) if necessary

1 egg

1 slice of smoked salmon cut into an 8cm (3½") round – save the trimmings

for the sauce:

1 teaspoon mayonnaise

1 teaspoon tomato sauce

1 teaspoon cognac

Cut the salmon trimmings into thin strips and mix with the mayonnaise, tomato sauce and cognac. Lay mixture into the artichoke bottom, soft poach the egg and lay on top. Place the salmon round on the egg. Optionally garnish with a teaspoon of caviar or salmon caviar.

GRAVADLAX

serves 4

2 tail pieces of salmon fillet with skin on

a handful of sugar (preferably brown)

a handful of salt

a bunch of chopped fresh dill, stalks included (plus more dill to garnish at the end)

Mix together the dill, sugar and salt and spread a quarter of the mixture in a layer on the bottom of a small glass dish. Place one salmon fillet, skin side down, on to the mixture and then pile half the mix on the salmon flesh, placing the other salmon fillet on top, flesh side down, to make a sandwich of the two fish fillets. Pile the remainder of the mixture on the top skin to cover.

Wrap with cling film and place a weight on top of the fillets to press them slightly and refrigerate for three days. Remove the salmon fillets, wash and dry them on kitchen roll. Discard the sugar, salt and dill mixture. Cover the salmon with freshly-chopped dill.

Slice thinly and serve with dill mustard sauce (mayonnaise, chopped dill, honey and mustard).

Main dishes: fish

PLAICE GOUJONS ON A FENNEL, ROCKET CORIANDER AND LIME SALAD WITH AIOLI

for one person

2 white plaice fillets

paprika

plain flour

Cut each fillet at an angle 1 inch : 25mm thick to make 8 pieces in all, dust them in a mixture of paprika, flour, salt and pepper, and deep-fry.

For the salad:

½ fennel bulb. thinly sliced

½ lime

1 tablespoon olive oil

1 teaspoon coriander seeds

handful of rocket

Refrigerate the fennel in a bowl of water. Mix the zest and juice of the lime with the oil – should be around 1;4 lime to oil ratio – add the coriander seeds and leave to marinate. When ready for service, mix the crisp fennel in the lime, olive, and coriander marinade, add a handful of rocket, pile up and serve. Accompany with a small pot of aioli.

Main dishes: poultry

GRILLED CHICKEN BREAST WITH SWEET POTATO AND CHORIZO MASH, ROCKET AND CHILLI OIL

serves 4

4 200-225g : 7-8 oz chicken supremes (skinless)
4 large or 8 small sweet potatoes
120g : 4oz slicing chorizo
50g : 2oz butter
4 handfuls of rocket tossed in house dressing
4 large tablespoons of sweet chilli sauce
4 large tablespoons of vegetable oil

Oil and season the chicken supremes and cook in a very hot ribbed grill pan. Rotate and turn over for a criss-cross pattern as for grilled tuna. When done, place in a 200°C : gas mark 6 : 400°F oven for 20 minutes.

Peel the sweet potatoes and slice into small chunks. Boil in water until soft, drain and mash with butter. Add the chorizo, correct the seasoning, and place a portion in the centre of each warmed plate. Mix the chilli sauce and vegetable oil, slice each chicken breast into 4 pieces, brush with the mixture and arrange on the mash.

PAN-FRIED DUCK BREAST OVER CANDIED GINGER PARSNIPS, COUSCOUS AND ORIENTAL SAUCE

1 duck breast
3 large parsnips
1 small bottle of preserved ginger in syrup

for the sauce:

300ml : ½ pint : 1¼ cups chicken stock
5-spice powder
small bottle of soy sauce
small bottle of sesame oil

for the couscous:

115g : 4oz couscous
250ml : 8fl.oz : 1 cup boiling chicken stock from a cube
a good tablespoon of olive oil
teaspoon coriander seeds
½ red pepper finely chopped into small cubes
½ yellow pepper finely chopped into small cubes
½ green pepper
½ red onion finely chopped into small cubes
some fresh chopped coriander

Pour the boiling chicken stock, coriander seeds and olive oil onto the couscous in a bowl, cover with cling film and leave for ten minutes. Take off the cling film and with a fork, break up the grains and stir in all the other ingredients.

Main dishes: meat

KNUCKLE OF HAM IN MUSTARD LIQUOR WITH PEASE PUDDING AND BUTTERED PARSNIPS

serves 4

for the smoked ham:

1.2kg : 2½lbs knuckle of ham
2 large carrots, scraped and cut thick on the bias
1 large onion. diced
Tomato paste
2 chillies or 6 peppercorns
Bunch of basil, chopped
1.25 litres : 2 pints : 1 quart water

Place all in a pressure cooker, bring to boil and pressurise for one hour.

for the pease pudding:

Put 225g : 8oz split peas in a pan with water and salt. Boil until tender, forming a thick sauce, then add salt.

for the parsnips:

Peel 5 medium parsnips, remove the woody cores, cut into thumb-size pieces and boil in salt water. When done, drain and toss in Normandy butter and chopped parsley.

Main dishes: vegetarian

FILO PASTRY PARCELS OF FOUR

CHEESES

serves 4

225g : 8oz of grated strong cheddar cheese or 60g : 2 oz each of the following cheeses; grated parmesan, mozzarella, cheddar and stilton

1 apple peeled and chopped

1 tablespoon grain mustard

1 tablespoon chopped spring onion

1 tablespoon sultanas or chopped dates

1 tablespoon chopped nut - pecan, walnuts, pine nuts etc

2 beaten eggs

black pepper

4 sheets of frozen filo pastry

melted butter for brushing

In a large bowl, mix all the ingredients together except the filo pastry and the melted butter, and place in the refrigerator to firm up. Brush the top surface of two sheets of filo pastry, place some of the filling in the centre of the first sheet and wrap it up in a square shape. Then place the square in the centre of the second sheet and gather up all the sides into a round shape and twist the edges together on top like a purse. Brush with melted butter and bake in a 200°C : gas mark 6 : 400°F oven for 10-15 minutes depending on the size.

CHAR-GRILLED MEDITERRANEAN

VEGETABLES AND ROCKET

for 4 portions

1 large aubergine

2 small courgettes

1 large red pepper

1 large yellow pepper

5 or 6 fresh basil leaves

A teaspoon of capers

A squeeze of lemon or lime

Some good olive oil

A handful of rocket and some shaved parmesan to scatter over

Thinly slice the aubergine and courgettes and brush with oil. Mark them by placing 3 or 4 of the slices at time in very hot dry, ribbed grill pan, marking both sides. Take them out and leave to cool. Roast the red pepper and yellow pepper in a hot oven until charred then peel of the skin, de-seed and cut into wide strips. Mix together the fresh basil leaves, capers, stripped peppers and vegetable slices with a little olive oil and lemon juice with lots of ground black pepper.

POMMES DE TERRE DAUPHINOISE

7 large potatoes peeled then sliced on a mandolin

1 leek blanched and dried

300ml : ½ pint : 1¼ cups double cream

150g : 5½oz grated cheese

Do not wash the sliced potatoes, place them in a roasting tin with the cream, blanched leek and salt and pepper, Mix all the slices by hand with the cream mixture, making sure that every slice is coated. Arrange the potatoes in even layers, cover with the grated cheese. Place a sheet of tin foil over the whole roasting tray to seal it and roast in a 220°C : 425°F : gas mark 7 oven until the potatoes are tender (lift up the corner of the foil and press a knife in) When the potatoes are cooked, lift off the foil and put back in the oven for 10-15minutes until the top is golden brown.

Desserts

ITALIAN BISCOTTI

50g : 2oz each of sultanas, dried apricots and prunes

50g : 2oz each of whole shelled almonds, hazelnuts and pistachios

Zest of 2 lemons

250g : 9oz plain flour

250g : 9oz golden caster sugar

1½ teaspoons baking powder

2 eggs

Preheat the oven 180°C : 350°F : gas mark 4, chop the fruit, leave the nuts whole and add to the lemon zest. Place in a large bowl the flour, sugar and baking powder, mix together. In another bowl, beat the eggs and mix the egg mixture into the flour, drop by drop until it almost combines. Beat in the fruit, nuts and zest until it combines – it will be sticky. Turn out on to a floured surface, divide in half, and with floured hands pat into 20cm : 9 inch long sausages, keeping the ends the same thickness. Place on to a silicone or lined baking sheet and bake for 25/30 minutes until firm. Remove from the oven and turn down to 140°C : 275°F : gas mark 1 for 5 minutes to cool a little. On a chopping board, slice the logs into 12mm : ½in thick slices, put them back in the oven (on a silicone sheet) or baking tray and bake for a further 35 minutes with the oven door open. Store in jar (not airtight).

Note: if you prefer the biscotti more tender, reduce the final drying time, but they won't keep as long as the fully-dried version.

CHOCOLATE MOUSSE WITH GRAND MARNIER

serves 6

225g : ½lb chocolate

6 egg yolks and separately whisked whites

150ml : ¼ pint : 1¼ cups double cream, whisked

60g : 1oz sugar

1 orange zest

1 shot Grand Marnier

Melt the chocolate in a bowl over boiling water. Whisk together the egg yolks, orange zests, sugar and spirit, then add the melted chocolate. Mix in the whipped cream and quickly fold in the whisked whites with a metal spoon, cutting and folding.

PECAN PIE

serves 6-8

Sweet pastry(see below)

4 eggs

300ml : ½ pint : 1¼ cups golden syrup

175g : 6oz golden caster sugar

1 capful vanilla essence

225g : 8oz whole shelled pecans

Line a 20 cm : 8" flan ring with sugar pastry and bake blind on 180c : gas mark 4 : 350°F. Bake with the pastry covered with foil or grease-proof paper and filled with baking beans or rice until just cooked.

Beat the eggs and stir in the golden syrup, golden caster sugar and vanilla essence. Add the pecans. Remove the beans and foil out of the flan tin. Pour in the mixture and bake on 220°C : gas mark 7 : 425°F for 10 minutes then reduce the oven temperature to 180°C : gas mark 4 : 350°C and continue baking for 35 minutes.

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full details of courses are at: www.cuisinecourse.com