



# CULINARY DELIGHTS

## BÉNICHON, THE ULTIMATE FEAST

Tempting culinary specialities are intertwined with the rural traditions that still exist today. The citizens of Fribourg love to serve their regional products. The undisputed crowning glory is the multi-course Bénichon feast, which gives thanks for the harvest and celebrates the return of the cows and their herders from their high summer pastures. Originally, the festivities included the blessing of the village church. Apart from small variations, the traditional sequence of dishes has not changed since 1852: Cuchaule AOP (saffron bri-

oche) with Bénichon mustard; broth and boiled beef; Jambon de la Borne AOP, saucisson, cabbage, green beans; leg of lamb, mashed potatoes, Poire à Botzi AOP; Gruyère AOP and Vacherin Fribourgeois AOP; meringues and double cream served in a small wooden pail, fruit, small cakes, puff pastry tarts, biscuits with sugar crystals, 'bricelets', and anise biscuits. In autumn, several restaurants also serve up this wholesome meal. The cantonal Bénichon festival will be held in Gurmels *from 29 September to 1 October 2023*. >>

## WHERE DELIGHTS ARE SHOWCASED



**'Moitié-moitié' fondue** – The winning recipe for four people is as follows: rub the fondue pot (caquelon) with a clove of garlic. Mix 400g of grated Gruyère AOP and 400g of grated Vacherin Fribourgeois AOP (insiders swear by a mix of mature and mild cheese), one teaspoon of cornflour and 300ml of white wine. Slowly bring to the boil whilst stirring continuously until the cheese is silky smooth. Season with pepper and serve with chunks of bread and/or potatoes. Bon appétit! >>



**Culinary capital 2023** – The city of Fribourg will play host to the national 'Semaine du Goût' (14 to 24 September). There are also a host of culinary events lined up for 2023 that will showcase seasonal produce, regional specialities and sustainable cuisine. >>

## AOP MEAT PRODUCTS



In 2021 Fribourg's traditional smoked ham, Jambon de la Borne AOP, became the first meat product to be awarded the protected designation of origin label. This local speciality is the star of any Bénichon menu. La Jambonnière, in Mézières, even offers a mail order service for its award-winning ham and other specialities. >> Boutefas, a type of uncooked sausage made in Fribourg and Vaud, was also awarded the AOP label at the end of 2021. >>

## CHOCOLATE HEAVEN



Maison Cailler is legendary. From 26 August 2023, a new train service will take travellers from Bern directly to Broc-Fabrique. In Fribourg city, Chocolat Villars has recently opened the experience boutique 'La Fabrik'. There is also world champion chocolatier Jorge Cardoso, who amazes visitors with his incredible life-size sculptures in the Rue de Lausanne. The Chocolaterie de Gruyères and the studio of chocolatier Romain Leemann in Bulle are well worth a visit too. >>

## SENSLER BRÄTZELE



These flat, crispy and deeply savoury waffles are part of the cultural and culinary heritage of the Sense district. You can buy them, for example, at the Schwaller family's farm shop in St. Antoni. >>

## A MORNING ON AN ALPINE FARM



Gruyère AOP and Vacherin Fribourgeois AOP never taste better than in their place of origin. A day on the Alpine pastures is an unforgettable experience. At the Vounetz Alpine hut, for example, visitors can participate in the working day of an Alpine farming family, from milking the cows and making cheese (8.30–10.30 am) to sampling the products made on the farm. Similar offers are available in the Schwarzsee and Moléson regions. >>

## FRESH FISH

The inhabitants of the canton of Fribourg love fish and there is a good reason why. Lake Murten and Lake Neuchâtel are home to 20 species of fish, including the catfish and other delicious species like European perch, zander, fera and brown trout. Some professional fishermen like Claude and Cyrille Delley on Lake Neuchâtel and Pierre Schaer on Lake Murten take guests on the boat with them. Locally caught fish are very popular. For example, the restaurants Du

Port and Le Rive Sud in Estavayer-le-Lac, the Bel-Air in Praz, the Du Port in Môtier, as well as the Bad Murtensee restaurant in Murten and gourmet restaurants in Fribourg offer excellent fish dishes. Children in particular believe that the fish they catch themselves taste the best. At the trout farm in Neirivue, you can try your hand at a spot of fishing, and a number of restaurants in the Intyamou Valley will cook your catch exactly how you want it. >>

## POIRE À BOTZI AOP



The tiny Poire à Botzi AOP (botzi = patois for bunch) is not easy to grow, is difficult to preserve, and does not offer a reliable yield. Despite this, it is a much-cherished part of Fribourg's culinary heritage and even has its own powerful and devoted lobby – in Switzerland and abroad – the 100-strong Confrérie de la Poire à Botzi. >>

## FOOD FESTIVALS



The historic town of Gruyères will host the 'Fête du Fromage' (7 May 2023) which celebrates the region's cheesemaking heritage. Events will also include alpenhorn concerts, as well as demonstrations of traditional crafts like shingle-making. >> The 'Goûts et Terroirs' food fair in Bulle is a tasty day out for food lovers (1 to 5 November 2023). >> Murten's legendary truffle market (18 to 19 November 2023) is a must for fans of this funky edible fungus. >>

## CRAFT BEER



There are several small craft breweries established in Fribourg that uphold the craft of traditional brewing and make it accessible. How about a brewing course? >>

## TASTE MY FRIBOURG



Fribourg in five courses: This food tour kicks off with Cuchaule at Le Point Commun café in the city centre. Next stop, Les Trentenaires for a glass of craft beer and cheese before heading to the Cathedral and some more liquid refreshment at Les Marchands Merciers. The tour ends at the Brasserie de l'Épée, in the Old Town, for a glass of Fribourg wine, a main course, dessert and coffee. >>

## VULLY WINES

With 150 hectares of vineyards, Vully on Lake Murten is the smallest of Switzerland's major winegrowing regions. The main grape varieties grown here are Chasselas (41%) and Pinot noir (28%), Gamaret, Merlot, Pinot gris and Chardonnay. There are also two speciality varieties, Freiburger (Freisamer) and Traminer (Gewürztraminer), both of which are subject to the 'Vully Charter' that aims to enhance their status. Local winemakers will open their cellars *during the weekend of 26 to 28 May 2023*. This is a fabulous chance to

get an inside look at these tradition-steeped wineries, many of which are still family-run. For foodies, there are two unmissable events: the 'Vully Gourmet Path' (24 June 2023), and the 'Balade gourmande' (15 July 2023). Last but not least, there is the Grape Harvest Festival in Praz on 16 and 17 September 2023. Of course, visitors can follow the three scenic vineyard trails at other times of the year as well, and maybe even combine their walk with a boat cruise on Lake Murten. >>

## GOURMET RESTAURANTS



A total of 33 restaurants are listed in the 2023 Gault & Millau guide for the canton of Fribourg, six more than the previous year. Pierrot Ayer, chef at Le Pérolles, and Romain Paillereau, the new chef at Les Trois Tours in Bourgillon, both received 17 points. La Cène and the Hôtel de Ville, in Fribourg city, as well as Le Sommet in the Hotel Les Montagnards (Broc) and the Pinte des Mossettes (Cerniat) were all awarded 16 points. Insider tip: Com'ça and L'Ecu (12 points) in Bulle. >>

## BÉNICHON RESTAURANTS



There is a good chance that from August to November local restaurants will be serving up the Bénéichon menu. The multi-course meal was originally enjoyed at home, but now you can order it in restaurants like the Gasthof zum Schlüssel in Ueberstorf or the Café Tivoli in Châtel-St-Denis. A few family farms become pop-up bistros during Bénéichon season. You can also buy vacuum-packed, ready-to-serve Bénéichon menu sets from local butchers around Fribourg. >>

## ORGANIC FOOD



The second edition of the culinary tour of Murten's Old Town will be held on *22 and 23 September*. Local organic farmers will showcase their wares, top chefs will transform this produce into mouth-watering meals, and the public will raise a glass! >>

## ORGANIC VEGETABLE DAY



*On Sunday, 2 July 2023*, Kerzers, Galmiz and Fräschels in Fribourg's Seeland will host the first 'Organic Vegetable Day'. Over 60 vegetable varieties are grown throughout the year in the 'Kitchen Garden of Switzerland', from rhubarb and asparagus in spring, and salads and summer veg, to squash and cabbage in the autumn. The day will be a chance for the organic farmers to explain what they do, present their philosophy, share tips, and let the public sample their delicious seasonal produce. Exploring this land of plenty by bike or on foot is sure to be entertaining. >>

## LEGENDARY CAKES FROM LAKE MURTEN

Mixing up Nidelkuchen and Vully Tart is not a good idea. 'Nidel' means cream. The Aebersold bakery has been producing the Murtner Nidelkuchen for three generations. Ulrike Aebersold and her team know exactly how to place five different layers of cream on the yeast dough to ensure that the cake comes out of the oven with its unique and mouthwatering caramel taste. >>

The Vully Tart has a larger lobby, namely Vully wine-growers. They consider the tarts to be an ideal accompaniment to wine, serving the freshly baked tarts with an aperitif, as a savoury snack with bacon or almonds, or the original sweet version with its handmade 'love wells' filled with caramelised sugar. Visitors can buy Vully Tart at the Guillaume bakery in Sugiez, and elsewhere. >>

## MARKET DAYS



The region of Fribourg has a vibrant and popular market tradition. Filled with produce from the Fribourg Pre-Alps, local farms, kitchens and wine cellars, market day is a real feast for the eyes! Whether in Fribourg, Bulle, Estavayer-le-Lac, markets of all kinds – food, bric a brac or crafts – are a moment of joy, with a joke or friendly chat here, a recipe or helpful tip there. They bring a sense of community and embody the spirit of the people of Fribourg. >>

## CUCHAULE AOP



The buttery, fragrant saffron brioche is the star of Fribourg's Bénichon menu and an integral part of its culinary heritage. Today, the irresistible bread speciality is available all year round. To preserve the high standards of Cuchaule AOP, the Confrérie des Chevaliers du Bon Pain holds an annual competition. The all-important saffron should be homegrown, but imports are also allowed. >>

## DESSERT



Fluffy, sugary, crumbly, velvety soft, crunchy and creamy: Fribourg's iconic meringues with La Gruyère double cream is in a very sweet class of its own! >>

## MUSTARD COMPETITION



Bénichon mustard may be best described as a sweet and tangy spicy preserve. The recipe requires concentrated pear juice (vin cuit), mustard, flour, sugar, anise, cinnamon and cloves, as well as a pinch of... that's a secret!. A major competition takes place in Estavayer-le-Lac (26 to 27 August 2023) to award the title of 'Best Bénichon mustard in the canton of Fribourg'. >>

## FONDUE – ANYTIME, ANYWHERE

Fondue is a sizzling love affair and can be enjoyed anytime and anywhere, for example in the beach bar La Dérive, by the Cable Ski lift in Estavayer-le-Lac. In Murten, the ultimate address is called Freiburger Falle. The sunset fondue on the summit of the Moléson or in the Alpine tavern Le Vuipay in Les Paccots is the ultimate culinary pleasure. In Cerniat, the Gros Chaumiaux Alpine cheese dairy attracts visitors, and in Schwarzsee, Raemy's goat farm offers a fondue made from goat's cheese. Fondue is served during a horse-drawn carriage ride or a round trip on Lake Murten. In Fribourg, the Café de l'Ange serves a fondue pot divided into three sections. The legendary Café du Gothard is also a sure bet. >>

## CONTACT

We would be happy to help with any queries you have or offer interesting media coverage ideas.

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