
TARTE FLAMBÉE

BY CHRISTOPHER LEE

Tarte flambée—or flammeküche, as it's known in German-speaking areas—is a rustic tart of onions, lardons, and crème fraîche. There's nothing like it in the United States. The usual comparison to pizza is perfunctory, even when covered in good Gruyère. When well done, it is remarkable. These days crème fraîche and fromage blanc are available in many stores and at many farmers' markets. The dish is scrumptious with the delicious Gentil d'Alsace from Meyer-Fonné.

DOUGH

2 cups all-purpose flour
5 ounces cold, cubed
unsalted butter
2 pinches sea salt
2–3 ounces ice water

Blend flour, butter, and sea salt together to cornmeal stage; a plastic bowl scraper works well for this. Add ice water a spoonful at a time, adding just what you need to form dough into a ball. Do not knead the dough more than you have to; overworking toughens the dough. Press dough into a flat disc, wrap in plastic, and refrigerate for a couple of hours or overnight.

FILLING

4 ounces smoked bacon, cut
into 1-by-¼-inch lardons
2 yellow onions, peeled, core
removed, thinly sliced
2 tablespoons whole butter
3 ounces crème fraîche
3 ounces *fromage blanc*
½ teaspoon sea salt
Pinch of nutmeg
2 ounces whipping cream

Simmer bacon in ½ cup of water over medium heat until water evaporates. Lower heat and brown bacon, stirring often, about 3 minutes. Drain bacon in a strainer and cool to room temperature. Sauté onions in butter over medium heat, about 15 minutes; then turn heat to low and continue to cook onions until they are tender but without color, about 10 minutes more; tip off any excess fat. Cool to room temperature.

Remove the dough from the fridge and roll dough out on a floured surface, either a round or rectangle, as you like. Lay dough on parchment paper on a baking sheet. Combine crème fraîche and *fromage blanc*, salt, and nutmeg, and spread evenly on the surface of the dough to within ½ inch of the edge of the dough. Distribute onions on cheese also to within ½ inch of the edge. Distribute bacon evenly over onions. Fold edge of dough over onions by about 1 inch, or flute the edge. Brush lightly with cream. Chill for 30 minutes in fridge. Bake at 425° F for 18–20 minutes, turning twice, until tart is golden on top and bottom is lightly browned.

Serves 6



Christopher Lee is a former head chef of Chez Panisse and Eccolo restaurants in Berkeley and co-founder of Pop-Up General Store in Oakland. Visit his website: oldfashionedbutcher.com.



**2015 LIRAC “LE CLASSIQUE”
DOMAINE DU JONCIER**

Great values abound in the southern Rhône: with the region’s abundance of favorable *terroirs*, digging just a little bit can yield bargain wines of depth, substance, and authentic local character. The Lirac appellation, for example, shares the same famous *galets roulés*—large, rounded alluvial riverbed stones—as across the Rhône in Châteauneuf-du-Pape, easily the region’s most prestigious appellation. These soils offer good drainage, forcing the vine roots to dig deep for moisture and nutrients, all while reflecting the sun’s heat to assist in ripening. Correspondingly, the wines of Lirac express a sun-imbued generosity in the form of potent aromas of dark fruit, with matching concentration on the palate that makes them ideal companions to roast meats, ratatouille, and other richly flavored Mediterranean dishes. Joncier’s Lirac, a blend of Syrah with Grenache, Mourvèdre, Cinsault, and Carignan, offers chewy tannins and penetrating flavors that recall a hot summer afternoon in beautiful southern France.



\$26.00 per bottle \$280.80 per case

—ANTHONY LYNCH



Lirac vineyards with Mont Ventoux in the distance

© Clark Z. Terry

**2017 GENTIL D’ALSACE
MEYER-FONNÉ**

The pinnacle of Alsatian wine is undoubtedly expressed with its famed *grand cru* Rieslings and Pinot Gris, as well as its mesmerizing, long-lived late-harvest wines. But consider the other end of the spectrum: entry-level Alsations offer a delicious introduction to the region at approachable prices, while their versatile, refreshing nature makes them apt for virtually any situation. Meyer-Fonné’s Gentil showcases three local grapes—Riesling, Pinot Blanc, and Muscat—in a dry style, featuring delicate floral aromatics and a crisp, zippy finish. This ethereal charmer, which can be sipped on its own as an apéritif, complements a wide range of cuisines. Alsatian cured meats, like smoked ham, or the perennial *tarte flambée* are no-brainers, but this white’s exotic perfume and lithe body also pair well with the cuisine of Southeast Asia. Pop open a bottle at your next picnic or, better yet, bring one to your favorite Vietnamese restaurant for a seamless match.



\$19.00 per bottle \$205.20 per case

—ANTHONY LYNCH

					
2015 Lirac “Le Classique” <i>Domaine du Joncier</i>	65% Syrah, 20% Grenache, 10% Mourvèdre, 5% Cinsault & Carignan	9- to 43-year- old vines Alluvial soils with large <i>galets roulés</i>	Serve <i>slightly cool</i> 60–64° F Decant optional	Dark fruit, thyme, lavender Stony, rich, bold	Drink now through 2025
2017 Gentil d’Alsace <i>Meyer-Fonné</i>	50% Riesling, 25% Muscat, 25% Pinot Blanc	Granite, clay, limestone	Serve <i>cold</i> 46–52° F Decant optional	Lychees, yellow raspberries, chamomile Elegant, dry, chalky	Drink now through 2020

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