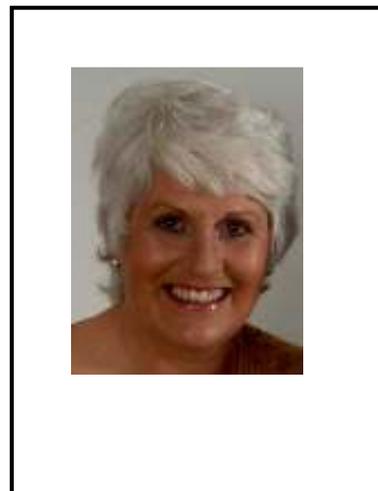


## First, catch your frog...

May we propose some oyster and champagne soup from Brittany with Normandy lettuce bread, Loire Valley frogs' legs and Chinon roasted swan? Do you fancy knocking up a sausage made from pigs' intestines, or a whole cow's tongue cooked in a delicious sauce? Or perhaps you'd like to go for some less exotic dishes regularly served up in the country kitchens and 'ouvrier' working men's cafés of northern France.



Donella East has spent the last twenty years exploring the rural hinterlands of France while organising and trying to prevent her travel writer husband George from getting into too much trouble.

On route she has collected a host of traditional, unusual, rare and sometimes outrageous - but always real - recipes from French country cooks and the obliging owners of one of France's best-kept culinary secrets.

As the magic hour of midday approaches, tens of thousands of rural bars across the country open their doors to gangs of working men in search of a cheap and filling meal. All those diners are also looking for the sort of food they and their ancestors would expect to be served at home.

Now, four carrier bags' worth of menus and recipes written on the back of beer mats have been collated by their owner to represent a complete range of French rural dishes. There are more than 150 recipes for starters, main meals, puddings, cakes, bread and the occasional culinary oddity in this first of a series covering every part of France, so enjoy your first cook's tour around the kitchens and cafés of eight very different regions.

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