



# COOKING TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

**Au gratin:** Topped with crumbs and/or grated cheese and browned in the oven or under the broiler.

**Au jus:** Served in its own juices (particularly, roast beef).

**Baste:** To pour or spoon pan drippings, marinade, or cooking juices over meats while cooking to prevent drying out and to add flavor.

**Bisque:** A thick cream soup.

**Blanch:** To immerse in rapidly boiling water and allow to cook slightly; to parboil.

**Boil:** To heat a liquid until large bubbles break on the surface. The boiling temperature of water at sea level is 212°F (100°C). A rolling boil is simply a vigorous boil. The boiling point is reached when a liquid is heated just until it begins to form bubbles.

**Bone:** To remove the bones from meat, poultry, or fish, to "de-bone."

**Braise:** To brown meat, lightly coated in flour, over high heat in a small amount of fat, or under broiler, and then to simmer it in seasoned liquids in a covered pot.

**Bread:** To cover with fine dry bread crumbs before cooking.

**Cream:** To soften a fat, especially butter, by beating it at room temperature. Butter and flour or butter and sugar are often creamed together, to make a smooth, soft paste.

**Crimp:** To seal the edges of a two-crust pie either by pinching them at intervals with the fingers or by pressing them together with the tines of a fork.

**Crudités:** An assortment of raw vegetables (sliced carrots, celery, mushrooms, broccoli flowerets, cauliflower flowerets, and so on) served as an hors d'oeuvre often accompanied by a dip.

**Cube:** To cut into cubes 1/2" on a side or larger. See also "dice" and "mince".

**Curdle:** To clot or coagulate (particularly when speaking of milk, cream, and such sauces as cream sauces and hollandaise).

**Cut In:** To combine solid fats and dry ingredients, especially shortening and flour, by chopping with two knives or with a pastry blender.

**Degrease:** To remove fat from the surface of stews, soups, or stock. Usually, the latter is allowed to cool in the refrigerator, so that fat hardens and is easily removed.

**Dice:** To cut into cubes less than 1/2 inch in size. See also "cube" and "mince".

**Dredge:** To coat lightly with flour, cornmeal, etc.

**Drippings:** Juices and browned particles that collect in the bottom of the pan in which meat or poultry has been roasted; used to enrich and flavor sauces and gravies.

**Entree:** The main course.

**Fillet:** To de-bone meat or fish. A fillet is the resulting tenderloin of beef or piece of fish without bones.

**Fines herbes:** A mixture of finely minced herb (usually parsley, tarragon, chervil, and chives.) Used to flavor omelets, mayonnaise, and salad dressings.

**Flake:** To separate into small pieces in the direction of the grain; used particularly when speaking of fish.

**Fold:** To incorporate a delicate substance, such as whipped cream or beaten egg whites, into another substance without releasing air bubbles. A spatula is used to gently bring part of the mixture from the bottom of the bowl to the top; the process is repeated, while slowly rotating the bowl until the ingredients are thoroughly blended.

**Fricassee:** Braised meat or poultry To cooking liquid is usually a white sauce.

**Fry / Pan-fry-** To cook food in hot oil or fat, usually over direct heat. The food is not stirred, but is simply cooked on one or both sides. Deep-fat fry- To cook food by immersing it completely in heated fat. Stir-fry- A Chinese method of preparing meat or vegetables by cooking very rapidly in a frying pan or wok over high heat, stirring constantly. See also "sauté".

**Glaze:** To cover with a glossy coating, either a concentrated stock for meats or a melted and somewhat diluted jelly for fruit desserts.

**Julienne:** To cut meats, vegetables, fruits, or cheeses into match-shaped slivers. See also "sliver".

**Macerate:** To soak peeled fruits in a mixture of lemon juice, sugar syrup, and wine or a liqueur. (The mixture should be placed in the refrigerator and allowed to steep for at least 2 hours.)

**Marinade:** Usually a strong flavored liquid, cooked or uncooked, used to make meats tastier and more tender; typically made of wine, olive oil, or a combination of the two, and seasoned with carrots, onion, bay leaf, and other herbs and spices. Other popular marinades are based on soy sauce or lemon juice. A dry marinade is a combination of herbs and spices rubbed into meat, which is then allowed to stand before cooking. To marinate is to let food stand in marinade, either at room temperature or (for a longer time) in the refrigerator, before cooking. Most recipes specify the length of time to marinate; recipes can vary from ½ hour to over-night to a couple of days.

**Meunlere:** Dredged with flour and □autéed in butter.

**Mince:** To chop into very small pieces. See also "cube" and "dice".

**Parboil:** To boil until partially cooked; to blanch. Usually, this procedure is followed by final cooking in a seasoned sauce.

**Pare:** To remove the outermost skin of a fruit or vegetable.

**Plump:** To soak dried fruit, most often raisins, in warm water before cooking or adding to batter.

**Poach:** To cook very gently in hot liquid kept just below the boiling point.

**Puree:** To mash foods until perfectly smooth by hand, by rubbing through a sieve or food mill, or by whirling in a blender or food processor.

**Reduce:** To boil down a liquid until the quantity has decreased to about half of its original volume; its flavor becomes more concentrated.

**Refresh:** To run cold water over food that has been parboiled, to stop the cooking process quickly.

**Render:** To obtain fat from small pieces of meat by heating until it melts. Sometimes called trying out.

**Roux:** Pronounced "Roo". A mixture of flour and butter used as the base for a sauce. White roux is cooked briefly without browning (to make sure that the sauce will not have a raw-flour flavor); for a brown roux, the flour-butter mixture is allowed to brown evenly before the liquid is added.

**Saute:** To cook and/or brown food in a small quantity of very hot fat, stirring or turning frequently. See also "fry".

**Scald:** To heat to just below the boiling point, when tiny bubbles appear at the edge of the saucepan.

**Score:** To cut shallow slits or lines into meat or fish, usually in a diamond pattern. As well as being decorative, scoring allows seasonings to penetrate more easily. Score the fat edge of steaks to be broiled, to keep them from curling.

**Sear:** To brown and seal the surface of meat quickly, in a very hot oven or in a frying pan, over high heat.

**Simmer:** To cook in liquid just below the boiling point. The surface of the liquid should be barely moving, broken from time to time by slowly rising bubbles.

**Sliver:** To cut into long thin pieces. See also "julienne".

**Steep:** To let food stand in (hot) liquid to extract or to enhance flavor, like tea in hot water or poached fruits in sugar syrup.

**Supreme:** The breast of a fowl (usually boned).

**Toss:** To combine ingredients gently with a lifting motion.

**Truss:** To fasten the wings and legs of poultry. with skewers or string, before cooking.

