

# 11 A bite to eat

Choose the word or phrase which best completes each sentence. Give one answer only to each question:

1. Indian food's too spicy for my .....  
a. appetite    b. desire    c. flavour    d. liking
2. You do the cooking and I'll wash up .....  
a. in return    b. by return    c. in revenge    d. to reciprocate
3. Air, food and water are ..... to life.  
a. indispensable    b. inevitable    c. indisputable    d. indestructible
4. The inconvenience of going on a diet is ..... by the benefits.  
a. overbalanced    b. outranked    c. overthrown    d. outweighed
5. The kitchen has been designed so that all the things you need are conveniently .....  
a. to hand    b. in hand    c. by hand    d. out of hand
6. Dieticians have recently ..... suggestions for a complete reform in our eating habits.  
a. come up to    b. put forward    c. made up    d. taken out
7. Teetotallers ..... from drinking alcohol.  
a. avert    b. abstain    c. evade    d. abscond
8. You'd better not drink too much of that stuff. It's extremely .....  
a. lethal    b. toxic    c. potent    d. fatal
9. If you want to lose weight, you should ..... the number of sweets and chocolates you eat.  
a. come down with    b. take out of    c. cut down on    d. watch out for
10. Chocolate cake's an irresistible temptation for somebody who's got a sweet .....  
a. appetite    b. palate    c. taste    d. tooth
11. If there's no coffee left, we'll have to ..... tea.  
a. do up with    b. make do with    c. do away with    d. make up with
12. The tomatoes are still green — they aren't ..... yet.  
a. developed    b. mature    c. ripe    d. seasoned
13. If there's one thing I can't ..... it's soggy vegetables.  
a. appeal to    b. bare    c. support    d. bear
14. The pudding was so delicious I had a second .....  
a. go    b. helping    c. plate    d. serving

## FOOD ,GLORIOUS FOOD

- 1.What would be your ideal starter, main course and dessert?
- 2.Given the choice between fried insects, boiled monkey brains or haggis what would you choose?
- 3.What is the best thing and the worst thing you have tried on holiday?
- 4.Do you enjoy watching TV chefs and ,if so, who is your favourite?
- 5.If you owned a restaurant what kind of dishes would you serve?
- 6.Can you remember something you ate as a child which always brings back memories?
- 7.Think of some phrases we use at the dinner table e.g. before/during the meal.
- 8.For me food is .....



## 5.3 Running a restaurant

## READING AND SPEAKING

A



Discuss these questions:

- What do you think are the pros and cons of running a restaurant? Would you like to run a restaurant? Give your reasons.
- If you were going to open a restaurant or café near where you live, what kind of food would you serve? What kind of atmosphere would you try to create?
- From a restaurateur's point of view, what are the attributes of an ideal customer?
- From a customer's point of view, what are the qualities of a good restaurant?

B

Seven paragraphs have been removed from this article. Choose the most suitable paragraph from the list A–G for each gap (1–7) in the article.

# The British are coming

"A stone's throw from the Palais des Festivals," says the Michelin Guide. "Pleasant dining room, partly vaulted, recently redecorated: pearl-grey walls, plum furniture and careful lighting. Specialities: foie gras in a potato ribbon; fillet of bass in mussel soup; passion fruit sorbet."

But the bit that matters lies just to the left of that sober piece of text: a single, discreet rosette. It was awarded, last week, to a new Cannes restaurant called Neat, named after its chef, Richard. He has just become the first British restaurateur since the Second World War to win a Michelin star in France.

1

"I suppose it would have been sensible to be a little apprehensive," he says. "But to be honest, I didn't even think about it. I'm surrounded by professionals, and provided you're honest, provided you serve up a quality product for a reasonable price, you'll do well. That's always been my philosophy, and it's the same here."

2

"In a way, I'm a pure product of France," he says frankly, drawing on a post-lunch cigarette. "I've been working in France or with French people for the past 18 years. It wouldn't be honest or sensible of me to be aggressively British about anything – and I'm hardly about to bite the hand that feeds me."

Nonetheless, his rapid promotion to one-star status in France, an honour for which many French chefs spend years slaving over hot vol-au-vents, has raised eyebrows. The local press has had a field day, and even national television has made the trip down to the chic Mediterranean resort town where Neat, 33, settled with his French wife Sophie in September.

Cannes was, he says, a very deliberate choice for his new venture. It was a challenge he set himself after giving up Pied à Terre, getting married and taking off on a two-year extended honeymoon to India (during which, Neat admits, he did very little except perfect his crawl in various hotel swimming pools and become a "really rather good" amateur chess player).

3

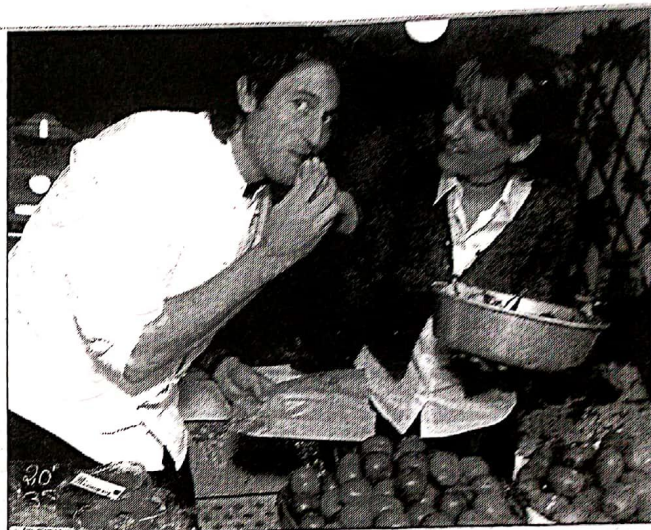
"Cannes has a longer season than anywhere else. There are film, TV and music festivals here, conferences and congresses from January to November. And there are 150,000 Brits living within 45 minutes' drive, plus another 50,000 every summer."

4

That being no way to run a restaurant, the Frenchman was "practically on his knees, begging us to buy it" seven months later; Neat was born, and at roughly half the price its owners would have had to pay for it half a year earlier. The restaurant, redecorated by Sophie, seats 45 in winter and will take 55 when the terrace is open in summer.

Finding the right staff was no problem, Neat says – though in the end they came from a somewhat unexpected source. The first hire was Mike, an old acquaintance from the Manoir, who was on holiday in Cannes and visiting a girlfriend at the Carlton Hotel nearby.

"He recognised the name and showed up two weeks after we opened," Neat says. "He came in for a coffee and about half an hour later was asking for a job. I told him working here was different to being on holiday, but he was back in a week with his knives. It was a fait accompli."





5

A battalion of Brits behind the saucepans didn't exactly go down a bundle with the local restaurateurs, however, particularly when the sought-after star came Neat's way. The reaction from the local trade was, he concedes, "underwhelming". But his customers – the congress business, a highly enthusiastic British community, and a small but growing band of Frenchmen – are delighted.

"Sophie tells me the French who come in here are a little bit sceptical at first," Neat says. "But they take the plunge, they see it's a professional operation, they like what they eat – and they come back."

6

There are many in Britain, and a growing number in France, who will dispute the value to a restaurant of a Michelin star. The venerable red guide, which this year celebrates its 100th anniversary, is accused of favouring the traditional over the inventive, and of placing as much emphasis on the fripperies as on the food. More than one chef in both countries has turned down a star.

But Neat, unashamedly, is not one of the doubters. "I've worked in gastronomic restaurants for 13 years now," he says. "I like working in them because you can charge enough to buy the best produce, to get top personnel, and to attract the best clientele – people who really enjoy their food, are knowledgeable about what they're doing."

7

So would he like a second star? "One, two, three, I don't know," he says. "I want to run a good restaurant, but I want a life too. Right now the most important thing is that I can do that right here – and wear shorts and sunglasses 10 months of the year."

Progress to Proficiency (Jones) Cambridge Press

John Henley

- A "It's a fact that gastronomy is judged in certain ways. Now I didn't set the goalposts, but I know what they are, and Michelin is the most creditable organisation currently giving ratings to gastronomy. I want to run a restaurant I'm proud of, and Michelin is the measure."
- B "This was a good place for a lot of reasons," he says. "Sophie studied at Nice just along the coast, and the south of France is her adopted home."
- C A month later came Elliot, a friend of Mike's "who does the pastry". Then Warren, Neat's old sous-chef at Pied à Terre, pitched up, and finally Jimmy, who was a good friend of Warren's. It's the best way to recruit people, Neat says: everyone can vouch for everyone else.
- D Neat's three-course lunchtime menu is priced at 220 francs, and the dinner equivalent is 270 francs: good value by Cannes' standards and a downright steal by London's. The dishes, with the exception of his trademark snails with mushrooms and garlic purée, are all new since the chef's Pied à Terre days.
- E Nor, he points out diplomatically, can the quality product he is serving up be described as English in any meaningful sense of the word. Having served under such French gurus as Raymond Blanc at the Manoir aux Quat' Saisons and Joel Robuchon in Paris, and spent 14 months with "the great unwashed" Marco Pierre White to boot, he is definitely more cuisinier than cook.
- F It took the couple and their business partner, Frenchman Bruno Asselin, some time to find the right venue, on the Place Mérimée about 30 yards from the Congress Centre. When they first arrived, the place had just been bought by a former French textiles executive who "rather fancied running a little bistro to keep himself from getting bored in his retirement," Neat says.
- G Words like coals and Newcastle may spring forcefully to mind, but Neat – formerly of the ritzy two-star London eatery Pied à Terre – insists he is not out to prove any kind of nationalist point, even if five out of the six kitchen staff in his new venture are English and it only took him six months to pick up the honour.



Ask your partners these questions:

In an average week . . .

- How often do you eat lunch out? How often do you eat dinner out?
- How many meals do you prepare or help to prepare?
- How many times do you lay the table and do the washing-up?
- How often do you go shopping for food items?
- How often do you eat as a family?
- How do your habits compare with those of a 'typical person' from your country?

# FOOD PREPARATION

Match a verb on the left with a food item on the right.

## PART 1

Pluck  
Crack  
Grate  
Knead  
Peel  
Skin  
Slice  
carve

cheese  
an orange  
a chicken  
a nut  
a rabbit  
a joint of meat  
dough  
a loaf

## PART 2

Mince  
Shell  
Toss  
Whip  
Stuff  
Mash  
Beat  
ice

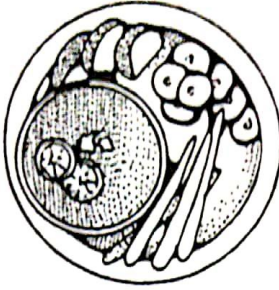
cream  
meat  
a hard-boiled egg  
eggs  
a cake  
a chicken  
a pancake  
potatoes

## EXPLAIN THE DIFFERENCE

starving and parched  
stale and mouldy  
peckish and ravenous  
rare and medium  
uneatable and inedible



## Food Idioms



Put the following words or phrases into the correct gap in the sentences below:

bigger fish	tough cookie	food for thought
in a jam	crumbs	the apple of their eye
my cup of tea	full of beans	spill the beans
humble pie	bananas	couch potato

1. He likes nothing better than sitting on the sofa all evening with a can of beer in his hand, watching the football on TV – he's such a .....
2. I've got to pay the electricity bill by tomorrow but I've got no money in the bank and I don't get paid until next week – I'm .....
3. She's always coming up with such crazy ideas – she's absolutely .....
4. He was very scared that I would go to the police and .....
5. Mary's unexpected decision has given us all .....
6. He just needs a cup of tea and a quick nap and then he'll be .....
7. Shopping for clothes is simply not .....
8. Bill is their only grandchild and so is .....
9. I thought Mary would keep working here this year but she had to give up the job as she has ..... to fry.
10. Anton was forced to eat ..... and publicly admit he had been wrong all along.
11. I wouldn't try it on with the boss, she's a real .....
12. Oh .....! I forgot to do my homework again.

Same again:

sardines	potato	beetroot	cucumber
water	pancake	hot cakes	toast

1. Even when everyone around him started getting stressed and panicking, she stayed **as cool as a** .....
2. When she asked him for a kiss he went **as red as a** .....
3. There are no or mountains hills in Mazowsia at all, the whole area is **as flat as a** .....
4. The pierogi filled with chocolate and peanut butter were a great success and were soon **selling like** .....
5. In the rush hour, it's hard even to get on to the bus because the passengers are **packed like** .....
6. On a cold, snowy winter evening, I like to be curled up in bed **as warm as** .....
7. She **spends money like** .....
8. As soon as her boss heard about her criminal record, he dropped her like a **hot** .....