

Some restaurants in Marseille

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First, a few quick words about top-class restaurants, for which I cannot do much better than my distinguished colleague Michelin, see <http://www.viamichelin.com>; to add a few comments:

- the best restaurant in Marseille is supposed to be **Le Petit Nice**, 160 corniche Kennedy, 0491592592, nouvelle cuisine and all that sort of things, at least 150 euros,
- the best bouillabaises can be found at **Chez Fonfon**, 0491521438, **L'Epuisette** 0491521782, both in Vallon des Auffes, or **Le Miramar**, 12 quai du Port (Vieux Port), 0491911040; at least 100 euros,
- intellectuals of Marseille meet at **Les Arcenaulx**, 27 cours d'Estienne d'Orves (near Vieux Port), 0491598030, around 50 euros.
- I do recommend **Les Mets de Provence Chez Maurice Brun**, 18 quai de Rive Neuve (Vieux Port), 0491333538, for very fine and original local cuisine in the region of 50-60 euros.
- the rising star is **Une Table au Sud**, 2 quai du Port (Vieux Port), 0491906353, inventive cuisine for 60 euros minimum.
- a classic fish restaurant in a beautiful surrounding is **Péron**, 119 prom Corniche John Kennedy, 0491310141, count at least 50 euros.

If you want to taste *bouillabaisse* without getting broke, the best idea is to be in **CIRM** on Thursday evening. You can also walk a few hours from Luminy (or go by car if you manage to steal one) to reach the city of Cassis, and dine at **Chez Gilbert** on the harbour. If you walk around the Vieux Port in Marseille, never try the cheap bouillabaises on the seafront, what would happen to you is unclear but supposed to be terrible. A reasonable place near Vieux Port is **Chez Loury**, 3 rue Fortia, 0491330973, if you take the cheap menu (about 20 euros, plus wine) in spite of the unfriendly way the waiters will look at you, and eat the simplified *bouillabaisse du ravi*, followed by the original sherbets with Provence herbs.

Now for a list of restaurants we do patronize regularly; note that prices may vary wildly according to which or how much wine you drink, wine being very expensive in French restaurants:

- An old favourite is **Chez Etienne**, 43 rue de Lorette, in the picturesque district of Panier. No phone, so come early or very late. No menu, but the canonical algorithm is to take first pizza (the best in the world, according to a guidebook from Marseille), then supions (young squid; unique in the world, according to the author of these lines) and pavé de boeuf (roast beef); some members of our team like to take a second pizza instead of dessert. No detailed bill, you will pay what the owner needs to earn that evening, but count around 40 euros.
- The second-best pizza in the world (the patronne is the niece of Etienne) is at **Le Carillon** place Notre Dame du Mont (half-way between Cours Julien and Préfecture), 0491475008; the service is slow but the prices very reasonable (15 euros). There are a few other *cheap restaurants* nearby.
- If you want to eat modern french cuisine in a refined place for around 25-30 euros, try **Le Florian**, 36 rue Ste-Cécile (walking distance from Place Castellane), 0491257078.
- A little more upmarket (the owners are devoted to the long-lost french monarchy) is **Cyprien**, 56 av Toulon (near Castellane), 0491255000; there is a cheap menu but the real gastronomic ones are above 30 euros.
- The **Assiette Lyonnaise**, 102 cours Julien, 0491423721, has rich andouillette and gras-double, and a lighter provenal menu, with inventive variations and excellent house wine, 25 euros.
- In the **Resto Provenal**, 64 cours Julien, 0491488512, try the soupe de poisson and faux-filet (roast beef), 25-30 euros.
- **La Gentiane**, 9 rue des Trois-Rois (near Cours Julien), 0491428880, is a small place with good traditional french cooking for less than 20 euros.
- If you like good smelly french cheeses, go to **La Cloche à Fromages**, 27 cours d'Estienne d'Orves (near Vieux Port), 0491548538, 25 euros or more.
- simple, fresh seafood can be found **Chez Toinou**, 18 cours St Louis (near Canebière), 0491540879, for 30 euros and more.
- **Il Canaletto**, 6 cours Jean Ballard (near Vieux Port), 0491339012, is a good Italian restaurant for 25 euros.
- **Le Nul Part Ailleurs**, 18 quai de Rive Neuve (Vieux Port), 0491335895, has standard french cooking for 20 euros, but will have room when everything else is full.
- **L'Entrecôte du Port**, 6 quai de Rive Neuve (Vieux Port), 0491338484, has reasonable meat for 20-25 euros.
- **Pavillon Thai**, 28 rue des Trois Frères Barthélémy (near Cours Julien), 0496124619, has a wonderful soup of chicken and coconut; 15-20 euros.

- **Anh Nam**, 27 bis rue d'Italie (near Préfecture), 0491482003, is a good cheap chinese/vietnamian for 15 euros.
- The speciality of present-day Marseille is *couscous*, and if you like it you will never be disappointed. The cheapest are to be found in the more ethnic districts, and if you walk on boulevard d'Athènes (below the railway station) or near Canebière you will find some good meals for 10 euros (beware of pickpockets though). One good address for about 15 euros is **Tarzaret Majdid**, 25 allées Léon Gambetta (near Canebière), 0491085266.

Warning: almost all these restaurants are closed on Sunday evenings, and many of them on Monday evenings; la Gentiane and l'Assiette Lyonnaise are happy exceptions for Mondays. Some may also be closed for summer holidays, so it is always wiser to phone before coming. All comments and suggestions are welcome.

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