



Goût de France

a Global Dinner Party will take place on
March 21st to celebrate French Cuisine

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The custom of the French Meal and famous French gastronomic cuisine is protected as part of the *UNESCO Heritage*, which recognizes and celebrates its importance to French culture. In September, from the 21st to 23rd, the *Fête de la Gastronomie*, was held in Paris as chefs took to the streets and offered delicious culinary moments with tastings and more. On March 21st of each year (including the upcoming event on March 21st, 2019), a global dinner party called *Good France/Goût de France* is held, involving 3,000 chefs, 3,000 menus, across five continents, at restaurants and French embassies around the world.

“For four years, the *Goût de France/Good France*

event has been putting the spotlight on French cuisine all over the world,” states Madame Ambassador Kareen Rispal, the French Ambassador to Canada, who hosted the dinner at the French Embassy in Ottawa last March. “This important event, held on March 21st, celebrates the vitality of French cuisine and its values: togetherness, sharing and respect for the product and the environment. In 2018, more than 3,000 chefs in 152 countries offered a gastronomic meal à la française. This event has also been hosted by most French Embassies all around the world. Here in Ottawa, I wanted to host a gastronomic meal to honour women, an issue that is deeply important to me. This unique meal, prepared by both Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s chef Katie Brown-Ardington and the



far right Madame Ambassador Kareen Rispa, the French Ambassador to Canada.



Embassy's chef Laurent Provence, was a fundraising event for the Women Deliver organization."

Asked how French culinary and the traditional multi-course meal is protected under the *UNESCO Heritage Act*, Ambassador Rispa replies: "The gastronomic meal of the French was declared an intangible cultural heritage by *UNESCO* in 2010. Intangible cultural heritage plays an important role in preserving cultural diversity in the face of growing globalization. The gastronomic meal should respect a fixed structure, starting with an *apéritif* (drinks before the meal) and ending with liqueurs, with at least four courses in between, namely a starter, fish and/or meat with vegetables, cheese and dessert. The gastronomic meal emphasizes the purchase of good, preferably local products, the pairing of food with wine, the setting of a beautiful table, as well as togetherness."

These values are promoted by the Good France operation.

Asked to name her favourite French foods, the Ambassador replies: "There are so many, but I would say foie gras, bouillabaisse and raspberry pie. And above all: anything chocolate!"

Add French cheese to that list of course, which we are now seeing more of in Canada. "As part of the new *Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA)* signed in 2016 and in force since September 2017, Canada opened a new duty-free quota which will make a huge difference (remember that the normal duty for importing cheese into Canada is close to 300%) for European

cheese, including of course French cheese. Ultimately, the consumer will have access to greater variety and lower prices, which should change consumption habits and increase the overall demand for dairy products."

With so many new French cheeses soon to hit the market, Madame Ambassador offers her suggestions. "France is famous for having more different types of cheeses than there are days in a year, so this is a tough choice: if you like mild-tasting cheese, I would start with a goat *Tomme de Savoie*, but if you want something stronger, go straight to *Epoisses de Bourgogne!*"

Chefs from around the globe from fine dining restaurants to high-quality bistros are invited to apply to participate in *Goût de France* by submitting an application on the event website and offering a menu which showcases the culinary traditions of France. "An international selection committee of chefs, supported by the embassies, approves the list of participating chefs to ensure the quality and coherence of the menu", according to the French Diplomatie website.

The list of restaurants in the GTA and elsewhere who are participating in *Goût de France* on March 21st, 2019 will be published in mid February on the website of the French Consulate in Toronto toronto.consulfrance.org/ and the French Embassy in Ottawa at ca.ambafrance.org/. For more information on *Goût de France/Good France*, visit www.france.fr/en/campaign/gout-france-good-france and the France Tourism Development Agency at www.atout-france.fr 🇫🇷