Reading

##### Opening an English Restaurant in Lyons

Lyons is a city of culture, science, learning. And yet, people have chosen to remember Lyons for its cooking and for its restaurants. All over France Lyons is regarded as a kind of **gastronomic** paradise where the art of presenting food at the table has reached new heights. The people of Lyons have a very clear picture of what a restaurant should be like. I’m afraid, I didn’t think about that when I decided to open my restaurant in Lyons. For me, running a restaurant was the realization of a dream. And running a restaurant in Lyons was a great challenge.

Quite honestly, if there is one thing that the city of Lyons does not need, then that is another restaurant. It already has thousands of restaurants. In every street there are **cafes, bistros, bars, brasseries** and other sorts of **eating establishments.** It would be hard to find a single street in the town which is without some kind of restaurant. In certain gastronomic corners, there is al- most nothing else — whole streets are lined with restaurants. There are restau- rants offering **specialties** from all corners of the world: Chinese restaurants, Indian restaurants, Mexican restaurants; Thai-food restaurants, Spanish, Ital- ian and Portuguese restaurants; Brazilian restaurants, Norwegian and Russian restaurants. Then there are restaurants **specializing in** the **cuisine** from all the regions of France.

Much has been written about French **cooking.** The French consider their cuisine to be at the very top of **culinary** art. And a French person knows about cooking. Even as children in kindergarten, the French are already eating **three- course meals,** starting with mixed salads, continuing with meat or fish and ending up with cheese or dessert.

Lyons is famous for fine cuisine. It enjoys the reputation of a **gourmet** town. Lyons certainly considers itself to be the **gastronomic capital** of France, possibly of the world. It is the home of great chefs. There are **chefs** here who do their best in order to invent new **recipes** and to serve better and better **dishes** at more and more reasonable prices.

The people in Lyons are a good restaurant **clientele;** they love to **eat out.** True, they do not love to pay very much for their food — restaurants are cheaper in Lyons than in any other French town that I know.

Here, in the capital of **gastronomy, to run a restaurant** is a vocation, a genuine calling requiring absolute devotion.

In this situation, was it wise to open a restaurant in a back street of an old- fashioned area of town, filled with **bars** serving cheap lunchtime **menus?** Was it a good idea to name this restaurant “Mister Higgins” and to start an attack on French gastronomy by means of a cuisine — the British — which the French consider to be next to inedible?

Adapted from ‘‘Plat du Jour’’ by Tom Higgins