

## Menu Lingo Defined



Jim Franco

- **Au jus:** Served with natural juices.
- **Béchamel sauce:** A French white sauce made of flour, butter, and milk.
- **Beurre Blanc:** A basic French sauce made from white wine, vinegar, shallots, and butter.
- **Bouquet garni:** Bay leaf, thyme, parsley, and often other herbs tied together.
- **Canapé:** A small piece of bread topped with a savory spread, usually served as an appetizer.
- **Caramelized:** Cooked over moderate heat until the natural sugars break down. The result is a sweet flavor and a dark color.
- **Carpaccio:** Thinly sliced raw beef, often drizzled with olive oil and lemon juice. The term is occasionally used as a poetic way to describe thinly sliced raw vegetables, such as “fennel carpaccio.”
- **Cassoulet:** A French casserole with white beans and meat.
- **Confit:** Usually preserved meat, but this can mean anything that is preserved.
- **Coq au vin:** A French stew made with chicken, red wine, mushrooms, onions, and bacon.
- **Coulis:** A thick sauce often made from pureed fruit.
- **Crème Anglaise:** A custard sauce that can be served hot or cold.
- **Daikon:** A popular Japanese root vegetable.
- **Edamame:** Whole soybeans. Often served at sushi restaurants as an appetizer.
- **Emulsion:** The result of slowly mixing two liquids that don't easily combine.
- **Foie gras:** Fattened liver of a duck or a goose. It has a buttery flavor and a smooth texture. Often put in a pâté and served cold.
- **Frappé:** A simple sugar syrup mixed with fruit or other flavorings and frozen.
- **Ganache:** An icing made from chocolate and heavy cream.
- **Gaufrette:** A delicate, fan-shaped wafer cookie made on an oblong iron. Typically served as a garnish on ice cream.
- **Gnocchi:** Italian dumplings usually served with a sauce.
- **Granita:** Frozen liquid and sugar that is stirred frequently during freezing to create a granular consistency.
- **Gratinée:** Sprinkled with bread crumbs or cheese and heated until golden.
- **Harissa:** A spicy red chili paste from North Africa. It is a mixture of chilies, garlic, and spices.
- **Julienne:** Anything cut into thin, matchstick-size strips.
- **Napoleon:** Layers of puff pastry and cream filling, but the term can also refer to anything that comes stacked.
- **Osso buco:** Veal shanks braised in white wine with vegetables.
- **Panna cotta:** An eggless custard served chilled. essence: A distillate or extract.
- **Pico de gallo:** A combination of finely diced fresh ingredients — typically tomatoes, onions, chilies, and cilantro.
- **Poached:** Cooked while submerged in barely simmering liquid. A delicate flavor results.
- **Quenelle:** A poached oval dumpling, often made of veal or chicken.
- **Quinoa:** An ancient grain from the Andes.

- **Reduction:** The result of rapidly boiling a liquid until it becomes a thick, intensely flavored sauce or syrup.
- **Sabayon (or zabaglione):** A foamy sauce made from egg yolks, sweetened and flavored with wine or liqueur. Served warm.
- **Seared:** Quickly browned over high heat, typically in a skillet, and often with butter. This seals in the juices and flavor and results in a crisp, browned crust.
- **Seviche:** Raw fish or seafood marinated in citrus (usually lime) juice. The acid in the juice “cooks” the fish.
- **Spaetzle:** A dish of small noodles or dumplings made of flour, eggs, water or milk, and salt.
- **Succotash:** A dish of cooked corn, lima beans, and butter.
- **Velouté:** A meat, fish, or vegetable stock made with flour and fat.
- **Vichyssoise:** A cold potato-and-leek soup.
- **Wilted:** Gently sautéed until the leaves soften.

*Written by Kyle Spencer*  
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