

EURO Review[©]



Sensory French Dining

Bon Appétit et
Bon Ahhh – Petite!

You see impossibly tiny women throughout Paris. I'm petite, for heavens sake, and I feel chastised when I see women

looking sleek and stylish in their "0" Petite-sized garments. It's no surprise that the best-selling **French Women Don't Get Fat!** appealed to all of us who have marveled at the eating habits and minimal derrières of the Madames and Mademoiselles. All that bread? And wine? And chocolate éclairs? How do they do it?

According to the author, "French women think about good things to eat; American women typically worry about bad things to eat." She avoids "diet" clichés and encourages taking pleasure in food and enjoying a balanced lifestyle.

"Well, of course they're not overweight," I assert. "There's no room!" I imagine broad behinds trying to squeeze through Metro turnstiles or maneuver through the ever-so-tiny spaces between tables for two in cafes. No, it would require an entire overhaul of the bistro physical plant to accommodate plus-size customers.



Automobile re-design would be next. The "Smart Car" is far too intelligent to invite the likes of overeaters to join their driving ranks. The prevailing vehicles on the roads of Europe are mere waifs compared to the outsized SUVs that bully their way past normal little compacts in the U.S. When friends joined us for a ride in our four-door Peugeot, my long-legged husband had to take the passenger seat. There simply wasn't enough room for a passenger behind him in the driver's seat.



Europeans enjoy a life of diminished spaces. They relish huge salads for lunch, while they 'dine' and take time to taste, savor and converse. Or they find a quiet sunny spot in the park to watch passersby or read. They sip café from petite porcelain instead of downing a cream-laden latté in a half-gallon paper cup. Food provokes the senses like all of the arts surrounding the French.

Still, I tested my observations with a bit of research. Imagine my surprise at bold, ominous headlines with Ministers of Health decrying the rampant obesity throughout Europe. Thirty-page documents noted conditions, reasons, solutions. Marketing to children, changing lifestyles, television, computers, education – there’s always a truckload of contributing factors to any given health crisis. And that’s how they view it – as a threat to health, not appearance.

I’m not so sure the French woman would view obesity in the same way. Nor would the automakers or café owners.

When YOU go to Europe, bring your great walking shoes and hearty appetite, because you really can enjoy all of it. Sit quietly over your pear tarte and café crème. Order that little pichet of wine with your lunch. Wander through charming urban avenues and provincial village lanes. As you walk from the marketplace, pull pieces from the warm baguette under your arm, as a prelude to the meal that lies ahead.



You’ll discover the pleasures they’ve known for centuries. That food is a wonderful part of life, to be savored but not worshipped. And walking to the market or museum burns through the ham and cheese crepe that called your name. Bon appétit et bon voyage!



Mme. Mireille Guiliano, author of **French Women Don’t Get Fat: The Secret of Eating for Pleasure**, has stimulated the interest of women throughout the world. So much so, that she has published her second book, **French Women for All Seasons: A Year of Secrets, Recipes and Pleasure.**

Visit her website for a delightful mix of warm advice, tasteful recipes and treasured secrets of French women: **From Mireille Guiliano**

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