



Alliance Française

Auckland

Cultural Workshops 2024 for A2 level

A little about me:



My name is Sarah Renault – Le Breton. Although originally from La Rochelle (on the Atlantic coast, best seafood in France), I have become Parisian at heart. I am also a true lover of art, literature, cooking, theatre and photography. Being an expatriate and having travelled around the world for the past twenty years, I have found that it is always a pleasure to share the different aspects of our culture with people who are interested in France.

I am a certified Science teacher (Maths, Physics and Chemistry), and have a genuine passion for teaching. Unfortunately, our lifestyle has made it difficult for us to stay for a full school year in the same place, so that I am actively seeking other ways to share my knowledge and passions, whether it be science, art or simply the French way of life.

This is why I have decided, with the support of the Alliance française of Auckland, to animate dedicated workshops around French culture, and to share with the kiwis some of the more exciting aspects of our way of life. Hopefully, I can also use this opportunity to help practice or improve your French.

About the workshops' format

The concept is a series of 10 workshops, meant for intermediate and advanced French speakers. The intent is to help attendees practice and enhance their French proficiency through the discovery of aspects of the French culture that I find particularly meaningful. They are not classic courses for people who want to learn French through a more typical academic approach.

That being said, I still intend to make it as efficient and helpful as possible, with typical teaching tools, such as memos about the necessary vocabulary used during each session, and/or grammar reminders to help the students better understand the content of the class.

For each session, attendees will be asked to produce a small written essay and will have many opportunities to participate orally. The goal is to make the sessions as interactive as possible. Having had to learn several foreign languages myself, I know that the only way to really improve is to participate actively, and use every opportunity to actually speak.

Proposed list of topics for the workshops

- **Arts de la table et recettes:** Food is sacred to us, and it involves not only delivering the best dishes possible, but also presenting them in the ideal way. French cuisine is an art and a science. We will center this session around how to organize a French diner at home. From the table setting to the preparation and organisation of a casual or formal diner.
- **Architecture parisienne:** Paris is arguably the most beautiful city in the world (although the romans might not agree...). But it was not always that way, and went through many uplifts throughout its more than 2,000-year-old history. One of the main changes, which has made it into what it is today, is the entire rebuilding of its center by the baron Hausmann, as ordered by Napoleon III. We will study the history of this herculean task, through the maps, historical documents and photos that were already available at the end of the 19th century.
- **Stylisme et décoration française:** Every year, in September, one of the largest home design events of the world is organised in Paris. We will study the main trends through this event, and use it as an opportunity to discover another aspect of European fashion and design.
- **Mode "Parisienne":** Paris is one of the fashion capitals of the world, where fashion trends are made or broken. We will study different aspects of French fashion and comment (in French) famous catwalk videos.
- **Une personnalité française :** During the XVIIIth and XIXth centuries, France was an important place for culture. You will have the opportunity to discover one of our famous women and her different cultural aspects : Sarah Bernhardt.
- **Littérature ou Théâtre :** France was known for the classic literature and plays as London. But in this workshop, you will discover a modern part of the French literature and role play to practise your French.
- **Découverte des principales régions viticoles françaises:** surely French wines need no introduction, and we will go through a journey to discover the main wine regions of France, and discuss their specificities (geography, history, cepage, tourism, etc.)
- **Série "Lupin":** Less famous than our wines or the Tour Eiffel, France nonetheless has a TV series industry, that has produced a few gems in the past. *Lupin* is a funny series based on the famous adventures of Arsene Lupin, who was known as the "Gentleman cambrioleur". You will watch an episode and role play after understanding the French casual language.
- **Monuments historiques:** France has a myriad of iconic landmarks from the Eiffel Tower to Versailles, and it is a challenge to choose just one. But you will have the opportunity to vote and participate to choose the monument.
- **Cuisine française:** Right alongside its wines, France has a renowned tradition for fine cuisine, some of it inherited from Catherine de Medicis, an Italian major historical figure, that kind of ruled France for a while... If the infrastructure available at Alliance française permits it, it would be exciting to finish the series of workshops with a cuisine class. We will go through the realisation of a famous French dish, and discuss and hopefully enjoy the outcome together.