

Meet the Parents: Creole Style!



My husband Richard has deep roots in his hometown, Le Tampon. For generations, the family business was fruit farming, so this means that Richard spent much of his childhood outside on the land. When he was a kid, Richard would go out with his dad to hunt **wasps** for dinner. The taste of wasp brings back memories of bonding with his father, and to this day, the whole family goes crazy for a big plate of wasp **larva**.

When we first started **dating**, Richard invited me to meet his parents for the first time over lunch at their house in Le Tampon. I was kind of nervous because my French at the time was **pretty horrible** and they didn't speak any English. Well actually, they didn't really speak French either, but a mix of French and Creole. I remember being quite lost and pretty embarrassed, but we all **got along** just fine. That's when I asked what was for lunch...and Richard and his dad exchanged a secretive **glance**. "Come on," Dad said, "Let's show her."

So we went outside to the small kiosk in the back of the garden, where a large black **skillet** was slowly cooking over the fire. Dad **handed** me a giant **spoon** and invited me to **stir**. Inside were these little blackened white balls of something...

"It's wasp larva!" Richard told me, like it was normal, and I almost dropped the skillet! "You're joking." "No no no no, it's our FAVORITE plate. Some wasp, some rice, a little tomato salsa...and a GREAT red wine...and voilà, you have the BEST. MEAL. EVER!" Richard said. I **gulped**. I couldn't be **rude** and refuse...it was my first time meeting the family, and I really wanted to make a good impression...

Later, we sat down to the table. They all thought it was hilarious to see an American with a plate of wasp. Thankfully, they let me pick out the wasps that had already developed legs and wings! I loaded up my fork with a LOT of rice, some salsa, and a few wasp larva...

Actually, it wasn't so bad!! (Much better than the wormy zandettes, but that's another story.) But I certainly didn't eat anymore that day. Now, almost three years later, wasp night at **the in-law's** has become a monthly occurrence. We had them again last weekend, and everyone laughed and laughed as I served myself a heaping spoonful of wasp. Funny how things change...

When I have visitors from the US, I always make sure that their trip includes a wasp dinner night at my in-laws. It's certainly a great way to make memories!

Vocabulary

Wasp - Guêpe

Larva - Larve

Dating - Sortir ensemble

Pretty horrible - Assez horrible

To get along - s'entendre

Glance - Coup d'oeil

Skillet - Poêle

To hand - Passer (qq chose)

Spoon - Cuillère

To stir - Remurer

To gulp - Déglutir

Rude - Mal poli

The in-law's - Chez les beaux parents

