If you want to visit the birthplace of [french toast](http://wonderopolis.org/wonder/where-does-french-toast-come-from), you won’t need toknow how to speak French!

The origins of [french toast](http://wonderopolis.org/wonder/where-does-french-toast-come-from) are not entirely clear, but long before this sweetsnack was called “[french toast](http://wonderopolis.org/wonder/where-does-french-toast-come-from),” similar recipes were being whipped up allaround the world. One of the earliest versions of [french toast](http://wonderopolis.org/wonder/where-does-french-toast-come-from) has been tracedback to the Roman Empire.

The name “[french toast](http://wonderopolis.org/wonder/where-does-french-toast-come-from)” was first used in 17th-century England. The recipe —and name — were brought to America by early settlers.

In France, the dish is called “pain perdu,” meaning “lost bread.” Why lostbread? Originally, people made [french toast](http://wonderopolis.org/wonder/where-does-french-toast-come-from) from [stale](http://wonderopolis.org/wonder/where-does-french-toast-come-from) bread in order tomake use of bread that would otherwise have been thrown away.

To make [french toast](http://wonderopolis.org/wonder/where-does-french-toast-come-from), you first dip slices of bread in a mixture of beateneggs, milk, [cinnamon](http://wonderopolis.org/wonder/where-does-french-toast-come-from) and vanilla. Then you fry the egg-coated bread in a panuntil browned.

Some people recommend slicing the bread the night before and letting it dryout a bit overnight to keep the bread from [absorbing](http://wonderopolis.org/wonder/where-does-french-toast-come-from) too much egg andgetting [soggy](http://wonderopolis.org/wonder/where-does-french-toast-come-from).

In the United States, restaurants usually serve [french toast](http://wonderopolis.org/wonder/where-does-french-toast-come-from) with butter,maple syrup and powdered sugar, but the possibilities are endless. [frenchtoast](http://wonderopolis.org/wonder/where-does-french-toast-come-from) can be topped with just about anything.

Popular toppings include powdered sugar, maple syrup, jelly, jam, honey,peanut butter, applesauce, whipped cream, fruit, yogurt, ice cream and nuts.[savory](http://wonderopolis.org/wonder/where-does-french-toast-come-from) (not sweet) [french toast](http://wonderopolis.org/wonder/where-does-french-toast-come-from) can be topped with bacon, cheese, gravy andeven ketchup!

People use a variety of different breads to make [french toast](http://wonderopolis.org/wonder/where-does-french-toast-come-from). In the westernand southwestern United States, many cooks prefer [sourdough](http://wonderopolis.org/wonder/where-does-french-toast-come-from) bread. Withinsome Jewish-American communities in the New York area, people use leftoverchallah bread from the [Sabbath](http://wonderopolis.org/wonder/where-does-french-toast-come-from) dinner for [french toast](http://wonderopolis.org/wonder/where-does-french-toast-come-from) on Sunday mornings.

Around the world, people enjoy [french toast](http://wonderopolis.org/wonder/where-does-french-toast-come-from) in many different ways. TheBritish call [french toast](http://wonderopolis.org/wonder/where-does-french-toast-come-from) “eggy bread,” “[gypsy](http://wonderopolis.org/wonder/where-does-french-toast-come-from) bread” or “french-fried bread.”And sometimes they serve it with ketchup.

The people of New Zealand prefer their [french toast](http://wonderopolis.org/wonder/where-does-french-toast-come-from) served with bananas,bacon and maple syrup. Australians serve up a [savory](http://wonderopolis.org/wonder/where-does-french-toast-come-from) version of [frenchtoast](http://wonderopolis.org/wonder/where-does-french-toast-come-from) with cheese and tomato sauce. The French consider “pain perdu” adessert, not a breakfast food.

Try It Out

Who says all toast is created equal? Grab your apron, chef’s hat and whisk. This [french toast recipe](http://allrecipes.com/Recipe/French-Toast-Stars/Detail.aspx) willmake you the star of the breakfast table!