



Fritz and Frites

317 N. Main St., Galena, IL
815-777-2004 • FritzandFrites.com

HOURS: (L) 11:30 am – 3 pm, (D) 3 pm – Close, Closed Mon.

ATMOSPHERE: Casual French Bistro / NOISE LEVEL: Quiet

RECOMMENDATIONS: Onion Soup; Caesar or Spinach Salad; Chicken or Goose Liver Pate; All 4 Schnitzels; Rindsrouladen; Steak Frites; Tilapia; Salmon; Profiteroles

LIQUOR SERVICE: Basic Bar; European Bottled Beer only; Mostly French and a few German wines

PRICES: Apps: \$2.50 to \$9.95, Entrees: \$15.95 to \$19.95

RESERVATIONS: Highly Recommended from 2 to 50

PAYMENT: Cash, Debit, All Major Credit No Checks

WHEELCHAIR ACCESS: Front door and Restroom

TAKE OUT: Yes, DELIVERY: No, PARKING: On Street



by rich belmont

FRITZ AND FRITES

Did you know there is a French Bistro located on the north end of Main Street across the street from City Hall in Galena, IL? It's as if Fred Grzeslo, the Proprietor and Chef, simply picked up a popular Paris café and moved it here just for us.

Fritz and Frites serves the authentic cuisine of Alsace, a Region of Eastern France, located next to the German border. Today this is French territory and most people speak French. However, between 1871 and 1945 the land switched back and forth between France and Germany four times. No wonder there is a legacy of both French and German cooking. Hence Fritz and Frites gets its name from Fritz, a nickname for Fred's German name Frederick and Frites the name of the ubiquitous French Fry. It's why their menu is a little French and a little German.

Fred was always a cook but he didn't start his professional life as one. Actually he graduated

from Columbia University with a degree in graphic arts. He was an illustrator in Chicago for eleven years.

Almost overnight that whole industry went digital and graphic artists found themselves out of work. So Fred decided to pursue his passion for cooking and enrolled in the College of Dupage Culinary School. There he received an education from expert chefs. His teachers included the President of the American Chef Federation and the Food and Beverage Director of Marriott Corporation. He trained under renowned executive chefs from several prestigious Chicago hotels.

After perfecting his skill as a chef at the Marriott Hickory Ridge Conference Center Fred finally decided it was time to settle down, marry his girlfriend Karyn, and open his own restaurant. He picked Galena because he fell under the spell of Galena's turn of the century charm. He was able to buy five acres of farmland where he now grows all the herbs and most of the vegetables he needs for Fritz and Frites.

Fred and Karyn have created an awesome restaurant! All of the food is slow cooked from scratch with a prodigious use of wine. The ingredients are all fresh. Karyn prepares the Pate. Fred or his Sous Chef, Uri, frequently drive to Chicago to pick up locally unavailable supplies like goose liver.

As soon as you enter Fritz and Frites you feel like you just walked into a real French Bistro. The tables are covered with white tablecloths and are on a black and white checkered floor. The walls are yellow and there is always some French music playing in the background.

The lunch menu offers a variety of sandwiches. There is Corned Beef on Rye, BLT on croissant, Ham and Gruyere cheese on a pretzel roll or Roast Beef or Grilled Salmon on toasted garlic Kaiser Roll. I, myself, frequently drive over from Dubuque just to have the corned beef sliced from real brisket left simmering over night.

The schnitzels are all so delicious! The meat is cut individually for each order. The cutlets are pounded flat just before cooking. Then they are coated with a special mixture of regular and panko bread crumbs. Finally, the schnitzels are sautéed in butter and lemon. It's difficult to choose between the traditional Wiener Schnitzel veal cutlet; A La Holstein with fried egg; Jäger Meister with mushroom and wine sauce; or Schweinschnitzel breaded pork cutlet.

Or you can choose Kasseler Rippchen, a smoked pork chop with cider glaze; or Sauerbraten, marinated in a sweet and sour sauce. The Rindsrouladin is phenomenal! Its Top Round sliced super thin, hand rolled, and stuffed with a pickle and onion. Then it's braised at low temperature until it is so tender you can cut it with your fork.

The French Bistro specialties include Garlic Roasted Chicken, Salmon with Lingonberry and Tilapia Provencal. The Tilapia is served on a wonderful Ratatouille which is a vegetable stew made with grilled tomatoes, garlic, zucchini, onion, eggplant, sweet peppers and herbs simmered in olive oil. Of course I can't forget to mention the classic Bistro specialty, and my favorite, Steak Frites. This is a huge rib eye grilled the way you like it and covered

with parsley butter. It is accompanied by an awesome pile of frites; French fries made from fresh potatoes sliced on a mandoline.

Look for specialties usually only available on week-ends. You might find Haddock in a Beurre Blanc; a white wine and butter sauce. Or perhaps the special will be Boef Bourguignon. This is braised beef simmered slowly at low temperature with lots of red wine, mushrooms, onions and carrots. By the way, if you have a favorite dish you can call ahead. Fred loves to honor special requests.



After such a wonderful dinner you will need a scrumptious dessert to top it off. The Apple Strudel with Calvados (Apple Brandy), flourless chocolate Black Forest Cake, Crème Brulée and Prunes in Armagnac (an aged French brandy) are all made on the premises. The Profiteroles are also fantastic. These are miniature cream puffs filled with ice cream. The pastries are imported all the way from Paris.

Now I'm sure you are all thinking it's time to indulge in some delicious French or German cuisine. There is no need to travel all the way to Europe when you can experience Alsatian specialties right here in downtown historic Galena!

