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# Boudin - A Taste of Belgium

*By alison - November 25, 2011*

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in Boudin Blanc

As my food hero, Anthony Bourdain, says, every culture has its own version of 'meat in tube form'. Belgium is no exception. Although **boudin** isn't a strictly Belgian invention, it's part of the fabric of food culture here and love it, or hate it, everyone has an opinion on it.



We are Canadians, Alison & Andrew, and we are slow travelling around Europe – with our cats. We believe every destination has a story to tell and that the journey truly is the destination. We travel slow – because everywhere is somewhere. [read more...](#)

Charcuterie is one of the (many) foods we've developed a passion for, since moving to Europe. Sausages, hams and patés, weren't my cup of tea back in Canada, but Europeans take cured meats to a whole other mouth-watering level. That said, many years passed, before I dared taste the pasty looking **boudin**.

For the uninitiated, boudin is a type of sausage, normally made from pork, but sometimes chicken or veal. It is typical to Belgium and France, but Germany, French Canada and the Cajuns of the southern United States, all have their own versions.

Boudin, in Belgium, comes in two main varieties: boudin blanc (white boudin) and boudin noir (black boudin). Boudin noir gets its dark red, almost black, colour from the addition of blood. Boudin blanc is very pale in colour, as there is no blood added, and the mixture often contains milk.

I'll be the first to admit, neither of these combinations sounds particularly appetising. But the addition of herbs, spices and other ingredients, by a true boudin master, can elevate these unappealing looking sausages to new heights.

One of our favourite varieties is the boudin Liège, named after the city in Wallonia. This is a type of boudin blanc, with the addition of fresh herbs and milk – delicious.

I was inspired to write about boudin today, after a visit to my local street market. One of our favourite stalls is run by a Walloon woman, who makes the most incredible patés and boudins. Normally her offerings extend to the blanc, noir and Liège varieties, but today she had many other flavours on offer.





Boudin Blanc: (from the top down) Apricot, Truffle, Nut and Liège (right)

We arrived home with samples of our favourite boudin Liège along with apricot, nut and truffle boudins. You'll see from the photo, we only chose varieties of boudin blanc, as we both find the flavour of boudin noir a bit harsh. But that's the great thing about boudin in Belgium, there is a taste for everyone.



Boudin, pâté and cheese, part of a balanced Belgian diet ;)

*If you're going to try boudin for the first time, make sure it is home-*

*made and using fresh ingredients. You'll find artisanal charcuteries at many of the markets in Belgium. To taste the boudins we buy, head to Place St. Josse on Thursdays and look for the charcuterie cart in front of Le Delizia restaurant.*

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Alison Cornford-Matheson is a freelance writer and travel photographer and the founder of CheeseWeb.eu She landed in Belgium in 2005 and, over the years, has become passionate about this quirky little country. She loves to discover Belgium's hidden gems - be they museums, shops, restaurants, castles, gardens or landscapes, and share them through her words and photos. She loves to travel the world with her husband, Andrew, and spend quiet nights reading with her cats and a glass of red wine. You can also follow her work on Google+

*Filed under **Belgium, Eat, Slow Food, Slow Food Producers, Slow Travel**.*

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Happy Cook / Finla

November 25, 2011 at 10:31

Brought up in India we were not at all used to these goods too, untill i came to belgium, I have to admit I am still not used to all their food as i hav enever been so much of a meat lover except chicken 😊 but the white one I make at home, we fry them in a bit of butter after slicing it.



Alison

November 25, 2011 at 10:53

Mmm, that sounds good! I have heard you can make Boudin blanc with chicken too so it may be something to try!



Louise

November 25, 2011 at 14:23

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We love boudin blanc. FYI, the BIO ones from Delhaize are very good!!



Alison

November 25, 2011 at 15:17

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Good to know Louise! I'll give those a try 😊

Sylvain

November 25, 2011 at 16:39

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Alison, I know the woman you're talking, she's also a the market in Place des Chasseurs ardennais on fridays afternoon: she's got great products! It's normal that she has more variety in boudins at this time of year: in Belgium, it's traditionnal to eat them for the Christmas time (you'll probably find some in every Christmas market as well).



Alison

November 25, 2011 at 16:46

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Yes Sylvain, she mentioned that she had more than usual. The truffle ones are particularly good if you have a chance to try them. She also had a cabbage one and several varieties of boudin noir; one with apple. Yum!



Jenn

November 26, 2011 at 22:48

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This is making me hungry! I'd like to offer a charcuterie platter when we do some festive hosting this season, but I'm kinda lost as to where I should go and what I should get. Do you serve it on bread or crackers? Any idea where I should be looking for this in Atlantic Canada?



Alison

November 27, 2011 at 11:34

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Mmm, we used to get some different things at the Halifax market and I'm sure some of the butchers at the Saint John City Market have their own versions of charcuterie from local products - sausages, hams, whatever looks yummy. As for what to serve it with, I think either some nice crackers and/or some yummy fresh grain breads would be good. We generally combine it with a cheese plate and maybe some olives and/or pate and spreads. There are no rules so just find what looks fresh and delish!



Louise

November 28, 2011 at 12:42

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Or do as the Belgian do: serve it with hot apple sauce!

Jen

December 4, 2011 at 23:55

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Hi Alison... This is tempting – it reminds me of Bavarian Weisswurst... but pretzels, sweet mustard and wheat beer are also a must 😊 I am curious about the Thursday market in St. Josse- What time does it run? I frequent the Place Jourdan Sunday market mostly – its within walking distance. But I also like the Flagey market too because it's a few bus stops away and on Sat and Sun. 😊 I've been to the Friday night market near us (Daily?) thats cute. But now I want to see the St Josse market!!! Midi market was REALLY overwhelming, but i would love to go back there without the hubby 😊 shh-hh.... it was just too much shopping overload for him 😊



Alison

December 5, 2011 at 10:02

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St. Josse just has a small local market on Rue des Deux Eglises. It's Thursday mornings until about 2pm. I like it because it's just outside my door, I know the vendors now and I know exactly what I want there. It's nothing like the bigger markets though.

heather

December 11, 2011 at 03:41

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I live in South Louisiana, United States (Cajun Country) and we have many places here that serves boudin, but ours boudin different from yours. Our boudin (boudin blanc) usually consists of spicy pork and rice in a sausage casing, though some boudin has seafood in it instead of pork. The pork butt and pork liver is smothered with onions, bell peppers, garlic, cayenne and black pepper, parsley and salt. The meat is then ground up and mixed with rice and green onions, and stuffed into a casing, and this sausage is usually served hot (you can buy it cold or frozen and heat it up at home). You can buy this and eat it just like that. I like mine in a

sandwich on sliced bread. My mom likes to fry her boudin in a frying pan, which is also good. This is a everyday food here, we eat this often and it is very good... yum!

Stores here do not sell boudin noir (blood boudin), so I've never eaten this kind before.



Alison

December 11, 2011 at 11:00

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Hi Heather. Thanks so much for your comment. I read about your Cajun boudin when I was researching this post and it sound delicious! I've been to Louisiana a few times as a child and I absolutely loved the food there, although I didn't try boudin. It's high on my list to visit again and taste more of your delicacies!

Heather LeCoq

December 12, 2011 at 06:09

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Hello again,

This website has a good picture of what Cajun Boudin looks like. At the top of the page, there is a picture of boudin balls, which is boudin shaped into a ball, breaded and deep fried (similiar to how my mom likes to cook hers).

<http://cajunboudinrail.com/Boudin.html>

Heather LeCoq

December 12, 2011 at 06:38

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PS... I was mistaken. I was exploring the

website that I posted, and I found one place in Breaux Bridge (Pont Breaux) that serves what they call boudin rouge (I assume is similar to your boudin noir, what we call blood boudin). There is a picture of it on the website, it looks like a black sausage. The shop that makes it is about a 30 minute drive from my home (I live in Scott, just west of Lafayette, near location #3 and #5 on the Boudin Trail map) I may have to take a ride out there one day and taste some blood boudin. I'm a little scared.... my mom told me she tried it when she was a child and didn't like it. They haven't sold it in my area in many years, since before I was born (35 years ago). The butchers here stopped selling it due to health regulation issues.

Anyway, have a nice day 😊



Alison

December 12, 2011 at 10:36

Hi Heather, Thanks for the link!  
It's interesting to see how boudin evolved over there. The blood boudin is worth a taste. I was scared of it too but it's not that bad. I still prefer the white boudin personally, but it's always interesting to try new things 😊

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