

FRENCH FOR A DAY

When in Melbourne, do as the Parisians do — especially this Thursday, Bastille Day. **JODIE DAVIS** reports

You don't need to jump on a Paris-bound jetliner to do *à la française* for a day. Writer Margaret Anderson, author of new book *How to Be French*, is one of Melbourne's most committed Francophiles, and knows exactly how to achieve that certain je ne sais quoi.

Bastille is everything and appearing composed is essential if you want French style, she says.

"Wear number one is 'soignée'," Anderson laughs. "That means well-groomed."

Getting out of bed every morning can be agonising, which is why the French breakfast is a triumph of good sense: a scattering bowl of muesli, a croissant and a wedge of hottery party.

Callie such as Luau, in the city and Cava, St Kilda, are excellent for it, just shy.

"Let chocolate be an old-fashioned breakfast drink, the sort of thing your parents, aunts and uncles love. Single women are conscious of staying slim and don't make a habit of drinking it," Anderson says.

After such a breakfast head to the store

is essential to *Parisian chic*, beginning with silky edges of quality lingerie and finished with spiky, up-to-the-shoulder, smoking slacks "but less" louder than top-to-toe labels.

"The essential thing is to take care of the details," Anderson says.

"Clothes have exquisite little buttons, bows or lace. Set off a plain suit with a *haute couture* or bag, for example. Toss your outfit with top-name shoes, bags and accessories."

But it's important to know you wear it.

"Stand tall and proud. Embrace your femininity, even in a corporate environment. French women don't equate being business with not being powerful."

Don't spend the rest of your *Agony à deux* by hating pull-me-through-the-day work on developing an aesthetic sense.

"Stop and contemplate art, nature and views. Don't throw back your morning coffee, for example — stop and appreciate it."

And if your wallet can't afford it, develop and go out for an evening of gastronomic pleasures. Or stay home and find the best with books, cinema, television and music.

"Language books can be hard to find, so add library classics but the Language International bookstore in Hawthorn sells new releases in French," Anderson says. "And even if you don't speak French, these magazines are worth looking at to get a sense of *Parisian life*."

Visit *Amor* your evening at home with an atmospheric French menu.

The *OH on the stage* is a modern-day black and white classic, starring David Hume and Victoria Posada.

FRENCH like some company? Hold a soiree. Since the 17th century the French like elegant spiced gatherings, or *soirees*, meant more than by adding feelings of *bonheur* to your surroundings. Keep music at a



PHOTO: MELISSA O'NEIL

Devoted Francophile: Margaret Anderson

continue to be relevant in the period of pleasure. Romance is *à la mode*, so head straight to the trendy parks.

"It doesn't matter what treatment you choose as long as it's in the most expensive salon," Anderson says.

"Why? That's just the way it is. Conversely, a French party must be done in the dodgiest, shabbiest place you can find. The French polish is considered a necessity, not a luxury, women live up to it much like we live up to our morning coffees."

A box of shopping should follow.

Quality clothing



Where to go

Best Breakfast at Cava, 32 Hines St, St Kilda, ph: 9598 9115

Wine: Go to *Wine* for luxury for luxury gourmet products, 72 Ardmore St, St Kilda, ph: 9534 0032

Flam: *Jeune* is a new French cafe at 111 Bourke St, Melbourne, ph: 9422 1111

Home: *Jeune* is a new French cafe at 111 Bourke St, Melbourne, ph: 9422 1111

Young and Lush: *Carta* is a new French cafe at 111 Bourke St, Melbourne, ph: 9422 1111

High-end: *M&M* and David Jones department stores, *Jeune* is a new French cafe at 111 Bourke St, Melbourne, ph: 9422 1111

for accessories. *M&M* is a new French cafe at 111 Bourke St, Melbourne, ph: 9422 1111

Young and Lush: *Carta* is a new French cafe at 111 Bourke St, Melbourne, ph: 9422 1111

High-end: *M&M* and David Jones department stores, *Jeune* is a new French cafe at 111 Bourke St, Melbourne, ph: 9422 1111

Home: *Jeune* is a new French cafe at 111 Bourke St, Melbourne, ph: 9422 1111

Young and Lush: *Carta* is a new French cafe at 111 Bourke St, Melbourne, ph: 9422 1111

High-end: *M&M* and David Jones department stores, *Jeune* is a new French cafe at 111 Bourke St, Melbourne, ph: 9422 1111

disciplined volume or improvisation may be. Margaret recommends *Le Français de Paris* by Jean-Louis Le Clezio and *Paris: the City, the City* by Jean-Louis Le Clezio.

"Be the most shocking and provocative people you know — the idea is to stimulate debate. Use sweeping and dramatic statements, such as 'The number nine for French is that they never understand the essential wisdom of the article!'," Anderson says.

"And you may see some from *France* return by the end of the evening."

For the same by using plenty of wine, champagne (served flavoured spirit) and mineral water, with simple and elegant food, bread, grapes, figs and cheese.

French-style sherry, an aperitif and worth knowing French with *France* about about all types of sherry, so it's worth getting advice from a sherry expert.

Anderson says the important thing to remember is "it's not where you buy your clients, but the relationship you have with your client."

Serving French wine would add elegance to any soiree but these days you can support the local industry and look continental.

"Domusque Paris, a French

restaurant in the Yarra Valley is making some fabulous wines," Anderson says.

Greener Chateau Yaldara Champagne is fine and much less expensive than French champagne.

But it's good to try your idea of making Bastille Day so style, look no further than dinner at *Le Monde*.

Chef Thomas Buisson has created a truly *à la française* dining experience.

"Thomas Buisson is a champion of traditional French cooking," Anderson says.

Buisson is again leading *Bastille* with his *à la française* dining experience, which offers a wine-matched five-course degustation lunch menu, available from today until Friday.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.

How to Be French, New Holland, \$24.95.