

# How to open a bakery in France (and actually make it work)

13 steps, in order. From your first conversation to your  
first customer.



# Here's the **full roadmap.**

01

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Talk to bakery owners

02

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Get qualified

03

---

Market research

04

---

Product development

05

---

Define your positioning

06

---

Business plan

07

---

Choose your legal structure

08

---

Register your business

09

---

Get a loan

10

---

Find a location

11

---

Sign your lease

12

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Build out + hire your team



STEP 1

# Talk to bakery owners

Ask what they wish they'd known before starting, where they source their flour, what their margins look like, and how many hours they actually work.

One honest conversation is worth ten business books.



STEP 2

## Get qualified

In France, you need a CAP Boulanger to sell bread under the legal "boulangerie" label. Without it, you can't call yourself a bakery.

Sign up for an apprenticeship or an accelerated adult training program is the most straight-forward way to do this.



STEP 3

# Market research

Do research on consumer habits, product trends, margins, average cart values, best selling products, etc.

Knowing these will help you with the next **step**.



STEP 4

# Define your positioning

Paris has thousands of bakeries. You need a clear reason for someone to **choose yours**.

Organic sourdough? Gluten-free? Japanese-French hybrids? Pick a lane. Generic bakeries survive. Specific ones build loyal regulars fast.



STEP 5

# Business plan

Write out your projected revenue, fixed costs, variable costs, and break-even point. Paris rents are high, equipment is expensive, and labour rules are strict.

Having talked with other professionals in the industry can help with this step massively. Don't hesitate to ask for help on this step.

A realistic business plan will also **tell your bank whether you understand your own business.**



STEP 6

# Product development

Your croissant recipe is **not enough**. Define your full product range, test it with real people, and nail your cost per item.

Margins in artisan baking are tight. Know exactly what each product costs you to make before you price a single thing.

You can alternatively work with a franchiser and avoid some of steps like this one.



STEP 7

# Choose your **legal structure**

Most solo bakers in France start as an EURL or SARL. An auto-entrepreneur status works for very small volumes but caps your revenue.

Your accountant, not Google or ChatGPT, should help you pick the right structure based on your actual projections.



STEP 8

# Register your business

File your company with the Chambre de Métiers et de l'Artisanat, not the standard business registry.

You also need to complete a **food hygiene declaration** with your local préfecture before you open.

Plan 4 to 8 weeks for admin.



STEP 9

# Acquire funding

The average cost to open a bakery in France runs between €150,000 and €300,000, including equipment, fit-out, and working capital.

**BPIfrance offers guaranteed loans for first-time business owners** that can make the difference if you don't have significant personal savings.



STEP 10

# Find a location

This is where most first-time owners **get it wrong**.

Footfall, nearby competition, the residential profile of the neighbourhood, and the rent-to-revenue ratio all matter.

- ⊗ In Paris, a 20-metre difference in street placement can cut your walk-in traffic in half. Use a tool like Gini by MyTraffic to find the best possible location.

You can look for a location near offices, near a school, near a metro entrance, ...



STEP 11

# Sign your lease

A commercial lease in France (**bail commercial 3-6-9**) is a long commitment.

Read every clause. Check what fit-out works are allowed, who pays for them, and whether the previous tenant left any hidden liabilities.



A specialist real estate lawyer is worth the fee.



STEP 12

# Build out and hire your team

Your fit-out will take **2 to 4 months minimum**. Start recruiting your first baker or apprentice while construction is running.

The best candidates in Paris have options. If you wait until you open, you'll be short-staffed on day one.



STEP 13

# Launch your bakery!

Don't wait for perfect. Open with your core range, get feedback, and iterate. A soft opening week with friends, neighbours, and local press is enough to generate your first word-of-mouth.

Your first customers will tell everyone they know if the bread is actually good.



Location selection is where most bakeries **win or lose.**

Foot traffic, competitor density, residential catchment, purchasing power by neighbourhood.

Gini by MyTraffic gives you the data to find the right address before you sign anything.

All you have to do is ask Gini.

**Unlock Knowledge**  
**Empower Decisions**

**MyTraffic** 