There are only a few possibilities for naming the inhabitants of places in the United States: New Yorker, Chicagoan, Philadelphian, Bostonian, Scrantonite. There may be more exotic forms for those from towns with French or Spanish names, but the possibilities fall far short of even Britain, where Oxonians come from Oxford, Cantabrigians from Cambridge, Liverpoolians from Liverpool, and Mancunians from Manchester. In my home town of Newcastle in New South Wales, we used to pride ourselves on our knowledge of Latin, calling ourselves Novocastrians.

But this is nothing to the complexity of French inhabitant-naming. Every French town of any size or antiquity, and every identifiable region, has a particular form for designating someone who comes from there, and knowledge of such forms provides the basis for French cocktail-party conversation. I have discovered approximately 750 names for cities, towns, villages and regions in the Petit Larousse (Paris, 1960). Such a list makes for rather dull reading; instead, I present an analysis of the logical patterns of inhabitant-naming (provided by the editor of Word Ways), and a bestiary of strange specimens.

The French pride themselves on their fierce individuality. Inhabitant-naming is no exception; although general rules can be discerned, these are riddled with exceptions. In the following, the name of the resident is usually formed by adding an ending to the town name (for names ending in C,D,G,H,L,M,N,T,R,X,Z) or to a slightly curtailed version of the name (for names ending in E,S,Y).

If the town name ends in -AN or -ON, add -NAIS; if the town name ends in -IN or -UN, add -OIS. If the town name ends in -EN, however, there is no discernible rule: Sainte-Julien-En-Genevois to Julienois and Gien to Glennois, but Caen to Caennais and Rouen to Rouennais. Residents of Agen have it both ways, Agenais or Agenois. Exceptions to the -IN rule are Haubourdin and Josselin, both of which add AIS; for -UN, Melun adds AIS and Dun-Sur-Meuse is inhabited by Duniens. Residents of Dinan are not only Dinannais but also Dinandois and Dinandiens; similarly, those living in Morvan term themselves Morvandais, Morvandiaux, Morvandiots and Morvandiaux.

Towns ending in -ONNE drop the E and add AIS, except for Auxonne to Auxonnois. Towns ending in -ENNE drop the E and add OIS, except for Mayenne to Mayennais and La Brenne to Brennous.
Towns ending in -FORT add AIS, except for Belfort to Belfortins and Belfortains, or Beaufort-En-Vallée to Beaufortains. Towns ending in -MONT add OIS, except for Remiremont to Romarinmontins. Other towns ending in T spread their favors about equally among AIS, OIS and INS. Occasionally, C or D is substituted for T before appending the suffix: Argentat to Argentacois, Sélestat to Sélestadiens, Le Dorat to Dorachons, La Ciotat to Ciotadens, Comtat Venaissin to Comtadins, Sarlat to Sarladais, Royat to Royadères.

Towns ending in -L usually add (L)OIS, but occasionally IENS (Cantal to Cantaliens, Epinal to Spinaliens, Vesoul to Vésuliens). Sospel becomes Sospelitains, but the oddest -L towns are Argenteuil and add OILENS.

If the town name ends in -VILLE, drop the E and add AIS (Alfortville, Sotteville-Les-Rouen). OIS (Belleville, Bonneville, Janville, Joinville, Trouville-Sur-Mer, Lunéville) or IENS (Decazeville).

Towns ending in -R are especially unruly, using AIS (Capcir, Forcalquier), OIS (Honfleur, Saumur), EENS (Lavaur to Vauréens), AINS (Saint-Flour, Montpellier) or IENS (Colmar, Lammeur). Harfleur adds a T before the ending (Harfleurta is, Harfleurtains), and Bar-le-Duc expands to Barisiens.

Towns ending in -C are twice as likely to add OIS as AIS, but IENS (Languedoc, Lourdéc) is also found. Occasionally, other letters substitute for the C, as in Lambesc to Lambescqais, Moissac to Moissagais, Souillac to Souillaguais, and Fronsac to Fronsadais. Beaune to Beaurecans and Bellac to Bellachons are laws unto themselves.

If a French town or region ends in -D, its inhabitants add OIS (Vermand, Montbard, Saint-Amand-Mont-Rond), INS (Saint-Amand-Mont-Rond, Pérignol), IENS (Sainte-Menehould) or even AIS (Montbeliard). -X is also an unruly ending, with Aix-Les-Bains to Aixois, Ax-Les-Thermes to Axéens, and Limoux to Limouxiens. Carmaux, Morlaix and Roubaix substitute S for X before adding I(E)NS: Carsmausins, Morlaisiens, Roubaissiens. Other substitutions include CQ as found in Dax to Dacquois.

In contrast, towns ending in -H (Auch), -K (Sarrebruck) and -M (Riom, Ham, Condom) all end in OIS. In fact, the association between -M and OIS is so pronounced that towns ending in -MES or -MS take this ending after dropping one or more letters: Baume-les-Dames to Baumois, Domme to Dommois, Vendôme to Vendômois, Nîmes to Nîmois, Exmes to Exmois, Fismes to Fismois, Remois. -EZ or -UZ is likewise well-behaved, adding IENS with Saint-Tropez to Tropéziens, Senez to Sénéziens, Morez to Moréziens, Lombez to Lombéziens, and Luz-Saint-Sauveur to Luziens. Alas, Carluz becomes Carluciens; even worse, the inhabitants of Metz are Messins and those of Biarritz, Biarrots.

Towns ending in -G are exasperating. Bourg-En-Bresse, Cabourg, Cherbourg, Strasbourg and Phalsbourg all add EOIS, but Bourbourg contains Bourbouriens. Bourg is inhabited by Bourcains, and Bourg-Saint-Andéol boasts Bourgueusains or Bourdesains. Towns and regions
ending in -GNE don’t behave much better, dropping the final letter and adding AIS (Auvergne, Mortagne-Au-Perche), OIS (Compiègne, Digne), IENS (Aubagne to Aubaniens). Even worse, one finds Bretagne with Bretons, Champagne with Champenois, Bourgogne with Bourguignons, and Gascony with Gascons.

As mentioned previously, towns ending in -E are very likely to drop this letter before taking an ending. But, as usual, there are exceptions: Vitré to Vitréens or Vitréens, Corse to Corsa, and Corto to Cortenais, Taulé to Taulésiens, Segré to Segréens, Neustrie to Neustriens, Mégare to Mégareens, Saintonge to Saintongeais, Maubeuge to Maubeugeois, Collioure to Colliourencs. Several varieties of towns ending with -E have already been discussed under -N, -L, -M, and -G. Beyond these, it is hard to discern underlying rules for deciding which ending to use.

Towns ending in -ES - and France has many - always drop both letters before adding a suitable ending. (Did I say always? The inevitable exceptions occur: Ardres to Ardresiens, Alès to Alésiens, Arles to Arlésiens, and Fourmies to Fourmisiens.) What ending to use is another matter. The odds are roughly three to two in favor of OIS over AIS (Thônes, Avranches, Chartres, Aigues-Mortes) and a host of other exceptions: Belvès to Belvèzeois, Istres to Istreens, Salies-De-Béarn to Salisien, Sallanches to Sallanchards, Ardes to Ardoisiens (a double ending?), Sabres to Sabrins or Sabringots, Giffres to Giffreins, and Saulxures-Sur-Moselle to Saulxurons.

Towns ending in -NS generally drop the last letter before adding an ending; exceptions to this rule are Leens to Leensois and Nyons to Nyonsais. The ending usually added is (N)AIS or expansions such as Sens to Sensois and Tonenais to Tonneinguais. OIS is instead used by Pons to Pontois, Salins-Les-Bains to Salinois, Moulins to Moulinois, and Saint-Gaudens to Saint-Gaudinois. Residents of Samoëns are different, calling themselves Samoënsins.

Towns ending in -US, -IS or -AS never drop the S before adding (S)AIS. However, Privas is inhabited by Privadois, and Auxois by Auxois (no change).

The only other letter preceding -S is R, and here there is a mixed bag: no cancellation of S in Thouars to Thouarsais, Cahors to Cahorsains, and Cuers to Cuersois, but cancellation of S in Marmers to Marmertins, Lillers to Lillerois, Thiers to Thierinois, and Louviers to Louvériens.

It’s very hard to generalize about towns ending in -Y, the third letter that is generally dropped before adding an ending. A type collection: Vaillance-Sur-Aisne to Valliciens, Saint-Rémy-Sur-Durolle to Saint-Rémois, Reccey-Sur-Oursce to Récéens, Poissy to Poissiais, Orly to Olysins, Nancy to Nancéens, Montemorency to Montemorciens, Vouvray to Vouvrirons, Savenay to Savenaisiens, Sully-Sur-Loire to Sullinois, Rumilly to Rumiliens, Saint-Péray to Saint-Péralais, Commercy to Commercinois, Le Faucigny to Faucignerans, Fumay to Fumaciens, Juvinly-Le-Tertre to Juvinjiens, and Gavray to Gavrians. Note that many of these are amplifications of the basic AIS, OIS, or NIS towns which precede them: Aissons, Clamecy, Foyens, Vitry, etc.

Thus far, names for places ending in -Y have been discussed in their order. It is time to look at some names for the inhabitants of third the area:

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As usual, there are those towns which do not cancel Y: Gray to Graylois, Bernay to Bernayens, Clamecy to Clamecyois, Toucy to Toucyquois, Vichy to Vichyssois, Vitry-Le-François to Vitryats, Sainte-Foy-La-Grande to Sainte-Foyens, and Ivry-La-Bataille to Ivryens.

Thus far, this article has discussed reasonably well-behaved names for persons residing in a given town or region. It is now time to look at extraordinary specimens of Gallic illogic. The first column gives the name of the town, the second a "logical" name for the inhabitant based on the rules discussed above, and the third the actual name of the inhabitant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Logical Name</th>
<th>Actual Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aire-Sur-L'Adour</td>
<td>Airois</td>
<td>Aturins</td>
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<td>Aix-En-Provence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vouziers</td>
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Are residents of Songeons ("let us dream") Songeurs ("dreamers")?
And, finally, whoever might come from Woëvre?

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