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WOMAN OF THE YEAR

Swiss born Berta Anderson, co-proprietor of the Stratford Mountain House Motor Lodge with her husband, Keith, has recently won the Taranaki Self-employed Woman of the Year Award for 1996.

Criteria for selection were business results, innovation, marketing, value to the community and customer service.

The Mountain House Motor Lodge is a Tourist Operation nestled on the slopes of the majestic and beautiful Mt Egmont/Taranaki. It was built around 1899 and has been providing services to tourism ever since.

Just a ten minute drive from Stratford, through native bush, will bring you to the Mountain House at an altitude of 845 meters. The combination of beautiful scenery and pure fresh air is certain to relax you and make you leave all the worries behind. When you step into the welcoming, warm lounge you can admire some interesting articles all the way from Switzerland, or view some of Keith's landscape paintings. The setting is beautiful and the reputation of the restaurant goes far beyond New

Zealand. You can relax around a crackling log fire or sit at your table and gaze out into the floodlit bush scenery. The food is hearty and tasty and the extensive menu will make your choice difficult.

Berta came to New Zealand in 1975 after travelling in Canada and the United States. She met her husband Keith while working at Dawson Falls. In 1985 they moved to Stratford Mountain House where Berta took over the kitchen. Coming from a very large Swiss family, she was well used to cooking and had moved into the tourist industry on leaving school. Since moving to Stratford Mountain House, she has tried to provide a varied menu using only quality products, but with the subtly added touches of her training in Switzerland.

Berta is very happy to contribute towards the history of the Mountain House which has seen some very great and distinguished personalities come and go. She is proud to operate a very exclusive, dynamic and successful Mountain retreat.



Berta Anderson in the lounge of her beloved Mountain House.
(Photo by courtesy of Daily News)

TRAMPERS BEWARE

Bears and wolves (of the four legged variety) are expected to return to Switzerland.

Obviously not enjoying life any more in the war torn ex-Yugoslavia, bears have moved north and some have already been sighted in Austria. It is therefore only a matter of time until they, like the wolves, will cross into Switzerland. In fact, it is thought that some wolves have already arrived, having crossed into Switzerland from Italy, following the killing and mutilations of over 90 sheep in the Val Ferret

(Wallis) as reported in the July/August issue of the Helvetia.

The return of these wild animals has been made easier for them thanks to a decision by the Federal Council to pay at least 50% of any damage they might cause in the future to private property and stock.

MORE TRAFFIC FINES IN SWITZERLAND

In last February's issue we had reported how the traffic fines had gone up like mad in Switzerland to a point where soon only rich people will be able to afford

BUFFALO LODGE

And since we are in the process of congratulating some Swiss people in New Zealand for their achievements, here is another one:

BUFFALO LODGE, owned and run by Raouf and Evelyn Siegrist is the only guest house to have made it into the finals for the 1996 NZ Tourism Awards in the Homestay category. This reflects the high standard of accommodation, cuisine and service offered by the Siegrist's to their local and international guests.

For those of you who wonder what and where Buffalo Lodge is, it is a combination of country retreat, gourmet restaurant and art studio on the Coromandel Peninsula. The address is Buffalo Road, Coromandel. Phone 07 866 8960.

Well done all you Swiss in the hospitality industry. Keep up the good work and thanks for the good name you give our country.

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to make driving mistakes or even only walk down the street.

These new fines have come into operation last September. If you go through a red light as a motorist, it costs you now the equivalent of NZ\$300.00, as a cyclist NZ\$70.00 and as a pedestrian NZ\$25.00.

Exceeding the speed limit within built up areas by only 11 km will set you back another NZ\$300.00. Just to fail to put back your direction indicator (blinker) can cost you NZ\$120.00 Even walking down the street might set you back the best part of a hundred dollars if you forget to use the pedestrian crossing or try to dodge the "NO WALK" traffic sign. Life is getting real tough in Switzerland.