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YOUR CORNER.....

Swiss cuisine boasts many specialty dishes - they can range from very simple dishes to gourmet cooking. Spread over the next few issues we'd like to share with you a range of these specialty dishes and perhaps a bit of history about them. For some readers these recipes may be already known, but to some of the second and third generation Swiss these may be what they have heard about.

The Charms of a simple cuisine.....

Have you ever wondered why "Rösti" became our so-called National specialty?

The staple diet of Swiss Nationals through many centuries used to be millet, barley and legumes. These would be worked into pulp and soups and served up for breakfast, lunch and dinner (Z'morgen, Z'mittag und Z'nacht).

More diversity to the Swiss daily diets came at the end of the 18th century with the arrival of the humble potato. **It became an instant hit with the farming community.** It saved our population from starvation through years of crop failures or poor harvests. In contrast to most other popular foods, the potato found its way from farmer's cuisine up to middle class and aristocracy. The versatility of Swiss potato dishes are nearly inexhaustible, without a doubt "Rösti" is the most popular and widely known dish of them all.

If we look upon "Rösti" as our National dish, I think we would have to consider "Milch-Kaffee" (unsweetened milky coffee) our National drink. It's offered at breakfast and dinner time. For many homesick Swiss, "Rösti und Milch-Kaffee" is the essence of our native cuisine.

There has been a lot of change in the last 30 years or so. Our eating habits have evolved, so to speak. (A sign of more affluent times!?) We now eat "Rösti" together with meat e.g. the Zürich specialty "Züri G'schnetzelts und Rösti", or "Bratwurst und Rösti". Instead of the traditional "Milch-Kaffee" we substitute with wine, beer or tea.

If anybody has old family favourite recipes that have been passed down through the years, please send them in and we can share them with other readers.

Trudi and Doris.



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"Rösti" (for 4 people)

Geschwellte Kartoffeln (boiled jacket potatoes);

1 Lt water

1 tsp salt

1 kg potatoes

Cook slowly for approx 20 minutes, drain and cool well.

(Can be cooked a day in advance)

Peel and grate cold potatoes. Heat 2½ tps butter (clarified if available) in a frying pan and add potatoes. Sprinkle salt over potatoes and cook on low heat until golden brown on one side.

Turn complete "Rösti" over and brown on second side. Heat through.

Cut approx. 1 tbsp butter into small pieces and add around rim of pan to crisp edges of "Rösti".

Helpful Tips...

*If possible use a heavy frying pan for "Rösti".

*The potatoes should not be too 'floury' or cooked too soft.

* For variation bacon pieces or chopped onion can be added.

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