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This and That Corner

Canton Unterwalden

Unterwalden, stuck between the Seelisberg and the Burgenstock, between the Urner Alps, the lake and the Brunig, never had any real chance to expand. Instead, the Unterwaldner just argued among themselves, resulting in the creation of the cantons of Obwalden and Nidwalden, which are separated by a high moor and a dark forest.

As the centuries progressed, the powerful leaders of Schwyz, the cosmopolitan cattle-drivers of Uri and the rather introverted Obwaldner and Nidwaldner - all situated in close proximity to each other in this small area - developed ways of life, economic patterns and political cultures that were distinctively different from each other. Today, the Urschweiz cantons are characterised by the political dominance of the Christliche Volkspartei (Christian People's Party), the fond way in which traditions and old customs are upheld and the common religious persuasion (Catholicism). Combined with these qualities is a certain consumer conformism which gives an outsider the happy impression of Inner Switzerland as a rich but smooth stew with the odd hint of archaism. It is considered a charming, but also a rather unimportant, sort of place that tends to be neglected.

Whether this splendid isolation will last is questionable. What with the corridor for goods traffic, the future trans-alpine rail link coming here and the increasing attraction of the area for holiday and second homes the place may not be able to remain a charming backwater for ever.

Source : *Insight Guides Switzerland*

Music : Central Switzerland is an abundant area, where one can find some very old folk-music forms. Ruedi

Rymann produces his extraordinary high tones with almost unbelievable ease. It is worth noting that the yodel can imitate the open notes of the alphorn. In several musical pieces one can hear fine old-fashioned fiddlers.

Naturally, there are also accordionists in Central Switzerland, but they play quite differently than, for example, those in the Grisons. There is a certain hardness missing, while the old melodic lines remain clear and undisturbed despite the virtuoso playing. The interpretations of Rees Gwerder are excellent examples of this sort of technique, which is becoming more and more difficult to find. The 'Ibachler' schottische, often played by the well-known landler group 'Zoge-n-am Boge', was recorded especially in honour of its composer, the almost legendary Kasi Geisser from Central Switzerland.

Innerschweizer Bohnentopf (all in one pot dish)

1 kg beans
300 gr swedes cut in big slices
1 kg potatoes
400 gr hogget stew
500 gr bacon cut in big pieces
20 gr butter or oil

Fry meat in oil on high temperature, add bacon beans swede and 1/2 litre of water and boil for 1/2 hour. Add but potatoes, salt if necessary and boil until potatoes are cooked.

Cholermues (Unterwalden)

150 gr flour
4 eggs
salt, pepper
10 mls milk
20 mls cream

Mix all ingredients until smooth. Melt butter in frying pan, and add mixture and fry. Cut in pieces, and turn to fry on other side. This dish was served as a main meal up the alps with meat.

This can also be eaten with stewed fruits, but replace salt and pepper with sugar.

As spring is on its way, here are two dishes to use leeks before they start growing into seed.

Lauch-Tatschli (Leek cakes)

Boil 500 gr potatoes and leave to cool. Slice 500 gr leeks very finely. Fry the leek in 1tbsn butter and add 2tbsn water and cook slightly. Put through a sieve. Grate potatoes like rosti and add 2 eggs, salt, pepper, nutmeg and finally the leek. Form little cakes with two spoons. Can be baked or fried in oil. Delicious served with a mixed salad or even with a roast.

Geffullter Lauch

Boil the white of 6 leeks (use green for a soup) until tender. Put through a sieve and let cool but keep the water. Roll the leeks into sliced bacon or ham, and arrange in an oven dish. Spread 400 gr grated cheese. Make a white sauce with 1/2 cup of flour, and add 1/2 milk and 1/2 leek water. Boil in microwave until smooth. Add the white sauce to the leeks and bake in oven for 1/2 hour.

An den Fruhling

Willkommen, schoener Jungling!
Du Wonne der Natur!
Mit deinem Blumenkorbchen
Willkommen auf der Flur!

Ei, ei! Da bist ja wieder!
Und bist so lieb und schon!
Und freun wir uns so herzlich,
Entgegen dir zu gehn.

Denkst auch noch an mein Madchen?
Ei, Lieber, denke doch!
Dort liebte mich das Madchen,
Und's Madchen liebt mich noch!

Furs Madchen manches Blumchen
Erbat ich mir von dir -
Ich komm' und bitte wieder,
Und du? - Du gibst es mir?

Willkommen, schoener Jungling!
Du Wonne der Natur!
Mit deinem Blumenkorbchen
Willkommen auf der Flur!

Anon

Bis bald
Lisette

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