

**Zeitschrift:** Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand  
**Herausgeber:** Swiss Society of New Zealand  
**Band:** 77 (2011)  
**Heft:** [7]  
  
**Artikel:** Gun politics in Switzerland  
**Autor:** [s.n.]  
**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-943402>

### **Nutzungsbedingungen**

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

### **Conditions d'utilisation**

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

### **Terms of use**

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

**Download PDF:** 09.02.2026

**ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>**



## Gun politics in Switzerland

Gun politics in Switzerland are unique in Europe. Switzerland has one of the highest militia gun ownership rates in the world. In recent times political opposition has expressed a desire for tighter gun regulations, but a referendum in February 2011 rejected stricter gun control.

The Swiss army has long been a militia trained and structured to rapidly respond against foreign aggression. Swiss males grow up expecting to undergo basic military training, usually at age 20 in the Rekrutenschule ("recruit school"), the initial boot camp, after which Swiss men remain part of the "militia" in reserve capacity until age 30 (age 34 for officers). Each such individual is required to keep his army-issued personal weapon at home. Most active soldiers are not allowed to keep munitions at home, since a ban on the practice was agreed by parliament in December 2008. Ammunition is now mainly stored in central arsenals.

When their period of service has ended, militiamen have the choice of keeping their personal weapon and other selected items of their equipment. In the case of retention, the rifle is sent to the weapons factory where the fully automatic function is removed; the rifle is then returned to the discharged owner. The rifle is then a semi-automatic or self-loading rifle.

The sale of ammunition is subsidized by the Swiss government and made available at the many shooting ranges patronized by both private citizens and members of the militia. There is a regulatory requirement that ammunition sold at ranges must be used there.

There are about 420,000 assault rifles stored at private homes. Additionally, there are some 320,000 assault rifles and military pistols exempted from military service in private possession, all selective-fire weapons having been converted to semi-automatic operation only. In addition, there are several hundred thousand other semi-automatic small arms classified as carbines. The total number of firearms in private homes is estimated minimally at 1.2 million to 3 million.

Recreational shooting is widespread in Switzerland. Practice with guns is a popular recreation, and is encouraged by the government, particularly for the members of the militia. 200,000 people attend the annual Feldschiessen weekend, which is the largest rifle shooting competition in the world.

### HEIMWEH, STATISTISCH ERFASST

*Jene Sehnsucht nach der alten Heimat  
ist (wer hätte das nicht schon erfahren!)  
nur ein Drittel Heimweh nach dem Lande  
und zwei Drittel nach vergangenen Jahren.*

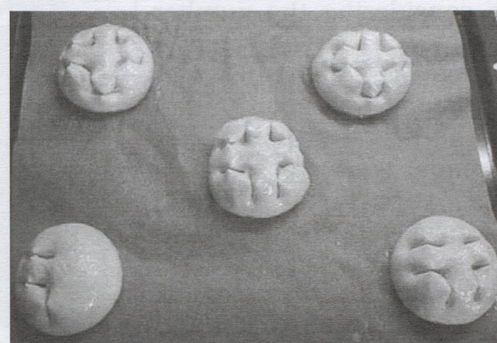
Mascha Kaléko

Do you remember the tomatoes and radishes that had a white cross for 1st August, on the traditional cheese board? Well, like Christmas, 1st August is in the wrong season, down under; tomatoes are expensive and don't taste like tomatoes; tomato soup with a white cross of whipped cream might be more appropriate.

However, my favourites are the

## 1st August-Weggen

Simply make a regular Zopf dough; if you like, add some sugar.



Instead of plaiting a Zopf, form little buns and cut the cross with scissors, three superficial snips for each arm of the cross after you painted them with a mixture of egg yolk and a drop of milk. Bake at about 200° for about 15 minutes or until golden. If you have a little Swiss flag to plant into the middle, they look just like in Switzerland - and make a great decoration for the table!

*En quote!*

## SWISS CHOCOLATES

& gluten / dairy free baking

phone: 09 420 3387, email: edith@swissbliss.co.nz

### HAND MADE DAILY

- delicious "SCHOGGISTAENGLI" (Truffle Cigars)
- real "MOHRENKOEPLI" (MussKuss)
- FLORENTINER
- CHOCOLATE THINS, incl Chilli Chocolate
- original "BASLER LAECKERLI" (Spiced Honey Sticks)
- CORPORATE GIFTS a SPECIALITY

LOCAL and mainly certified ORGANIC ingredients

### VISIT & CONTACT US

- at the factory in WAITOKI, Friday's 9am to 6pm
- at the MATAKANA village farmers market, every Saturday 8am to 1pm
- order ONLINE, [www.swissbliss.co.nz](http://www.swissbliss.co.nz)
- MAIL ORDERS available

### OUR LOCATION

Swiss Bliss Chocolate  
867 Kahikatea Flat Road  
Waitoki, RD1 Kaukapakapa 0871

