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## Chuchichäschtli (Kitchen Cupboard)

### Rösti

**Rösti** (often spelled **Röschti**) is a Swiss dish consisting mainly of potatoes. It was originally a common breakfast eaten by farmers in the canton of Bern, but today is eaten all over Switzerland and also in many restaurants in the western world. Many Swiss people consider rösti a national dish.

Today, rather than considering it a complete breakfast, it is more commonly served to accompany other dishes such as bratwurst or fried eggs. Rösti is made with roughly grated potato, either cooked or raw. Depending on the frying technique, butter or another fat may be added (and usually salt and pepper).

The grated potatoes are then shaped into rounds or patties, which

come in different sizes, usually measuring between 3–12 cm (1 to 5 inches) in diameter and 1–2 cm (0.5 inch) thick.

Often, Rösti is simply shaped inside the frying pan. It is most often pan fried, but can also be baked in the oven. Although basic Rösti consists of nothing but potato, a number of additional ingredients are sometimes added, such as bacon, onion, cheese or fresh herbs. This is often considered to be a regional touch.

There are different views on what makes a perfect Rösti. The greatest difference of opinion is whether to use raw or boiled potatoes as the main ingredient. The kind of potato which makes the best Rösti dish is widely disputed in Swiss popular consciousness.

Rösti is eaten only in the German-speaking part of the country. They are portrayed stereotypically as identifiers of Germanic culture, versus the Latin one. The line separating them is called Röstigraben (the Rösti-trench).

*By Marcel Rüedi*



*What is your favourite New Zealand potato for a great Rösti?*

## Garden Diary

### Spring Gardening

Vegetables may be growing slowly now due to cold or waterlogged soils. You may have to cover crops with frost cloth and speed up growth with liquid fertiliser. Dig in compost lime and general garden fertiliser and leave the garden to settle ahead of spring sowing and planting.

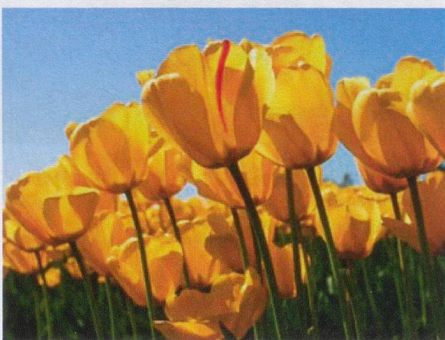
Clean your seed trays stock up on seed raising mix and sort out your planting plan. Don't forget to rotate your crops to prevent soil borne diseases. Check your seed packets as well, as some seeds lose their viability after a while but you have nothing to lose by sowing what you have. To check if they are OK, drop a few seeds into a bowl of water to see if the sprout in a few days.

If your soil is warm and friable enough, you can start to plant early spring crops in August like broad beans, snow peas and Cos lettuce, as well as radishes and Lambs let-

tuce which don't mind the cooler temperatures. Brassicas such as cabbage, cauliflower and broccoli can go in now also to be ready before the white cabbage butterflies are back on the wing in late spring.

Sow onions indoors in seed trays and wait until the seedlings are 5–10cm tall before transplanting.

If you haven't put any fruit trees in yet, get them in quick and stake well to prevent windrock and keep well watered.



Plant berries for Christmas such as raspberries, boysenberries and thornless blackberries. They can be trained up a trellis or along wires. It is also not too late to plant strawberries either as they fruit six weeks after flowering and plants are readily available in garden centres.

Spray peaches and nectarines with copper or a fungicide, before bud burst to prevent leaf curl.

Plant early potatoes and protect with frost cloth, as seed potatoes take up to one month to show their tops which are susceptible to frost damage. If you have room, sow Globe Artichokes to be ready in late summer. Wait until September to sow traditional Summer crops such as Tomatoes Peppers and Aubergine indoors.

**Happy Spring planting!**

*By Melissa Lanz*