Zeitschrift: The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK

Herausgeber: Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom

Band: - (1978)

Heft: 1739

Artikel: So you think you can cook, do you?

Autor: [s.n.]

DOI: https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-687277

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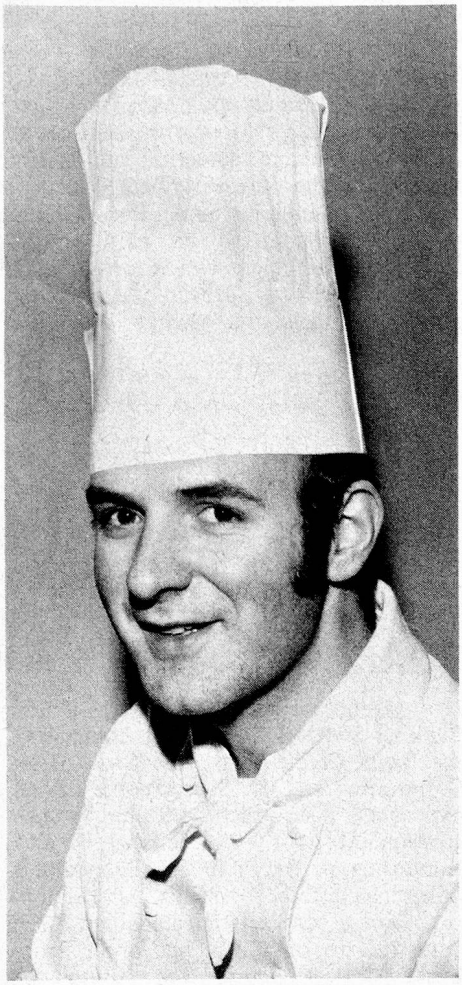
So you think you can cook, do you?



Anton Mosiman.

So you think you can cook, do you? Many of you certainly can, some of you probably cook very well indeed. Even your editor likes to dabble in the kitchen when his wife lets him. But about one thing most people who like good food are agreed – real cooking is hard work.

With that in mind let's meet a man who has devoted his life to fine cooking, who regards cooking as the creative art it is and a way of life and who has reached the pinnacle of his career at the age of 29.

Just such a man is Anton Mosiman, Maitre Chef des Cuisines at London's prestigious Dorchester Hotel.

Born in Kt Solothern on 23rd February, 1947, Anton Mosiman is the son of a family of restaurateurs. From the age of seven he knew he wanted to be chef and nothing else. To achieve his aim and his phenomenal successes, Anton underwent apprenticeships and training in some of the best establishments in the world including Lucerne's hotel school, the Swiss Pavillion in Osaka, Japan during Expo '70, the Palace in Gstaad and the Rome Hilton to name but a very few.

But about one thing Anton Mosiman is adamant. He has never worked at a hotel just because of its name or reputation. The only possible reason for him to go anywhere was because there was a chef, a maitre, there who could teach him something and from whom he wanted to learn.

Surprisingly perhaps, this good humoured man likes to eat out whenever possible, actually enjoying good food – might there not be a danger that he might see too much of a good thing. And what about his weight? No problem there fortunately, although Anton does indulge in the odd run in the park just to keep in trim.

His busy life precludes him from having any other outside interests – except perhaps his big collection of old books – well over 2,000 of them. Not surprisingly, many of them are on the subject of cooking.

"What they prove" says Mosiman, "is that there really is nothing new in cooking. It has all been done before, under a different name or using different ingredients."

But let us return to what can only be called a busy life. He usually starts work at about 8.30 in the morning and often does not finish until midnight or even later. With luck he might sometimes manage a few hours off in the afternoon.

Dealing with over 100 chefs as he does might be difficult for an older man so how does this youthful man cope? Quite simply, he says, he tries to motivate. He devotes a lot of his time to developing a meaningful teamwork in the Dorchester's huge and gleaming kitchens – kitches which are spotless, as one might expect, under the watchful eye of a perfectionist such as Mosiman.

On one subject Mosiman does feel strongly – training. He regards it as part of his job to help the apprentices as much as he can, often by motivation. In the same vein, he compiled the "Lehrbuch der Küche", the main cookery training book now used in Switzerland. He also has further literary aspirations, admitting that he would like to write a book one day but as yet has not clarified his ideas.

His other main hobby is worth mentioning. Quite simply he likes entering and winning international culinary competitions. To date he has won no fewer than six international gold medals and, along with his team, achieved the almost impossible by winning gold medals for all 12 dishes they cooked – created is probably a better word – at a Frankfurt competition.

So what better way could there be of thanking Anton Mosiman for talking to the *Swiss Observer* than by publishing (with acknowledgement to the *Caterer and Hotelkeeper,* 28th July, 1977) the menu for the meal which stands out most in his mind – the one which won him a German gold medal in 1972?

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