

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: - (1980)
Heft: 1770

Werbung

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tasty topics

October 1980

from the Swiss Centre Restaurants, Leicester Square, London

Swiss net big venison deal

FROM the highlands of Scotland, where the annual deer hunting season is now well under way, comes news that almost the entire shoot from the estates of one of the country's biggest landowners has been earmarked for London's Swiss Centre restaurants.

The deal stems from a chance visit to the Swiss Centre restaurants from Sir Andrew Forbes-Leith, who told general manager Hans-Jorg Baumann that he wanted to ask for some advice on selling venison from Scotland.

He was told he need go no further, and over lunch in the elegant Chesa restaurant it was

agreed that the Swiss Centre restaurants should have first choice of all he could produce.

In line with the restaurants' policy of strict quality control at every stage, Mr Baumann and his purchasing manager, Andreas Marti, visited Sir Andrew's home near KinCraig, and went deer-hunting themselves.

Said 28-year-old Andreas, who came to London four years ago from his native Berne: "We found it hard work, but most exhilarating. Sir Andrew believes in hunting the traditional way. His only concession to modern technology is telescopic sights. He certainly doesn't believe in walkie-talkies, or even dogs.

"It's not unusual to have to stalk an animal for as long as five hours. You may have to walk as far as 10 miles before you spot a herd".

Sir Andrew Forbes-Leith is an



Andreas Marti... looking for lunch

astute businessman who has developed his vast estates so successfully that he now has his own wild life park and fish farm, as well as a luxurious hunting lodge.

THE special venison promotion at the Swiss Centre restaurants will last from the middle of October until the beginning of December. To whet your appetite here are some of the special menus that will be available:

Paté de Gibier

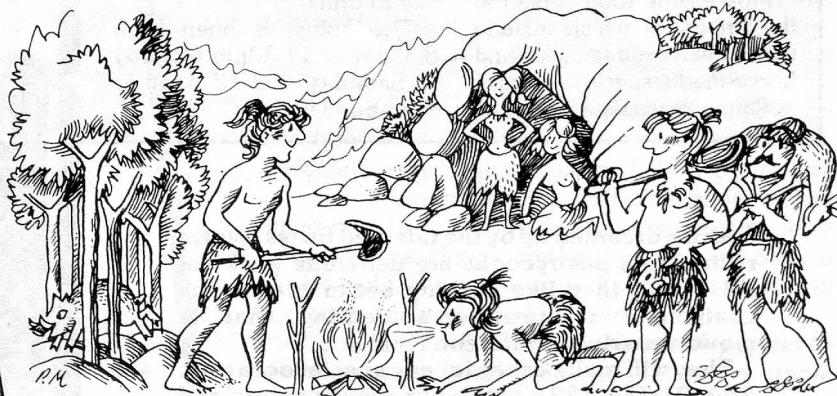
Appetizer
Venison paté garnished with Sauce Cumberland and celeriac.

Civet de Cerf la Punt

Jugged venison with diced bacon, croutons, fresh silver skin onions and mushrooms, served with home made spaetzli.

Cotes de Cerf Pepin le Bref

Deer cutlets marinated and garnished with small silver onions, Chanterelles, mushrooms, grapes and diced bacon.



The Swiss have known the delights of roast venison since Stone Age times. At the Swiss Centre restaurants the method of cooking may have been updated, but the taste remains the same... succulent.

AT 4 o'clock in the morning, six days a week, one of Soho's most colourful characters, 32-year-old Alan Davies, can be found jostling his way among the early arrivals of the new Covent Garden, selecting the market's choicest fruit and vegetables.

For someone who has been in the fruit trade since the age of 11, when he started serving from a Soho street stall, Alan has a trained eye for a bargain. But strangely enough, price is not his first consideration.

"In this job", he says, "what I'm after first and foremost is quality".

Alan is still a Soho stallholder during the day, but he is most proud of his early-morning job as buyer for Swiss Centre restaurants. "It's a marvellous job", he says. "The Swiss standards are so incredibly high. Everything has to be bought fresh every day. All the vegetables they use are fresh — they won't touch any of the frozen stuff. In these days that's very unusual.

"In fact, the only thing you'll find in the restaurant that's frozen is ice cream — and they make that themselves".

Explains purchasing manager Andreas Marti: "Our policy is simple — top quality and value for money. And we are never going to compromise on quality. In no way. If times do get harder it would be the easiest thing for us to lower our standards, such as buying in frozen food. But this we will never do".

Alan Davies started working for the

Dawn patrol reaps the richest harvest



Andreas Marti and Alan Davies
... early pickings

Swiss Centre restaurants six years ago. He recalls: "I had bought a lot of strawberries, which were selling very well. I had about 40 trays left when this man came up to me and asked how much I wanted for all my strawberries. He bought all my stock.

"Half an hour later he came back with another man from the Swiss Centre restaurants and asked whether I had charged the right price. Then he asked if I would buy them another lot the next day — and I have served the company

ever since".

Alan was responsible for the Swiss Centre restaurants having their longest-ever strawberry season this year. It started with Californian strawberries in February — two months earlier than last year — and ended in August. Alan bought strawberries from Spain, Italy, Mexico, Portugal, Holland and France, as well as from English growers.

The recent highly-successful melon promotion also kept him on his toes. That, too, resulted in new tastes being introduced to the Swiss Centre restaurants, such as the exotic pineapple melon from Cyprus and a hitherto unknown variety from Turkey.

"We bought three crates", says Alan, "and found they had a taste between a honeydew and a water melon. The man who produced them didn't know what to call them. They were green with yellow stripes, so we decided to call them tiger melons".

Alan went on his first-ever holiday this year — to the smallest of the Canary islands. "Very interesting", he says. "I went to see where our cucumbers and tomatoes came from".

Nicest way to start the day

A SWISS breakfast is the ideal way to start the day. And where better to enjoy it than at the Swiss Imbiss, the snack bar that has its own entrance in Wardour Street.

Most of the food served at the Imbiss — which include light meals and snacks and home-made specialities such as flans and sausages — can be

taken away. The Swiss breakfast costs £1.

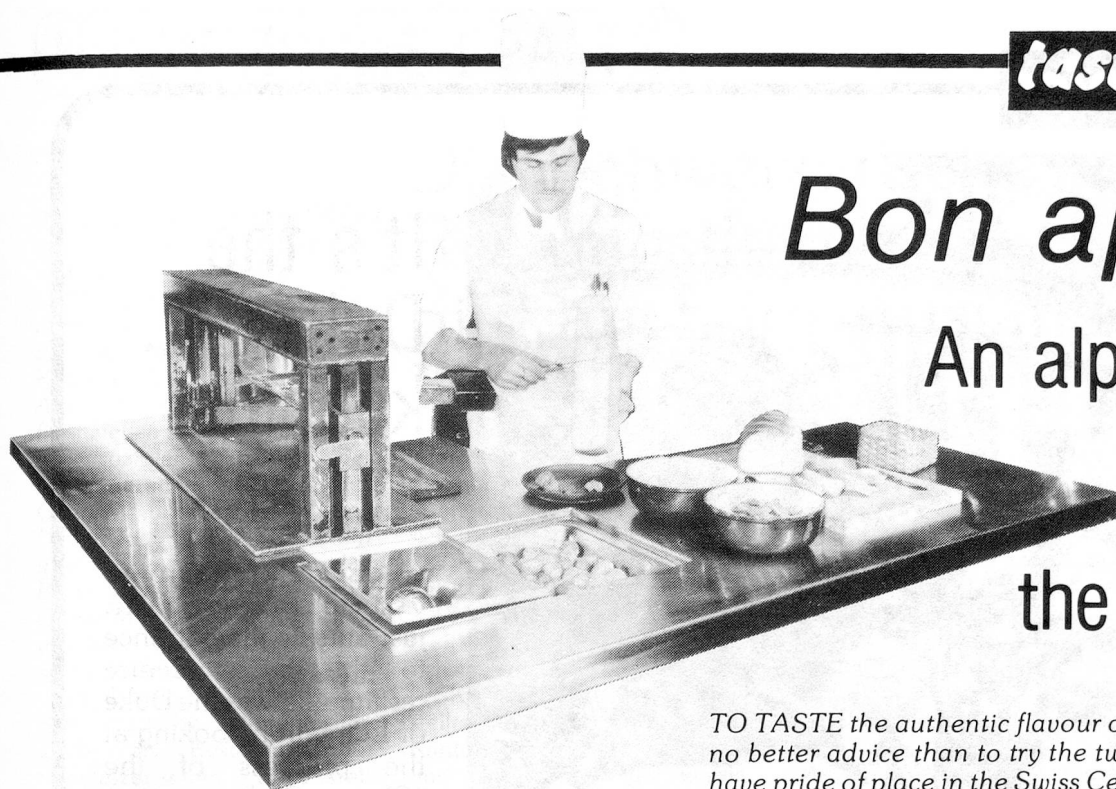
For this you get croissant and bread roll — baked on the premises, of course — butter, jam and as much coffee as you like to drink.

The Imbiss is open from 8.30am to 11.30pm Monday to Saturday, and 12 noon to 9pm Sundays.

CAKES dreamed up by the talented Swiss Centre restaurants pastrycooks are delicious works of art — and they like nothing better than being challenged to provide something that is mouthwateringly different.

They will make cakes for any special occasion. Ring 01-734 1291 with your requirements and get an on-the-spot quotation or call into the Gourmet Corner and ask the manageress, Mrs Elizabeth Ince, for details.





Bon appetit!

An alpine flavour in the heart of the West End

TO TASTE the authentic flavour of Switzerland there can be no better advice than to try the two classic Swiss dishes that have pride of place in the Swiss Centre restaurants — Cheese Fondue and Raclette Valaisanne.

Fondue, the ideal choice for a get-together with friends, was born among the high mountains of the French-speaking part of Switzerland. Since then it has spread right round the world, with many variations on the original idea.

But at Swiss Centre restaurants they serve the original recipe, made from a mixture of genuine Gruyère and Vacherin cheese, Swiss white wine and kirsch. This is prepared in a special fondue pan and placed in the centre of the table on a lighted burner where it simmers gently throughout the meal.

You eat fondue with a long-handled fork, spearing a cube of crisp, crusty bread and dipping it in the molten cheese.

Cheese fondue is a nourishing dish in itself, but Swiss Centre restaurants also propose a special three-course meal, where it is accompanied by the perfect starter and dessert. The full menu is shown on the left.

Raclette Valaisanne is another supreme party dish. The Valais is the wild and rugged region of Switzerland where the River Rhone starts on its long journey to the Mediterranean — a holiday playground where raclette is the highlight of any après-ski party.

As part of the £1.5 million refurbishing programme the Swiss Centre restaurants now have a raclette and fondue buffet, where you can watch the chef in action as in our picture (above).

Raclette is a very simple dish to prepare. He cuts a mature cheese in half and exposes the sliced part to the fierce heat of a special raclette stove. As the cheese melts it is scraped onto a plate (racler=to scrape) and served with jacket potatoes, pickled gherkins and onions.

All you need now is to sprinkle it with pepper to your own taste, make sure you have an ample supply of Swiss dry white wine at your elbow — and imagine yourself in the heady, exhilarating atmosphere of some high-altitude mountain resort.

Swiss Fondue Meal

Starter

Delices des Grisons

Ham, beef and sausage from the Engadine, air-cured in the pure Alpine air at an altitude of 1500 metres.
Bundner Trockenfleisch

Main Course

Fondue Valaisanne

Dip crusty cubes of bread into the bubbling cheese and wine and enjoy the taste of Switzerland.
Kase-Fondue

Dessert

Soufflé glacé Grand Marnier

A favourite ice soufflé flavoured with Grand Marnier liqueur.
Eis-Soufflé Grand Marnier
Coffee, Espresso or Coffee Hag.

Wine

Swiss white wine is the perfect accompaniment to Fondue and ¼ litre per person is included.
¼ Liter Weisswein

Liqueur

Also included is a miniature bottle of Kirsch, the famous Swiss spirit distilled from cherries.
Kirsch

Taste it either half way through ("coup du milieu") or after your meal! Or take it home!

tasty topics

Picture courtesy of the Evening News



It's the Duke . . . keeping in touch

A RECENT surprise visitor to Leicester Square, just outside the entrance to the Swiss Centre restaurants, was the Duke of Edinburgh, looking at the progress of the "Cleaner City" campaign, which had been launched at the Swiss Centre by Mrs Shirley Porter, MP. Only a few months ago the Duke was in Switzerland himself, when he accompanied the Queen on her state visit there.

YOU can order gifts by phone. All you have to do is ring 01-734 1291, ask for the Gift Shop, give your order and your credit card number. All presents are tastefully gift-wrapped before being parcelled for mailing.

HERE'S DREAMING OF A SWISS CHRISTMAS

BOOKINGS are now being taken for Christmas parties in the Swiss Centre restaurants — ideal for seasonal office get-togethers. Ask for details of the special Christmas menus.

PICTORIAL 1981 calendars and diaries are now available, from £2.60. Very attractive cotton wall calendars, from £4, come in a variety of designs.



SWISS wine makes a most acceptable Christmas gift — from single bottle packs to whole cases. Write for a copy of the very comprehensive wine list.

SWISS Christmas hampers can be packed with a variety of goodies, from Swiss delicacies to souvenirs — the choice is limitless. Prices start at £10, and hampers can be delivered anywhere in the UK mainland. Call in to the Gourmet Corner to discuss your requirements, or phone the manageress on 01-734 1291.