

Cheese-dairies in the Alps

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THIS AND THAT

- The last stage of the 'tour de Suisse' was won by Urs Freuler. But the overall leader was Phil Anderson, Niki Ruetimann 2 and Guido Winterberg 3.
- Accidents in the mountains cost 166 lives, in 1984, 23 per cent less than in the previous year.
- Every fifth Swiss citizen gets a rent, either AHV (old age pension) or IV (invalid pension). In 1984 1387 mio sfrs were paid out through the AHV, 12.8 per cent more than in 1983, and the IV paid out 178 mio sfrs, or 13.4 per cent, more than the previous year.
- About 120,000 Swiss abroad would be eligible to vote on federal matters, but only 10,000 have their names registered.
- The PTT (Post Office) announced new postal taxes as from January 1986. Mailing will go up by 15 per cent but phone taxes and telex will go down (but it is not yet decided how much).
- In Bern a painting by Auguste Renoir was sold at an auction for 1.5 mio sfrs. More than twice the estimated value. It was sold to the U.S.A.

ANGELA AND VRENI'S CORNER

One might regard ageing as like being on an ocean wave. If you let it carry you along, you float on top; if you fight it, you are sunk.

Gertrud von Le Fort

Have you tried 'Apple-Carrot Yoghurt' as an entree?

2 cups plain yoghurt; ½ lemon rind and juice; approximately 2 tablespoons sugar. Mix these well.

200g apple and 200g carrot, grate these and mix with yoghurt.

Serve in small bowls, garnished with walnuts or hazelnuts.

And what about 'Kalbshaxe'?

Fry 4 Haxe on both sides until brown. Take out of pan.

Add 1 grated onion; 1 carrot (cut in cubes); 1 celery stick (cut); 1 tablespoon tomato concentrate; 1 tablespoon flour.

Toss in butter until flour burns brown. Add 200ml stock. Add meat again together with a sprig of rosemary, salt, pepper, paprika. Add 100g prunes (stoned). Cook slowly for about one hour. Serve with rice or mashed potatoes.

Cheese-dairies in the Alps

If you are familiar only with modern cheese-dairies sparkling with chrome fixtures, then you certainly will have trouble imagining the simple native means used in former times for making cheese in the Alps.

Milking took place outdoors at some distance from the hut, and wooden milking pails were used. The milk was carried up to the hut in larger milk buckets and was emptied into shallow tubs of turned wood or into copper carrying containers, and was placed in a cool spot for the cream to form.

The cream was then skimmed off with a Schuefe (a wooden ladle) and was poured into the cheese-kettle to be heated over a wood fire for the production of lean cheese.

Cheese rennet was used to curdle the milk. Earlier on this was done by hanging into the milk as a rennet bag a Chitzimagen, a bundle made of the dried stomach of a young goat. When the milk had curdled, the cheese mass was agitated with Schuefe (wooden ladles) and Ruerer (a stirring utensil made of fir stem that had the stumps of its broken-off branch-work making a whorl), and the curd was thus reduced to the desired size.

Sometimes cheese-cloth was used, but more frequently the cheese mass was picked up by hand from the cheese-kettle, pressed together and put into the Chaswerb (a cheese-cask, also called Jarb).

The Chasholzi (a wooden spigot) plugged in front of the cheese cask provided a draining channel for the whey, and fed this over a groove in the Till (a base-board under the cask) into a small draining pail. The whey in the cheese-kettle continued to be heated, and with the addition of the Suur (sour rennet-whey) from the Surfassli (rennet-jug), it was made to curdle once again. This procedure is called Vorbruch. The Zieger cheese particles rising to the surface were drawn off and one part was put into the whey bucket, which was then kept warm under the bed covers for a later meal.

MARITIME TRANSPORT

Switzerland's Ocean-going Fleet

In 1984, as a result of the general economic recovery, Swiss maritime transport showed a slight improvement. In spite of the smallness of its fleet, Switzerland is also concerned by the evolution of the general situation.

At the end of last year, Switzerland's ocean-going fleet numbered some 32 vessels with a total capacity of 486,610 tons. It consisted of 14 freighters, 8 ships equipped for bulk transport, 5 wine-tankers, 4 refrigerator ships and a 'roll-on roll-off'. On this last-named vessel loaded trucks drive directly on and off, hence its name.

Switzerland's merchant fleet has a total crew of nearly 700, 40 per cent of whom are Swiss nationals. This branch contributes not only to Switzerland's supplies but also to its foreign relations.

NASA RELIES ON SWISS TIME!

Thanks to its high precision, its great reliability, its excellent legibility and the simplicity of its use, an everyday consumer product can today celebrate 20 years of good and loyal service to NASA.

The hand-wound Omega Speedmaster chronograph was selected on March 23, 1965 to accompany the American crew of the first manned space flight in the Gemini programme.

On March 23 1985, the crew of the space shuttle was preparing for the next Discovery flight. The one and only item of their equipment not to have been altered by an iota in 20 years: their wrist chronographs. They were exactly the same as those worn for the earlier mission, the choice having been brilliantly confirmed moreover in November 1978, after a new in-flight test carried out for the Shuttle programme on the models of some thirty manufacturers from all over the world.