

# The guilds in the Middle Ages

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## The Böögg between right and left

The Sechseläuten used to be held on the first Monday following the spring equinox. On that day, the Fraumünster bell, for the first time in the year, tolled to mark the end of working hours at 6 p.m. The holiday was moved to the third Monday of April in 1952. Because of the later date, and because of summer time introduced in 1981, the lighting of the Böögg's pyre at 6 p.m. has now moved to several hours before nightfall. Additionally, because of its present date, the holiday is often within a fortnight of 1 May, leading to a stark contrast between the upper class dominated Sechseläuten and the working class holiday of May Day. This proximity of the major festivals of two political poles of the society of Zürich has led to various interferences in the past, for example the abduction of the Böögg in 2006 by leftist "revolutionaries" a few days before the Sechseläuten.

Since then, several Bööggs are held in reserve with the main one stored

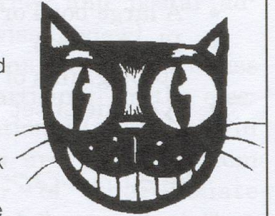


at a bank nearby the Sechseläutenplatz, the open area in front of the Opernhaus near Bellevue where most Zürich open air activities take place. *swissinfo*

## Zürcher Chatzeggschrei

Ingredients:

400g mince  
1 Tbs oil  
2 Tbs flour  
1 onion, chopped  
1 tsp paprika



100ml red wine  
300ml beef stock  
1 Tbs vinegar  
1 tsp lemon juice  
Salt and pepper  
1 Bay leaf  
1 clove  
50g raisins  
100-200ml cream

- Heat oil in pan, add onion, then mince, paprika and the flour and brown.
- When nicely browned, add the wine and stock.
- Add all the other ingredients except the cream and simmer for about 20-30 minutes.
- At the end add the cream.
- The dish has to have a slightly sour taste!
- Nice with Rösti, Spätzli, Noodles etc.

*En guete!*

## The Guilds in the Middle Ages

As more people became craftsmen, people of the same craft began to band together. They found that together they could do more than any one of them alone could do.

This was the beginning of an organization called a guild. Each line of business had its own guild: butchers, bakers, dyers, shoemakers, masons, tanners, and many others.

The purpose of the guild was to make sure its members produced high quality goods and were treated fairly. These guilds became very powerful in towns toward the end of the Middle Ages. They began to pass many laws that controlled competition among merchants, fixed prices and wages, and limited the hours during which merchandise could be sold. If a stranger came into a town, he could not sell his goods unless he paid a toll and obeyed the guilds

rules. The guild also took care of the widow and children of a merchant who died and punished members who used false weights or poor materials.

Guilds also ensured that new crafters were properly trained. A boy began his career as an apprentice. His parents sent him to a master in the craft he was to learn. For a period that varied from three to eleven years, the boy lived as a part of his master's household doing menial chores and learning his trade.

After a boy served his apprenticeship, he became a journeyman or day worker for his master. In order to become a master himself and join a guild, he had to demonstrate his skill in his craft by creating a "masterpiece" that was approved by the guild. He also had to have enough money set aside to open his own shop.

*from the internet*



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