

Wood-Carving in Switzerland

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GRISONS MEAT IS FABULOUS, SAYS TV STAR PAT PHOENIX

Pat Phoenix, star of Britain's most popular television show, "Coronation Street", which has a regular audience of more than 24 million viewers, has discovered a new delicacy — Grisons raw meat. She thinks it is "fabulous".

This is what she has to say about it in the top-selling ITV magazine, TV Times:

"Away from the traditional to a complete novelty that has reached Britain just in time for the party season — raw meat from the Grisons, that mountainous region of Switzerland which contains such magical winter sports resorts as St. Moritz and Davos.

"A delicacy long-known and relished by holiday-makers, this treat is simply raw meat which has been hung in the crystal-clear mountain air till it's dried, then sliced paper thin.

"This process which takes place at an altitude of 4,600 ft. — that's more than nine times the height of Blackpool Tower — goes on for as long as six months. Then the meat is vacuum-packed — ready for the shops.

"It has a fabulous taste and makes an unusual and delicious addition to the usual buffet fare of cold ham or beef."

The Grisons meat is produced at Schiers in the Landquart valley by Albert Spiess and Company, and is imported into Britain by the Kestonia Food Products of 74 Corporation Street, Manchester.

In addition to the Grisons Dried Beef and Grisons Raw Ham, the company also exports Grisons Bacon and two varieties of salami.

Helvetic News Service.

WOOD-CARVING IN SWITZERLAND

During the last two decades chip-carving in wood has become one of Switzerland's most popular hobbies — a hobby enjoyed by people of all ages whether country folk or town dwellers. Some adepts make money out of it, but most people just do it for fun. All kinds of wooden objects can be decorated in this way, including furniture and even timber on house façades.

Chip-carving is an ancient craft. It was known to the Romans and the old Germanic tribes. Pre-historic graves in South Germany have been found to contain chip-carved pottery. The Emperor Charles V had a bench embellished for him in this manner in 1518. Chip-carved furniture and household utensils have long been a familiar sight in farm houses in many countries. In Switzerland chip-carving is an important element of peasant art.

The only tool needed is a sharp knife, the designs being made with the aid of a compass and ruler. Basic motifs, such as a circle divided into six parts, can be reproduced in dozens of variations. These elementary designs permit a wide range of improvisation and are well-suited to the medium.

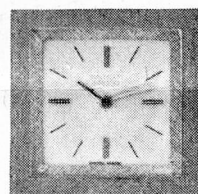
True wood-carving, that is sculpture in wood, is something quite different and calls for professional skill. It is practised throughout Switzerland, Brienz being one of the main centres. Professional wood-carvers draw their inspiration from nature and the arts. They study in special schools or under master craftsmen, have their own guilds and often attain an astonishing degree of mastery. Like their counterparts in South Bavaria and Austria, Swiss wood-carvers also cater for tourists by producing attractive and inexpensive souvenir articles,

[S.N.T.O.]

A LANDMARK IN THE SWISS CONSTRUCTION OF COMPRESSORS

A big engineering firm in Winterthur recently celebrated the production of its thousandth dry piston compressor. The first of these invented by the firm in question, was built in 1935 for a Swiss brewery which wanted to be able to obtain compressed air absolutely free from oil and the unpleasant odour characteristic of machinery. This requirement gave the firm's engineers the idea of adopting once again a principle that had been worked out for other purposes, i.e. a dry, or non-lubricated, piston. In this case, hermetic sealing of the piston is obtained by a "labyrinth" device, the clearance between the piston and the cylinder wall being less than one tenth of a millimetre, even in the largest models. This type of compressor has been used successfully for over a quarter of a century now for the compression of air and gas which must remain completely pure and dry, in a large number of industries, in particular the foodstuffs, chemical and pharmaceutical sectors. The thousandth Sulzer labyrinth compressor, referred to here, forms part of a series of five machines each absorbing 960 h.p., manufactured for an oil refinery in the process of construction in Germany.

[O.S.E.C.]



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