

Woman's Observer

Objektyp: **Group**

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

Band (Jahr): - **(1982)**

Heft 1791

PDF erstellt am: **26.09.2024**

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Model in Swiss cotton cambric. Exclusive design of Mettler's 1982 summer collection

Exclusivity – hallmark of Swiss cotton

SWISS cotton is of particularly fine quality and the Swiss have been producing it for 200 years.

Cotton is not commercially grown in Switzerland, of course, but Swiss cotton is what the Swiss make of the very best fibres they can import from various subtropical regions of the globe.

Swiss cotton means delicate fabrics, silky-smooth jerseys and sumptuous embroideries. The world's best-known designers often use Swiss cotton for their exclusive models, and the fabric enjoys a high reputation in the fashion world.

Switzerland has virtually no raw materials of its own. For centuries, therefore, the Swiss have schooled themselves in the

art of processing and refining imported raw materials to a peak of quality and using them to produce high-grade manufactured goods for sale abroad.

Imported metals are turned into precision watches, tools and machinery; imported textile fibres are transformed into the finest fabrics.

Working hand-in-hand with textile machinery manufacturers and the chemical industry, the

crêpe, satin, etc.) and fine jerseys. They are noted for the outstanding elegance of their patterns as well as for their high quality manufacture and their superfine finishes.

Another distinguishing feature is their exclusivity. Only relatively small quantities of material are produced in each pattern, but the pattern collections are correspondingly large.

Many manufacturers bring out

By Dr. ETHEL KOCHER,
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Swiss cotton industry has evolved a number of highly specialised techniques and processes. For example, Swiss cotton is noted for the exceptional uniformity of its yarns and its fabrics for their beautiful feel and hang as well as their excellent wearing and easy-care qualities.

And the value of Swiss cotton exports is impressive. Fabrics average some Sfr. 28,000 per ton, almost 50 per cent higher than that of foreign imported fabrics.

Swiss cotton is produced primarily for sale abroad and 98 per cent of embroidereds and 60 per cent of wovens and knitteds are sold in foreign markets.

Swiss exporters supply 120 countries through the world with their quality products. The main markets are in Europe; the biggest customer outside Europe is Japan.

Swiss cotton is aimed chiefly at the fashion-conscious section of the population in the importing countries – the people with purchasing power. As the products are of first-class quality, they are priced accordingly. With its worker and staff income level as high as it is, Switzerland could never compete in the world market with cheap textiles.

The fabrics marketed are chiefly fine wovens (voile, batiste,

hundreds of new patterns every season – some up to 1,000 – in order to be in a position to offer their customers in more than 100 importing countries a wide selection.

Each collection has its own particular stamp, and every one is in line with the latest fashion trends. This is why it is so important for Swiss manufacturers to be in constant creative contact with the top people in the fashion centres of Paris, London and Rome and to keep in touch with what is going on in New York, Los Angeles and Tokyo as well.

Marketing exclusive textiles is no easy task at present, and Swiss exporters often find themselves up against tariff barriers of various kinds. True to the free-trade principle, Switzerland itself has refused to introduce any import restrictions for textiles, with the result that Swiss manufacturers have no leverage with which to gain entry to wholly or partially closed markets. They have to rely entirely on their own performance.

So on top of their high quality products they offer first class service, making prompt, correct deliveries and meeting any special technical or fashion requirements that their customers may have.

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Recipe of the month

THIS is the first of a new series of recipes, and features the best known of all Swiss cheese, Gruyère.

Gruyère has a rich, piquant flavour; light, mellow and with a soft, creamy texture which makes it ideal for this unusual savoury cheesecake. Who will be the first to serve it at a local Swiss Club meeting?

Ingredients:

Butter for greasing
 1½oz butter (40g)
 2oz potato crisps crushed to crumbs (50g)
 1oz water biscuit crumbs (25g)
 1 teaspoon finely chopped parsley (1 x 5ml spoon)
 2oz Gruyère cheese (50g)
 ½ pint aspic jelly (250ml)
 4fl oz whipping cream (100ml)
 A pinch of salt
 A few grains of Cayenne pepper
 2 egg whites
 2 tablespoons grated Gruyère for topping (2 15ml spoons).

Method:

Line and grease lightly the bottom of a 6-6½in (15-16cm) loose-bottomed cake tin at least 2½in (6cm) deep. Melt the butter, work in the crumbs and press evenly all over the bottom of the tin. Chill.

Grate the cheese finely and mix in the parsley. Warm the aspic jelly if solid, then cool or chill it until quite cold but not yet set. Whip the cream with the salt and Cayenne pepper until it holds soft peaks. Whisk it into the cheese with the cooled aspic jelly. Leave in a cool place until thick and about to set.

Whisk the egg whites until stiff. Fold them into the cheese mixture. Turn the whole mixture gently onto the crumb base and chill until set. Remove from the tin and sprinkle with the grated cheese just before serving.



Costume in Swiss spun rayon-linen 'Asiatique' with co-ordinated blouse in cotton voile 'Silhouette'

Softly falling Swiss silk/wool mouseline from Gut's winter collection



Polka dots on Swiss cotton crêpe 'Belinda' for skirt and blouse with colour contrasting top



This sporty skirt waister combines fresh colours of Swiss quality polyester 'Pamera' from Mettler's winter collection