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This and That Corner

Bern - The federal capital

The city of Bern, in contrast to most other European capitals, is not obviously international in any way. Swiss history has not left any one centre where the "nation's greats" forged their destiny. There was never a unifying, inspiring personality around whom the upper echelons of society would gather, as there was, say, in the case of Europe's monarchies. Rather, Bern is the result of the hegemony of a few patrician families who managed to retain their claim to a leading role for centuries.

The old town can be visited no matter what the weather : even in torrential rain, you will not get too wet because the old streets are lined with covered arcades, 6 km in length. The main streets run roughly parallel with the end of the rocky outcrop skirted by the Aare River. Outside these rows of buildings in the city centre, the land falls off steeply on three sides down to the Aare.

Bears Everywhere - There is much to see in Bern, including plenty of bears, the city's and the canton's emblem. From the railway station it is a nearly straight walk or tram ride of a bit less than 2km to the Barenggraben (Bear Pits), just across the river; live bears, small and large, can be seen rolling about, and concern about their continued health and happiness helps to ensure that they have as much care as possible (or at least as much as is feasible for a wild animal kept in a pit in the middle of a city). Bears have lived in these pits since the 16th century however and the bear emblem crops up all over town in many different guises, including a local teddy-bear-shaped biscuit. Bern has two tourist offices - one at the main railway station and one at the Bear Pits.

The bear emblem commemorates the founding of Bern by Duke Berchtold. Horace Walpole, English man of letters, explained the significance of the bear in a letter to a fellow countryman, George Montagu, in 1766: "The most faire City Bern hath the name of Beares in the Dutch tongue, because Berchtold Duke of Zeringen, being to build the Citie, and going forth to hunt, thought good to give it the name of the first beast he should meete and kill."

Source : Insight Guides Switzerland

Aarberg is a lovely little town, situated between Bern and Biel in the Seeland, with two bridges on both ends. One is a very old but very beautiful wooden bridge. The centre of town has many restaurants, very busy when the monthly markets bring many people to the town. Aarberg is well known for its flea market when people come from all over Switzerland and even Alsace. Aarberg sugar factory is a big employer in the town, with the sugar being made from sugar beet.

Now for some traditional recipes: Kaseschnitten Berner Art

6 - 8 slices of bread
200gr grated cheese
2 eggs
10 mls milk

1 tspn Kirsch
Oil for frying

Mix cheese with egg yolks, milk and Kirsch. Add stiff beaten egg whites. Spread mixture on one side of the bread. Fry in oil cheese side down until golden and turn over and fry the other side. Delicious with a green salad.

Rosti - Hash browns

Cook potatoes, peel and keep in refrigerator overnight. Grate potatoes and fry in oil until golden. Do not turn all the time just when bottom is golden brown. Sprinkle salt at 1/2 time. There are many variations of rosti - here are some alternatives :

1. Fry one onion cut finely before adding potatoes.
2. Cut bacon in small cubes and fry until golden before adding potatoes.
3. When rosti are golden brown spread grated cheese on top and leave for a few minutes without stirring.
4. Can do the same with Krauterkase Schabziger (cheese with herbs).
5. Rosti can be done with raw potatoes, but cooking time is 10 minutes more.

Bon Appetit
Lisette

Here are some Mother's Day Poems.

I Love You Forever, Mom

You have shown me how to give of myself
You have shown me leadership
You have taught me to be strong
You have taught me the importance of the family
You have demonstrated unconditional love
You have demonstrated a sensitivity to people's needs
You have handed down to me the important values in life
You have handed down to me the idea of achieving one's goals
You have set an example, throughout your life of what a mother and woman should be like
I am so proud of you and I love you forever.

-Susan Polis Schutz

Genau wie meine Mutter

Manchmal hoere ich mich
wie meine Mutter sprechen,
und ich bin entsetzt,
was ueber meine Lippen kommt
Immer habe ich geglaubt,
nie wuerde ich solche Dinge sagen,
aber gelegentlich tue ich es doch.

Manchmal fange ich im Spiegel
einen Blick von mir auf, und ich erschrecke.
Ich sehe aus wie meine Mutter,
Ist das ihre Unsterblichkeit dass sie weiterlebt
in mir?

Les deux meres

La-bas, bien loin, sourit une maison tres
blanche;
La-bas, bien loin, s'epleure une mere au front
gris;
La maison se lezarde et la mere se penche;

L'une branle sa tete et l'autre ses lambris.

Je suis le fils des deux, et mon coeur les
venere.

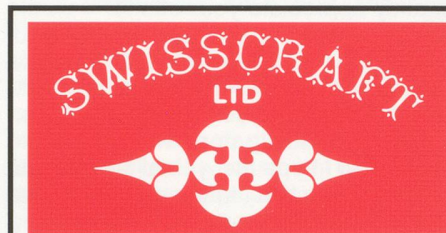
Quand je vais au pays, dans la belle saison,
Je vois s'ouvrir pour moi tes deux bras, o ma
mere!

Je vois s'ouvrir pour moi ta porte, o ma
maison!

Et je baise les mains et je baise les pierres,
Je regarde les doigts et les planchers
treublants;

Et j'ai des pleurs tres doux au bord de mes
paupieres.

Pour la mere au front gris et la mere aux
murs blancs.



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