

Two Umlauts are Better Than One

BY OLIVER SHARPE, TIME OUT FOOD COLUMNIST

Aside from the ampersand the umlaut is my favorite special character. Thus, I was understandably excited to discover Jäger Rösti, a snack with two umlauts, on my recent trip to Switzerland. It is as delicious as it is difficult to type.

Rösti, a traditional Swiss dish consisting of shredded potatoes pan-fried in butter, is often served as a side. Jäger Rösti, which translates to, "Rösti Hunter's Style," is a meal unto itself, adding a layer of melted cheese, bacon and a sunny-side egg to the equation. I couldn't help but be reminded of a similar dish made famous by a Southern roadside staple that serves their hash browns "scattered, smothered and chunked." It is fascinating that two restaurants separated by 50 years and nearly 5,000 miles had arrived at nearly the exact same dish.

The dish was designed to sustain Engadine hunters as they tracked Steinbocks across Alpen peaks but left me feeling rather lethargic. Luckily the deck chairs at Restaurant Trutz, the purveyor of Jäger Rösti, provide stunning panoramic vistas that promote digestion. Trutz is a slopeside lodge operated by the Suvretta House Hotel and reminiscent of Bonnie's or Cloud 9 here in Aspen. I dined there daily and successfully ate my way across the menu. Standouts included a ridiculously rich gnocchi gorgonzola and the Engadiner wurst, a locally produced sausage, both of which also had me wanting a

nap rather than another lap on the lifts.

Lunch at Trutz provided the perfect amount of energy for an après-ski expedition to the Snow Polo World Cup taking place on the frozen surface of Lake St. Moritz. They didn't serve food but there were bottles of Perrier-Jouët in the media tent, an amenity that I highly recommend to any event looking for favorable coverage. You can't travel anywhere without running into someone from Aspen, and I was pleased to see a friendly face in Melissa Ganzi on the field. She was the only female player in the tournament and notched a goal for Team Badrutt's Palace Hotel in their losing effort against Team Cartier. I gained a new appreciation for snow polo and hope the World Snow Polo Championships in Aspen soon see similar attendance to the 15,000 fans that enjoyed the game in St. Moritz.

Switzerland is the worldwide leader in adapting sports to winter conditions and they have moved well beyond polo, modifying just about every activity you can think of for play on the pristine white expanse of Lake St. Moritz. Race fans will enjoy White Turf, a horseracing and skijoring series, while duffers will dig the Snow Golf Cup where players putt from the fluff. There is also Cricket on Ice, which I'm sure still doesn't make any sense to anyone not from a former British colony.

Switzerland, you have a lot to offer and I like you. I like you umlaut.