

GERMAN CUISINE

Germany is a country located in the heart of Western Europe. It is bordered by Denmark, Poland, Czech Republic, Austria, Switzerland, France, Luxembourg, Belgium, Netherlands, the North Sea, and the Baltic Sea. Germany has a strategic location on North European Plain and along the entrance to the Baltic Sea

The cuisine of Germany has evolved as a national cuisine through centuries of social and political change with variations from region to region. Some regions of Germany, like Bavaria and neighboring Swabia, share dishes with Austrian and parts of Swiss cuisine.

Pork, beef, and poultry are the main varieties of meat consumed in Germany, pork being the most popular. Average annual meat consumption is 59 kg (130 lb). Among poultry, chicken is most common, although duck, goose, and turkey are also consumed. Game meats, especially boar, hare, and venison are also widely available, especially in autumn and winter. Lamb and goat are less popular.

Meat is usually braised; pan-fried dishes also exist, but these recipes usually originate from France and Austria. Several cooking methods used to soften tough cuts have evolved into national specialties, including Sauerbraten (sour roast), involving marinating beef, horse meat or venison in a vinegar or wine vinegar mixture over several days.

A long tradition of sausage-making exists in Germany; more than 1500 different types of sausage (German: Wurst) are made. Most Wurst is made with natural casings of pork, sheep or lamb intestines. Among the most popular and most common are Bratwurst, usually made of ground pork and spices, the Wiener (Viennese), which may be pork or beef and is smoked and fully cooked in a water bath, and Blutwurst (blood sausage) or Schwarzwurst (black sausage) made from blood (often of pigs or geese). Thousands of types of cold cuts also are available. There are many regional specialties, such as the Münchner Weißwurst (Munich white sausage) popular in Bavaria or the Currywurst (depending on region, either a steamed pork sausage or a version of the Bratwurst, sliced and spiced with curry ketchup) popular in the metropolitan areas of Berlin, Hamburg and the Ruhr Area.

Before 1990, the cuisine from Eastern Germany (1949-1990) was influenced by Russian, Polish, Bulgarian and other countries of the Communist bloc. East Germans traveled abroad to these countries on holiday, and soldiers coming to East Germany from these countries brought their dishes with them. A typical dish that came to the East German kitchen this way is Soljanka.

GEOGRAPHIC SETTING AND ENVIRONMENT

Germany is located in Western Europe. The topography of the country is varied, and includes regions of deep forest and high mountains, as well as a wide valley surrounding the Rhine, Germany's largest river. The highest mountain peak, the Zugspitze, lies on the border with Austria. Less than 3 percent of Germans are farmers, and the country must import much of its food. Apples, pears, cherries, and peaches, as well as grapes for wine production, are important crops in Germany.

HISTORY AND FOOD

Food has always been a major part of German culture. Even the well-known German fairy tale, Hansel and Gretel, makes reference to food. Hansel and Gretel, brother and sister, discover a house in the forest made of gingerbread and candies. King Frederick II (King Frederick the Great, 1712–1786) introduced the potato, a staple in the German diet. He gave away seed potatoes and taught the people how to grow them. But wars caused food shortages and hardship twice during the twentieth century. After the Germans lost World War I (1914–18), food was scarce and soldiers trying to get home were starving. After World War II (1939–1945), the country had even less food available, but this time nations that had defeated Germany, including the United States, helped to feed the Germans and rebuild the country. In 1949 after World War II, Germany was divided into East Germany and West Germany. This division caused the country's two halves to develop different styles of cooking. East Germany, closely associated with its neighbor, Russia, took on a more Russian style of cooking. West Germans continued the traditional German cuisine.

Differences in cooking style between the northern and southern Germany

Germany, similar to the northern and southern styles of cooking in the United States. In the north, restaurants in Hamburg and Berlin might feature aalsuppe (eel soup) or eintopf (seafood stew). Soups of dried beans, such as weisse bohnsuppe (white bean soup) are also popular. In the center of the country, menus include breads and cereals made with buckwheat and rye flour. A favorite dish is birnen, bohnen und speck (pears, green beans, and bacon). In the middle of the country, a region near the Netherlands known as Westphalia is famous for spargel (asparagus), especially white asparagus, and rich, heavy pumpernickel bread. Westphalian ham, served with pungent mustard, is popular with Germans worldwide.

Frankfurt, located in the south, is the home of a sausage known as Wüstchen . This sausage is similar to the U.S. hot dog, sometimes called a "frankfurter" after the German city. In the south, a dish mysteriously called Himmel und erde (Heaven and Earth) combines potatoes and apples with onions and bacon. The southern region of Bavaria features rugged mountains and the famous Black Forest. Black Forest cherry cake and tortes, as well as Kirschwasser, a clear cherry brandy, are two contributions from this area. Spätzle (tiny dumplings) are the southern version of knödel (potato dumplings) of the north. Lebkuchen is a spicy cookie prepared especially during the Christmas season. East and West Germany were reunited in the early 1990s, but Germans continue to cook according to their region

Regional Cooking Styles:

Germans love rich, hearty cuisine, though each area of Germany has its own definition of what a traditional meal looks like . German regional cuisine can be divided into many varieties such as Bavarian cuisine (southern Germany) or Thuringian (central Germany) and Lower Saxon cuisine and Ore Mountain cuisine.

Bavarian cuisine -

This region primarily consists of the regions of Bavaria, Hamburg and Hesse.

Bavaria

The Bavarian dukes, especially the Wittelsbach family, developed Bavarian cuisine and refined it to be presentable to the royal court. This cuisine has belonged to wealthy households, especially in cities, since the 19th century. The (old) Bavarian cuisine is closely connected to Czech cuisine and Austrian cuisine (especially from Tyrol and Salzburg), mainly through the Wittelsbach and Habsburg families. Already in the beginning, Bavarians were closely connected to their neighbours in Austria through linguistic, cultural and political similarities, which also reflected on the cuisine.

A characteristic Bavarian cuisine was further developed by both groups, with a distinct similarity to Franconian and Swabian cuisine. A Bavarian speciality is the Brotzeit, a savoury snack, which would originally be eaten between breakfast and lunch.

Bavaria is a part of Southeastern Germany, including the city of Munich and spreading to board with the countries Austria and the Czech Republic. The region is located at higher elevations, and is known for yielding beet and potato crops and also for the production of fine beers.

Hamburg

Due to its century-old history as a harbour town, the traditional cuisine of Hamburg is very diversified and sapid as ingredients' supply was safe. Until the 20th century, it was predominantly characterized by the extensive choice of different kinds of fish from the river Elbe and the quick access to both the North Sea and the Baltic Sea, both being roughly 100 kilometers away from the city center. The neighboring regions did supply the city state with fresh vegetables, fruit came mainly from a region called Altes Land just southwest of Hamburg and until industrialization, the neighbourhood of Wilhelmsburg was considered the 'milk isle' of Hamburg.

International trade made spices and exotic nutrition items from Asia and South America available since the 16th century which were soon incorporated into civic kitchens. On this basis, the cuisine of Hamburg developed its characteristics nowadays due to the supraregional harmonization of the Northern German and Scandinavian cuisine.

Hesse

Wheat, rapeseed, sugarbeets, and barley grow well, along with a variety of vegetables, which grow near Erfurt, the state's capital. Cauliflower, cabbage, kohlrabi, and broccoli grow by traditional means near Erfurt. Tomatoes, lettuce, broad beans, onions, and cucumbers are grown in the eastern portion of the region near Jena under glass centers on about 12 acres of land. Thuringia is the second-largest herb-growing region in Germany; the town of Kölleda was once considered the "peppermint town", where herb growers used to congregate to study herb cultivation.

Thuringian Cuisine

One-third of Thuringia is covered in forest, and is considered to be one of the best game-hunting regions in Germany. Popular game includes red deer, roe deer, wild boar, rabbit, duck, and mouflon (mountain sheep). The wooded areas also contain a wide variety of edible mushrooms, such as chestnut mushrooms, porcini, and chanterelles, along with wild berries, such as blueberries, cranberries, raspberries, and blackberries, which are all traditional accompaniments to game dishes.

The most famous foods from Thuringia are Thuringian sausages and Thuringian dumplings. The state is also known for its sausages; steamed, scaled, and cured varieties are all prepared. Popular varieties include Thüringer Mettwurst (a spreadable cured sausage), Feldkieker (a cured, air-dried sausage dried up to eight months), Thüringer Leberwurst (a steamed pork and liver sausage), Thüringer Rotwurst (a steamed blood sausage packed in a bladder or other natural casing) and Mett (minced pork).

Saxon cuisine and Ore Mountain cuisine

In general the cuisine is very hearty and features many peculiarities of central Germany such as a great variety of sauces which accompany the main dish and the fashion to serve Klöße" or Knödel as a side dish instead of potatoes, pasta or rice. Also much freshwater fish is used in Saxon cuisine, particularly carp and trout as is the case throughout Eastern Europe.

The rich history of the region did and still does influence the cuisine. In the blossoming and growing cities of Dresden and Leipzig an extravagant style of cuisine is cherished (one may only think of the crab as an ingredient in the famous Leipziger Allerlei). Other regions where the people had to work really hard to yield some harvest and were really poor like in the Erzgebirge peasant dishes play a major role and famous dishes originating there are e.g. potatoes with Quark, potato soup or potato with bread and linseed oil. Also in the region Vogtland there were many peasants but they were wealthier and that's why in this region the Sunday roast is a tradition that is nowadays still lived up to.

Cereal grain cultivation occupies 62% of the cultivated land in Saxony-Anhalt. Wheat, barley, oats, and rye are grown, with the rye being grown near Börde, where it is used to make Burger Knäckebrötchen, a flatbread produced there since 1931. Another 10% of the cultivated area is planted in sugar beets for conversion to sugar, popularized after the 19th century, when the region had an economic boom.

Structure of meals

Breakfast (Frühstück) commonly consists of bread, toast, or bread rolls with butter or margarine, cold cuts, cheeses, jam (Konfitüre or more commonly called Marmelade), honey and eggs (typically boiled). Common drinks at breakfast are coffee, tea, milk, cocoa (hot or cold) or fruit juices. Deli meats like ham, salted meats, salami and meat-based spreads such as Leberwurst (liver sausage), Teewurst or Mettwurst and cheeses such as Gouda, Frischkäse (cream cheese), Brie, Harzer Roller, Bergkäse etc are consumed frequently.

Traditionally, the main meal of the day has been lunch (Mittagessen), eaten around noon. Dinner (Abendessen or Abendbrot) was always a smaller meal, often consisting only of a variety of breads, meat or sausages, cheese and some kind of vegetables, similar to breakfast, or possibly sandwiches. Smaller meals added during the day bear names such as Vesper (in the south), Brotzeit (bread time, also in the south), Kaffee und Kuchen, literally for "coffee and cake"), or Kaffeetrinken. It is a very German custom and comparable with the English Five-o'clock-Tea. It takes time between lunch and dinner, often on Sundays with the entire family.

Breakfast (Frühstück)

German breakfastA typical breakfast in Germany consists of a warm beverage such as coffee, tea or cocoa, bread (Brot) or bread rolls (Brötchen) with various spreads and toppings such as Butter (butter) or Margarine (margarine), Marmelade (marmalade or other jam), Honig (honey), Quark (a type of curd cheese), Wurst (sausage) and Käse (cheese). A glass of juice (Saft) is also commonplace, as is a boiled egg (Ei). Cereals are also popular, particularly among younger people. Müsli, which is a mixture of cereal flakes, nuts and dried fruit and other ingredients is also very popular. It is mixed with Joghurt (yogurt) or Milch (milk) and often topped with fresh fruit (Obst).

With today's busy lifestyles there is a growing trend towards eating a more simple breakfast, young people prefer cereal over a more hearty meal of bread, cheese and sausage. However, the traditional breakfast of fresh breads accompanied by a cheese or meat selection is still alive and well, particularly on the weekend when the family has more time. With a bakery (Bäckerei) on every street corner, it's customary to buy freshly baked rolls on Saturday and Sunday for the whole family to enjoy over a leisurely breakfast. On weekends, some Germans also like to cook eggs, whether hartgekochtes Ei (hard-boiled egg), Spiegelei (fried egg) or Rührei (scrambled egg).

In between the meals/ Brunch (Grosse Pause/ Zweites Frühstück / Pausenbrot)

Germans have plenty of words to describe a meal that is eaten between main meals. Far from being unhealthy, eating small snacks between meals is encouraged to prevent overeating at lunch and dinner. Eating a snack between breakfast and lunch is very traditional in German schools and this is called Pausenbrot (recess bread if you translate it literally) or Zweites Frühstück (second breakfast). Since German schoolchildren generally don't eat meals at school, there's quite a long wait between breakfast and lunch, which typically they eat at home. So, the Pausenbrot is meant to make sure students have the energy and ability to concentrate for the entire morning. Although the word Pausenbrot indicates that it's a sandwich snack, it doesn't necessarily have to contain bread. Pausenbrot may be a small sandwich, but fruit is quite typical, and yogurt or a Müsli bar are also popular Pausenbrot snacks.

Snack (Zwischenmahlzeit)

SnacksAdults also need to keep their energy levels up during the day. For them, it's the Zwischenmahlzeit (in-between meal) that keeps them going between meals. A Zwischenmahlzeit is also referred to as Brotzeit, Vesper or Zweites Frühstück. The English word Snack is also used, as is Imbiss, although these refer more to actual meals that may replace main meals, whereas the Zwischenmahlzeit is meant to be eaten in addition to the main meal.

Lunch (Mittagessen)

Luncheon dishTraditionally, German families eat their main meal during the day, between 12 and 2 p.m. However, many families now eat the warm meal in the evening. A typical lunch plate might consist of Kartoffelsalat mit Würstchen oder Frikadellen (potato salad with sausage or meat balls), Spätzle mit Geschnetzeltem (Spätzle noodles with stir-fry), Schnitzel mit Buttergemüse (Schnitzel with buttered vegetables) or Fischstäbchen mit Kartoffelpüree (Fish sticks with mashed potato). Meat is served most every day, particularly pork and chicken. Vegetables are also a standard part of any Mittagessen. Typical vegetables served at lunchtime are grüne Bohnen (green beans), Möhren (carrots), Erbsen (peas)and Kohl (cabbage). Potatoes are also a staple and come in the form of Salzkartoffel (boiled), Knödel (dumplings), Bratkartoffel (fried potatoes), Krokette (croquettes), Kartoffelpüree (mashed potatoes) and of course, Pommes Frites (french fries). Of course, as popular as potatoes are, rice and noodles are also eaten as side dishes.

Dinner (Abendbrot)

This is the main meal today, usually eaten at home with the family in the evening. Traditionally, the German dinner – called "Abendbrot", meaning "evening bread", consists of a selection of whole grain bread, deli meats and sausages, cheese and a cold or warm drink. Yet, eating habits changed over time and today, many families eat the warm meal in the evening.

Pork, beef, and poultry dishes are the favourite main courses. But here too, change is in progress. Seafood used to be the domain of the northern coastal areas. But seawater fish like fresh herring, mackerel, salmon and sardines or freshwater fish like trout, salmon, bream and carp are popular across the country today.

Popular Dishes:

FISH

Smoked sprat and Alaska pollock is the most common fish varieties . Popular freshwater fish on the German menu are trout, pike, carp, and European perch. Seafood traditionally was restricted to the northern coastal areas, except for pickled herring, which often served in a Fischbrötchen, as Rollmops (a pickled herring fillet rolled into a cylindrical shape around a piece of pickled gherkin or onion), or Brathering (fried, marinated herring). Fish fingers, known as Fischstäbchen, are a popular processed food made using a whitefish, such as cod, haddock or pollock, which has been battered or breaded.

PORK AND MEAT

Pork is the most consumed meat, Schweinshaxe (braised pork hock) and Saumagen (pork stomach) are a popular traditional pork dishes. Pork, beef, and poultry dishes are the favourite main courses.

VEGETABLES

Vegetables are often used in stews or vegetable soups, but are also served as side dishes. Carrots, turnips, spinach, peas, beans, broccoli and many types of cabbage are very common. Fried onions are a common addition to many meat dishes throughout the country.

Asparagus, especially white asparagus known in German as Spargel, is a common side dish or may be prepared as a main dish. Restaurants will sometimes devote an entire menu to nothing but white asparagus when it is in season. Spargel season (German: Spargelzeit or Spargelsaison) traditionally begins in mid-April and ends on St. John's Day (24 June).

BREAD

Bread (Brot) is a significant part of German cuisine. About 600 main types of breads and 1,200 different types of pastries and rolls are produced in the German Cuisine

Bread is served usually for breakfast (often replaced by bread rolls) and in the evening as (open) sandwiches, but rarely as a side dish for the main meal (popular, for example, with Eintopf or soup). The importance of bread in German cuisine is also illustrated by words such as Abendbrot (meaning supper, literally evening bread) and Brotzeit (snack, literally bread time). In fact, one of the major complaints of the German expatriates in many parts of the world is their inability to find acceptable local breads.

Bread types range from white wheat bread (Weißbrot) to grey (Graubrot) to black (Schwarzbrot), actually dark brown rye bread. Most breads contain both wheat and rye flour (hence Mischbrot, mixed bread), and often also wholemeal and whole seeds such as linseed, sunflower seed, or pumpkin seed (Vollkornbrot). Darker, rye-dominated breads, such as Vollkornbrot or Schwarzbrot, are typical of German cuisine. Pumpernickel, a steamed, sweet-tasting bread, is internationally well known, although not representative of German black bread as a whole. Most German breads are made with sourdough. Whole grain is also preferred for high fiber. Germans use almost all available types of grain for their breads: wheat, rye, barley, spelt, oats, millet, corn and rice. Some breads are even made with potato starch flour.

Germany's most popular breads are Rye-wheat (Roggenmischbrot), Toast bread (Toastbrot), Whole-grain (Vollkornbrot), Wheat-rye (Weizenmischbrot), White bread (Weißbrot), Multigrain, usually wheat-rye-oats with sesame or linseed (Mehrkornbrot), Rye (Roggenbrot), Sunflower seeds in dark rye bread (Sonnenblumenkernbrot), Pumpkin seeds in dark rye bread (Kürbiskernbrot) and Roasted onions in light wheat-rye bread (Zwiebelbrot).

BREAD ROLLS

Bread rolls, known in Germany as Brötchen, which is a diminutive of Brot, with regional linguistic varieties being Semmel (in South Germany), Schrippe (especially in Berlin), Rundstück (in the North and Hamburg) or Weck, Weckle, Weckli, or Wecken (in Baden-Württemberg, Switzerland and parts of Southern Hesse), are common in German cuisine. A typical serving is a roll cut in half, and spread with butter or margarine. Cheese, honey, jam, Nutella, meat, fish, or preserves are then placed between the two halves, or on each half separately, known as a belegtes Brötchen.

Rolls are also used for snacks, or as a hotdog-style roll for Bratwurst, Brätel, Fleischkäse or Schwenker/Schwenkbraten. Franzbrötchen, which originated in the area of Hamburg, is the small, sweet pastry roll baked with butter and cinnamon.

SIDE DISHES

PASTA AND POTATOES

Noodles, made from wheat flour and egg, are usually thicker than the Italian flat pasta. Especially in the southwestern part of the country, the predominant variety of noodles are Spätzle, made with large amounts of eggs, and Maultaschen, traditional stuffed noodles reminiscent of ravioli.

Besides noodles, potatoes are common. Potatoes entered the German cuisine in the late 17th century, and were almost ubiquitous in the 19th century and since. They most often are boiled (in salt water, Salzkartoffeln), but mashed (Kartoffelpüree) and pan-roasted potatoes (Bratkartoffeln) also are traditional. French fries, called Pommes frites, Pommes (spoken as "Pom fritz" or, respectively, "Pommes", deviating from the French pronunciation which would be "Pom freet" or "Pom") or regionally as Fritten in German, are a common style of fried potatoes; they are traditionally offered with either ketchup or mayonnaise, or, as Pommes rot/weiß (lit. fries red/white), with both. Also common are dumplings (including Klöße as the term in the north or Knödel as the term in the south) and in southern Germany potato noodles, including Schupfnudeln, which are similar to Italian gnocchi.

SPICES AND CONDIMENTS

With the exception of mustard for sausages, German dishes are rarely hot and spicy; the most popular herbs are traditionally parsley, thyme, laurel, chives, black pepper (used in small amounts), juniper berries, nutmeg, and caraway. Cardamom, anise seed, and cinnamon are often used in sweet cakes or beverages associated with Christmas time, and sometimes in the preparation of sausages, but are otherwise rare in German meals. Other herbs and spices, such as basil, sage, oregano, and hot chili peppers, have become popular since the early 80's. Fresh dill is very common in a green salad or fish fillet.

Mustard (Senf) is a very common accompaniment to sausages and can vary in strength, the most common version being Mittelscharf (medium hot), which is somewhere between traditional English and French mustards in strength. Düsseldorf, similar to French's Deli Mustard with a taste that is very different from Dijon, and the surrounding area are known for its particularly spicy mustard, which is used both as a table condiment and in local dishes such as Senfrostbraten (pot roast with mustard). In the southern parts of the country, a sweet variety of mustard is made which is almost exclusively served with the Bavarian speciality Weißwurst. German mustard is usually considerably less acidic than American varieties.

Horseradish is commonly used as a condiment either on its own served as a paste, enriched with cream (Sahnemeerrettich), or combined with mustard. In some regions of Germany, it is used with meats and sausages where mustard would otherwise be used.

DESSERTS

Cakes

A wide variety of cakes and tarts are served throughout the country, most commonly made with fresh fruit. Apples, plums, strawberries, and cherries are used regularly in cakes. Cheesecake is also very popular, often made with quark. Schwarzwälder Kirschtorte (Black Forest cake, made with cherries) is probably the most well-known example of a wide variety of typically German tortes filled with whipped or butter cream.

Doughnuts

German doughnuts (which have no hole) are usually balls of yeast dough with jam or other fillings, and are known as Berliner, Pfannkuchen (only in Berlin and Eastern Germany), Kreppel or Krapfen, depending on the region.

PANCAKE

Eierkuchen or Pfannkuchen are large (usually around 20–24 cm in diameter), and relatively thin (~5mm) pancakes, comparable to the French crêpes. They are served covered with sugar, jam or syrup. Salty variants with cheese, ground meat or bacon exist as well as variants with apple slices baked in (called Apfelpfannkuchen, literally for apple pancakes), but they are usually considered to be main dishes rather than desserts. In some regions, Eierkuchen are filled and then wrapped; in others, they are cut into small pieces and arranged in a heap (called Kaiserschmarrn, often including raisins baked in). The word Pfannkuchen means pancake in most parts of Germany.

Quarkkäulchen, is a popular pan cake like dessert with sugar and cinnamon.

PUDDINGS AND ICECREAMS

A popular dessert in northern Germany is Rote Grütze, red fruit pudding, which is made with black and red currants, raspberries and sometimes strawberries or cherries cooked in juice with corn starch as a thickener. It is traditionally served with cream, but also is served with vanilla sauce, milk or whipped cream. Rhabarbergrütze (rhubarb pudding) and Grüne Grütze (gooseberry fruit pudding) are variations of the Rote Grütze. A similar dish, Obstkaltschale, may also be found all around Germany.

Ice cream and sorbets are also very popular. Italian-run ice cream parlours were the first large wave of foreign-run eateries in Germany, becoming widespread in the 1920s. Spaghettieis, which resembles spaghetti, tomato sauce, and ground cheese on a plate, is a popular ice cream dessert.

FESTIVALS

Oktoberfest is the German festival of October. It is held, not in October but during the last week of September in Munich. In late summer or early fall in the United States, many cities stage Oktoberfests to celebrate German culture, especially German beer. At German Oktoberfests, beer is traditionally drunk from a large, decorated stone mug called a Bier Stein (beer stein). Germany has more than 1,200 breweries, making over 5,000 different kinds of beer.

For Christmas, cut-out honey cakes called Lebkuchen are baked in squares, hearts, semicircles, or little bear shapes, iced, and decorated with tiny cutouts of cherubs (angels) and bells. One large or five to seven small cakes are then tied together with a bright ribbon and presented by a young lady to a young man of her choice on Christmas Day. Springerle (cookies), marzipan candies, and Stollen (a type of coffeecake with candied and dried fruit) are also popular Christmas desserts. To accompany the cookies, Germans drink Glühwein, a type of mulled wine. A favorite drink with teenagers is Apfelschörle, a sparkling fruit juice. A traditional Christmas dinner is roast goose with vegetables and Kartoffelknödeln (potato dumplings).

In Germany, roasted goose is a staple for Christmas Day meals. In the southern parts it is often replaced with european carp. The carp is cut into pieces, coated in breadcrumbs and fried in fat. Common side dishes are potato salad, cucumber salad or potatoes. Another very common dish in christian german culture is Würstchen mit Kartoffelsalat, sausage (mostly Wiener Würstchen) with potato salad. In recent years, Raclette became known as a christmas dish, too. While originating in Switzerland the dish has been adapted in wide regions of Germany. Popular dishes also include Chocolate Easter Bunny, Oktoberfest Gingerbread, Roasted Christmas goose, Christmas cookies