

Heinrich Gasteiger . Gerhard Wieser . Helmut Bachmann

# Classics

## of the Dolomites

Traditional,  
savory,  
and sweet  
specialties

❁ ❁ ❁  
The Best Recipes, Easy to Prepare



**ATHESIA**

Heinrich Gasteiger . Gerhard Wieser . Helmut Bachmann

# Classics of the Dolomites



The Best Recipes, Easy to Prepare



**ATHESIA** VERLAG

# South Tyrol invites you to the table

*Classics of the Dolomites* is the title we've chosen for this book. The Dolomites are not only a UNESCO World Heritage Site but also a cultural and culinary crossroads—with South Tyrol at their heart. The book contains recipes for dishes that every South Tyrolean has known since childhood—dishes that seem to have always been there. They're the kind of dishes you never need to explain; simply mentioning them awakens memories and whets the appetite. South Tyrolean cuisine is incredibly diverse, however, and the list of classics could go on forever. That's why we've chosen the dishes that everybody who spends time in South Tyrol should try at least once; though most originated in a single valley, these dishes have gone on to become beloved favourites throughout South Tyrol over decades—and often centuries. Small as South Tyrol may be, its cuisine brings together a remarkable array of local traditions. To give a few examples, the Vinschgau Valley contributes the Paarl bread and Palabirne pears, the Eisacktal Valley its delicate wine soup, and Bolzano its St. Magdalena roast beef; the Überetsch and Unterland regions bring us Plent, Terlan is home to a vast variety of asparagus dishes, and the Ahrntal Valley offers the sharp and savoury grey cheese and rib-sticking pressed dumplings. South Tyrolean classics are something of a geographical patchwork—and one that looks back on a long history. But we'll tell you more about that in the introductory chapters. We hope you enjoy reading our recipes—and have even more fun cooking them!

The "So kocht Südtirol" team



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## The Roots of Classic Dishes

In this book, we present the classics of South Tyrolean cuisine. And as we begin, we'd like to address two particularly compelling questions: What makes a dish a classic? And what is South Tyrolean cuisine, exactly? The answers to these questions are closely related: Firstly, a dish becomes a classic when it is intertwined with tradition, when it has been a staple of cuisine since time immemorial, and when the recipe has been passed down from generation to generation. Classics never go out of fashion; they are a constant of cuisine, and an inseparable ele-

ment of a land and its people. This also means that these classics are anchored in the culinary culture of a land, like tiny offshoots growing from the roots of alimentary tradition—in our case, that of South Tyrol. This brings us to the second question: What exactly is South Tyrolean cuisine? If we had to distil the essence of South Tyrolean cuisine into one word, that word would most likely be 'variety'. Fundamentally, South Tyrolean cuisine encompasses an immense variety of layers which have merged over the centuries to form one single, harmonious whole. As such, it is no easy task to separate one layer from another—but it's certainly worth a try.

# Our Agricultural Heritage

The first, the sturdiest, and arguably the thickest layer is the agricultural heritage of our region which shapes our cuisine to this day. Everything that has ever come to our tables is the food that our farms, barns, gardens, fields, orchards, and even our forests provide. We can see one perfect example in South Tyrol's national dish of bread dumplings: made using flour, eggs, milk, and bread, it's got the lot, all rolled into one.

## 1,000 Years of Bread Dumplings

Bread dumplings, or *Knödel*, are indisputably the classic of all South Tyrolean classics. And given that their roots can be traced back over 1,000 years, it's no surprise. A fresco in the castle chapel of Hocheppan dating to the late 12th century depicts not only Mary in childbirth, but also a pan containing five bread

**South Tyrol has been enjoying this sight for centuries: Dumplings, the classic of all classics.**



## The Exception to the Dumpling Rule

The misconception that dumplings are always round is disproved by the pressed dumpling, a local speciality from the Ahrntal Valley known as "Pressa." After the "Pressa" have been rolled out they are pressed into flat patties, similar to a burger in shape. Then—in equally exceptional fashion—they go into a frying pan, where they are fried in butter and rounded off with a gentle simmer in salted water. Pressed dumplings are made with grey, alpine, or mountain cheese, and are a fabulous dish if you like your tastes strong and decisive.

dumplings. And a sixth is on the fork which Mary is holding. Incidentally, **Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays** were all "dumpling days" on the farms of old; this regularity led to the creation of countless interpretations of the conventional dumpling and gnocchi recipes, all of which originated on farms. To give one example, the speck used to make speck dumplings came from the farm's own pigs, while the main ingredient in cheese dumplings was sourced from the farm's own milk and the black polenta, or buckwheat, was cultivated (and is again today, with ever-increasing regularity) on the farm's own fields. As we said: they've got the lot.



**Pusterer Breatl, Vinschger Paarl, Schüttelbrot:** The tough, hardy rye is generally the primary ingredient in South Tyrolean bread.

### Typically South Tyrolean

The same goes for bread, staple food *par excellence*, which was also the primary source of energy for the laborious rural lifestyle. From *Pusterer Breatl* to *Vinschger Paarl*, the basic ingredients remain the same: flour, water, yeast or sourdough, salt, and spices.

One notable speciality bread from our region is South Tyrolean **Schüttelbrot**, which was designated as a Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) product by the EU in 2020. This thin, crispy (by no means burnt!) flatbread is made from rye flour, and the dough is hand-shaken before transferral to the oven. Shaking loosens the dough up and fills it with air, which speeds up the subsequent drying phase considerably. The classic dough is seasoned with caraway, fennel, anise, and fenugreek, while the more recent iterations may be made with spelt flour or seasoned with rosemary or beetroot. One way or the other, it's clear to see that not only the ingredients for Schüttelbrot, but also the lengthy drying process—not to mention its incredibly long shelf life (up to two years!) are rooted in the agricultural lifestyle: farmers of bygone days seldom had the time

to fire up the large wood-fired oven that found its home on almost every farm.

A slightly less compact counterpart to South Tyrolean bread, although perhaps at least as old, is **Muas**, which has always been a staple of the rural diet.

**Its consistency may be somewhat of an acquired taste, but Muas is a dish that is as nutritious as it is tasty.**





**Vinegar provides both the flavour and the name for sour soup, a dish served mainly in winter.**

Although the original *Muas* was made with oat flour, this was gradually substituted with more flavour-some (and finer) flours, ranging from black polenta (buckwheat) to wheat. *Muas* is prepared in a cast-iron *Muas* pan, which distributes the heat evenly on the base of the pan, where the tastiest part of the *Muas* forms: known as the Schärre or Schornn, this is the crust that develops on the bottom of the pan. And given that *Muas* is eaten straight from the pan, it is the part that everybody seated around the table generally fights over.

And with *Muas*, we come to the down-to-earth and hearty staples of South Tyrol's rural culinary tradition, which count numerous dishes rooted in the need to make the most of absolutely everything that was available on the farm. Whenever an animal was slaughtered, it was not just the prime cuts that were used, but every single part that was edible. The philosophy of nose-to-tail eating which has recently

returned to vogue (a sensible and necessary contribution to combating food waste) was a matter of course on the farm. **Sour soup**, a tripe soup flavoured with vinegar, is usually made using the rumen and paunch of veal and beef, although this varies from region to region. In the trading city of Bolzano, for example, where the southern influence is a tangible presence, sour soup is also flavoured with tomatoes or tomato paste, white wine, and parmesan cheese, in similar style to Florence's *Trippa alla Fiorentina*.

**Veal head, liver dumplings, black pudding, and blood pasta** also made a regular appearance at the table as a result of this all-round utilisation; although these dishes may not be everyone's cup of tea today, if

### **A Very Unusual Pasta**

One of the most persistent examples of the nose-to-tail concept—eating every edible part of an animal—can be seen in *Schwoafßnudl* (blood pasta) which looks back on a long tradition, particularly in the Pustertal Valley. To make them, the pig's blood was collected during slaughter and mixed into the pasta dough, giving the dish its colour, flavour, and an extra portion of protein—and therefore energy.

you're open to new tastes, you can be sure that they won't disappoint. Needless to say, the best cuts also made their way to the table, generally on Sundays or holidays. The **Schöpserne**, for example, a roast of mutton with root vegetables, is a tradition in many of our valleys. Incidentally, this roast takes its name from its provenance: a *Schöp*s is a castrated ram.

# South Tyrolean Classics: Step by Step

## South Tyrolean Schlutzkrapfen (recipe on page 44)



Combine sautéed onions, spinach, garlic, ricotta, parmesan and chives, season with nutmeg, salt, and pepper, and stir well.



Roll out the dough thinly using a pasta machine and cut out circles (Ø approx. 7 cm). Place a small amount of the filling in the center.



Moisten the edges of the dough with water and fold into a half-moon shape. Press the edges together firmly.



Cook the Schlutzkrapfen in salted water for about **3 minutes**, remove them, and arrange on plates.

## Deep-Fried Ricotta Parcels (*Tirtlen*) (recipe on page 86)



Shape the dough into a roll and cut it into 16 equal pieces. Roll out each piece into a circle (Ø approx. 14 cm).



Evenly distribute the filling onto 8 of the dough circles, leaving about 2 cm free around the edges.



Brush the edges with water and place another dough circle on top of each. Press the edges together firmly.



Fry the Tirtlen in hot oil at **180°C** until golden and crispy on one side (about **2 minutes**). Flip and fry the other side for about **1 minute**.

## Shortcrust pastry for South Tyrolean Apple Strudel (recipe on page 68)



Sift the flour onto the work surface and make a well in the center.



Place cubes of butter, powdered sugar, egg yolk, vanilla sugar, lemon zest, and salt in the center and knead together.



Once no butter pieces are visible, quickly knead everything with the flour into a smooth dough.



Roll out the shortcrust pastry to 40 x 25 cm and place it on a baking tray. Spread the filling on top and fold the dough over it.

## Yeast dough for Sweet Yeast Buns (*BuchteIn*) (recipe on page 74)



For the yeast starter (Dampfl), mix crumbled yeast, sugar, and milk.



Let the yeast mixture (Dampfl) rest in the flour, covered, for **15 minutes** at a maximum of **35°C**.



Mix the eggs, vanilla sugar, and orange zest, gently warm the mixture, then add it and stir.



Knead the dough in a stand mixer until it forms bubbles. Let it rest, covered, for **15 minutes**.

# Asparagus with Bozner Sauce

Prep. time **approx. 45 minutes**

Serves **4**

## Asparagus

<b>2 kg</b>	white asparagus
<b>1 tsp.</b>	butter
<b>1 pinch</b>	sugar
<b>2 tbsp.</b>	white wine
	salt

## Bozner Sauce

<b>2</b>	eggs
<b>1 tsp.</b>	mustard
	salt
	white pepper, freshly ground
<b>2 tbsp.</b>	hot beef stock (see page 26) or water
<b>100 ml</b>	sunflower oil
<b>1 tsp.</b>	white wine vinegar
<b>1 tbsp.</b>	chives

## Other ingredients

<b>2 tbsp.</b>	parmesan, grated
<b>1 tbsp.</b>	chives, finely chopped
<b>50 g</b>	butter, melted
<b>8</b>	small new potatoes, boiled
<b>8</b>	slices cold ham

## Asparagus

1. Peel the asparagus and chop off the woody ends.
2. Bring a pan of salted water to the boil. Add the butter, sugar, and white wine.
3. Add the asparagus to the boiling water, cover with a clean dishtowel or kitchen paper to ensure that the spears are fully immersed, and boil for approx. **15 minutes**.

## Bozner Sauce

4. Boil the eggs for **7 minutes**, plunge into cold water, peel, and separate the yolks from the whites. Chop the whites finely.
5. Combine the yolks with the mustard, salt, pepper, and hot beef stock. Add the oil slowly, stirring vigorously as you pour.
6. Add the white wine vinegar, chives, and chopped egg whites.

## To serve

7. Carefully remove the cooked asparagus from the pan and arrange on plates.
8. Sprinkle with the grated parmesan and chives and top with browned butter.
9. Serve with the potatoes, cooked ham, and Bozner Sauce.



# Spinach Dumplings with Alpine Cheese

Prep. time **approx. 40 minutes**

**Serves 4**  
(approx. 8 dumplings)

## Spinach dumplings

<b>150 g</b>	firm white bread or diced bread
<b>60 g</b>	onion
<b>1</b>	clove garlic
<b>2 tbsp.</b>	butter
<b>200 g</b>	spinach leaves, boiled
<b>2</b>	eggs
<b>50 ml</b>	milk
<b>30 g</b>	alpine cheese, diced
<b>1 tbsp.</b>	flour
<b>1</b>	generous pinch of nutmeg
	salt
	pepper, freshly ground

## Other ingredients

<b>20 g</b>	alpine cheese, grated
<b>30 g</b>	butter, browned
<b>20 g</b>	baby spinach

## Spinach dumplings

1. Dice the white bread finely.
2. Peel the onions and garlic, slice finely, sauté in butter, and add to the bread.
3. Puree the spinach and eggs in a blender.
4. Add to the white bread along with the milk, alpine cheese, flour, nutmeg, salt, and pepper and mix well.
5. Cover and leave to rest for approx. **15 minutes**.

## To make the dumplings

6. With wet hands, shape the dough into balls.
7. Bring a large pot of salted water to the boil, add the dumplings, and leave to simmer for approx. **15 minutes**.
8. Arrange the spinach dumplings on a plate and garnish with grated alpine cheese, browned butter, and baby spinach.

## Tips

- \* Serve the spinach dumplings on roast cocktail tomatoes or with a light, creamy alpine cheese and nut butter sauce.
- \* You can also shape the dough into long spinach dumplings. For 200g of cooked spinach, you will need about twice as much raw spinach.



# Roast Veal with Garden Vegetables

Prep. time **approx. 1¼ hours**

Serves 4

## Roast veal

<b>1 kg</b>	veal (shoulder or knuckle)
	salt
	pepper, freshly ground
<b>2 tbsp.</b>	sunflower oil
<b>150 g</b>	onions, quarters
<b>150 g</b>	carrots, sliced
<b>1</b>	sprig of rosemary
<b>2</b>	sage leaves
<b>80 ml</b>	white wine
<b>700 ml</b>	beef stock (see page 26) or water
<b>1 tsp.</b>	cornflour
<b>1 tbsp.</b>	butter, chilled

## Garden vegetables

<b>400 g</b>	vegetables (100 g each of carrots, beans, cauliflower, and broccoli), cooked
<b>50 g</b>	butter
	salt
	pepper, freshly ground
<b>2 tbsp.</b>	parsley

## Roast veal

1. Season the veal with salt and pepper and sear on all sides in sunflower oil. Roast at **200°C** in a preheated oven.
2. After approx. **30 minutes**, turn the veal over. Add the onions, carrots, rosemary, and sage. Lower heat to **160°C** and continue cooking.
3. Gradually add the white wine and a little of the beef stock.
4. Roast for another **30 minutes**, basting regularly.
5. Remove the veal from the sauce and keep warm.
6. Strain the gravy through a sieve, add a little cornflour to thicken, and stir in the chilled butter.

## Garden vegetables

7. Toss the vegetables in butter, season with salt and pepper, and sprinkle with parsley.

## To serve

8. Cut the veal across the grain into approx. 5mm thick slices.
9. Arrange on plates with the vegetables and drizzle with the gravy.

## Tip

- \* Serve with mashed potatoes or steamed rice.



# Buckwheat Cake

Prep. time **approx. 1 hour**

**Makes 1 cake tin**

(diameter 26 cm, approx. 16 slices)

## Ingredients

230 g	butter, softened
200 g	sugar
6	egg yolks
150 g	buckwheat flour
30 g	cornflour
150 g	hazelnuts, grated
1 sachet	baking powder
1	generous pinch of lemon zest, grated
6	egg whites

## Other ingredients

	butter
	flour
200 g	lingonberry jam
	icing sugar
100 ml	cinnamon cream

## Preparation

1. Cream the butter with half of the sugar until light and fluffy.
2. Stir in the egg yolks gradually.
3. Add the buckwheat flour, cornflour, hazelnuts, baking powder, and lemon zest and beat well.
4. Beat the egg whites to a stiff peak and fold in.
5. Pour the batter into a greased, floured cake tin and bake in a preheated oven (**180°C**) for approx. **40 minutes**.
6. Once cooled, slice in half horizontally and fill with lingonberry jam.
7. Slice into portions, dust with the icing sugar, and serve with the cinnamon cream.

## Tip

- \* You can also fill this cake with apricot or raspberry jam.



# Authors



**Heinrich Gasteiger** is a master chef and long-time culinary instructor at the Professional Hotel School Kaiserhof in Merano. He is regarded as a leading figure and visionary in all areas of cooking. His international experience includes working in the renowned kitchens of top hotels across Europe, such as in Gstaad, Lugano, Seefeld, and Munich. Today, he works as a creative product developer in the food and gourmet sector and is known for his innovative food design.



**Gerhard Wieser** is a master chef and certified dietary cook. He is the head chef of the gourmet restaurant *Castel Fine Dining* at the five-star Hotel Castel in Dorf Tirol, which he has led to earn *two Michelin stars* and *five Gault Millau toques*. His culinary style has been shaped by experiences with top chefs in Europe and Asia. Wieser is a passionate developer of food and gourmet products and was named *Chef of the Year 2020* by the Schlemmer Atlas.



**Helmut Bachmann** master chef and long-time vocational teacher at the hospitality school *Emma Hellenstainer* in Brixen. As a member of the Italian national chefs' team, he competed in culinary contests in Frankfurt, Luxembourg, Basel, Chicago, and Vienna, earning several gold medals. He is also a member of the *World Association of Chefs Societies (WACS)* as a *Global Master Chef*.



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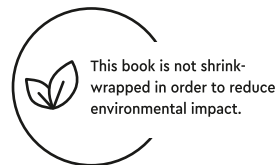
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South Tyrolean Schlutzkrapfen (recipe on page 44)



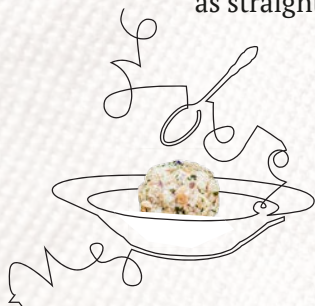


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**So kocht  
Südtirol  
Team**



From the Alps to the Mediterranean and Austria: Over the centuries, South Tyrol has absorbed a multitude of culinary influences and transformed them into its own unique dishes, from wine soup and cheese dumplings to Schlutzkrapfen (spinach-filled ravioli) and spinach spätzle pasta, from potato pancakes to Tirtlen (deep-fried quark parcels), roast lamb and braised meats, sweet Krapfen pastries, strudel, and a whole host of local specialities from the valleys of the region.

In this book, master chefs **Heinrich Gasteiger**, **Gerhard Wieser**, and **Helmut Bachmann** have compiled the best recipes for South Tyrol's classic dishes— from cold and hot starters to soups, breads, main dishes, and desserts. The “So kocht Südtirol” team provides clear, intuitive directions for each recipe, along with valuable tips and step-by-step instructions to make them as straightforward as possible—even for novice cooks.



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