

CELEA

December 2022



AN AUSSIE CHRISTMAS

Not your conventional Christmas celebration

CULINARY MAESTROS

Discovering the Goan Heart & Soul of Chef Avinash Martins

THE MAGICAL CUISINE OF MADHYA PRADESH

Food from the heart of India

Eating Switzerland, the Vegetarian Way

Not just Swiss cheese!

By Bindu Gopal Rao



On a recent visit to Switzerland, I had the opportunity to see a rather unusual aspect of the country in its showcase of vegetarian food. From being known as a typically meat-eating country, the winds of change are sweeping Switzerland, that is making inroads into vegan and vegetarian cuisine. And being vegetarian myself, this was a trip that was an eye opener for me as I learnt about how the country is showcasing its fresh produce in innovative ways. So, if you are making travel plans for the New Year, fret not, the 'Swisstainable Veggie Day' initiative will ensure you have more vegetarian food than you would imagine. Here are some places to check out (do reserve a table in advance with your dietary preferences).

Damien Germanier in Sion

Located in the charming city of Sion, the one-Michelin Star restaurant, Damien Germanier is named after its Chef. Damien confesses that he has a weakness for vegetables and uses them creatively in his food. For someone who cares deeply about the origin of his ingredients, he says when they are sourced locally, they will be fresher, tastier and leave a lesser carbon footprint. "We work with these products in their entirety, from the leaf to the skin for the vegetables. We also use a lot of ancestral and natural preservation techniques to offer fruits and vegetables all year long, with lacto-fermentation in jars, pickles, and drying," he explains. Using vegetables like parsnip, carrots and cabbage, Chef creates art on your plate here. You can even have some appetisers as you tour his kitchen. If you love cheese, ask for their cheese trolley, there are over 20 varieties to sample, all of which can be paired with the famed Swiss wines.

<https://damiengermanier.ch/en/>

Le Chat Botté in Geneva

Overlooking the majestic Lake Geneva, Le Chat-Botté restaurant (whose name literally translates to 'Puss in Boots') serves an eclectic



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mix of French fare led by Chef Dominique Gauthier. Local producers are regularly the heroes of their menu. At this one-star Michelin restaurant you can sample their Vegetal Menu - L'inspiration vegetale that has four or six courses and can be adapted for vegan requests. The menu is experimental, and you can try dishes like the Jerusalem artichoke, chestnuts, artichokes and hazelnut appetiser, Fresh goat cheese ravioli from La Touvière, with ceps mushrooms and coffee, Butternut and pumpkin squash, truffle from Bourgogne and a dessert of Fine French meringue, pink grapefruit vanilla and yuzu cream.

<https://www.beau-rivage.com/en/le-chat-botte-restaurant.html>

La Fleur de Sel in Cossonay-Ville

The charming town of Cossonay-Ville can be reached using a funicular train and is home to La Fleur de Sel, a restaurant that has François Gautier as its Director and Chef Sommelier. The one-Michelin starred restaurant in a quaint lane has a vegetarian menu that includes a trilogy of parsnips with the scents of Sancho and ball celery roasted in a casserole and flambéed with Calvados. Do not miss the dessert - a duo of clementine in a spiced consommé, savarin biscuit soaked in pistachio and arugula ice cream. If you are lucky, the chef will also show you how he forages for local ingredients and uses them in his cooking.

<https://www.lafleurdesel.ch/>

Hiltl, Zurich

If you are in Zurich, it is a must to visit Hiltl, started in 1898 by Ambrosius Hiltl, Haus Hiltl is the world's oldest vegetarian restaurant per the Guinness World Records and is run by the family's fourth generation, Rolf Hiltl today. All the food is made fresh every day using regional produce, ripe fruits and vegetables and there is an extensive buffet where you can pay by the weight of the food. This also ensures that wastage is controlled – you pay and eat



how much you need. With over 100 dishes, you will be spoilt for choice here. With dishes like Lukewarm blue Potato Salad & Celery Root Schnitze, Mountain Cheese Omelette & Mushroom, Mushroom Stroganoff, Thai Papaya Salad, Hiltl Tartare, Beetroot Carpaccio and Banana Madras, among many others, this is a must visit for its great taste.

<https://hiltl.ch/en/>

Alive Vegan Cafe in Geneva

A cafe done up in pastel hues with lots of foliage, Alive in Geneva has food that is fresh, seasonal, organic and uses local products. The portion sizes are large and are best shared.

Do try the Avocado Toast that has guacamole, sweet potato hummus, pickles, pomegranate, balsamic cream, and Moroccan Salad made with carrots, chickpeas, almonds, quince, mint, coriander, grapes, & sweet and sour vinaigrette. Also check the Moussaka made with Benedict Waffle with Tofu, Hollandaise Sauce, Spinach, Shiitake Smoked Lentil Tempeh. Eggplant, Tempeh, Bechamel, Tomato Sauce, Pesto, Rice. The focus is on using superfoods in all their dishes which ensures your health is automatically taken care of. An inhouse store sells their own brand of artisanal cheese, superfoods, and yoga accessories all of which are ecologically sensitive.

<https://www.alive.swiss/fr/>

