

Zeitschrift: Swiss review : the magazine for the Swiss abroad
Herausgeber: Organisation of the Swiss Abroad
Band: 27 (2000)
Heft: 1

Inhaltsverzeichnis

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. [Siehe Rechtliche Hinweise.](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. [Voir Informations légales.](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. [See Legal notice.](#)

Download PDF: 15.03.2025

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

Vive la difference

Celebrations are as much part of everyday human life as our daily bread. Nevertheless traditional customs are threatened by an insidious process of erosion, as individualism and commercialisation make ever greater inroads into time-honoured folk rituals. The loss of individuality is undermining the beliefs on which many traditions are founded. Yet it is the very cult which lies at the root of many festivals that lends them such charm! We only have to think of the magic of carnival masks that herald the approach of spring throughout the country. Even in today's climate of spiritual barrenness, ceremonies to drive out evil spirits and ward off demons re-awaken the belief in magic.

Switzerland boasts a highly diversified festival culture, and all regions of the country have their own unique customs according to the season. In Eastern Switzerland the caterwauling music of the "Chalanda Marz" ushers in springtime festivals,



Lukas M. Schneider

"Switzerland has a highly diversified festival culture."

while the shrill ringing of bells celebrates the end of winter. In the early hours of the morning young people gather on village squares and form a noisy procession through the streets. In Zurich a major spring festival, the "Sechseläuten", is celebrated and culminates in the burning of the "Böög" (an effigy of Winter) on a huge bonfire.

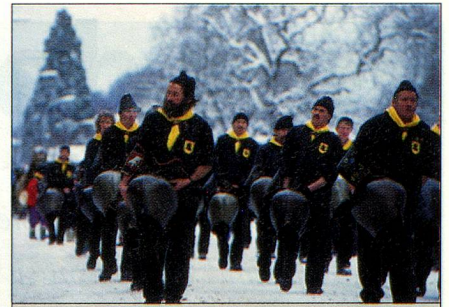
Summer is the time for mountain festivals. In the central and lower Valais the season begins with classical cow fights in which the winner is selected to lead the herd for summering on the Alp. In Eastern Switzerland, picturesque cowherd meets are celebrated with alpenhorn blowing, flag-throwing and Swiss wrestling. And fans of horse-racing congregate for the equestrian festival in Saignelégier in the Jura.

Autumn heralds the time of wine festivals. While vintners invite the population to taste the latest vintage in the wine-growing villages of French-speaking Switzerland, in Locarno people gather at the lakeside promenade, where passers-by stop to buy chestnuts roasted on an open fire. And in Northern Switzerland children carrying "Räbeliechtle" (lanterns) light the way for street processions at dusk.

Finally, winter is dominated by representations of St. Nicholas. One of the most colourful is the costume worn by residents of the Appenzell hinterland, with its intricate filigree head-dress. The noise made by the "Trychler" of Oberhasli in the canton of Berne is impossible to ignore. Shaking their huge cowbells in synchrony, these muscular fellows march through villages and fields. Among festivals based on a historical event, Geneva's "Escalade" holds a special place. The festival is held to commemorate the failure of Savoy troops to seize the city of Calvin on 11 December 1602. The pitch torches which accompany the evening procession are emblematic of Geneva's dire situation at the time.

At "Swiss Review", too, the publishers and editorial team have reason to celebrate. Our magazine has been given a facelift by Karl-Heinz Gebert, a well-known Zurich print media designer. The new look is based primarily on modern typography and a simpler layout structure. It is our aim in future to increase the focus on the visual aspect, and we look forward eagerly to your feedback!

Lukas M. Schneider



FOCUS

How does Switzerland celebrate? **4**

OFFICIAL NEWS **9**

OSA NEWS **11**

SRI NEWS **12**

SOLISWISS **13**

MAILBAG **14**

ECONOMY

The trouble with air traffic control **15**

VOTING

Subjects for 12 March 2000 **16**

MOSAIC **18**



Basle's Carnival holds a special place in Switzerland's Shrove-tide festivities. In terms of quantity it is the largest of all the country's regularly held events. But in terms of quality, too, this popular festival with its imaginative costumes is a cut above the rest.

Cover: ALEXANDRE ORLOFF

SWISS REVIEW

Swiss Review, the magazine for the Swiss Abroad, is in its 27th year of issue and is published in German, French, Italian, English and Spanish in more than 20 regional editions. It has a total circulation of over 355,000. Regional news appears four times a year.

Editors: Lukas M. Schneider (LS), Secretariat for the Swiss Abroad (Chairman); Alice Baumann (AB), Press Bureau Alice Baumann Conception, Berne; Pierre-André Tschanz (PAT), Swiss Radio International, Berne; Dario Ballanti (DB), parliamentary correspondent of Corriere del Ticino; Editor of Official News: Robert Nyffeler (NYF), Service for the Swiss Abroad, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, CH-3003 Berne. Translator: Nicolette Chisholm.

Publisher, Editorial Office, Advertising: Secretariat for the Swiss Abroad, Alpenstrasse 26, CH-3000 Berne 16; Tel: +41 31 351 61 00, Fax: +41 31 351 61 50, Postal Cheque Account (Swiss National Giro): 30-6768-9.

Printed by: Buri Druck AG, CH-3084 Wabern.

Change of address: Please advise your local Embassy or Consulate – do not write to Berne.

Internet: <http://www.revue.ch> **E-mail:** revue@aso.ch