

**Zeitschrift:** The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK

**Herausgeber:** Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom

**Band:** - (1962)

**Heft:** 1402

**Artikel:** Marrying in Geneva is serious - and complicated

**Autor:** Dunn, Ruth

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-687950>

### **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:** 01.02.2025

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

# Woman's World

*New York: A new fondue!*

There are now three fondues on the new and colourful menu of the Chalet Suisse Restaurant at 45 West of the ever changing 52nd Street in New York. The old favourite, Cheese Fondue, and Fondue Bourguignonne, first introduced to New York in 1956 by Konrad Egli of the Chalet Suisse and which has since been put on the menu of many a leading restaurant, are there, but since his return from his latest visit to Switzerland last September, Mr. Egli has come up with another "first": Fondue Orientale. This newest gourmet delight from Switzerland consists of thin slices of pork, veal, beef and kidney — all fillets. Rice and salad goes with it. Oh yes, and soup, too, which you take at the very end of the meal: a specially prepared bouillon in which the meat is cooked at the table. Sauces: Curry, Bearnaise and Russian.

*Can I take it in duty-free?*

Customs regulations vary a great deal from country to country. Although policies have become distinctly more liberal since the end of the war, the ideal — duty-free import of gifts — has yet to be attained. Large numbers of business people and tourists are therefore always up against the problem: "What can I take home with me and how much can I take in duty-free?" At the suggestion of the Federation of Swiss Tourist Offices and the Swiss National Tourist Office, the Swiss Tourist Federation, Berne, compiled a table showing the extent of duty-free concessions on articles taken into their respective countries by travellers returning from abroad. This has just been published in German and French and is obtainable free of charge from the Swiss Tourist Federation, Gurtenstrasse 6, Berne.

*Fashion Notes*

This year's most popular hat is the mink beret, worn with almost anything from tweeds to mink.

It looks especially pretty with coats in such colours as lilac, blue or raspberry. Hats of other furs are extremely smart also, usually chosen for a special costume.

\* \* \*

Many shapes give individuality to pants in holiday and spring collections. The wider leg is gaining from easy, straighter types to bell bottoms. When pants fit tight, they are usually of stretch fabrics.

\* \* \*

The newest evening bodice is just a wide band. From it, halter effects rise to cover the bosom, sometimes the back too. This is part of the wide, wide belt look that has flashed into prominence the past few weeks.

## *Marrying in Geneva is serious—and complicated*

by Ruth Dunn

Getting married has always been a serious step to take, but getting married in Geneva makes this step every bit as complicated as it is serious.

Being a British subject, I did not make the task any easier for myself by deciding to marry a Yank. — And to complicate the matter even further — one who was born in France.

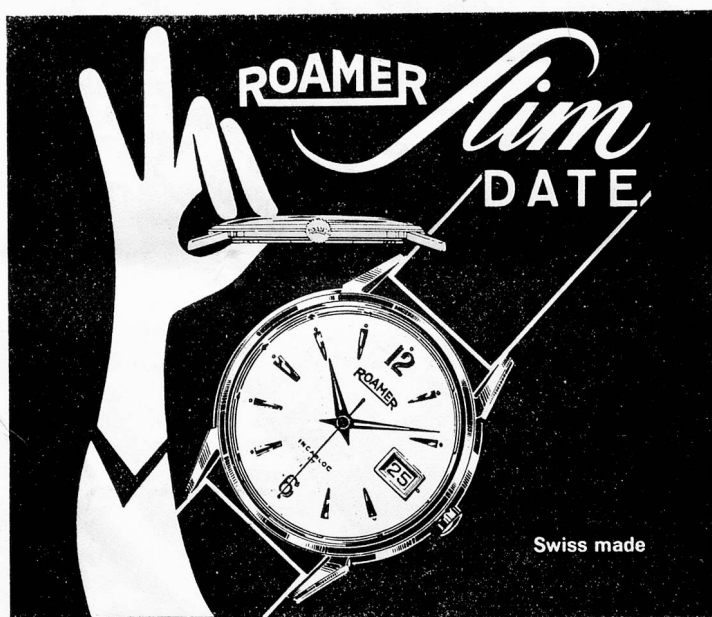
In most countries, the first step to getting married is to prove that you have ever been born. Although one has to produce a birth certificate to obtain a passport, a passport is not sufficient evidence of birth. The original certificate must be handed in to the authorities. Moreover, they are suspicious of a birth certificate which is not in French, but to get round this problem, Geneva has put at the disposal of all foreign would-be-weds an official translator, who will translate a birth certificate into French for the sum of 4 francs.

Nor is a birth certificate issued in France acceptable. For some unknown reason the French issue a birth certificate which is only valid for three months, and in the case of marriage, the certificate has to make a trip back to its birth place to be stamped "en lieu de mariage".

Switzerland, like most countries, is not an exception in its insistence on knowing whether you have already a husband hidden away somewhere in your own country. To straighten this question out, you have to go to your respective consulates to fill up a form denying the existence of all other husbands or wives, and in the case of divorce, producing a certificate of divorce. In exchange for this you are given an official document stamped with the consulate's permission to marry. If you are a British subject, this will cost you 20 francs. The Americans are kinder and give it to you for nothing.

The next excursion is to the "Contrôle des Habitants" to get an official certificate of residence in Geneva. This will cost you 5 francs and a great deal of queueing behind Italian workmen, if you happen to be so shortsighted as to go on a Saturday. If, however, you have a working permit, this is proof enough of residence.

Armed with your documents you make your way to the Mairie at Eaux-Vives — there, if you are lucky and your documents are in order, to sign the "Promesse de Mariage". This means if he "cries off", you can sue him, and if you "cry off" he sues you — a frightening legal step.



Your documents, along with your "Promesse" are left at the Mairie for police investigation and permission. The investigation usually lasts about two weeks, after which you are summoned to come and name the day. The whole preparation takes time — and meanwhile there were frantic messages arriving from the "folks back home" wanting to know why we were not married yet.

Naming the day involves another visit to the Mairie, where a large appointment book is pulled out from under the counter, into which your "date" is entered. The only vacancy on the Saturday we chose was a 9 o'clock in the morning. It was a question of "Get me to the Church on time".

We arrived on time, in fact, so frightened were we of oversleeping that we each set our alarms half an hour early. We were ushered into a waiting room by a man in a green dress uniform. Other people started to arrive and we and our witnesses played a guessing game of who among them was going to marry whom.

After a few minutes, the man in the green uniform appeared and asked us if we would like to go in. We told him that we were still waiting for some of the guests to arrive. He looked downcast and informed us that they had 27 marriages to do that morning. We worked that out as being one every six minutes and relented.

The bridegroom, the chief witness and most of the guests who had arrived at that time were from the journalistic profession. Their immediate reaction was to compare the large table around which we had to sit, to a conference table. The bridegroom was heard to mutter "The first time I actually sit at a conference table and I haven't even got any bargaining power".

The ceremony lasted only five minutes, at the end of which we were handed a "Livret de Famille" with space enough for 12 children. Maybe they hoped to do some christenings.

*Reproduced by courtesy of Weekly Tribune, Geneva.*

## Nouvelle Société Helvétique (LONDON GROUP)

Tuesday, 20th February 1962, at 7.45 p.m.

at the Swiss Hostel for Girls

9 Belsize Grove, N.W.3

**OPEN MEETING**

with film show, "Sélection 1961" (Montage

Ciné—Journal Suisse)

(about one hour),

followed by a discussion of proposals for the inclusion of a new Art. 45 bis, defining the status and rights of the Swiss abroad, in the Swiss Federal Constitution.

Refreshment service with coffee or tea (4/6 inclusive) from 6.45 p.m. onwards.

Will members and friends intending to be present please inform the Warden of the Swiss Hostel not later than Tuesday, 20th February, between 11 a.m. and noon.  
(Tel. PRIMrose 6856)



Switzerland's  
**Chalet Cheese**

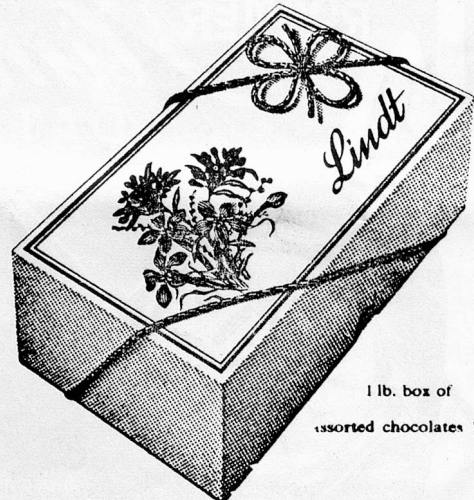


**delicious**



**nutritious**

## Lindt mountain rose



1 lb. box of  
assorted chocolates 12/6

THE CHOCOLATE OF THE CONNOISSEUR