

DESSERTS

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THE SWEETNESS of nature

If you think that dessert is the best part of a meal, you will delight in every mouthful of the treats sweetened with aromatic honey collected from the Swiss mountains

DINING AT Badrutt's Palace is as much a feast for the eyes as it is for the taste buds, especially delicate desserts with layers of cream and wafer-thin buttery pastry, mouthwatering traditional cakes and silky-smooth ice cream, all skillfully created by the talented Stefan Gerber, Executive Pastry Chef at Badrutt's Palace, and his team.

To ensure these treats taste as good as they look requires ingredients of the highest quality, including the locally sourced honey that features on the hotel's menus, from breakfast bircher muesli sweetened with raw honeycomb to traditional Swiss cakes.

BUSY AS A BEE

Switzerland has more than 17,000 beekeepers, each with an average of 10 colonies, and its bee density of four colonies per square kilometre is one of the highest in the world. Beekeeping involves a careful and thoughtful approach, respecting the natural cycle of the bees, and in Switzerland honey is typically harvested twice a year – once in the spring and again in summer – producing around 3,000 tons annually.

Containing a small amount of vitamins, minerals, amino acids, zinc, antioxidants, antibacterial and anti-inflammatory

agents, honey is often used to soothe sore throats, irritating coughs and even minor burns. But it is the sublime sweetness and unique flavour that makes it so popular in Switzerland, with an annual consumption of 1.2 kilograms per capita, making the Swiss among the world's top honey consumers.

In the book *Honig der Alpen* (*Honey of the Alps*), food expert Dominik Flammer says Alpine honey is richer in variety than all the other honey in Europe thanks to the crop diversity and the different nutrient sources. He explains that 50 of Europe's 100 honey varieties are found in the Alpine region, from blackberry to Alpine rose honey.

The Executive Pastry Chef sources his honey from Annamaria Albin-Andriuet, a second-generation beekeeper from nearby Pontresina. She has been collecting honey for more than 30 years, and her 10 hives produce a light honey that carries the aroma of wild Alpine roses found in the Roseg Valley. The chef discovered this liquid gold in a gift shop in St. Moritz and has been creating a selection of dishes and treats to showcase its delicate taste ever since.

LIFE IS SWEET

Badrutt's king of pastries and desserts loves to pair the honey with Swiss milk, particularly in the form of cream or salted butter and luscious milkshakes. When it comes to baking

Opposite: Executive Pastry Chef Stefan Gerber with some locally sourced honey

