

4th Nostalgic Culinary Mile in Saas-Fee

Dress up in Grandma's skirts and off you go...

...to the Saas Valley!

Because the glacier village of Saas-Fee is staging the Nostalgic Gourmet Mile for the fourth time on 13 September. Take your seat at probably the longest dining table in the Valais region.

The event which was planned to be a one-off affair to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the Saas-Fee hotel business in 2006 has now become a permanent fixture on the village's calendar of events. The very first of these events three years ago was so successful for the organisers from the Saas-Fee Hoteliers' Association and enjoyed such positive feedback that it was decided without further ado to hold it on an annual basis. The Gourmet Mile has developed into a real crowd puller appealing to people of all ages, and the decision to stage this special event every year has definitely proved to be the right one.

So we can look forward to sitting at probably the longest dining table in the Valais region again in 2009.

From noon until 6 p.m. the main street in Saas-Fee will be transformed with the appearance of one long, inviting dining table where guests can celebrate and feast in style.

At the end of the day, the marquee in the village square finally beckons and guests can celebrate here late into the night with music and dance, food and drink.

Reliving times gone by

Once again you will have the pleasure of tasting numerous traditional culinary specialities from the Valais region, many of which have been virtually forgotten over the years. These delights will be on offer together with some good Valais wine at the many stands along the main street. The restaurateurs and hoteliers will be serving in the costumes and in the spirit of the good old days.

You are surrounded by "smugglers",
"mountaineers of the old school",
"English noblemen from the 19th century",
"genteel ladies" or "farmers' wives in the typical
dress of the Valais region".

And even the pioneer of tourism, the priest
Johann Josef Imseng, will be commemorated as
some people dress up in the clothes of 19th
century priests. The "good old days" will be
celebrated here throughout the day in any shape
or form imaginable, whether it be the food and
drink on offer or the wonderful costumes which
are worn with just as much pride by the locals as
they are by visitors to the village.

Prize-giving ceremony for the most original costume

One of the many highlights of the day is definitely
the prize-giving ceremony for the most original
nostalgic costume. Throughout the day, a jury
specially selected for this task will be looking for
the most beautiful and unusual outfit. If you
should encounter this jury, then don't forget to
smile at the camera and hope that you will be
considered one of the best. For there are
fantastic prizes to be won, all donated by the
service providers of Saas-Fee and the Saas
Valley. At 8 p.m., the suspense mounts in the
marquee as the best costumes are announced.

So, dress up in grandma's skirts or great-
grandpa's mountain climbing outfit and head for
the 2009 Nostalgic Gourmet Mile in Saas-Fee!

The district of Macugnaga as guest of honour

This year the district of Macugnaga (Italy) will be
welcomed as guest of honour at the Nostalgic
Culinary Mile in Saas-Fee. The event will be
attended by a delegation of officials and the
Monterosa Choir, with local Macugnaga
specialities on offer.

Some people might be asking themselves the
question: Why is Macugnaga coming to Saas-Fee
as the guest of honour? What the two districts
have in common is a "criminal" past: smuggling
over the Monto Moro Pass. The intention is to
relive these earlier times on 13 September as
part of the Culinary Mile, and on arrival at the
North and South entrance to the village, guests
will be encouraged to buy a bottle of spirits that

they have to smuggle through the village. That won't be as easy as it sounds, because diligent "customs officers" will, of course, be patrolling the streets on the lookout for smuggled goods. Anyone who is unmasked as a smuggler and wants to keep their smuggled goods will have to pay a forfeit (e.g. give his/her best rendition of a song). Every bottle of spirits is also a lottery ticket that could turn out to be the winning number in the marquee in the evening. There are great prizes to be won, including travel vouchers to the value of CHF 500.--, baskets of food and hotel vouchers from all over Switzerland. Of course, we shouldn't broadcast the fact, but it does appear that even today, smuggling still pays!

...and it's all for a good cause

Celebrate and enjoy yourself...and all for a good cause! This makes your visit to the Nostalgic Gourmet Mile even more fun.

This year the Nostalgic Gourmet Mile will be raising money for the "Tanja" Foundation in the village of Bitsch, which supports severely mentally and physically handicapped adults (www.oberwallis.net/tanja). *sf*