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Magazine of the Herend Porcelain Manufactory

No 55

Herend 1

HERALD



Pharaoh's laws

—

Lagom, the secret
of harmony in the home

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In Sissi's footsteps

EIFFEL

EIFFEL MŰHELYHÁZ
EIFFEL ART STUDIOS

MŰVÉSZET. MESTERSÉG. MEGÚJULÁS.

CARULLA LEON JESSICA A tökéletesség szédítő ereje – The Vertiginous Thrill of Exactitude



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HUNGARIAN STATE OPERA



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1101 BUDAPEST, KÖBÁNYAI ÚT 30.



Dear Herend Herald Readers,

Art...

Art is a hymn to creative talent. It is as old as mankind, therefore ageless, knows no geographical boundaries, therefore is transcontinental, stems from the individual, therefore is subjective, is unaffected by time, therefore eternal, is one-off and unrepeatably, therefore unique. It lives among us, invisibly takes us by the arm, accompanies us on our way, waits patiently, does not haste, nor rush, lets itself be loved. If you do not see it, you will hear it, if you do not understand it, it will make you think. It plants a seed in you, which will sooner or later sprout. Art indulges, relaxes, enrages, calms, replenishes you. It addresses your soul and plays it like a musical instrument. It hides itself in bodies, rhythms, music, dance, mother tongue, literature, earthborn materials. Art helps you recognise timeless in evanescent, eternal value in transient. You can live without it, as you can survive on bread and water, but the symphony of life will be incomplete without it.

Herend and creativity go hand-in-hand,

and their union yields art, encompassing the expertise of centuries, the richness of our years, continuous learning and humble work. Through our creations we are reborn day by day like a phoenix, always getting better than before, looking ahead and shaping a future. We stand on rocks on which we can build. We respect our past, we know our present values on which we build our future. It is not enough to be on the cutting edge, we intend to maintain that position. Creation needs patience, persistence and quiet courage. We ennoble art with our trendsetting work, we encase love in our porcelain to be able to gift harmony.

Yours respectfully,

Dr. Attila Simon
Chief Executive Officer

The glazing process. The porcelain will turn snow white after the subsequent firing at 1410 °C.



Did you know?

Reference to Herend porcelain implies hard-paste porcelain that is fired at high temperatures until it reaches high density, has a unique white tone, is covered with a transparent glaze, and breaks conchoidally. Pure white gold.

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WHITE GOLD

In terms of material and form, the secret of Herend porcelain's beauty lies in its embodiment of a harmony of four ancient elements: earth, water, fire and air. Its magnificent whiteness is ensured by an appropriate mixture of water and base materials obtained from earth, while its translucency can be obtained with the help of fire and air. Now, let's take a behind-the-scenes peek at the process of porcelain-making.

Centuries-old formula

The first and perhaps most important step is to prepare a paste of excellent quality. Porcelain paste consists of three main ingredients, kaolin, feldspar and quartz; all are powdery minerals, which are first mixed with water according to a specific and secret formula. Given that it is the only way to obtain a high-quality, workable and highly usable paste, it is crucial to observe the precise mixing proportions.

Alliance of three minerals

Each of the three ingredients has its purpose in the technology of porcelain-making. Kaolin accounts for the malleability of the paste, which determines its workability, plasticity and the product's resistance on firing. Due to its alkali content, feldspar functions as a melting component, i.e. it facilitates melting and fusion at the firing temperature. Quartz plays the role of a component that creates the structure and gives it strength; its proportion determines the transparency and translucency of the product. The degree of whiteness of the porcelain is influenced by the quality of the base materials, more precisely, their iron and titanium content. Even despite the most accurate preparation of raw materials, some mineral-bound iron or titanium may be left in the paste, and may result in a yellowish tint on the porcelain surface; however, the masters of Herend have a technique to get rid of such flaws: they apply a reducing atmosphere on firing, which ensures a characteristic translucent blueish white colour of porcelain.

Handmade treasure

The next technological phase is firing. Porcelain is fired multiple times before the final work of art is completed. The first firing is called bisque firing, and is carried out at 950 °C. Then comes glazing, which, depending on the size and shape of the product, may involve dipping, spraying or immersing the object. Glaze is glass-like molten silica, which not only lends porcelain its characteristic gloss but also its mechanical strength and resistance. The glazed bisque porcelain is fired again at a temperature between 1,370°C and 1,410°C. At such a high temperature, complicated physical and chemical procedures take place, as a result of which a final, dense structure develops. Porcelain pulp shrinks significantly, by 12% to 15%; modellers always take it into account on designing products. At this point, unpainted items reach porcelain master painters, who add manual painting to each piece to make them more unique and valuable.



Kaolin



Feldspar



Quartz



PHARAOH'S LAWS

Justice in ancient Egypt

Brilliant, time-tested engineering structures all over the world, which may be as old as thousands of years old, never fail to fill us with awe. The pyramids trumpet the one-time talent of ancient engineers even today, however, no-one remembers who the pharaoh's lawyer was, for instance. It is time to speak of the legislation and legislators of ancient Egypt.

In order to establish order and peace in society, rules and laws are required, and people need to observe them – it was apparently well-known back in ancient Egypt over five thousand years ago.

whimsical rules

The first monarch of the Egyptian Empire, Menes, is credited not only with uniting Lower and Upper Egypt but also with instituting the first laws in Egypt. His edicts, however, were short-lived, given that each pharaoh to follow was authorised to change them to his liking. This is why no law codes like that of Hammurapi from 18th century B.C. Mesopotamia survive. The laws of ancient Egypt were far from standard, they were not set in stone because, as historians say, they were like the River Nile: whimsical and changeable.



Sphinx
05684000 TAT
Egyptian cat
15458000 SN

Representative of Maat on Earth

Legislators, i.e. pharaohs, had Maat, a deity and daughter of Sun God Re, to come to their aid: Maat was a goddess of justice and order, representing the world order established upon creation. Egyptians believed that Maat's principles are conveyed by the pharaoh, and everyone must respect them to be able to live in harmony and get through to the underworld after their death. Although the pharaoh was the lord of justice, he had other persons in the system to help him. The vizier, the highest official, served the pharaoh as his right hand and supervisor of the empire's management, including an active role in passing judgements. Acting as judges, Maat's priests helped maintain a cosmic balance.

Crime and punishment

But what counted as a crime in ancient Egypt? Acts of crime were categorised by whether the injured party was the empire or a civilian. The latter category included, for instance, donkey theft, wheat theft, or failure to repay a loan. Depending on the weight of the offence, the punishment of perpetrators would be a fine or beating, or, in case of recidivist thieves, as many as a hundred lashes on the soles, coupled with branding with a hot iron for life.

Did you know?

In ancient Egypt, the pharaoh was the only one allowed to keep cats as pets, and even strays were protected by law. Egyptians revered cats as sacred animals; should anyone even hurt one, they would face a death sentence.

Ruthless judgements

More severe crimes, such as manslaughter, deserting, treason or tomb-raiding were referred to the jurisdiction of the Kenbet, a council presided over by the pharaoh and the vizier; on interrogating criminal offences, the torturing of suspects was permitted. Those unable to prove their innocence could prepare to say goodbye to their lives. Executions involved cruel methods like impalement, death by burning, and some were thrown into the Nile to be devoured by crocodiles – on top of that, the punishment could even be extended to the perpetrator's family members!

SHIPS OF THE POLAR REGION

Gliding on a dog sled there are no obstacles: dogs born to pull sleds stop at no sub-zero temperatures, no snow-covered meandering mountain trails, and not even when forced to carry cargo.

In the service of man

Humankind has been assisted by sled dogs for three thousand years; back around 1,000 B.C., the method of traveling on dog sleds was developed by the Inuit people, who lived on the frozen wastelands of the North Pole region. Later, when European navigators discovered that distant part of the Earth, they acquainted Europe with this smart solution, too.

Worth their weight in gold

When in the late 19th century and in the early 20th century Alaska was feverish with a gold rush, the demand for dogs and sleds struck astronomical figures. Allegedly, all stray dogs were collected from the streets of Seattle, and transported to Alaska to be used as sled dogs carrying cargo – given that mining camps were only accessible by dog sled in the challenging winter months.

Born to draw sleds

At sled dog races, the most frequently seen breeds are Siberian Huskies and Alaskan Malamutes. They are highly intelligent, easy-to-train, and, consequently, joy to work with. Moreover, Huskies and Malamutes easily tolerate extreme circumstances, too. Both breeds have a double coat with a soft and dense undercoat for insulation, while their outer coat is coarse and thick to cope with weather adversity.

Sled dog races

Sled dog races best compare to foot races: the goal is to cover a distance as fast as possible. Races include short-term races over a distance of a few kilometres, as well as extremely long-term races that take days to complete. A dog team usually consists of 16 dogs capable of maintaining an average speed of 30 km/h on the snow. What makes this fast pace possible is that the joint mass of the musher and the sled remain below 100 kg. The musher must thoroughly know the dogs to be able to assign them roles. Dogs with good stamina will be placed closest to the sled as they are good at moving cargo, while the fastest member of the dog team will be appointed the lead dog to dictate the pace.



Lying wolf 05801000 SVH4COL-1



Dog training

The training of sled dogs starts at an early age. Puppies spend their first weeks learning about socialisation, group dynamics, and get to know the outside world. By the time they reach the age of 6-8 months, they are strong enough to run behind harnessed dogs and learn from the “big ones”. Trainers use the practice of positive feedback to train their four-legged pupils, and pair them with experienced and patient dogs for their first run with the sled team; by the time a live mission (a race or cargo transport) comes up, puppies have covered at least 3,000 km of practice run. Training takes a few months, given that these dogs were born for this sport and pulling a sled is an excellent opportunity for them release their enormous energy. Mushers apply no force only verbal commands, and dogs pull out of enthusiasm and play. Sled dogs normally participate in races between the ages of two and ten years.

Champions' breakfast

Exposed to strenuous physical work, sled dogs deserve royal feasts each day. While a dog of similar size kept as a pet needs roughly 1,700 calories a day, a sled dog can easily consume as many as 10,000 calories in the same amount of time. Their plate consists mostly of proteins like chicken, salmon and beef. While pulling the sled, they are pampered and motivated with frozen pieces of fish and meat.

Did you know?

The world's most famous sled dog race, Iditarod is held in Alaska. The competitor who covers the over 1,500 km distance with their dog team gets to pocket the cash prize worth roughly HUF 15 million. This sport is an expensive hobby anyway: a dog from a renowned kennel costs HUF 1.5 million, as a minimum.

PHOENIX, A SYMBOL OF REJUVENATION

Soul is one of the top-secret ingredients in Herend porcelain, as it certainly requires soul to create perfect porcelain from the base materials - by hand only. A phoenix, also referred to as a soul-endowed bird, is born in Herend.

Besides dragons, unicorns and turtles, the phoenix also counts as a sacred animal in China, whose body parts symbolise five virtues. Its head represents moral purity, its wings dutifulness, its back ritual behaviour, its chest philanthropy, its stomach reliability.

Inspired by legends

Based on mythical stories, the phoenix is a symbol of strength and patience; in a more general sense, it symbolises victory. To create the Phoenix collection, the masters of Herend Porcelain Manufactory used the most frequently available descriptions, whereby "this bird is utterly beautiful, similar to a bird of paradise but larger than an eagle. Its head and neck are gleaming golden, its breast is coated in fiery blue down, and its body is covered in plumage glowing red, green and blue".

Dazzling regeneration

The series that consists of small and larger phoenix-shaped figurines, vases ornamented with firebirds and other decorative objects, also includes a spectacular wall plate. This work of art tells about renewal; the phoenix used to be revered as a double of Sun on Earth. It was believed that every time the bird's reign over the world ends, it regenerates in a gleaming glow, and continues reigning. According to the legend, it is reduced to ashes and rises again once every five hundred years.

Did you know?

Although it only exists in legends, the phoenix rising from time to time carries an ever timely message. Using our fires within, i.e. our internal energy and adaptability, we can cope with the difficulties presented by this changed life. Remember this thought when you look at the phoenix figurine.





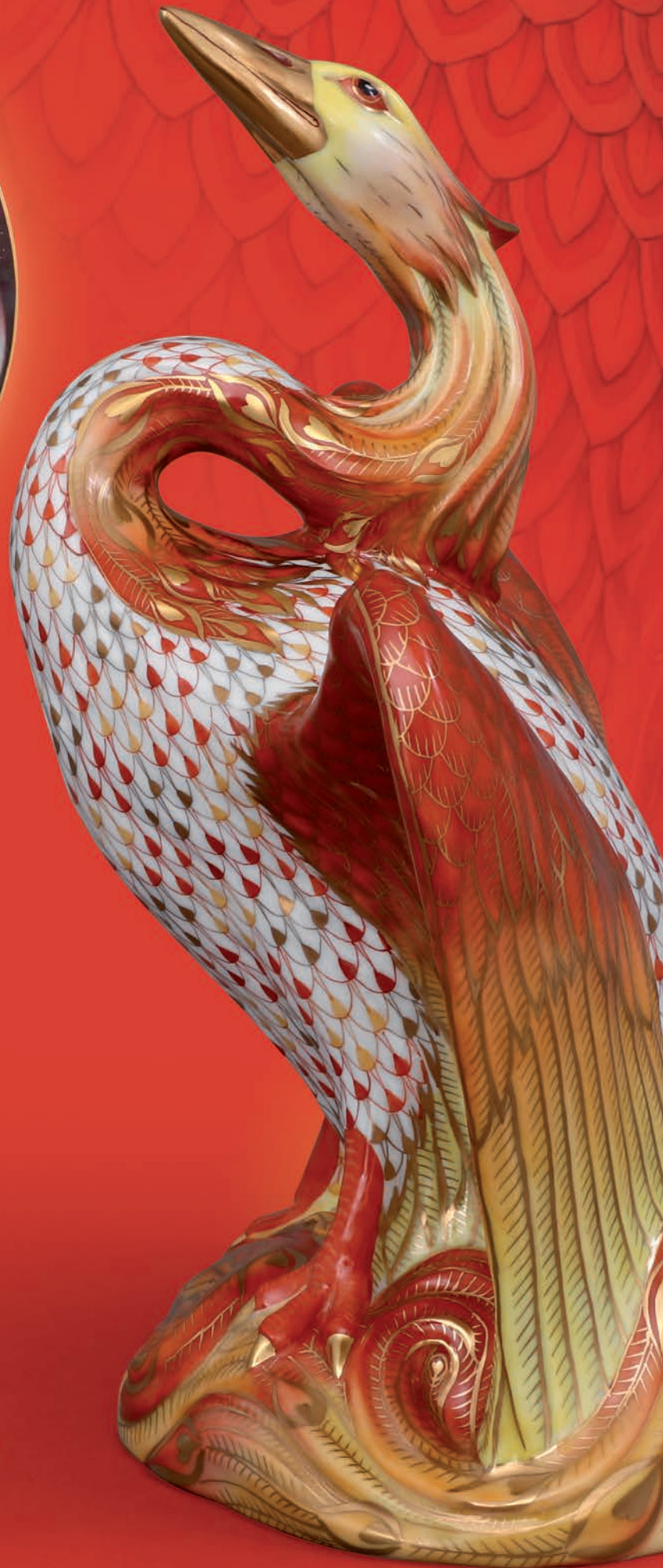
The latest bravura piece

Herend Porcelain Manufactory intends to pay homage to the uniqueness of this mythical creature resembling a pheasant and a peacock this year with probably the world's largest porcelain piece being prepared in a manufactory. The bravura piece of the Phoenix collection is a 1.6 m high porcelain bird weighing approximately 200 kg, dreamed up by industrial designer Szabolcs Zeke to be implemented by more than seventy co-workers over a period of nearly two years. The pottery workshop has spent 1,075 man-hours on forming the porcelain bird consisting of 19 parts, while dozens of highly qualified masters are still working on its glazing and painting.



Wall plate
08439050 SP745
Medium size phoenix
16189000 VHSP35
Rising phoenix
16205000 SP769

On the opposite page
Medium size phoenix
16189000 SP776



LAGOM, THE SECRET OF HARMONY IN THE HOME

Swedish people are believed to be balanced and happy, owing in part to the fact that their living follows the spirit of lagom. But what does this Swedish word actually mean, and how is it related to interior design?

In most languages, and Hungarian is no exception, there is no equivalent to this word; the best circumscription would be "not too much, not too little", "just enough". Lagom is a lifestyle advertising moderation instead of devouring life, and economy instead of wastefulness. Swedish people have lived according to these principles for a long time; however, the world has just come to know lagom in the past few years. By today, it has grown so popular that it has claimed a place in interior decoration trends. A home furnished in harmony with lagom is not overcrowded in terms of furniture, colours or patterns, objects are made of natural materials like wood, stone, porcelain or clay, and the dominating colour tones are warm and natural.

Natural light

The more windows, the more sunlight to enjoy, followers of the lagom trend claim. Natural light improves our mood, and spaces full of light seem more friendly anyway than dark ones. If your options are limited regarding the number and sizes of windows, you can consider white walls and warm lighting.

Did you know?

Long-lasting and high-quality objects of interior decoration that do not go out of fashion or do not decay even after years comply with the philosophy of lagom. This is positive thinking also from the aspect of our environment as it saves our Earth from a large quantity of waste and it reduces our ecological footprint.

Colour harmony

Although Scandinavian trends of interior decoration rarely use colours, lagom does not rule them out, only uses them in moderation. If you choose tones from the same colour family for your home, the end result will surely not be too harsh. Feel free to experiment with grey, beige, khaki and other earth colours!

The power of details

According to lagom, our living spaces must radiate calmness, which is a reason why harsh pattern and overcrowded rooms are not preferred. Our home is no place to accumulate unused objects; instead of quantity, we should focus on quality: we could select a couple of really beautiful and valuable porcelain objects and wall tableaus to draw attention to shelves and walls.





ONCE UPON A TIME THERE WAS A RODEO

What count as extreme sports today used to be parts of everyday life. Rodeo dates back to the times when cowboys on the endless planes of the American Wild West threw lassos and rode bronco horses or bulls as part of their jobs.

Wild west show

As early as in the second half of the 19th century, American cowboys competed one another to prove themselves the best, fastest and most skilled in activities around livestock; US states have still not decided where the first rodeo event was held - Wyoming and Kansas are contending even today for the title. In the early 20th century, competitions were held nationwide where the audience was entertained with Wild West shows, in addition to spectacular rodeo events. A hotshot of the era was William Frederick Cody, better known as Buffalo Bill, who toured even Hungary in 1906 with the hundreds-strong crew of the Wild West Show. Combining a circus and a theatre, his performances included sharpshooting, parade on horseback and acrobatic numbers.

Eight seconds on the bull's back

Professional rodeos consist of seven competitive events, most of which correspond to traditional activities carried out on farms, namely: bare-back riding, steer wrestling, team roping, bronc riding, tie-down roping, barrel racing and bull riding. The latter is clearly the highlight of rodeos. Staying mounted on a bull weighing 800 kg to 900kg for eight seconds gripping a bull rope (a looped rope around the bull's chest) with only one hand is a pretty notable performance. Judges not only keep the time but also observe the bull rider's control of his/her body and the animal, in addition to scoring the bull's agility and vitality.

A legendary bull

In bull riding, animals get some of the limelight, too! The most well-known of all was Bodacious, also known as "the world's most dangerous bull" or "the greatest bull ever to buck". In the 1990s, it was considered a great challenge to stay mounted on Bodacious for eight seconds as he bucked off everyone practically in the first second. In the course of years, bull riders attempted the impossible, and only eight of them succeeded. Although the bull died in 2000, his legend lives on: the rock band Primus wrote a song to honour him under the title *Ballad of Bodacious*.

Did you know?

Although rodeos are most popular in the United States, the word "rodeo" comes from Spanish, meaning roundup, enclosure.



THE ART OF HORSESHOEING

Horses have worn horseshoes for almost as long as people have worn shoes – and similarly to the technologies of shoemaking, the craft of horseshoe-making has developed a great deal in the course of history. As an example, the first horseshoes looked more like tiny boots made of leather and bast fibre.

Horseshoes are intended to protect horses' hooves from wearing away too fast or asymmetrically; for foals, they may be necessary for remedial purposes. Given that hooves keep growing the same way as human nails do, they require regular attention; horseshoes even need to be removed once every 6-8 weeks so that hooves can be properly groomed. Nailing horseshoes on calls for specific expertise, as farriers need to take into consideration the position and the shortcomings of the limbs and the wear of the previous horseshoes, moreover, they need to select the right method of hoof trimming and the new shoes to be applied. This is because different shoes are used on horses in carriages and on cart-horses, but there are also special shoes adapted for slippery winter roads.

Metal horseshoes were invented by the Romans: in roughly the 2nd century B.C., iron became an easily available raw material, which prompted the manufacturing of a wide range of new tools; this is how also horseshoes made of wrought iron and attached with iron nails spread all over Europe. The methods were further refined over the centuries: starting from the 10th or 11th century, the first cast bronze horseshoes appeared, and from the 13th century on, they were sold ready-made in large quantities. Horseshoes were certainly available in multiple sizes, as cold-blooded horses put in the service of trade and wars had wider hooves.

If we were to compare various horseshoes made in the past few millennia, we would discover a single feature shared by all of them: horseshoes from the ancient period, from the middle ages and from our days have equally seven nails, and not without a reason. In the ancient times, the number seven had an actual cult around it, attributing it mystical powers based on facts like the seven colours of the rainbow, the seven days of the week, the seven planets of the universe, to the best of knowledge of the astrology of the age, and, even the seventh child in a family was believed to be born with special abilities.



Did you know?

According to tradition, horseshoes bring luck; there are a number of folk traditions linked to it. Nailed to the threshold or on the doorframe, horseshoes allegedly have protecting powers, put under your pillow on New Year's eve, you can ensure your luck for the coming year.

WEDDINGS AROUND THE WORLD

The union of two people in marriage is a celebration in all corners of the world. However, the traditions attached to the big day of the bride and the groom vary by country.

India

Instead of wearing jewellery, Indian brides use henna painting to direct attention to their hands. Mehndi takes hours to prepare before the big day, but it aims at more than just decorating the bride: during the lengthy procedure, it is supposed to bring relaxation to her, making her leave the stress of the wedding behind.

Scotland

According to the tradition of English-speaking communities, the bride must wear "something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue" to be blessed in their marriage. Scots have additional customs to bring luck, which they still love to use at weddings: putting a coin in the bride's shoe makes her lucky, while a white feather in her bridal bouquet brings happiness to the newlyweds.

Greece

Sweeping the floor probably takes longer than washing up the dishes after Greek weddings. But not because they hardly use plates; on the contrary! Most plates get to be broken intentionally just to scare away harmful spirits. Smashing plates represents new beginnings: the newlyweds throw away their old lives to build a new one together.

Japan

At weddings in Japan, they often drink to the health of the newlyweds; drinking sake is outright part of the ceremony. The bride and groom drink from the nation's alcoholic beverage three times from three different cups, after which the fathers and mothers of the bride and groom do the same to symbolise the union of the two families. Each family member takes three sips from each cup, and to each sip a meaning is attributed – the first three, for instance, symbolise the young couple, the father and mother of the bride, and the father and mother of the groom, respectively.

China

On average, ten million weddings are held in China annually, but similarly surprising is the high number of Chinese wedding traditions. It is not rare to have ten-course dinners at the nuptials – in the hope of abundance and children –, and the bride may flaunt as many as thirty spectacular dresses but not less than three on her wedding day, as a symbol of affluence.



Pair of giraffes
15283000 VHP

Hungary

At true Hungarian weddings, merriment goes on into the morning; this is why the new husband and wife need to ensure that the wedding guests are never left without delicious bites. The midnight menu is served after midnight and almost always includes stuffed cabbage. This typical Hungarian meal gives enough energy for guests to keep on partying for hours. Hungarian weddings incorporate elements from other countries' cultures: the custom of throwing the bridal bouquet for single girls to catch and the garter for unmarried young men to race for comes from English-speaking countries, in addition to carrying the bride over the threshold to observe the superstition of fending off evil spirits lying in wait under the threshold have become essential in all weddings.

Russia

Russian newlyweds are given a richly decorated sweet bread. The decorations applied to the korovai include wheat stalks and interlocked rings, the former symbolising well-being, the latter as a symbol of fidelity. According to tradition, the one who can bite a larger bit out of the bread will be the family head.

Did you know?

Money dance with the bride is part of not only Hungarian but also Polish, Nigerian and Mexican weddings. Guests throw or drop money into a pot or pin it onto the bride's dress.

A RENAISSANCE OF LOG HOUSES

In the Scandinavian countries, in North America and in the Alps, log house construction has traditions dating back hundreds of years. Log houses have regained popularity today, thanks to the unique atmosphere inside these fairy-tale homes – much owing to the fact that they are made of a natural base material, wood.

Medieval mobile homes

The first log house is estimated to have been built roughly 5,000 years ago in Northern Europe. These homes assembled from stacked logs had their heyday in the middle ages; what is more, they were built at the time to be moveable. Proof of this is seen in the Finnish village of Espåby, which had to be moved pursuant to a government decree in 1557, whereby people disassembled their houses and reassembled them in their new place of residence.

Quick and practical

Right from the beginning, excellent base materials have been available in Northern countries for building log houses. Using dense and solid fir logs (such as spruce or redwood), a family was able to build a home in just a few days. Most of the buildings were erected without a single nail: it was sufficient to stack and join logs in a skilful way,

Homes of celebrities

The most famous log house owner is Queen Elizabeth II. Balmoral Castle, the favourite summer residence of the Queen of the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth, has a log house attached, which overlooks the River Dee and offers an unparalleled view.

Eco-conscious solution

You would be surprised how log houses stand the test of time! Buildings made of high-quality and carefully treated wood may serve several generations. By virtue of their excellent qualities of heat and sound insulation, the house energy rating of log houses is good: given that no further heat insulation is necessary, they have smaller ecological footprints. Owing to their stable structure, they are also very safe: in case of earthquakes, they may prove more resistant than brick buildings.

Breathing wood

Log houses may have positive effects on not only our environment but also our health. Given that stone and brick houses, due to their high humidity, may be an ideal breeding ground for bacteria and allergens that may cause itching, watering eyes, runny noses or even asthma, log houses, due to their breathing wood, provide for a healthy level of humidity in all seasons. Some claim that log houses made of wood revive every spring, releasing a scent of budding trees in the house.

Castle made of wood

The largest log house is linked to the name of a US business man from the last century, Louis Graveraet Kaufman. Far from being modest, his home called Granot Loma has 23 bedrooms, 13 bathrooms and a 9 m tall fireplace. Standing on the shore of Lake Superior in Michigan, the estate was built from thousands of fir logs in 1923.

Did you know?

In the open-air ethnographic museum of Trondheim, 14 different traditional log houses are on display, where one can imagine life in a medieval Norwegian town.



Large ornamental vase
06565091 SP2010-MCD



IN SISSI'S FOOTSTEPS

Wife of Emperor Franz Joseph I of Austria, Elisabeth Amalie Eugenie von Wittelsbach, or, as better known to all, "Sissi" was a passionate traveller; now we can follow in her footsteps at the major stages of her adventurous life.

To remember the empress, who was legendary for her beauty and kindness, the cultural route called Sissi trail was set up in 2002. The journey spans five countries from Bavaria to Switzerland and stops over in cities that are inseparably interconnected with Sissi's personality.

UNTERWITTELSBACH

Sissi's fairy tale-like story began in Bavaria, where she was born in 1837 as the fourth child of Duke Maximilian Joseph of Bavaria and Princess Ludovika of Bavaria. Little Sissi had a serene childhood, she spent summers in her father's favourite summer residence at the water castle in Unterwittelsbach, where she could play and ride horses to her liking. Surrounded by tasteful parks, the building now bears her name, "Sissi Castle", expecting visitors with an exhibition showcasing Sissi and her age.

BAD ISCHL

The girl from Wittelsbach was just 15 years old when she met the young emperor of the Dual Monarchy of Austria and Hungary at a ball, and she instantly had a crush on him. As the feeling was mutual, Franz Joseph soon asked for her hand in marriage in the same small town in Upper Austria. Because the couple frequently stayed in the atmospheric spa town, Bad Ischl was also referred to as the "secret capital of Austria". An interesting fact about the couple's summer castle, the Imperial Villa: its floor plan resembles a letter "E", reminiscent of Elisabeth. The Marble Palace built for Sissi accommodates a photo museum today with a large quantity of exciting contemporary photographs.

HEREND

Not only Hungary's oldest but also one of the world's most famous porcelain manufactories operates in Herend. Founded in 1826, Herend Porcelain Manufactory was a Supplier to the Imperial and Royal Court, i.e. provided multiple imperial castles with "white gold". Emperor Franz Joseph ordered a set particularly for his wife: decorated with oriental motifs and initials, the set was named after Gödöllő as Queen Sissi often spent time in the Royal Palace of Gödöllő. The success story of Herend Porcelain is presented in the Porcelanium Visitor Centre, while peeking at the secrets of porcelain-making is possible at the Minimanufactory.



VIOLET-RI
Tea set for two

Did you know?

The violet was Sissi's favourite flower. She was so infatuated with it that she used violets not only as the main ingredient of her perfume and cosmetic products but she also had the walls of her room in the Gödöllő Castle painted a violet colour. This violet pattern tea set with a crown knob was made as a limited edition series to honour the queen and remember the 120th anniversary of her death.



MERANO

With the passing of years, Sissi had to face an increasing amount of hardships: her two-year-old daughter Sophie died of typhoid fever, her marriage was going through a crisis, and she developed a range of illnesses. Her doctor recommended her a change of air and environment; this is when she actively started traveling. With its mild climate, Merano in South Tyrol captured her heart; she spent two winters there in the Trauttmansdorff Castle oozing a Mediterranean atmosphere, which today functions as a travel history museum. The trail starting there leads to Sissi's marble statue in the Emperor Elisabeth Park.

GENF

Elisabeth loved to be on the move; sometimes she did not heed her entourage's opinion claiming a journey unsafe. This is what happened also in September 1898, when they were unable to talk her out of a visit to the Lake Geneva. On the fatal day, she was hurrying with her lady-in-waiting Countess Irma Sztáray to catch the ship Genève when an Italian anarchist, Luigi Lucheni stabbed her close to her heart, and Sissi died of the injury. The railing along the lake shore bears a bronze plaque, while a statue of Sissi was erected in Rotonde du Mont-Blanc as a memorial to her assassination.





FRUIT OF THE SEA, GEM OF THE DINNER TABLE

The diversity of crustaceans is amazing: they include over 50,000 species worldwide. Of all crustaceans, one species enjoys particular attention both in gastronomy and in fishery. But what makes spiny lobster so special?

Night shift

Everyone knows that spiny lobster makes a really luscious meal, but much less well-known is their interesting life: being nocturnal creatures, they only leave their hiding places after sunset to hunt for their favorite prey, crabs and clams.

worth every penny of it

Spiny lobster is found in almost every warm sea, such as the Caribbean and the Mediterranean, but it almost always reaches supermarkets frozen. Live specimens on fish markets cost considerably more, roughly € 55-60/kg. The explanation for the high price of spiny lobster goes that the species is hard to breed and can almost exclusively be caught in open waters. Moreover, these crustaceans grow slowly, are extremely susceptible to infections and their eggs are difficult to raise.

Experienced divers get the upper hand

Catching spiny lobster near its natural habitat is considered a popular activity; its practice, however, is subject to the possession of licences and compliance with strict regulations in most countries aiming to protect biodiversity and the species. It is prohibited to harvest female spiny lobster, and even males below a certain size should be released back into the water. Being a nocturnal animal, it is easiest to catch at night; in many places, this far-from-easy stunt is exclusively permitted while diving, using only hands (gloves), i.e. without the help of any other special tool. If someone were to catch spiny lobster during the day, they would first need to find its hiding place and lure the animal out of it. This technique is not really recommended as one may damage the coral while trying to catch the spiny lobster.

The scrumptious arthropod

If you wish to amaze your dinner guests, cook them spiny lobster as a main course. Although the preparation of the 30cm to 50cm long crustacean requires some effort, its taste, which is similar to that of crayfish, offers abundant compensation. Apart from some struggle with its exoskeleton, it is rewarding to work with spiny lobster as it goes well with almost anything, can be prepared using any cooking technique (e.g. grilling, boiling, or steaming), and it makes even the simplest of courses sing, from salads to pasta. The most delicious taste is attributed to European spiny lobster.

— Lobster 15587000 VH-OR

Did you know?

As opposed to lobster, crab or crayfish, spiny lobster is not equipped with large claws; accordingly, its most useful, meaty part is found in their tails. In compensation, it has long antennae to help nocturnal navigation.

GRILLED FILLETS OF PIGEON BREAST

couscous with roasted pepper, creamed chick peas and fennel with coriander

Owing to its tender and soft meat and its delicious flavour, pigeon is a prime candidate for festive courses.

Preparation

1. Salt and pepper the cleaned pigeon fillets, season with coriander and garlic. Sprinkle with olive oil, then refrigerate wrapped in foil for one or two hours.
2. Roast the capia pepper on olive oil, then add a little butter and season with salt, pepper and ginger. Scald the couscous with twice as much boiling vegetable stock, then add butter, salt and coriander.
3. Blanch the fennel in salted water, then sauté it on a combination of olive oil and butter, and season with salt, coriander and garlic.
4. Purée the chick peas with the rest of the vegetable stock, adding garlic, salt, pepper, mustard and coriander.
5. In a pan, sear both sides of the marinated pigeon breasts on hot olive oil. Add a little butter and garlic to the fillets to baste them, then let them rest for five minutes.
6. Slice the pigeon breasts, and serve with the side dishes, garnish with sprouts.

Ingredients for 4 persons

- 4 pigeon breasts
- 250 g couscous
- 600 ml vegetable stock
- 120 g capia peppers, diced
- 250 g cooked chick peas
- 200 g cleaned fennel
- salt, ground pepper, garlic, ginger, coriander, seedy mustard, sprouts
- olive oil, butter



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