

Swiss Guard publishes popes' favourite recipes

A young chef with the Vatican City's Swiss Guard has launched a new book which contains the favourite recipes of various pontiffs, including the Argentine delicacy Dulce de Leche and the Polish dish Pierogi.

David Geisser, 24 and trained in gastronomy at a world-renowned restaurant, today presented his book "Bon Appetit, Swiss Guard", with the recipes of the most popular dishes in the Vatican for both his colleagues as well as for various popes and prelates.

Among the desserts listed is Dulce de Leche, a caramelised milk concoction immensely popular in Argentina and Latin America and a favourite of pope Francis, formerly Buenos Aires archbishop Jorge Bergoglio.

Francis, who since ascending to the Holy See in 2013 has not returned to his native land, has also introduced empanadas and succulent beef cut colita de cuadril to the menu at the Vatican, according to Geisser's book.

Former pontiff John Paul II also favoured delicacies from his homeland. Perogi, a type of pasta filled with various vegetables and similar to ravioli, was one of his preferred dishes and it is said that the meal helped the late Polish pontiff to recover from a 1981 assassination attempt.

Recipes favoured by Vatican Secretary of State, cardinal Pietro Parolin, and the prefect of the Papal Household monsignor George Gainswein also figure in the collection.

But Swiss Guard commander Daniel Anrig left no doubt where his loyalties lay during the presentation. "There is nothing like Italian cuisine, it is the best in the world," he stated.