

Swiss Guard's Vatican cookbook promises feast fit for a pope

Book includes recipes chosen by Vatican officials and some of the pontiff's favourite Argentinian dishes



A Swiss Guard salutes Pope Francis at the Vatican. Photograph: Alessandra Tarantino/AP

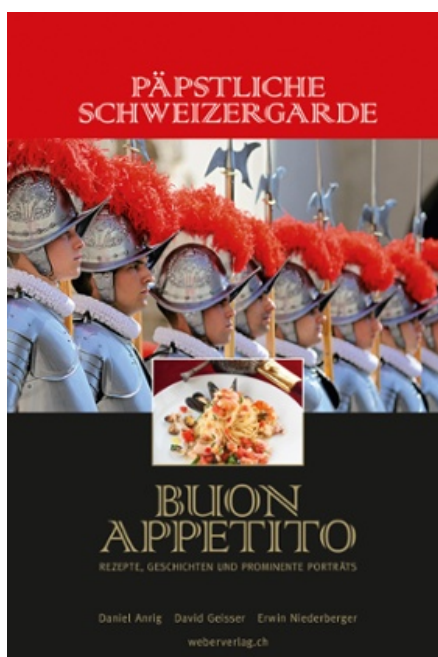
Pope Francis is known to enjoy a spot of cooking and used to make a mean paella when archbishop of Buenos Aires. Now some culinary inspiration has come from within the Vatican and, should the pontiff ever find himself yearning for a new dish, he could do worse than have a word with one of his Swiss Guards.

David Geisser, 24, a chef who has been compared in his native country to Jamie Oliver, joined the elite team of soldiers in February last year and has come up with a Vatican cookbook.

In it Francis can find a menu tailored specially to his tastes, starting with Argentinian empanadas on pepper

salad, then Colita de cuadril - a beef dish also from Jorge Bergoglio's homeland – and ending with a known papal favourite, dulce de leche.

“It is known that Cardinal Bergoglio liked cooking himself. Hopefully he would like our suggestions,” [writes Geisser in Buon Appetito, which is currently only available in German.](#)



The cover of David Geisser's Vatican cookbook

Swiss Guard Oberst (commander) Daniel Anrig and Wachtmeister Erwin Niederberger are also credited as authors of the book.

“A soldier can only fight and wage war when he has eaten well, and enough,” Anrig was reported to have said.

Geisser, from Zürich, includes recipes favoured by the Swiss Guard alongside dishes chosen by top Vatican officials including Georg Gänswein, the German archbishop nicknamed Bel Giorgio or Gorgeous George.

“Bishop Gänswein's favourite dish is a Roman classic, which surely is due to the long time he has spent in the Eternal City: saltimbocca alla romana,” writes Geisser.

Pietro Parolin, Francis's secretary of state, prefers gnocchi al Vaticano, the reader is informed, a dish combining the dumplings with a basil pesto and pancetta sauce.

In the Vatican on Wednesday, Francis had a chance to try out the language of most of the Swiss Guards when he met with the players from Bayern Munich football club.

He gave them a papal blessing – something which some in Rome may have found irksome. On Tuesday night the visiting side thrashed local club Roma 1-7.