

A meal fit for a Pope: Swiss Guards produce cookbook on Pontiff's favourite meals

- Francis's favourite foods are empanadas and dulce de leche, book reveals
- Recipe book also contains meals preferred by the Vatican's Swiss Guards
- It has been compiled by David Geisser, soldier from Zurich and former chef
- The Vatican's Swiss Guards are all single Catholic men from Switzerland

By HANNAH ROBERTS FOR MAILONLINE IN ROME

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With their pantaloons and ruff collars, the Swiss Guards are not the most manly of personal armies.

And while there is little cause for pope's elite bodyguards to take up arms, their culinary skills at least are in demand; they have now produced a book of favourite pontifical recipes.

A new cookbook - Bon Appétit, Swiss Guard - reveals the favourite dishes of Pope Francis and his two predecessors, Benedict XVI and John Paul II.



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Egg and chips again? A soldier from the Vatican's Swiss Guards shakes hands with Pope Francis

The book compiled by David Geisser, a 24-year-old soldier from Zurich who originally trained as a professional chef, includes delicacies from the three popes' home nations of Argentina, Germany and Poland.

Pope Francis seemingly has a sweet tooth and has introduced 'dulce de leche', a caramelised milk pudding popular in Argentina, to the Vatican menu, as well as traditional Latin American empanadas.

John Paul hankered after the Polish favourite, Pierogi, a stuffed pasta dish, and demanded it while recovering from a 1981 assassination attempt.

Benedict was keen on Bavarian dishes such as wurstel salad and baked cherries with cream.

The recipe book, published this week in German, contains the recipes preferred by his colleagues in the guard as well as various popes and prelates.

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.



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Papal choice: Pope Francis, left, has a penchant for traditional Latin American empanadas, right

Swiss Guard commander Daniel Anrig said 'A soldier can only fight and wage war when he has eaten well, and enough.' But he left no doubt as to where his loyalties lie.

'There is nothing like Italian cuisine, it is the best in the world,' he said.

Swiss Guards are the Swiss soldiers who have served as bodyguards of the Pope since the 16th century and are responsible for the security of the apostolic palace.

They must be single Catholic men aged between 19 and 30, and at least 5ft 8.5ins tall.

They swear allegiance to the Pope and are famous for their Renaissance-style uniform, with a plumed feather in their helmet, leggings and a high ruff collar.

POPE FRANCIS'S SPECIAL MENU

- **Argentinian empanadas on pepper salad** - empanadas are fried or baked pastries stuffed with meat or cheese
- **Colita de cuadril** - a cut of beef known as tri-tip from the bottom sirloin.
- **Dulce de leche** - Latin American confection made by slowly heating condensed milk until its sugar caramelises