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Cooking – the books

This article has been specially written for us by **Gräfin Schwarzkümmel**, the newly appointed Culinary Consultant to the Editorial Team, who joined the others in Mitzitant, Vienna last December. We thank her. Ed.

The Austrian Post Office has over the last three years produced a series of booklets – their "Marken Heft", approximately 160x110mm. These typically contain 30-40 sides of recipes, illustrations and background text, and two pages of Meine Marke (Personalised Stamps) with a design appropriate to the booklet's theme and in useful denominations (eg standard inland and foreign letter). The total face value of the stamps is usually the same as the booklet's selling price, which is in the 6 Euro region.

They are difficult to locate on the Austrian Post Office web site, so a table follows with the title, issue date, and reference number. Typing that number into the search box normally produces the correct page. There is a "description" but it tells you little of use – eg "Beinhaltet zwölf Rezepte" (= 'contains 12 recipes').

Your Editor tells me he has used the Gulasch booklet's recipes in his kitchen– and greatly enjoyed the results!

Best of	Ref	Date
Kekse	611041	11/11/2013
Cremesuppen	611050	03/03/2014
Schnitzl	611051	03/03/2014
Strudel	611052	03/03/2014
Salat	611056	10/06/2014
Grillen	611057	10/06/2014
Obstkuchen	611058	10/06/2014
Schololade	611004	18/09/2014
Klare Suppen	611062	18/09/2014
Gulasch	611063	18/09/2014
Vorspeisen	611070	27/11/2014

Best of	Ref	Date
Huhn & Co	611071	27/11/2014
Bäckereien	611072	27/11/2014
Torten	615006	16/03/2015
Pasta	615007	16/03/2015
Fisch	615016	15/06/2015
Eis & Co	615017	15/06/2015
Wild	615026	07/09/2015
Süsse Minis	615027	07/09/2015
Weihnachtsmenü	615035	23/11/2015
Weihnachtskekse	615036	23/11/2015







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The booklets contain histories of the recipe theme and the main ingredients – for example, the Gulasch one discusses the origin of the dish (Hungarian cattle herdsmen?) and the need for and the history of onions. Cooking hints are supplied: do not expose the paprika to dry heat for more than a few seconds or it will turn bitter; the meat must not be too lean – and much more excellent advice. The book ends with dumpling recipes. There are two pages each with four Gulasch-relevant personal stamps.

Schnitzls have many legends associated with their origin. A Byzantine princess liked her food coated with gold leaf; austerity changed this into breadcrumbs; the idea came via North Africa to Milan where F.M. Radetsky took a liking to it.

The Schnitzl book is similar, although it does include some strange coatings for the schnitzl such as ground pumpkin seeds, honey and sesame seeds, or Parmesan cheese. Three typical pages follow, showing the detailed nature of the recipes. Your Editor asserts that smoked paprika is best when making veal gulasch – I suppose it may appeal to his coarser tastes but not to my more refined palate!







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The covers of the booklets give a good idea of their coverage so I'll conclude by showing you all the available ones.

