

Harry – gefangen in der Zeit

Culture and society

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Germany is famous for its sausages with sauerkraut, an unimaginable variety of breads, a plethora of meats, and, of course, cakes like the "Schwarzwälder Kirschtorte," which Harry and Anna also try. What is perhaps less well-known is that Germany has a diverse range of cheeses. The annual per capita consumption of cheese is approximately 25 kilograms, and there are certainly strong and pungent examples among them. Yet, not everybody would be brave enough to attempt "Mellnkase," or "Würchwitz mite cheese." This German gourmet cheese is also sarcastically referred to as "the most alive cheese in the world." It has earned a spot among the world's top 10 most disgusting foods.

Mite cheese is a product for the adventurous and curious. In the German state of Saxony-Anhalt, mites have been used to ripen cheese for centuries: Fresh cheese, seasoned and molded, is placed in a box with the creepy-crawlers. Their saliva and excrement contribute to fermentation. To keep the little animals from eating the cheese, rye flour, their favorite food, is sprinkled into the crate. The cheese is ready to eat after 3 to 12 months. What is its shelf life? Connoisseurs believe it is infinite. The mites, by the way, are still alive when the cheese is eaten. When there is no cheese left, adamant foodies put the mites straight on their sandwich. A memorial to the mites has been erected in Würchwitz. Well then, bon appétit!

Würchwitz mite cheese, by the way, was included in the Slow Food organization's "Ark of Taste" list in 2006, which lists threatened regional specialties from around the world.