

Irmgard Wöhrl

Cooking with the Trapp family

Recipes and memories from
Johanna Raudaschl



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25 Jänner 2007

Meine Freunde habe ich erfahren, dass Johanna Raudaschl, die 1931 bei unserer Familie Köchin war, wieder in unser Gedächtnis gerufen wird.

Ihre Enkelin, Irmgard Wöhrl, wird die Rezepte und Lebensgeschichte ihrer Großmutter und der Zeit, in der sie bei uns war, in einem Buch beschreiben.

Johanna Raudaschl war eine von Gott begnadete Köchin, die unsere Väter bei einem Fahren und einer Jagd im Salzkammergut so beeindruckt hat, dass er sie sofort zu uns nach Aigen bei Salzburg gerufen hat.

In Irmgard Wöhrls Buch werden die Episoden an unserem Familienleben sein, die mal nie veröffentlicht wurden: die Familie Trapp durch die Augen unserer besten Köchin gesehen.

Ich bin ganz sicher, dass dieses Buch ein großer Erfolg werden wird und hoffe auf eine baldige Übersetzung in die englische Sprache. Mit besten Wünschen!

Maria von Trapp



6. Juni, 2007

Liebe Frau Irmgard Wöhrl!

Das Kochbuch von Ihrer Großmutter, Johanna Raudaschl, ist angekommen und ich muss sagen ich bin ganz weg wie süß es geworden ist. Ich würde Ihnen gratulieren und von Herzen danken, dass Sie uns eine Kopie geschickt haben.

Ich bin keine raffinierte Köchin, aber ich würde doch einmal ein oder das andere Rezept vornehmen. Mal in Amerika das Mehl anders ist wie die Backen, auch nicht so gut wie in Österreich, aber es sind ja auch andere Rezepte drinnen, die kein Mehl brauchen.

Ich freue mich für Sie für dieses unpersonlich Kochbuch und wünsche Ihnen einen großen Erfolg.

Hertzlichen Gruß

Maria von Trapp

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Foreword

I am delighted to hear that Johanna Raudaschl, who was the cook for our family in 1931, is to be remembered once again.

In this book her granddaughter, Irmgard Wöhrl, shares the recipes and tells her grandmother's life story, including the time she spent with us.

Johanna Raudaschl was a divinely gifted cook who impressed our father so much at a banquet after a hunting trip in the Salzkammergut that he immediately invited her to work as a cook at our home in Aigen near Salzburg. Here you will read previously unpublished episodes from our family life: the Trapp family as seen through the eyes of our best cook.

I am certain that this book will be a great success.

With best wishes,

Maria von Trapp, Vermont in 2007



Preface

“With God begun, the day is won.”

Each of her recipe books, which she wrote in Kurrent, begins with this sentence as a dedication: *“Mit Gott begonnen ist schon gewonnen.”* (With God begun, the day is won.)

My grandmother Johanna Raudaschl was a very devout woman. She grew up in a farming family, and religion influenced her life from early childhood. She was born out of wedlock in August 1904; this carried a stigma at that time in the small rural community in the Salzkammergut (a lake district in Upper Austria). Because her mother, my great-grandmother, also had to go to work as a farmhand after the birth of her daughter, Johanna Raudaschl grew up under the strict care of her grandmother.

Never quite satisfied and yet never unhappy, she came to terms with her destiny. Diligent, strong, and self-confident, she followed her own path, which for a while – probably the most important time of her life, as she often said – led her to the home of the Trapp family. My grandmother cooked for the baron, the baroness, their children, and their guests. This was a very responsible position that called for acquired knowledge, as well as heedfulness, interest, inventiveness, and imagination. Concerned with everyday essentials for those entrusted to her care, she never thought of herself. But the fact that she was able to prepare excellent meals even during meager times brought her appreciation and recognition, which provided her with an inexhaustible source of energy and the courage to face life.

Despite the necessary respectful distance, an almost friendly relationship based on mutual esteem quickly developed between Johanna Raudaschl and her employer, Baroness Maria Augusta von Trapp, who was exactly five months younger. When my grandmother later told me about her experiences in the Trapp family household, I always sensed a special harmony between these two very different women. I already loved those stories when I was a little girl. I was very close to my grandmother and could talk with her about everything.

She was a wonderful cook, and I probably inherited some of her talent. When she passed away in 1993, aged 89, after a life both fulfilled and full of hardship, she left me her cookbooks. They were old, yellowed, and covered with all types of stains, and when I held them in my hands – almost like relics – various little pictures of saints, newspaper clippings, and notes fell out. A treasure trove! And so it has long been my wish not to let her life, her recipes, and her recipes for life, be forgotten. With great joy, I began to cook

and sometimes had the feeling that my grandmother was standing next to me, helping me a little. Although she had written down the ingredients, there were rarely precise notes or instructions on how to cook the dishes step-by-step. After all, she had always done everything by instinct.

I am very pleased that, on the occasion of the opening of the Sound of Music Salzburg Museum on the grounds of Hellbrunn Palace, Anton Pustet Verlag has decided to publish a new edition of my Trapp cookbook, which first came out in 2010. In its updated form, it now appears with a new title and cover, a fresher layout, as well as additional photographic material, supplemented by minor adjustments to the text where they have since become necessary.

Against the backdrop of my grandmother Johanna Raudaschl’s life story, it was important to me to keep the book as authentic as possible and to capture both the spirit of the interwar period and the meal plan in the Trapp household. In short, to present a simple and flavorful cuisine. Truly good food endures, even as trends come and go. *With God begun*, this new edition is dedicated to the goodness my grandmother brought to the Trapp household through her cooking, and to the good she brought into the world.

Irmgard Wöhrl, spring 2026





My humble self

A cool welcome in the hot summer of 1904

The touching and eventful life story of my grandmother Johanna Raudaschl began at the Holzberg farm, above the picturesque Lake Attersee, around St. Bartholomew's Day (August 24th), 1904.

That summer was unusually hot and dry until late August, which meant that the first hay harvest could take place earlier than in other years. It was a good one. Just as the meadows were noticeably threatening to dry up, the rain everyone had been longing for finally came at the end of August, bringing cool relief.

The farmer's daughter Theresia Raudaschl paid little attention to what was going on around her. She had very different worries as she set off on this mild, rainy August day on the arduous path that led from her parents' Holzberg farm to her sister's, in order to bear her first child, under her sister's care. It was not exactly a joyfully awaited event, even though the baby was conceived with her first great love. In the fall of the previous year, the inexperienced 25-year-old had met a migrant worker from Salzburg and fallen head over heels in love with him. Their secret meetings, however, were not without consequences. Although they had already spoken of marriage, the man reportedly moved on to work in the quarry at Hallein. When Theresia realized he had left her a keepsake – the child she was now carrying – she was heartbroken and too wretched to leave the house. For a long time, she did not dare reveal her condition.

While her brothers, Franz and Matthias, showed little to no sympathy for the expectant mother – they were only concerned with her capacity for work, which gradually deteriorated under the emerging circumstances – Theresia found refuge with her sister, Johanna. Together with her husband, Johanna ran a small farm on the opposite shore, in Steinbach on Lake Attersee. In order to reach it, Theresia first had to hang a linen sheet from the balcony of the farmhouse on the Holzberg mountain. This signaled to the ferryman below that someone wanted to



Johanna's mother, Theresia Raudaschl (1878–1963).



Theresia's sister, Johanna (1882–1945), gave her support in the difficult time surrounding the birth of her child.

cross the lake, and he prepared for the journey. Then it took her a good hour to walk down the mountain to the landing place and reach the other shore with the boat. Two days later, on August 26th, 1904, Theresia gave birth in Steinbach to a girl: “My humble self,” as Johanna Raudaschl formulated it in her memoirs. It was likely not merely polite restraint or the modesty that was so typical of my grandmother throughout her life that led her to such a rather dismissive way of describing herself. A child born out of wedlock during this era was considered to be a “mishap” and a considerable disgrace at that. But the most important thing appeared to be that the birth went well, and mother and daughter were both in good health. The courageous aunt embraced her sister, with whom she had always felt a tender bond of affection, and assured her that she was not the first and quite certainly not the last woman who would experience something like this.

How right she was. But nothing changed the fact that illegitimate children and their mothers were largely treated as outsiders at that time. This was an appalling injustice and a circumstance that, it seemed to me, troubled my grandmother throughout her entire lifetime. In contrast to this supposed stigma, she had many positive experiences, such as the affection of caring and especially understanding relatives who guided her destiny during the early years and gave her more stability than her mother could. It was probably a result of her personal experiences that Johanna developed a very distinct sense of justice and solidarity, which she maintained up to a ripe old age. She was self-confident and assertive, clever, and humorous. And at some point, without any trace of pride or pretension, she came to the reassuring certainty that, despite everything, she had made something of her life.

One of these understanding relatives who influenced her first days on earth was her aunt. And she was also the one who, as her godmother, carried the newborn



Johanna Raudaschl's birthplace in Steinbach on Lake Attersee.

girl to Steinbach to be baptized the day after her birth and gave her the name of Johanna. “Hannerl” is what she was called later. However, no one spoke much with the baby at the beginning, because the aunt had to do her work, and her mother only recovered gradually from the strain of childbirth. Although Theresia would have welcomed some bed rest that first week, it was simply not possible. After a few days, she already had to go back home, across the lake, and up Holzberg mountain. The harvest work was waiting, and she had already been away for much too long. This did not suit her strict brothers at all, because every hand was very important for the work back then. After all, there were no machines or other technical aids. Reaping had to be done with a sickle and scythe. There was a tremendous variety of work for the farmers to do on the farm and in the stables. Someone had to take care of the animals, the fields required constant attention, from the sowing to the harvest. In addition, every farmer was his own craftsman. And then there were also the forests of Holzberg farm. According to the old saying, a farm without a forest is like a bed without a cover. The name Holzberg (wood mountain) farm did not refer – as one might think – to a special abundance of woodlands but just to the location near the forest. Still, the family owned the 10 to 15 hectares customary for the region, and there was constantly work to be done.

Work was not just a part of life, but a necessity and its foundation. It belonged to life like the seasons, like the sun and rain. For this reason, the brothers chose to bear the shame of their sister having an illegitimate child rather than lose her as a valuable farmhand. The baby was simply wrapped in a blanket and taken along to the field. Not the warmest of welcomes.



Unterach, Johanna Raudaschl's home village, on a postcard from the year 1907.



Apple cake in a casserole with crumble topping

INGREDIENTS:

Apple cake

- 2 cups (350 g) apples, peeled and cut into large cubes, soaked in lemon juice
- 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups (250 g) pastry flour
- $\frac{3}{5}$ cup (150 g) butter
- 1 $\frac{1}{8}$ cups (150 g) powdered sugar
- 3 eggs
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (125 ml) cold milk
- 2 tsp (8 g) vanilla sugar
- 5 tsp (16 g) baking powder

Crumble topping

- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup (90 g) butter, very soft
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (90 g) granulated sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (45 g) almonds, ground
- $\frac{3}{5}$ cup (65 g) all-purpose flour
- 1 pinch of salt
- 1 pinch of cinnamon, ground
- 3 tbsp almond slivers
- 1 tsp (4 g) vanilla sugar

INSTRUCTIONS:

Crumble topping

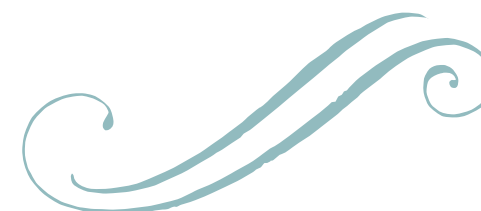
Beat butter with sugar, vanilla sugar, salt, and cinnamon until soft, mix in almonds and flour, and then leave to stand in a cool place.

Apple cake

Stir butter, sugar, and vanilla sugar until creamy, then gradually whisk in the eggs. Mix flour with baking powder and sift into the mixture.

Add milk until it becomes a foamy batter. Carefully add the diced apples with a wooden spoon. Pour the mixture into a buttered and floured cake pan of about 10 x 8 inches and bake in a preheated oven for 15 minutes at 350°F (180°C).

Crumble the topping with your hands, sprinkle onto the cake together with almond slivers, and bake for another 35–45 minutes until done. Total baking time 50–60 minutes. Use a skewer to check whether the cake is fully baked.



Sweet buns filled with jam

INGREDIENTS:

1 $\frac{3}{5}$ cups (150g) pastry flour
1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups (150g) all-purpose flour
1 tbsp (15g) fresh yeast or
2 tsp (5g) dry yeast
 $\frac{1}{3}$ cup (45g) powdered sugar
 $\frac{1}{2}$ –1 cup
(125–200 ml) milk and
whipping cream
in a 50:50
mixture
1 tbsp sour cream
salt
butter for the dumpling pan
1 egg
 $\frac{1}{3}$ cup (80g) butter, melted
for spreading
 $\frac{1}{2}$ jar plum or apricot
jam mixed with a
bit of rum

INSTRUCTIONS:

To make the sweet buns (called Buchteln or Wuchteln), mix the two types of flour and sift so that it becomes very fine. Make a sponge, mixing the yeast with 1 tsp of powdered sugar, 3 tbsp of lukewarm milk, and a bit of flour. Cover with a towel and leave to rise in a warm place for about 30 minutes. Stir the rest of the ingredients into the sponge with a wooden spoon. Mix with the spoon until the dough is smooth and has bubbles. Cover the dough with a towel and let rest for another half hour.

Butter the sides of a deep baking dish and cover the bottom well with melted butter. Roll out the yeast dough on a floured work surface until it is about half a finger thick. Use a pastry cutter with a diameter of approx. 2 inches to cut out circles. Place $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 tsp of plum or apricot jam mixed with a bit of rum at the center of the dough circle and then close the dough around it. Dip into the melted butter with the pinched-together ends at the bottom and line them up in the baking dish. Repeat this process until the baking dish is completely full.

Cover the sweet buns and leave to rise for another 20 minutes, then brush with melted butter. Pre-heat the oven to 350°F (180°C) and bake for about 25–30 minutes in the lower half of the oven. Brush with melted butter once again at the end of the baking time.

Serve the freshly baked sweet buns with powdered sugar and vanilla sauce while they are still warm.





Beef broth with semolina strudel

INGREDIENTS:

Broth

- 2 quarts (2 liters) water
- 1 onion, halved and well-browned on cut side
- 1 lb (500g) stewing beef (from leg or shoulder, etc.)
- ½ lb (200g) beef bones and marrow bones
- root vegetables, cut into large pieces (carrot, parsley root, celeriac, leek, parsley)
- 1 bay leaf
- 10 peppercorns
- 3 juniper berries
- 1 pinch of nutmeg

salt
chives

Semolina strudel

- 3 tbsp (40g) butter
- 2 eggs
- ½ cup (125 ml) sour cream
- 1 tbsp parsley, finely chopped
- ½ cup (100g) semolina
- 1 pinch of salt
- strudel dough
- 2 tbsp (25g) butter

INSTRUCTIONS:

Place soup vegetables with onion halves, beef bones, and marrow bones in a large pot with cold water and bring to a boil. Salt the broth and add the stewing beef. Simmer lightly without a lid until soft for about 2–3 hours.

Remove the meat and use separately. Strain the broth through a sieve and salt to taste.

Semolina strudel

Beat butter well with egg yolks until foamy. Mix in sour cream and semolina. Cover the mixture and leave to rest for about 30 minutes. Then beat egg whites with a pinch of salt until stiff and fold into the mixture.

Sauté parsley in butter. Brush the prepared strudel dough with the butter-parsley mixture, spread the semolina mixture onto it, and roll up the dough.

Place strudel on a cookie sheet covered with parchment paper, brush with egg, and bake until golden in the preheated oven at 350°F (180°C).

Cut strudel into pieces, decorate with chives, and serve in broth.

Brisket with almond-horseradish crust

INGREDIENTS:

1 ½ lb (600g) brisket
1 tbsp butter

Almond horseradish

1 cup (250 ml) beef broth
1 cup (40g) diced rolls
2 tsp (10 ml) whipping cream
1 egg
1 egg yolk
3 tbsp horseradish
(from the jar)
1 tbsp almonds,
ground
2 tbsp almond slivers

butter
horseradish, freshly grated
chives, chopped

INSTRUCTIONS:

Boil brisket in beef broth until soft (about 3 hours). Melt some butter in a roasting pan, slice the cooked brisket, and place in pan.

Almond horseradish: Bring beef broth, diced rolls, and whipping cream to a boil, and then blend well with a handheld blender. Boil once more and then whisk in horseradish, ground almonds, egg, egg yolk, and almond slivers. Spread a thick coat of the almond horseradish over the top of the brisket slices. Drizzle some melted butter over it. Broil in oven at 430°F (220°C) until golden brown.

Crisp root vegetables, creamed cabbage, and potatoes go well with this. Serve the brisket sprinkled with some freshly grated horseradish and chopped chives.



A true culinary treasure!

Johanna Raudaschl was the Trapp family's cook around 1930. Her refined sense of flavor, simplicity, and quality reached far beyond her own time and still lives on today in the recipes she passed down to her granddaughter, Irmgard Wöhrl – from rich beef broth with semolina strudel to hearty venison stew, and the iconic Salzburger Nockerl.

In this deeply personal journey of discovery, handed-down recipes, scribbled notes, and family stories come together to reveal an extraordinary woman of many facets. Paired with Caroline Kleibel's historical insights, it also paints a vivid picture of everyday life in the Trapp villa.

This is an updated special edition of
THE TRAPP COOKBOOK, which was honored
with the World Cookbook Award.

