

***Have you ever imagined a genuine chef? If you did, you must have had in mind the image of Jakob Hausmann, the Swiss who fell in love with Romania. A man full of life, so trapped in the passion that keeps him in his restaurant from early morning until late evening, who always has a sincere smile for all of those that come inside “his house” as he refers to Mica Elvetie restaurant.***

You most definitely heard of him before: he is the chef that all celebrities in Bucharest visit and has just moved his “house” in Bucharest’s Historical Center so that he could make happy more people who want to try out his specialities. Roger Federer, Pink, Jean Claude van Damme, Wesley Snipes, Steven Segal, lots of politicians and Romanian public figures are his guests when they want to spend some memorable moments in Bucharest.

“I can pick any letter from the alphabet and find a VIP who has visited me. I am happy about this, it means that people talk about me and respect my house but I welcome everyone who visits me.” Yes, Jakob Hausmann is happiest when non-VIP people are walking in his restaurant and, in particular, those that celebrate something.

“I recognize them and I ask: “What do you celebrate? Is it someone’s birthday?” and they say, for example “It’s my wife’s birthday.” Then I go into my kitchen, I bring them desert on the house, I put a candle on top and I offer them whatever I can in order that they have a good time in my house. Birthdays, anniversaries, friends from abroad... these are rare moments and that I am doing everything that I can to make them truly memorable. This makes me proud of my profession, this is what I live for.”

The house speciality is steak on stone and it is a recipe brought by him to Romania more than 14 years ago. Many cooks have tried to copy it, but his customers always come back to the original one.

“It’s not just about the stone or the meat, it’s more about the sauce, the method, the mis-en-place, about the respect and the necessary instruments that contribute to my secret. It’s like when you go on vacation and drink a very good wine: if you take it with you at home, it doesn’t taste the same. That is why, when you eat a swiss speciality from a Romanian cook it doesn’t taste the same as when it is cooked by a native Swiss cook.”

He admits that he is not an expert in wine for drinking, yet he is one in wine for cooking, but almost all of his clients agreed that the star of the menu, swiss steak on stone, is most tasty when served with a dry red wine from the local vineyards: Rouge de Roumanie from Domeniile Samburesti.

The suppliers are carefully chosen by Jakob Hausmann and, in this moment, either we are referring to traditional partnerships like Angst or Valvis Holding, or the seasonal ones that he personally chooses each week at the market, each ingredient that is used in his kitchen has the best quality for the dishes served in his restaurant.

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Jakob Hausmann doesn't believe in heavy or light foods. Everyone can eat a little of everything, but it depends on the quantity, referred to each individual.

“Even a dish with ingredients that are considered heavy, if it has vegetables, it's balanced. I cannot serve meat portions of 500g unless specifically asked for, the sauces don't have a mayonaisse base, but a vegetal one. We don't add too much salt because it dehydrates and makes one gain weight, our desserts are not drowned in white sugar, we only use brown sugar and honey. This is how we take care of our customers' health.” The menu has his creator's touch. It has three parts: the chef's stone specialities, traditional swiss food and deserts or seasonal dishes. In order to satisfy and convince new customers, the prices at Mica Elvetie are smaller now and Jakob Hausmann guarantees that you can eat for under 50 lei and leave his restaurant as happy as a Swiss.

His Motto: “Every meal has a recipe: few skills, a bit of good will and love to fill” is his belief that the people who come at his restaurant are making a very conscious choice and are bringing him their time, their money and their family – thus important components of their lives and that is why he owes them to put his soul and skill in making their wishes come true.

The new restaurant, located in the Historical Center, has much more space than the previous one, lower prices and great future plans: thematical Swiss evenings, cooking demonstrations, a dynamic and seasonal menu and a cooking school. Jakob Hausmann is a highly active man and confesses that in the next 10 years, he wants to fulfill all his professional wishes: a cooking show, the Swiss authorisation Gault Millieu, the Austrian one Haube, perhaps a Michellin star (when it will be available in Romania) and, generally, to leave a legacy for the young Romanian cooks.

“The Historical Center has a giant potential and is a business card for the romanian tourism. Skilled cooks are needed and together they can raise the value at westic standards but also respect the tration and gastronomical culture.”

Jakob Hausmann was born in Switzerland and has studied cooking in Zurich. He came to Romania in 1991 and loved it so much he moved here. His first Mica Elvetie restaurant opened in 1998 and soon became, one of the most famous in Bucharest. He had a cooking show in 2008 – “Let's cook” on the national TV station and, in the same year, he became a Gastronomical Master.

Mica Elvetie has moved this fall in Franceza street, no 60, at the ground floor of Europa Royale Hotel. The new restaurant with a different concept is much bigger than the former and is Jakob Hausmann's new personal ambition. Through this new beginning he wants to conquer both tourists and romanians, but keeping all of the ingredients that have made him famous.

## **Oaspeti la Jakob Hausmann – experimentati Elvetia in inima Bucurestiului la restaurantul Mica Elvetie din Centrul Vechi**

***Daca v-ati imaginat vreodata un bucatar-chef veritabil, cu siguranta aveti in minte imaginea lui Jakob Hausmann, elvetianul indragostit de Romania. Un om plin de viata, absolut patruns de pasiunea care il tine in restaurantul sau de dimineata si pana seara, care are mereu un zambet sincer pentru cei care calca pragul “casei sale” asa cum ii place sa spuna despre restaurantul Mica Elvetie.***

Cu siguranta ati mai auzit de el: este bucatarul pe la care trec majoritatea VIP-urilor aflate in trecere prin Bucuresti si tocmai si-a mutat “casa” in Centrul Vechi, ca sa faca fericiti cat mai multi oameni care vor sa-i incerce preparatele unice. Roger Federer, Pink, Jean Claude van Damme, Wesley Snipes, Steven Segal si multi politicieni si figuri publice romanesti sunt invitatii sai atunci cand vor sa petreaca momente placute in Bucuresti.

“Pot sa iau tot alfabetul si pentru fiecare litera gasesc un VIP care m-a vizitat. Ma bucura asta, inseamna ca oamenii vorbesc despre mine si-mi respecta “casa” dar eu primesc cu mare drag pe toata lumea care vine la mine.” Cu toate acestea, Jakob Hausmann se bucura cu atat mai mult atunci cand vede oameni noi, perfect obisnuiti, care ii calca pragul si, in special, de cei care sarbatoresc ceva anume:

“li recunosc si ii intreb: “ce sarbatoriti? E ziua cuiva?” Si ei imi spun, de exemplu: “E ziua sotiei mele.” Atunci ma duc in bucatarie si le aduc un desert din partea casei, le pun o lumanare si le ofer tot ce pot ca sa se simta bine in casa mea. Zile de nastere, aniversari, cand iti vin prieteni din strainatate... sunt momente rare si de aceea incerc sa imi aduc aportul ca ele sa fie cu adevarat memorabile. Iar asta ma face mandru de profesia mea, pentru asta traiesc. “

Specialitatea casei este friptura pe piatra si este o reteta adusa in Romania de dansul acum mai bine de 14 ani. Multi au incercat sa-o copieze, dar clientii se intorc mereu la original:

“Nu e vorba doar de piatra sau de carne, e mai mult despre sos si metoda si aranjament, despre respect si instrumentele necesare care contribuie la secretul meu. E ca atunci cand mergi in vacanta si bei un vin bun: daca il iei cu tine acasa nu mai are acelasi gust. De aceea, atunci cand mananci o specialitate elvetiana din mana unui bucatar roman, nu e ca atunci cand e facuta de unul nativ elvetian.”

Recunoaste ca nu este un expert in vinul de baut, ci mai degraba in cel de gatit, dar aproape toti clientii au cazut de acord ca alaturi de vedeta meniului, muschiul de vita elvetian pe piatra, se potriveste un vin sec, rosu de pe plaiurile romanesti: Rouge de Roumanie de la Domeniile Samburesti.

Furnizorii sunt alesi cu mare grija de catre dansul, iar in acest moment, fie ca vorbim de parteneriate vechi cum are cu Angst sau cu Valvis Holding, sau de cele sezoniere pe care le desemneaza personal in fiecare saptamana in piata, fiecare ingredient care intra in bucataria sa e de o calitate optima pentru preparatele elvetiene servite in restaurantul sau.

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Jakob Hausmann nu crede in mancaruri grele sau usoare. Toata lumea poate sa manance cate putin din toate dar depinde de cantitate, raportata la fiecare. “Chiar si o mancare cu ingrediente considerate grele, daca e asociata cu legume e potrivita. Nu voi servi portii de carne de 500 de grame decat daca se cere expres, sosurile nu au baza de ou, ci una vegetala. Nu punem multa sare pentru ca deshidrateaza si ingrasa, deserturile nu sunt inecate in zahar tos, folosim zahar brun si miere. Asa incercam sa avem grija de clientii nostri.” Chiar si meniul este se aseamana “parintelui sau:” E compus din trei parti : specialitatile pe piatra ale bucatarului, preparate specifice elvetiene si deserturi si preparate in continua schimbare. Ca sa multumeasca si sa convinga cat mai multi clienti, preturile de la Mica Elvetie au scazut si Hausmann garanteaza ca sub 50 de lei pleci fericit ca un elvetian din restaurantul sau.

Motto-ul sau “Fiecare fel de mancare are o reteta: indemanare, daruire si restul dragoste” comprima crezul sau ca oamenii care vin la restaurant fac o alegere foarte constienta, isi duc acolo timpul, banii si prietenii sau familia, deci componente importante din viata lor si ca el este dator sa puna suflet si pricepere pentru a le indeplini dorintele.

Noul restaurant, situat chiar la intrarea in Centrul Istoric, se poate lauda cu mult mai mult spatiu, cu preturi mai mici si cu planuri mari de viitor: seri tematice elvetiene, demonstratii de gatit, meniuri dinamice, in functie de sezon si o scoala de gatit. Jakob Hausmann este un om foarte activ si marturiseste ca in urmatorii 10 ani doreste sa-si indeplineasca toate dorintele profesionale: o emisiune, o carte de gatit, autorizatia elvetiana Gault Millieu, cea austriaca Haube, poate o stea Michellin cand se va acorda in Romania si, in general, sa lase in urma o mostenire pentru tinerii bucatari romani.

“Centrul Istoric are un potential urias si este o carte de vizita pentru turismul romanesc. E nevoie de bucatari priceputi care sa se ridice la standardele occidentale si sa respecte traditia si cultura gastronomică.”

Jakob Hausmann s-a nascut in Elvetia si a facut scoala de bucatari in Zurich. A venit in Romania in 1991 si n-a mai plecat de drag. Primul sau restaurant Mica Elvetie si-a deschis portile in 1998 si a devenit, in scurt timp, unul dintre cele mai cautate din capitala, iar el unul dintre cei mai prestigiosi bucatari. A avut o emisiune culinara in 2008– “Hai sa bucatarim” pe TVR 1 si in acelasi an a devenit Maestru in Arta Culinara.

Mica Elvetie s-a mutat anul acesta in Centrul Vechi, pe Strada Franceza, nr. 60 la parterul Hotelului Europa Royale. Noul restaurant, diferit ca si concept, de tip bistro, este mult mai mare decat fostul amplasament si reprezinta noua ambitie a lui Hausmann. Prin acest suflu nou al Micii Elvetii, si doreste sa cucereasca deopotriwa bucurestenii si turistii, dar pastrand toate ingredientele care l-au facut celebru.