

Miriam Glaus 24 // Cairns // Swiss Cake & Coffee Shop production manager

She's a European champion in the world of bread and pastry but I only found out because someone else told me. The modest production manager at Swiss Cake & Coffee Shop, Miriam Glaus, placed third in the Best Apprentice Baker/Pastry Chef Awards in Europe not long after being named Best Apprentice in Switzerland in 2002. It was a French theme for the competition in Switzerland and the apprentices had to produce bread, pastries and cake decorations portraying this theme.

"For my cake decoration I made a French coffee shop with a baker with a big belly and lovely girl in a red skirt," Miriam says.

"I think that's the reason I won."

The European competition in Holland had a flower theme and Miriam created bread and danishes in the shapes of flowers and windmills to win third place.

It hardly seems fair that someone in charge of quality control baking and sampling cakes, cookies and crumbles all day could be so slim and fit. "I do a lot of running around the bakery," Miriam laughs. On top of that Miriam enjoys competing in street races, bushwalking and kite surfing.

Back home in Switzerland she spent a lot of spare time snow kiting (kite surfing on the snow) but the "crocodiles, stingers and sharks" have put her off kite surfing here. Miriam says she loves the warm weather, the rainforest and the beaches and, believe it or not, her 4am starts for work at the Grafton St bakery and coffee shop. "I had a neighbour who was an apprentice baker and pastry chef and she would come home early each morning. I thought it was great to still have the whole day left after work."

At just eight years old she started helping out at home baking cakes and biscuits and remembers with fondness her mother's zucchini cake which was the result of an overabundant veggie garden. "I really loved this cake, it was so moist. There were always too many zucchinis in the garden and we had to think what to do with them," she says.

Swiss Café owner Andreas Widmer found Miriam three years ago in Switzerland where she worked in a hotel close to St Moritz.

"Miriam applied to work with us which was wonderful but I was a bit worried she was over qualified," Andreas says.

More than three years later Miriam is a permanent resident and next year is looking forward to applying to become an Australian citizen.

Cake queen

Cairns cake lovers are enjoying the talents of a European champion, discovers **Gail Sedorkin**



Photograph // Chris Hyde

Steak sanga tops

Following my claim that the biggest and best steak sandwich was at the Edge Hill Bowls Club, a *cairnseye* reader says her steak sanga find is unmissable. Jessie Grant of Gordonvale says the Cape York Hotel is a very affordable place for a family to eat, without having to go through a drive-through, and the food is excellent. It was while dining at the Cape recently when Jessie discovered the monster steak sandwich for \$9.50. "The sandwich was 10 foot high. There were three pieces of bacon, a large quantity of steak and a heap of salad on Turkish bread," Jessie says. "It's the only place where we can afford to eat and bring the kids and not go through a drive-through."



New Japanese spot

Japanese food has moved into the suburbs. Where sushi takeaway once dominated the city (you would guess because that's where the strong Japanese trade frequented) a little takeaway café has opened on Reservoir Rd near Hungry Possum Pizza. BenToAn Sushi and Japanese takeaway has a range of fresh sushi or you can order bento boxes or curries from the menu. It's a healthy option for people wanting a quick, easy and tasty meal. Former Sushi Express at Orchid Plaza head chef Naoto Matsuura is heading the new business.

French Kisses No.2

Good news for those who love good coffee and French pastries, French Kisses number two is on the way. Earlier this year the patisserie scene in Cairns received a welcome addition with French Kisses opening in Shields St. Specialties from renowned French chef Patrick Anisset include Le French Kisses, a moist almond and roasted peanut biscuit base covered in white chocolate cream filled with a mango and honey heart and finished with a white chocolate glaze. It's scheduled to open at Edge Hill early in December and will be open seven days a week from 7am to 6pm.

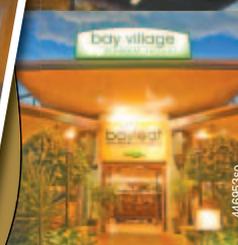
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