

## Information for the press

### Aachener Printen

They are not just called „Printen“, but „Aachener Printen“ and they are – in every respect – unique. With remarkable success they persistently resist to all comparisons with gingerbread. In the imperial city more than 4,500 tons of Printen dough is annually produced – once as hard and soft version of the Printe, once with sugar icing or with chocolate, once refined with nuts or almonds.

The history of the world famous speciality started more than three hundred fifty years ago, when bronze casters from the Belgian Dinant brought figural-baked bread with them to Aachen. The up to this time new kind of pastry aroused great curiosity among Aachen bakers and they did not want to rest until the recipe got revealed. The outside of the original Printe, which was formed in wooden moulds to artful motifs, showed a striking similarity with today's "Spekulatius" (kind of almond biscuit). The pastry eventually got its name from pressing (in German dialect „Prenten“).

Today's recipe and shape of the Aachen "national pastry", however, originated from the Continental Blockade imposed by Napoleon; it was the reason that the Aachen bakers at producing the Printe with beet sugar and treacle had to improvise, owing to which a tough and difficultly mouldable dough was produced. This compromise solution, originally attributed to the master baker Henry Lambertz, turned out to be a future success. Due to its flat and slim shape, it offered the advantage of an unproblematic production process and moreover it was better suited for dispatch and with that for the development of new Printen markets.

The company history of the oldest and biggest Printen factory in Aachen (the "Printenfabrik Lambertz") shows that already in early times the Printe was well known and in demand far beyond the city borders.

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Back then as well as these days the Aachen Printe has not only been produced in factories, but has also lovingly been made by hand in local bakeries in Aachen. At numerous corners in the historic city centre traditional Printen bakeries offer their creations all year long – each bakery with its own secret recipe.

Those who want to discover part of the early Printen craft history are recommended a visit in the "Café Van den Daele". Here the uncrowned „king of Printer bakers“, the Belgian Leo van den Daele, created artful and valuable delicacies until a few years ago. Until today his unique collection of models can be marvelled at in the traditional café in Aachen.

Not only bakeries, but also restaurants in Aachen can meanwhile not imagine doing without the Printe. Those who have once gained a taste are recommended Rhenish “Sauerbraten” (marinated pot roast) with Printen sauce. Complete Printen happiness is achieved when Printen ice cream from one of the Aachen ice cafés melts in the mouth ...

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