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# FINAL REPORT

# FUNDAZIUN UCCELIN

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HRISTO FILYOV



JANUARY 19, 2024



# Program Plan

**Schloss Schauenstein**

**By Andreas Caminada**

**12.09-24.09.23**

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**25.09-29.09.23**

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**Hotel de Ville / Franck Giovannini**

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**Frantzén / Björn Frantzén**

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## Introduction

I learned about Uccelin in the middle of 2021, when I was scrolling through my Instagram I saw a picture from Simeon Nikolov (a former Uccelin) during his stage at Hotel de Ville. I immediately wrote to him to congratulate him on his new adventure and to ask him how he managed to find jobs in such High End places. He told me about the foundation and I immediately checked the website for the program history/aim and what were the requirements. As I was reading about all the restaurant and producers I was thinking that there is no way that the foundation is going to pick me so I didn't bother to even apply. That's a thing that bothered me a lot during the last two years. March 2023 came and again on an Instagram story I saw Simeon post that Uccelin Applications are now open. This time I was not going to miss the chance.

The date is 19<sup>th</sup> of April 2023, I am at work. I'm just finishing the last mise en place before service starts. Everything is ready, service will start in a couple of minutes. I have a little time so I decide to check my phone. And there it is the e-mail- , I am happy to inform you that you are officially an, Uccelin" ". I couldn't believe what I am reading. I just got outside of the restaurant and stared at the phone's screen for 5 min. Then the server came and said that the first guest have arrived. You can say I had one of the best services of my life.

It's the 12<sup>th</sup> of September 2023. It's my first time in Switzerland, I get out of the airport and hop on the train to Chur from Zürich airport. I can't believe my eyes, I have never seen a better organized country, the train goes by lake Walensee(little did I know that later on my journey I will help „Froggy” to catch fish on the same lake). The views of the lake and surrounding mountains are mesmerizing. In Chur I get out of the train and get on a new one to Thusis. In Thusis Simeon is waiting me at the train station to pick me up. I get in the car and we go to the Italian restaurant down the road and have a good chat about Uccelin and what I can expect during my program. After we are finished at the restaurant Simeon drives me to the place where I will sleep and wishes me luck. I unpack and organize everything for the next day and get in the bed to sleep. I couldn't get a lot of sleep that night, I was feeling very anxious and nervous, but also grateful and privileged.

In the morning I got out of bed dressed and waited for the clock to hit 10:20, so I can go to Fürstenu. As I was walking down the road I saw the castle and I got really excited because my journey was about to begin.....



# Schloss Schauenstein

By Andreas Caminada

12.09-24.09.23

## First week:

It's 12:00. I have just finished the meeting with Anthea and got my uniforms. I get in the kitchen and meet with everybody, then Sous Chef Simon tells me that this week I am going to help Dominic on Entremétier. During the next few days I got to see a lot of new techniques and cooking methods that I have not witnessed before like the carrot for the Apero, the fake oyster shell, the potato flan and many more. I also got to witness some new ingredients like the begonia leaves and the Carpinello cheese. During that week I got the opportunity to get involved in the service and to help Entremétier for the plating of the carrot and horseradish and the herb cannelloni with roe for the Apero and the Saibling and Milken Kalb. During the week I also got the chance to help Sebastian in the test kitchen for peeling beetroot (for pickling and pastrami), for picking Elderberry from the branches (also for pickling) and to help Liubash with the cleaning and portioning cooked sweetbreads for the week. The day after I cleaned and portioned the sweetbreads, Sous Chef Simon showed me how he prepares them for service and he also gave me the job to wash the lamb belly from the brine, to season it with spice mix and then to smoke it in the oven. During the last service of the week I had the chance to help pastry with mise en place and the preparation and plating of the Friandise.



## Second week:

Second week started the same as the first week-helping Entremétier for various tasks such as: chopping onions for caramelized onions for the sweetbread dish, making daikon rolls for the lamb main course, slicing shallots in to Brunoise and finely slicing chives. During the week I was rotated between sections and got the opportunity to help Garde Manger for the daily mise en place like: slicing beef for tartare, slicing and cutting bell peppers and salted melon for the Pike perch-cucumber-salted melon dish.





During the week I got the opportunity to go and help in the John Baker bakery. I was really happy because bread is a big passion of mine. I got up at 1:30 and went straight to the bakery—I couldn't wait. We started off by firing the wood oven and by taking out the dough from the fridge to proof. While the dough was proofing we made the dough for the breads for tomorrow. After the dough was ready we formed the shapes we needed and left the dough to proof a little bit more. Then we baked the bread. This was the first time I was using a wood fired oven to bake



bread. It was amazing. While the breads were baking we prepared the Biga for tomorrow and also made 25kg of laminated dough. At 10:00 in the morning the shift in the bakery ended. During the night I learned a lot—although the baker didn't speak English and I didn't speak German or French, he made the effort and took his time to translate everything I need to know via google translate – he

is really nice guy and great teacher with a big passion for baking.

During the last days I got the opportunity to practice my foundations such as knife skills—chopping onions and parsley, slicing chives, making bread in to brunoise for the potato and butter milk foam, finely slicing cauliflower and I also helped pastry with the donut dough, baking sable, making glazes, dried meringues and more.

I had a great time and learned a lot during those two weeks. The team here is like a family and I was really impressed by a lot of thing like how everything is pasteurized in jars instead of vacuum bags and how intense and sharp the tastes of everything I tried is. But the thing that impressed me the most is how motivated, happy and positive is everybody. I want to thank Chef Marcel Skibba and the whole team for this two wonderful weeks.







# Fischerei Frosch

Hanspeter Gubser – „Froggy”

25.09–29.09.23

I get up at 6:00 and start preparing myself. Hanspeter takes me at 6:30 with a tricycle with a trunk (I have never rode in such a machine before, it was really interesting and tight☺) and we go straight for coffee. We talk a little and he seems like a really nice guy (latter I realized that he actually is amazing). We get to the boat and he shows me how he gets it in the water, and then we take off. It's really cold and I am wearing shorts-not the best decision of my life. We start collecting the net and he shows me how he does it. My job for the first day to help him with collecting the pieces of Styrofoam attached to the net every 20 meters that prevent the net from going to the bottom. During the first day we caught 3 forelle, 21 felchen and 91 egli. Now we put all the fish in buckets with ice, bring the boat back to shore and go to the kitchen to clean and vacuum the fish. Then we go to the some of the restaurants and shops in the city to deliver the fresh fish. At 16:30 in the afternoon we hop on the boat again to put the nets for tomorrow morning. And that's how the first day ends.



The process is the same every day, the only thing that changes is the place we put the net the night before. Froggy explains to me a lot about how the currents and winds change depending on which side of the lake we put the net in. Some days after we cleaned and vacuumed the fish Froggy took me to pick mushrooms in the forest or to help his friends with vine harvest (and then with the drinking of wine☺) I am extremely grateful to Hanspeter for his great attitude and for his love of his craft. During the week I learn a lot about the lake, the fish processing and overall how hard it is to be a professional fishermen.





# Central

Virgilio Martinez

01.10-29.10.23

The Earth has 103 Ecosystems and 84 of them can be found in Peru. Of the world's 32 climates, Peru has 28 of them. In other words – Peru is mega diverse. Here at Central, they take you at a gastronomic tour of the diversity of Peru.

Chef Virgilio Martinez's food is truly one of a kind. The respect he shows for his deep roots to the Peruvian culture via his food and philosophy is mesmerizing and nothing short from amazing. During my days here I got to learn about his philosophy from the inside and I can say Chef Virgilio is not only a chef, he is a gastro innovator.

First week:

I arrive at Lima late in the afternoon and get straight in a taxi. It's my first time in Latin America. The sights I see while riding in the taxi are not pleasant, quite run-down buildings and people living in poverty. Then suddenly everything changes, the moment we enter the bohemian district of Barranco (where Central is located) the picture becomes colorful and the city seems to be full of life. A lot of young people and tourist walking around having fun and enjoying life. I see why the restaurant is located here.



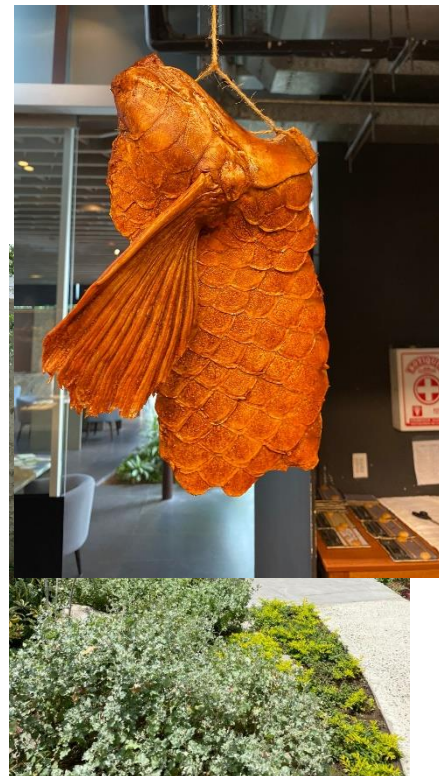
finely white corn, portioning lamb neck and octopus and preparing the station for service. The variety of ingredients I am not familiar with is big, but after a couple of days I start to know most of them. Some of the new ingredients I encountered in the restaurant are: Paiche (known as



The next day I arrive at the restaurant and I am greeted by Chef Marvic and Chef Bernabe. They show me around the kitchen and tell me I am going to be helping at the hot station. During the week I have daily tasks such as arranging thinly sliced pieces of olluco (a root from the family of the potato, but is low on starch and tastes like a radish) in to a perfect circle, chopping really



finely white corn, portioning lamb neck and octopus and preparing the station for service. The variety of ingredients I am not familiar with is big, but after a couple of days I start to know most of them. Some of the new ingredients I encountered in the restaurant are: Paiche (known as Arapaima- A fish from the Amazons, considered one of the largest fresh water fishes), olluco, cherimoya, Cecina (smoked pork belly from the Amazon), Papa Voladora (Flying potato) and many more. Most of the people in the kitchen don't speak English but they are kind enough to take their time







and to try to explain to me when I ask something. During my first week I even got the chance to be on the line for two services and help the Chef and the Sous-Chefs with the plating of the food. Although everyone in the kitchen exhibits discipline and a strong work ethic the working environment is still really positive and satisfying.

#### Week two:

In the beginning of the second week I got asked by my colleagues if I want to go with them to visit the fish market in 4 in the morning. That was something I was looking forward to doing when I arrived in Lima so it was perfect that they asked. We went to the market and it was quite the experience. The fish varieties were a lot and the quality was amazing, the people were shouting and pulling you to buy from them. We bought a big Sole (which they offered to clean and filet for only 1 Sole-0.5Euro), some limes, chilies and cilantro. I bought some Sea Urchins and we went to one of the chefs from the Restaurant's apartment to make Ceviche. That was my first experience for Ceviche in Peru and it was exceptional.



During the week when it was service time I worked mainly on the line with the sous-chef plating food. This week it's easier for me because I started to get used to the language and the new ingredients (I still get confused sometimes, but learning). When it is prep time I help the hot section like last week. In the end of the week I got the chance to help cold section for 2 days. Some of my tasks included to slice really thinly clams and scallops. Portioning clams that were marinated in blue spirulina for 1 night. I also had to make a tartare made from Pacu (a fish from the piranha family, but its vegetarian and feeds from the fruits that fall from the trees in to

the water) with fermented coconut and salted cucumber. When I helped cold section during service my job was to plate the razor clams with scallop espuma, Leche de Tigre and Sargassum and to plate the Seaweed brioche crumbs with sea weed espuma and marinated clams. I also did some of the crisps we use for the scallops dish that is made by cooking rice in a Cecina broth (Cecina is a smoked pork belly that is from the Amazonia), after that we make cooked rice in to a puree and then we mix the rice puree with Tucupi (a fermenter juice from manioc) and a aji panca puree. The ready puree is then spread very thinly on silicone mats and dehydrated. After the crisp is dehydrated, we fry it in hot oil.



During the week, the other chefs invited me out to eat and to walk around quite often and that really made me feel like I am starting to get part of the team.





### Week Three:

The week started by going to one of the big open food markets in Lima with couple of the chefs from the restaurant. I got the chance to witness a lot of new ingredients, some of the native street food and businesses and over all how the locals spend their everyday routine.

In the kitchen during the week I worked on strengthening my knowledge and practicing everyday tasks that had to be done on the hot station. I had the chance to help in the prep kitchen with the cleaning of the seafood such as razor clams, scallops and Vongole clams. I have never



worked with seafood so fresh. I even got

the opportunity to learn how they make the bacon made from the belly of the Arapaima. The salt the belly with a mixture of salt, lime and pure made from Cocona (a tropical fruit with citrus taste), then after that they rub it with dry Cecina and smoke it. After that the belly is dry aged for 20 Days. The work was really fun this week and I am starting to really get used to the pace of service at the hot station.

### Week Four:

The last week I worked mainly on hat station and continued to practice the daily

tasks and Mise en Place. In the middle of the week I got the chance to get the full experience of Chefs Virgilio's concept and vision as a guest of the restaurant. The experience is mind blowing and now I can understand why Central is number one in the world.

In conclusion I can say that during the month I've spent at the restaurant I learned a lot of new techniques and a really big amount of new ingredients and how to work with them. The Central team is amazing and every single one of them made me feel like I was part of the family.



## Restaurant de l'Hôtel de Ville de Crissier

Franck Giovannini







31.10–25.11.2023

Restaurant Hotel de Ville is located in Crissier, near Lausanne where Chef Franck Giovannini crafts haute cuisine using exceptional local products. It is a constantly evolving gourmet cuisine which upholds the philosophy of this great restaurant and pays homage to the great chefs before him.

First week:

The moment I walked in to the kitchen for the first time I was awed. Perfectly clean kitchen, filled with a classical French brigade of 35 chef, all in white, fully focused and concentrated on their tasks. I was stroked with respect immediately.

During the first week I was helping mainly on poissonnie and crustacé where I got the opportunity to help with the cleaning of lobsters and butchering fish, plating the small ornaments we put on the final plate such as yellow beetroot cone with parsnip and grapes and spicy apple chutney with grapes and herbs. I also made some of the small herbs and garnishes we use for the final plates and got the chance to help during service. One of the things that amazed me here is how delicious the food is and how much respect the chefs pay to the classic French cuisine with the staff food.



Some of the dishes included – Entrecôte au poivre, Consommé, Pot-au-feu, Tartiflette aux pommes, flan Pâtisserie and many more.

The chefs are great and the environment in the kitchen is fast paced with a great attention to detail. Everybody is fully focused to deliver the best food possible.

Week Two, Three and Four:

During the next three weeks I worked only on Crustacé. During that time the chefs let me help them

with more complex task such as Roe Deer ravioli, help them with cleaning Blue lobsters and then making them in to medallions filled in to metal ramekins with farce with lovage and leeks and pumpkin ravioli filled with langoustine tartare and topped with a farce made from lobster and sauce Américaine. I also was shown by the sous chef how to open and clean scallops and razor clams. This week I am fully involved in the service and the mise en place and full adapted to the environment. My main tasks include making garnishes prior service and plating the scallop and inflorescences dish. During the end of the second week we had a wild game dinner, where I got the chance to work with wild birds I have never worked before such as Grives,



Tetras, Bécasse, Palombe and Perdreaux. The attention to detail the chef have when showing me how to work with the birds is out of this world and the flavor combinations are outstanding.

During the last week the chefs let me organize the station by myself and let me run the service with them.



In conclusion I can say that Hotel de Ville is a wonderful place to learn the fundamentals of the French cuisine in a modern way. The chefs don't cut any corners in the techniques they use and had the same requirements for me, which pushed me a lot and made me learn a huge amount of new techniques and upgraded my working speed. It has been a great experience to be part of the team at Hotel de Ville. I am very thankful to the entire team for their nice attitude and the effort to show me as much as possible.







# Frantzén

Björn Frantzén

27.11-20.12.23

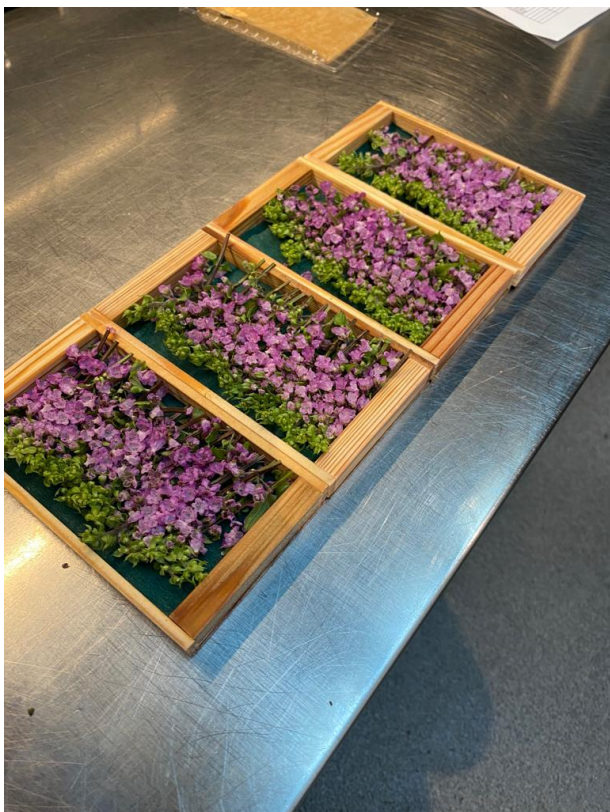
Frantzén is set across three storeys of a spruced-up 19<sup>th</sup> century building in the Norrmalm district in the center of Stockholm. Chef Björn Frantzén's food is a unique hybrid of Nordic cuisine that marries classic and modern techniques inspired by local and international tradition with Asian notes.

## First week:

I watched a video back in 2019, when Chef Björn Frantzén, together with his wife and some of his team members learn the news that the restaurant is receiving 3 stars. From the moment I watched that video I was hooked up with the „Frantzén” story. It has been a dream of mine for almost 5 years now to be able to get myself inside the Frantzén kitchen. The moment I saw that Frantzén is a partner restaurant for the Foundation I knew my dream will become a reality.

During my time at the restaurant I was assigned to the AM prep team. My task include preparing the mise en place for the service team and also making some of the prep for the staff food.

I am a big fan of the Japanese cuisine and I am really fascinated how much new ingredients I am able to see and to work with during the first week. Some of them are Hana Hojiso (the flower of Shiso), Shiro Kombu (a Kombu seaweed that is washed with vinegar to remove the chlorophyll and to lower the pH levels), Amazake (a nonalcoholic sake made from fermented rice) and many more.



I was also introduced to a new machine – The Spun centrifuge. A machine that work on 3000rpm and keeps temperature below 10-12 degrees. The purpose of the machine is to clarify fruit and vegetable juice and also stocks by spinning them so fast that on the one end of the bottle goes the pulp and on the other end is the clarified liquid. The machine is quite easy to work with – the only thing you need to be careful is that the measurements are exact to a milligram between the 4 bottles that you place in the machine.

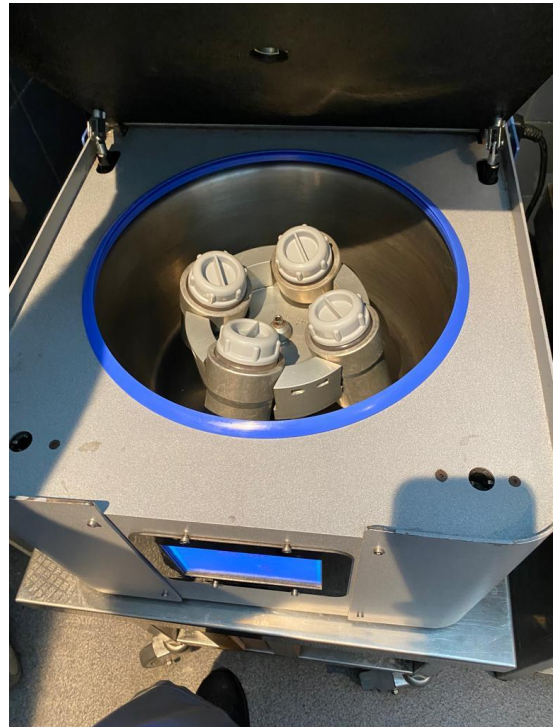




## Second week:

In the beginning of the week I was assigned to make the juice pairing for the whole week. During the process of making the infusions I was able to learn how the Amazake is made and also made a lot of interesting juice combinations such as grape juice with tomato water and Kombu and also Raisin juice with Cep mushroom tea infused with brown butter.

The Sous Chef also let me make the lacto fermentations for the week that we use in the juice infusions and in some of the vinaigrettes on the menu.



This week they change some of the dishes on the menu so I get to learn a little bit of extra new recipes and ingredients. A lot of the thing we use at the restaurant are imported directly from Japan and the quality is insane.

## Week Three:

During the weekend I went out with some of the Chefs from the restaurant to explore Stockholm and some food locations. The nationality of the majority of the staff

members here at Frantzén is quite diverse and that makes for some interesting conversations and stories.

During the week most of my tasks were the same as the previous two weeks. The only difference is that I got the chance to help pastry a little and learn how they make the famous black garlic and licorice fudge and also the fennel pollen pate de fruit. The next week the restaurant is closing for the winter holiday, so that means that we work also on Saturday. That gives us one more day in which we can start the cleaning for the closing for the season. The whole process for shutting down the restaurant is really well organized and impressive.







#### Week four:

On the first day of the last week the whole team had something like a Christmas gathering. During the gathering Chef Bjorn and some of the senior team members have a speech for the new years resolutions and goals and also evaluation of the past year. We also had a traditional Swedish Fika and saffron buns. I got gifted the Frantzen cookbook with the signatures from all the team member and I can't express how grateful I am to the whole team for the amazing surprise.



During the last week we focused on cleaning the



whole kitchen because the restaurant was closing for the winter holidays on the 21<sup>st</sup> of December and besides the cleaning my tasks were the same as usual, which gave me the chance to straighten my technique and work on my speed and precision on executing the daily tasks. I was also introduced to a new equipment – the Brix meter. This device measures the dissolved solids in a liquid and is used mainly to measure the sucrose levels in an aqueous solutions. We use it to check the sucrose level in a Sea Buckthorn and Carrot Sorbet. On the last day Sous Chef Fredrick had a surprise for all of the Stagiaires. We got the chance to try the Onion, Licorice & Almond soup that Chef Bjorn has on the menu since 2008. The soup was amazing and the gesture was really nice.

As a conclusion I can say that my dream became a reality. I've always wanted to work in restaurant Frantzen and coming here didn't disappoint. The team members are great and the working atmosphere is electric. I learned a lot for the past month and I'm really thankful to be able to complete one of my

dreams.







# The Chocolate Line

Dominique and Julius Persoone

26.12-30.12.23

It's the end of a busy year for The Chocolate Line during which Dominique and Julius Persoone win the Chocolatiers of the year award by Gault & Millau. My week at The Chocolate Line is only 4 days but I am motivated to make the most out of it.

During my period in the fabric I get an insight on the whole process of Chocolate making. I learn about Cocoa verities and how and where they grow, I learn how they ferment the pods (they even have a chocolate that is triple fermented using sourdough starter), dry and roast them to make a beautiful bean



to bar chocolate. A also learn how to use the machines that cover the perfectly cut pralines

with a thin layer of tempered chocolate, the machines that fill the bonbons with the exact amount of filling needed every time. I also learn quite a few tricks for making a thin chocolate shell and the proper tempering of the chocolate, so we can avoid fat and sugar blooming. Some of the machinery they use is fascinating, like the one that cuts the pralines into perfect squares – the blade of the machines use ultrasound waves to vibrate 20000 times per second to make the perfect slice.



On the last day of my stage I was invited to the Christmas party with the whole team. We exchanged gifts and had a nice chat about food. It was a great gesture by Julius to invite me and I am really grateful to him and the whole team for the hospitality.

The Chocolate Line is a great place to learn everything you need to know about chocolate and how to work with it and I am extremely happy that I was able to be a part of this great team even for a small amount of time.





# Eigenbrötler

Daniel Amrein

03.01-06.01.24

Eigenbrötler Backwerke GmbH is a small, successful bread manufacturing company located in Wauwil. The longstanding passion for ancient spelt and old grain varieties provides guests with added quality and a wonderful taste experience using natural leavening, in-house sourdoughs and pre-ferments, long fermentation times, and utilizing all ingredients from organic agriculture.

In the darkness, when many people are in deep sleep, the team of bakers begins their everyday routine. Passionate hands shape rolls, roll croissants, work magic with dough, feed the various sourdoughs, and grind grains for the whole-grain breads.

During my four days at the bakery I learn how to shape various forms of bread, laminating dough for croissants, baking cakes and crackers and also making cantuccini. It was really interesting for me to see how the logistics work for such a huge bakery and how the bakers manage to organize their tasks so efficiently. Daniel taught me how to make my own sourdough starter and how to maintain it and also showed me how to work with the wood oven and how to bake bread inside.

I really enjoyed my time at the bakery with Daniel and the whole team. Eigenbrötler is full of passionate people with deep love for their craft and it's a great place to learn everything about baking and different types of grains.







# Städlichäsi Lichtensteig

Willi Schmid

08.01-12.01.24

My last week as an Uccelin started in Städlichäsi Lichtensteig, where the master of cheese – Willi Schmid. His work is recognized nationally and internationally using the best raw milk in the area to produce the highest quality cheese – hard cheese, semi-hard cheese, soft cheese with red smear, blue cheese, cheese in wood – all in several variations and one better than the other.



The work in Städlichäsi starts early – at 6:00am. The day begins by

receiving the raw milk from the farmers (Raw milk because it is pure milk: full of enzymes, protein and fat. This is the only way to create a cheese that has a round taste), then it's time to fill the tanks and to heat the milk up and add the rennet. Every variety of cheese has a different temperature and bacteria and needs different time to coagulate. I was really surprised to learn that Willi uses

*Lactobacillus bulgaricus* (A type of bacteria used in Bulgarian yogurt, for which we are very proud of) for almost all of his cheeses. When the milk coagulates it's time to curdle it. The size of the curds differs based on the cheese we are making – small curds are used for semi hard and hard cheeses and large curds for soft and semi soft cheeses. After cutting the

curd we leave the whey to separate and then it's time to fill the cheese baskets. After filling the baskets we leave them for a little while for the cheese to set and then we start rotating the cheese in the baskets. The cheese is rotated so it can lose whey and evenly and the shape is perfect. Different cheeses have a different baskets, techniques of rotation and pressing. The cheese is ready when the bacteria has dropped the pH level to the desired amount. Most of the cheeses need to achieve a pH level between 5.25 and 5.4 and only the blue cheese goes below 5 – from 4.85 to 4.95. After the pH levels are good we transfer the cheese to salted water (22% salt) and leave them in the water. Soft and semi soft cheeses go in the water for 1 hour, semi hard go in the water for 1 day and the hard go in for 1 day per kilo of cheese. After the salt water it's time to put the cheese to mature in the maturing room. Most of the cheeses mature at 13.4 degrees at 85-90% humidity and some of the hard cheeses mature at 8.2 degrees. The maturing process is different based on the type of cheese and the result we want.



During my time with Willi I learned how important it is to work holistically. The farmers need to take care of the meadow the cow's feed from, the same way Willi takes care of the milk he brings him. It was an amazing pleasure to work with a person with such an emotion and passion for his craft.

## Evaluation and Conclusion





The amount of knowledge, new friendships, stories and wisdom that I acquired during the last four and half months wouldn't be possible without the Uccelin Foundation. I am incredibly grateful to the restaurants and producers for the opportunity to work in their establishments and meeting a lot of great people that I was able to become friends with during my travels. A huge thank you to Anthea and Sina for their amazing work for organizing my whole program and making it as easy as possible for me to follow and were always available if I had some questions or needed something. And a special thank you to Andreas and Sarah Caminada, the whole foundation board and everyone involved for choosing me to be part of this amazing Foundation and giving me the chance to get closer to my dreams!

Danke!

