

# Vienna: home of the sacher-torte

As Viennese wines have acquired awards, the city's signature dessert has remained a favorite. The Sacher-Torte is most unusual in that it is the only dish I know of that has a hotel named for it.

The torte itself was created in 1832 when a young apprentice cook, Franz Sacher, was asked to fill in for the main chef of the difficult and despotic Count Metternich. The count ordered a new dessert for a soiree planned for the very evening that the neophyte cook was on duty. No one knows exactly how Sacher came up with the recipe. Rumor has it he consulted with his sister but the heat was on as he had been ordered by the Count not to embarrass the court. Fueled by youth and enthusiasm, the 16-year-old went to work and the delectably delicious chocolate Sacher-Torte was born. It was an immediate hit. Sacher went on to become one of the greatest cooks of his time and is considered the "father of Viennese cuisine."



Sacher's son, Eduard, followed his father's work, eventually becoming a purveyor to the Royal Court. He went on to open the elegant Hotel Sacher.

While over the years many famous people have stayed at the hotel perhaps the most memorable guests have been Yoko Ono and John Lennon who held their "Love-In, Be-In" press conference here as they lay wrapped in sheets in a bed set up for them in the hotel lobby.

The recipe for the Sacher-Torte is a well-guarded secret. It's been widely imitated but never replicated. The original is kept in a safe in the hotel's vault. A simplified version of the original can be found in the hotel's officially sanctioned publication, The New Sacher Cookbook, which can be purchased on the Hotel's website. On average, the kitchen at the Sacher Hotel turns out between 500 and 800 Sacher-Tortes a day. During the Christmas holidays, they've been known to make more than 3,000 cakes daily.

Even though the original recipe is a strictly held secret there are seven essential steps to making the torte. They are:

- 1.) Break your eggs separating the whites from the yolk.
- 2.) Mix sugar, chocolate and yolks together.
- 3.) Add in whipped whites and flour.
- 4.) Bake in an oven at 180 degrees for an hour.
- 5.) Cut in two.
- 6.) Spread the apricot jam filling between the two layers.
- 7.) Cover with hot chocolate icing and let cool.

Above all, the Sacher-Torte must be served with freshly beaten cream and preferably with a cup of freshly brewed hot coffee. Without this smooth, elegant finishing touch, the pleasure is incomplete.

**For more info: Hotel Sacher is located at Philharmonikerstrasse 4, Vienna, Austria. Tel: +43 (0) 1-51 4560. The official cookbook with the simplified recipe can be purchased on the hotel's website: [www.sacher.com](http://www.sacher.com).**

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