



Hemp for connoisseurs



Hemp is currently hailed as a wonder plant, not due to its hallucinogenic properties but because it is an excellent source of nutrition.

It is hemp seeds which are currently taking the culinary world by storm. The hemp nuts, as they are known, are pressed to obtain oil and then the pressed kernels can be dried and milled to produce flour. Alternatively, the seed can be consumed whole, for example roasted and salted as offered by new Swiss company Alpenpionier, which specializes in promoting the cultivation of hemp in the Swiss mountain regions.

Hemp used to be cultivated widely in Switzerland and was primarily grown for its fibre. In the last century it came into disrepute because it was also used as a drug, but now varieties are available that have THC levels of almost zero and thus have no hallucinogenic effect. These varieties are officially approved for cultivation.

Hemp delicacies are primarily found in health food stores. You can eat the hemp nuts as they are, roasted and salted, while the shelled seeds are a popular addition to muesli. Hemp oil is a valuable ingredient in cold cuisine, and the flour milled from the pressed kernels can be used in baking. Ideally you would replace



some of the flour with hemp flour, but brownies can be made from 100% hemp flour – although they are obviously not quite as light since hemp flour contains no gluten. For those who are gluten intolerant, hemp nuts are a welcome dietary addition.

Hemp fibre is being used again today as it was in the past; for example, once it has removed the seeds, Alpenpionier sends the fibre to a company that uses it as a building material. What's more, hemp fibre is increasingly being used for making clothing.

Soon you will be able not just to eat regional food, but to wear clothes from the region, too.