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LUXEMBOURG Covering a scant 1,000 square miles, and with a population of less than 400,000, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg was created by the Congress of Vienna, and became an independent state in 1867. Landlocked by BELGIUM, FRANCE, and GERMANY, it is a green country, traversed by three rivers (and three languages), and ranging in terrain from the Ardennes at its northern border with Belgium to the flatter Gütland in the south.

In common with many small countries, Luxembourg defends its nationhood fiercely. In spite of this the influence of its neighbours, particularly Belgium, can be clearly detected in its cuisine, with additional, more contemporary, influences coming from Italy and Portugal. Betraying its history of poverty (in stark contrast to its present status as an international banking centre) many traditional dishes reflect a focus on vegetables, especially potatoes and *choucroute* (see SAUERKRAUT), and preserved foods, particularly pulses and smoked hams.

This is demonstrated in the typical *Judd mat Gaardebounen*, often cited as the Luxembourg national dish: boiled, sliced smoked pork served with a thick preparation of fresh or dried broad beans flavoured with sage, and boiled potatoes. According to Nosbusch (c.1990), *Kermesse* (Christmas) used to be a welcome excuse for meat festive fare, with dishes such as the *Kiirmeskuch* (a plain yeast-raised cake with raisins, eaten spread with butter and often topped with a thin slice of smoked ham), and an interesting soup, *Gehäck*, made with pork offal, and finished with prunes soaked in local Elbling wine.

The suffix *à la luxembourgeoise* seems to be used, even by the Luxembourggeois themselves, to cover a multitude of sins. Often denoting a fried piece of meat served with a sauce made with any combination of gherkins, shallots, or capers, it can simply mean the addition of some Luxembourggeois wine such as Riesling to a stew or fish dish. The *Alice B. Toklas Cookbook* (1954) characteristically caps all other contenders with Mashed Potatoes *à la Luxembourgeoise*: simply replace the milk or cream more usually added with a similar quantity of red wine. JEL

LYCHEE *Litchi* (*Nephelium litchi*), is of a group of tropic and SE Asia. The name 'litchi'. Others in the LONGAN, RAMBUTA

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