

# Breakfast with capital B&B in Scotland

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By Edith Dunbar  
special writer

I watched the dark Italian youth, his black hair in short ringlets, pour hot tea on his corn flakes.

I glanced at my husband Harry; his attention was on the tea splashing into the bowl. The young man, who was perhaps 20, passed the teapot to his friend, another young Italian whose long hair was twisted into a pig on the top of his head. He, too, proceeded to flood his cereal with tea.

The four of us were seated in the dining room of a farm house near Bettyhill in the hilly, desolate portion of Scotland's northern Suber-

land County. While peat burned in the fireplace, keeping the room warm but musty smelling on a mid-August day, we were participating in the second B of B&B, bed and breakfast.

Pointing to their cereal bowls, I said, "Is that how it's done in Italy?" The young man with the pug stared, apparently not understanding English. The curly haired one tried, "The milk... it is too..." He paused, the right word didn't come. We all looked at one another. "Parlez vous Français?" my husband asked. No, they didn't speak French.

For a moment, we all crunched on our corn flakes. Then suddenly it came to me. Italian. Spanish. Kissing cousins, right? "Caliente!" I shouted.

"Si, si," the milk caller. "Hot." "Si, si," the travelers said. For Pete's sake, I thought, they'd rather soak corn flakes in hot tea

## reader's report

than cold milk.

The breakfast in communication prompted the curly haired one to try again. "The breakfasts... the breakfasts..." He stopped, unable to go on.

Harry and I leaned toward him, waiting.

He tried again and succeeded. "They... they... overwhelm us," he said.

"Ah, si, si," Harry and I responded. Now we were simpatico. "They overwhelm us too," Harry said.

We were into our second week of B&Bing in Scotland, and we knew the breakfast routine well. After we helped ourselves to cereal (usually a

variety was stored in huge glass jars on a wheeled cart) the hostess came in to ask whether we wanted tea or coffee.

Because we had learned that Scottish coffee is too strong for our taste, we always ordered tea. After the tea was brought in, the hostess returned with dinner plates covered with fat sausages, limp bacon (not in strips but in wide pieces), flowing fried eggs, fried tomato and sometimes fried mushrooms.

In addition to the fried foods, there were ample slices of toast, cut in half and cold, and orange marmalade. Fruit was often missing, although sometimes wee glasses of

orange juice were at our place settings when we arrived at the table. (In London at a bed and breakfast, we were given a choice between cereal and fruit juice. We could not have both.)

When our Bettyhill hostess brought in eggs, bacon and sausage, the Italians sighed. I said, "We have a saying. When in Rome, do as the Romans do." They didn't understand.

"Claro," they said and left. From that day on, Harry always told our hostess the evening before that he didn't want eggs for breakfast. He'd found it impossible to eat only the cholesterol-free white bordering the runny yellow middle. He was unable to explain to me why he continued to eat the meal.

When we arrived in Irvine on the west coast in Ayrshire where Harry has relatives, I became confused. I discovered that Cousin Maud feasts

on only bran flakes and orange juice for breakfast. Cousin Ian enjoys wheat germ every other morning, and two pieces of toast and stewed prunes on alternate mornings. Cousin Isabel eats either blueberry or strawberry yogurt. Nothing else. No one wanted eggs or bacon or sausage, although they offered to prepare them for us.

Isabel insisted that no one she knows has cereal, sausage, bacon, eggs, tomato slices, mushrooms, and toast for the first meal of the day. "Why it takes too long to eat all that," she said. "We'd be eating right into morning tea."

Are big Scottish breakfasts at B&Bs the result of misunderstanding? Perhaps few foreigners, except for Romans, consume them to please their hosts. The Romans attempt to carry on as if they were in Rome.

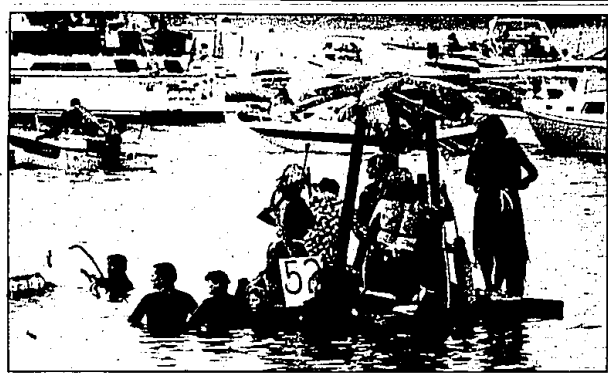


Photo by MICKY JONES

One of the many entries in the "Milk Carton Boat Regatta" at the cherry festival in Traverse City.

## Take your pick: cherry mustard, dressing, jelly or barbecue sauce

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the fruits have given way to the nuts when you read that "competition will include both individual and teams. Corporate teams are encouraged to register early for this hilarious event."

Everybody is cheered out by the final Saturday night, when the Milk Carton Regatta takes place on the beach in downtown Traverse City. Sailors in outrageous costumes sail

"creative" boats made of milk cartons; they come around the point and usually sink slowly beneath the water to the cheers of the crowd.

One of the themes of the 1991 National Cherry Festival is handicapped awareness. There will be Fun and Games for Special Kids 9 a.m. to noon July 10. The Wheelchair Golden Mile joins other popular race events July 13.

For more information on the fes-

tival contact them at P.O. Box 141, Traverse City 49685 or call (616) 947-1220. You can get general area information by calling the Grand Traverse Convention and Visitors Bureau toll-free at (800) TRAVELERS.

If you would like recipes from the Cherry Marketing Institute, write to CMI at Suite 200, 2200 University Park Drive, Okemos 48861.

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Munching foot-long hotdogs and licking ice cream cones wrapped in red, white and blue, the audience eagerly follows the festivities. When an afternoon shower saucily intrudes, the Danes are prepared. As square dancers do-si-do, their fuchsia skirts twirling, 30,000 umbrellas magically appear. Steep green slopes, tiered with rippling blankets, bloom with shimmering awnings of red, yellow, blue, purple and orange.

AALBORG

Aalborg is on the same parallel as Juneau, Alaska, land of the midnight sun, so Fourth of July fireworks don't start until the sun goes down about midnight. That leaves visitors time to explore this walkable city of 155,000 people who greet every stranger with a merry "God dag" (good day). This commercial community of half-timbered houses, 300 restaurants, acclaimed museums and amusement parks is the cultural center of northern Jutland and Denmark's fourth-largest city.

Twelve-hundred years ago it was a key Viking stronghold. The Norsemen's largest burial ground in all of Scandinavia is here — 682 tombs beneath a broad green lawn.

Though Danes are fiercely proud of their fighting Viking heritage, they have, over the centuries, meliorated like good wine. Norwegians call them "sof" (sweet), just because they're so darn nice. They greet friends — even day-old friends — with affectionate hugs and smother rosy-cheeked children with kisses.

Danes love bicycles and pedestrian shopping streets, both abundant in the old section of town. The best-loved and liveliest street, belying its saintly name, is Jomfru Ane Gade — "Virgin Ann" in English. Lined with discos, restaurants, jazz spots and pubs, Jomfru Ane behaves as if the sun never sets. And in summer, that's almost true.

Fourth of July celebrations start when a morning parade struts through old town. Marching bands blare out Sousa favorites as fervently as any VFW brass band.

Meanwhile, at the Duus Wine Cellar in the Renaissance-era Jens Bang's House, revelers gather to "skol" each other with beer and aquavit. Visitors beware: traditional aquavit is potatoes distilled to a fiery essence that could launch rockets to Mars. Norsemen down their venerated drink in one heroic swallow.

Scandinavians also love smorgasbords, those bountiful buffets of bread, salads, fish, meats, vegetables, fruits and desserts displayed with artistry befitting a Parisian chef.

For an elegant Fourth-of-July smorgasbord and a dinner dance, attend the lavish Danish-American

party held in the city's conference center, Aalborg Hall. Tabern the length of a Viking ship gleam with the harvest of land and sea as white-gloved waiters pop champagne. Across the street from Aalborg Hall, hundreds of lanterns light Kilde Park, where popcorn and ice cream, hotdogs and Danish beer are dished up to the beat of disco, big-band and country-western dancing. Suddenly, all the world's a stage.

With the sun finally retired, the night sky flares with a fresh incandescent light of spinning pinwheels, bursting rockets and shooting fountains. One firework follows another like barraging sequins fired from heavenly cannons. "Sis, boom, and ah!"

"Til lykke paa dagen, Amerika! Congratulations, America on your birthday."

Aalborg is easily accessible by train, bus or air, with Scandinavian Airlines (SAS) providing excellent daily service from Copenhagen. For information on accommodations in Aalborg Tourists Bureau, 8 Oster, DK-9000, Aalborg, Denmark, or the Danish Tourist Office, 635 Third Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017; telephone (212) 949-1333.

## Fun, fireworks heat up on summer nights

Continued from back page

On the Fourth, an evening program will feature a 35-gun salute and patriotic music played with whistles, fiddles, bagpipes and drums. Traditional picnic fare will be served at the Fort's Tea Room, where seats under umbrellas are perfect for watching the twilight scurry of people, bicycles, horses and carriages on village streets below.

Just before the explosion of Island fireworks, fort soldiers will give a burst of cannon fire. High on the limestone cliffs of Mackinac Island,

Fort Mackinac offers everybody "the best seat in the house" to watch the colorful display.

While visiting the forts at the Straits of Mackinac, save time to walk the trails and gaze at the wildflowers at Mill Creek southeast of Mackinac City and Mackinac Island State Park on Mackinac Island.

ROCKETS RED GLARE  
The state parks are just part of a 20-mile-long fireworks celebration that will brighten the Straits of Mackinac over the Fourth of July weekend. For more details call the Straits Area Tourism Council toll-

free at (800) 678-1119.

PLAY IT SAFE

According to AAA Michigan, more than 100 communities are hosting professional fireworks displays over the July 4 holiday this year to help spectators celebrate safely.

But the fun doesn't end then, with other hamlets, villages, hamlets across the state planning fireworks celebrations for various events through the Labor Day weekend in September.

While most displays will be near parks or beaches to allow ample room for viewing, your best bet is to arrive early, says AAA Michigan Club Services Director Peter Erickson.

Erickson suggests packing a picnic and games for the kids while waiting for the fireworks to start. Remember to bring chairs and don't forget blankets to ward off an evening chill. Stroller and wagons are the ticket to help ease the walk after the show when youngsters are tired.

Another AAA Michigan travel tip: Wait until crowds disperse to make leaving easier. You can anticipate as much as an hour's wait at some of the state's larger shows.

Another prime spot for fireworks viewing is on the water, and boats are urged to arrive early, too. Check with your Coast Guard on local safety zone restrictions, so you're not asked to move after anchoring.



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down 30%. And Tucson is only one case where people successfully worked to beat crime.

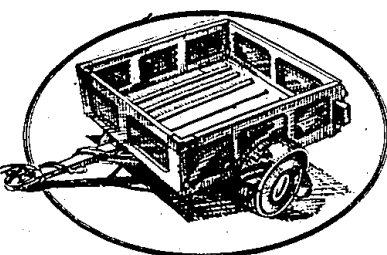
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