

**What's it like?**

## RESTAURANT ASICA – WHAT A PLEASURE!

by *Mitch von Büren – Switzerland*

As I read the article about the fast-food restaurant Hitzberger – which I find a good place to be as well – in the last 'what's happening' I felt the need to reply with the suggestion of visiting Restaurant 'Asica'.

This restaurant is called 'Asica' because the meals are a mixture of food from Asia and Africa. That sounds quite creative – and it really is! Choose, for a starter, between Sushi and African Strudel, between Crocodile and Springbok for the main course or between Mangoussie and Maniok cake for dessert.

I have to be honest: I'm not very interested in experimental cuisine. I'm not used to eating jam on my duck or too much cinnamon in my sauce. But: I LOVE the Asica. The food tastes as wonderful as the cooks are experimental! I have tried a lot of special menus there, even though I'm not very courageous about ordering food I've never eaten before. But for me, the Asica is a guaranteed place to eat special food combinations in a perfect quality.

Do you want some more ideas of what's possible? Jenny and Marc, who will serve you in English or Swiss German, while both come from the Philippines, offer you at the moment:

Springbok tureen on cabbage salad with Amarillo mustard sauce as a starter. Then you could go on with a fresh lettuce salad garnished with *pak choi*, tomatoes, mango, cucumber and sesame dressing or with a coconut soup seasoned with lemongrass, Thai herbs, chilli, ostrich and sweet potatoes.

And as the servings are big enough to let you leave the restaurant four hours later without any more hunger, but not too big to feel full after the first two dishes, you can go on with the Tuna filet marinated with lime and chilli on mango-leek vegetables or with the 'butcher's victim' Zebra entrecote on Thai asparagus with apricot-chutney. Any of these meals are combined with selectable side dishes.

Hey, I'm sure you'll like it! And never forget about the dessert; it's delicious!! To give your stomach the chance to digest your wonderful meal, take a risk and feel free to drink the offered rum in different flavours (with chilli, cinnamon, and about six other options)!

And if you'd like to enjoy the wonderful atmosphere with a group, but you don't know if you're companions will feel OK about the special menus, please relax: the menu contains different 'normal' curries as well...everybody can find their favourite dish!

Go onto [www.asica.ch](http://www.asica.ch) to reserve your place. I hope to be able to read your article about your visit here soon!

## FROM THE ARCHIVE

Below are a couple of articles from the September 2010 issue of "What's Happening?"

**A funny thing about English**

### MODAL VERBS

by *Andi Curran – England*

One thing I had always thought relatively simple about the English language is the grammar of modal verbs. Modal verbs never change in form (e.g. I can, you can, he can, she can...) and they do not need to use an auxiliary verb to form negatives and questions. Simply said – I had always thought that they were wonderful things.

That was until my four-year-old son, James, came to me to inform me that he was allowed to go to his friend's birthday party.

"Daddy, Mummy says I do can go to Felix's party," he said.

"No, James, not you *do can go*, but you *can go*," was my corrective reply.

"What?" said James, "Daddy, I think you don't can speak English very well."

So, perhaps modal verbs are not quite as simple as I had thought...

To learn more about modal verbs, go to

[www.englisch-hilfen.de](http://www.englisch-hilfen.de) or [www.englishpage.com](http://www.englishpage.com)

**What not to say**

## BECOME, GET, RECEIVE

by *June Winterflood – Canada*

Don't say, "I became an e-mail". The verb, **become**, means "transform" or "change into"; you change from one state into another one, for example:

- The first time you have a child, you become a parent.

- When you see a sad film, you become sad.

- On your wedding day, you become a married person.

You can also use the verb, **get**, in some of these cases: you get sad; you get married.

Since the verb, **get**, also means **receive**, you can say, "I got an e-mail" or "I received an e-mail".



Photo: Mika Lee

## A CITY WORTH VISITING: BEING BORED IN TORONTO IS AN ART IN ITSELF

by *Alison Biber – Switzerland*

Anxious, nervous, excited, sad and worried: these were all of the feelings I felt before – and on the day – I left for Toronto. Joy and happiness in the knowledge of being in a new city were the feelings I had after I arrived in Toronto. It was astonishing to see the amazing skyline of the city while leaving the airport.

Besides having all these feelings, I didn't know what it would be like, alone in a big city without knowing anybody. But having arrived there, I forgot all about my feelings and worries. Having my first day at school and meeting many people from all over the world – Korea, Japan, Mexico, Brazil, Colombia, Saudi Arabia and many, many more – helped me to quickly settle down.

But why was it a good decision of mine to go to Toronto?

After reading this article, you will know the answer.

There is a lot to do for everyone, for example: Lake Ontario is perfect for a day at the beach, because it is wide like the ocean and the beaches are beautiful.

Or just hanging out with some friends at one of the many coffee places or trying out one of the many restaurants – eating Mexican, Korean, Japanese or Portuguese food – is great way to spend your time.

And there is nothing better than having a nice ice cream from Baskin and Robbins while sitting at the wonderful Harbourfront.

There is even something for the 'dudes'. They can step into Hooters where they can be served by some women in hot pants. Even though it's a place especially for men, I went there as well because, once a week, they have a special offer where you can have all-you-can-eat chicken wings for \$10 and beer for \$3.

After an enjoyable day, you can jump into the great nightlife of Toronto. From some nice pubs and terrific nightclubs to just a relaxing home party at a friend's house, you can find everything in Toronto.

If somebody is a culture lover, they should visit one of the many museums or visit a Broadway musical or just go to the festivals and concerts taking place all year round.

Something you definitely should not miss as well is enjoying one of these parades: the Gay

Parade, the Santa Clause Parade, the *Nuit Blanche*, the Ice Parade, and of course the TIFF, the "Toronto International Film Festival".

Somebody who wants to feel the exciting atmosphere of a baseball, basketball or hockey game shouldn't miss a visit to the Rogers Centre.

For shopaholics, I recommend the St. Lawrence Market and the nearby flea market. China Town is the place for priceless products. And those who want to shop at American Eagle, *Aeropostale*, Abercrombie and Fitch, Bath and Body Works or Victoria's Secrets should go on a stroll in the Dundas Square area or step into the many shopping centres.

Toronto is also a perfect city for international students since it is an international city. And if you go to a language school, you have the opportunity to book a trip to the States or visit places in Canada for a special student price. That's how I went to New York City, Montreal and Algonquin Park. Besides these places, there are many others you can visit, like Washington and the famous Fun Park, Canada's Wonderland.

There are many language schools in Toronto. I went to ILSC which I can recommend to everyone.

I have a hint for you before I finish up my article. If you want to act like a real Torontonian, don't get excited if the subway is late, because it's an everyday occurrence.

During the six months I stayed there, I had to say goodbye many times when one of my friends was leaving, but I never thought about how it would be to go back myself until it was time for me to pack my suitcases and say goodbye, or better 'cu again', to my friends and leave this amazing city where I'd passed six incredible months.

The feeling I had when I was leaving Toronto was sadness because I was having a hard time leaving everything behind me and going back to Switzerland.

Once back in Switzerland, it took me a while to feel at home again. Even now, I am still thinking back to the time I had there.

Visit [www.toronto.ca](http://www.toronto.ca) for more info.

**A joke from the Internet**

## TWO WOMEN TALKING IN HEAVEN

**1st woman:** Hi! Wanda.

**2nd woman:** Hi! Sylvia. How did you die?

**1st woman:** I froze to death.

**2nd woman:** How horrible!

**1st woman:** It wasn't so bad. After I stopped shaking from the cold, I began to get warm and sleepy, and finally died a peaceful death. What about you?

**2nd woman:** I died of a massive heart attack.

I suspected that my husband was cheating, so I came home early to catch him in the act. But instead, I found him all by himself in the den watching TV.

**1st woman:** So, what happened?

**2nd woman:** I was so sure there was another woman there somewhere that I started running all over the house looking.

I ran up into the attic and searched, and down into the basement. Then I went through every closet and checked under all the beds.

I kept this up until I had looked everywhere, and finally I became so exhausted that I just keeled over with a heart attack and died.

**1st woman:** Too bad you didn't look in the freezer – if you had looked there, we would both still be alive.

**Why don't you write for What's Happening?**

## THE JOY OF WRITING

If you haven't written something for "What's Happening?" yet, I'd like to know why: afraid of making a mistake? have nothing to say? lack time? not a gifted writer? can't benefit from the experience?

Remember: your writing is checked and sent back to you with the amended version alongside your original. You can learn simply by comparing the two. The other excuses, unfortunately, miss the point.

*Learning by doing* is the best way to learn. Writing in "What's Happening?" can also give you a real 'buzz', especially when a reader finds your particular text helpful. In last month's issue, for example, a reader told me that she discovered a new website because of a student's article – Isn't that cool?

**Just a chat – with a student**

## CLAUDIUS BRYSCH – Poland

**What do you do?**

I'm a machine technician / technical designer for the printing industry. I have worked in the printing industry for 20 years, but on a number of products.

**What do you like most about your work?**

The most interesting part is when I go to the customers' sites. When I start a project and we don't have any drawings of the machine, I have to take measurements of the machine. I have to do a good job, because what I do must be installed by another person.

**How often do you have to go on-site?**

It varies: once a month or sometimes just two or three times a year. My last business trip was in Tehran. I was so happy to get back home. I don't understand their language and I don't know much about the culture, so I had to be careful.

**How long have you been learning English?**

I started at the school two years ago, but I had a break because of a problem in my shoulder which is the result of a bicycle accident.

I also learned English in the *Volkshochschule* in Lörrach.

**Where are you from and where do you live now?**

I was born in Poland and I never had English in school. I have lived in Germany for 34 years. When I first arrived in Germany, I didn't speak German – I needed a couple of years to learn it. At that time, I was blocked from integrating: I was in a school for learning German, and it was not a good decision, because there were a lot of boys from other countries, so we talked to each other in other languages – not German. My parents went back to Poland after five years, because they became ill and they wanted to go back. (I have a daughter who is 20 and I can't imagine leaving her alone – I think she still needs me.) For my parents, it was a good decision, but my family was broken into pieces: one sister in Serbia, another in Holland.

**Do you feel German or Polish or European?**

The last one.

**What do you think of the current situation of the Euro?**

It was a great decision to create Europe, to be a union. Until now, it's been easy. It will continue step by step. It's such a big project that it's normal to have a lot of problems, and I am sure we can solve these problems. It's better to have financial problems than war.

**Do you have a favourite motto or saying?**

I try to enjoy life every day. It's not always so easy.

**What do you see in the future?**

I try to explain to my daughter how important education is. She's studying architecture in the third semester. Architects are designers. They have to make it look good, but my job is to make it work.

It's difficult for me one year to the next. When you're nearly 50, it's a bad time: you have to do a lot but you're not as young as before, and the pressure at work grows more and more.

English is needed: in e-mails, on clients' sites, with clients, in instructions.

**Speaking of English, do you like the new learning system here at the school?**

I'm at level B1.2. I have not so much experience of using English. At first, I was not so happy with the new system, but now I like it. The software is better, but I don't like Tim!

**Do you go to the Group Activities at the school?**

Not so often, because of time and my work. I come here by bike. It's 20 km by bike.

**Wow! Tell me more.**

I started biking and jogging nearly six years ago, because I had problems with my back; but in 2007, I ran the first marathon – 42 km – and since then, I've run two times in Freiburg and one time in Basel. I run the half marathon every year. I like it because it's a good contrast to my job. I like to run in the forest so that I can enjoy the quiet. I also like skiing in winter.

**Do you like to plan things or to be spontaneous?**

I make a lot of plans, but in a short time before. I'm very flexible. What's most important to me is to stay healthy and my family: my wife and my daughter.

## SUGGESTION BOX

There is a suggestion box in reception for your ideas: ideas about how we can improve the school and its services so that we can help to make your learning experience the best possible.

Well, the same applies to What's Happening?

If you have any ideas about how to make the publication better, please tell me – by dropping a note into the physical 'Suggestion Box' in Reception or by dropping me a line via e-mail.

Even better, please come along to the next What's Happening? meeting on Thursday, 26 January, from 12:00 to 13:00.

I welcome all comments: good and bad!

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