

# Personalities



In 2026 we are drawing attention to individuals who set new standards with their approach, skill and pioneering spirit – women from the culinary field who rethink tradition and shape the future.

The spectrum ranges from a Burgenland winemaker of international acclaim with a desire to experiment and commitment to quality, to a wildlife expert from the Waldviertel in Lower Austria who sustainably interprets regional resources and a couple from Vorarlberg that loves to bake.

They all represent a generation of female creators who preserve Austria's culinary heritage, whilst boldly developing it.

## Miss Rosé Pia Strehn

Pia Strehn associated wine with stress when she was a child. Her whole family was working almost non-stop. After graduating from school she therefore decided to do something different and studied health management. But Pia soon discovered her love for viticulture, which she began to study and completed a number of trainings and internships. For almost ten years she has been running the organically certified family winery in Deutschkreuz in Burgenland in the fourth generation. Both of her brothers are involved as cellar masters. Pia focused on producing rosé wines and sparkling wines right from the start, which involved a lot of awareness raising to begin with as rosé was considered a simple wine without any special qualities. Today her prestigious wines aged in barrique barrels and sparkling wines are in international demand – and Pia has long been known as “Miss Rosé”.

[strehn.at](http://strehn.at) (German only)

## Biodynamic winemaker Stefanie Renner

Stefanie Renner grew up among vineyards and cellar work in Gols, but initially followed a different route. After her studies and gaining international experience, Stefanie returned with her sister and took over the family business in 2014. With the rennersistas label they brought a new style and fresh energy to the Burgenland wine scene. They focused entirely on biodynamic farming according to Demeter principles. In 2021, Stefanie's sister Susanne chose a fresh path, so brother Georg joined the business. Stefanie and Georg have been running the winery together ever since. Renner & rennersistas is all about values. Stefanie is regarded as a dynamic voice of the new Austrian wine scene, which combines natural winemaking, handwriting and authenticity.

[rennerundsistas.at](http://rennerundsistas.at)

## The sheep's milk creator Eva Nuart

Eva Nuart grew up on her parents' farm with sheep. Nowadays, Eva and her husband Daniel play a substantial role in running the organically certified farm. Eva produces sheep's milk specialities and supplies them to clients including renowned gourmet restaurants with expertise, fresh ideas and respect for traditional production methods. The range includes curd, yogurt and sheep's cheese of different levels of maturity and forms of processing. Her husband primarily looks after the sheep. With her creations, Eva elevates Austrian sheep cheese to a higher level and makes it visible within gourmet cuisine.

[nuart.at](http://nuart.at) (German only)

## Vegetable-loving chef Stefanie Sonnleitner



Cooking has always played an important role in Stefanie Sonnleitner's life. Her mother, top chef Sissy Sonnleitner, ran Restaurant Kellerwand in Kötschach-Mauthen together with Stefanie's father. Stefanie worked in its kitchen with her mother for several years and also front of house for a while. They decided to close the restaurant in 2019, a few years after the death of Stefanie's father. Stefanie, who has always had a love for vegetarian-vegan cuisine, then joined Biohotel Daberer. As sous-chef she can pursue her passion for vegetable dishes and also takes care of the hotel's own vegetable garden. Stefanie regularly reveals tips and tricks on how to cook with vegetables at cooking workshops, which she runs with head chef Florian Bucar.

[biohotel-daberer.at](http://biohotel-daberer.at)

## Hunter and master butcher Verena Diana Rosenkranz

Verena Diana Rosenkranz is a very versatile lady. She grew up in Zell am See in SalzburgerLand and now lives in the Waldviertel. Verena used to be a media and communications expert, but the passionate hunter founded Wildviertel in 2021. With this enterprise she focuses entirely on offering meat from free-ranging game, fresh and refined. In order to be able to process the meat herself, the mother of three completed an apprenticeship as a butcher with a master craftsman's title in 2024. From cutting to processing and packaging – Verena accompanies every step. She also ensures that all ready-made meals are cooked according to old family recipes. And her strategy works: Wildviertel is a huge success and has received multiple awards.

[wildviertel.com](http://wildviertel.com) (German only)

> LOWER AUSTRIA

## Talented hostess Susanne Dorfer-Bacher



In 2014, Susanne Dorfer-Bacher took on a huge task: management of Landhaus Bacher in Mautern, one of Austria's leading gourmet establishments. Her parents – top chef Lisl Wagner-Bacher and wine expert Klaus Wagner – lay the foundations for the restaurant's success. For Susanne it was always clear that she wanted to pursue a career in hospitality, with a love for service and training as a sommelier. Her expertise as a host has been recognised by trade magazine Rolling Pin, among others. Susanne was awarded "Maitre of the Year" in 2023. Her husband Thomas Dorfer now takes care of the culinary side of things. The highly decorated chef has been running the kitchen since 2004. The couple married in 2006. Together they maintain the esteemed position of Landhaus Bacher and fill it with fresh ideas. The kitchen and service boast five Gault Millau toques and two Michelin stars.  
[landhaus-bacher.at](http://landhaus-bacher.at)

## Pond farmer Birgit Hofbauer

Carp pond farming has a long tradition in the Waldviertel and has even been recognised as a Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System (GIAHS). One of the pond farmers is Birgit Hofbauer, a graduate of the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences in Vienna. Together with her husband she runs Karpfenkaviar near Heidenreichstein, specialising in fish processing and creating new products. In autumn 2025, for example, Birgit devised a chocolate with grey poppy seeds and carp broth – a collaboration which Julia Zotter of Zotter Chocolate was all ears for. Birgit is also a trained pond ranger and gives children and school classes insights into the pond habitat, the tradition of pond farming and the origin of valuable foods.  
[karpfenkaviar.at](http://karpfenkaviar.at) (German only)

UPPER AUSTRIA

## Service expert Sarah Schöftner

Hosting is her thing. Sarah Schöftner last proved this in November 2025 at the AustrianSkills Championships. She achieved first place in the Restaurant Service category and has been national champion in the discipline ever since. Sarah trained at Hotel Guglwald in her home region of the Mühlviertel. There she recently completed her apprenticeship as a hotel and hospitality assistant. In September 2026, Sarah will embark on a big trip. As national champion she will represent Austria at the WorldSkills Championships in Shanghai, China.  
[muehlviertel.news](http://muehlviertel.news) (German only)

## The innovative innkeeper Miriam Bock

After her tourism training, Miriam Bock worked in Berlin, Sardinia and at restaurants in her home region of Upper Austria. In 2025, Maria and her husband Tobias decided to open their own restaurant in Gallneukirchen. They took over an existing inn, which now bears the name s'Elzer GenussStüberl. The concept is oriented towards a traditional "Jausenstation" (snack bar). On the menu you will find newly interpreted "Mühlviertler Jause" platters, prepared with regional, organically certified delicacies that include vegetarian and vegan options. The couple also belongs to Bio.Genuss Mühlviertel, an association of establishments and culinary manufacturers that happily open their doors to interested parties and provide insights into their work.  
[genussstueberl.at](http://genussstueberl.at) (German only)

SALZBURGERLAND

## The vegetarian-vegan hut manager Evelyn Matejka

Evelyn Matejka runs the Franz-Fischer-Hütte in the Radstadt Tauern, the first mountain hut in the Alps that has an entirely vegetarian and vegan kitchen. At around 2,020 m above sea level she serves creative, plant-based cuisine with regional and organic ingredients – from vegan buckwheat pancakes to plant-based pastries that reinterpret traditional alpine cuisine. Evelyn has concentrated on vegan cuisine for many years and has made the hut a place where sustainability, regionality and inventive plant-based cuisine are at the core. Her concept attracts attention far beyond the Alps and shows how vegetarian-vegan cuisine can thrive and inspire, even in remote mountain regions.  
[franzfischer-huette.at](http://franzfischer-huette.at) (German only)

## Soul food connoisseurs Jaqueline and Carolyn Herzog



Jaqueline studied English and Italian, Carolyn studied architecture, but both have always had a love for culinary arts. Jaqueline ran a mountain hut where she made everything herself, from the bread to the butter and cream cheese. Carolyn practiced fermenting. When a restaurant became available to take over in Maria Alm at the foot of the Hochkönig in 2021, the sisters seized the opportunity and founded the somewhat different Die Herzogin. Everything that can be made by oneself has since been prepared by Jaqueline. Carolyn took care of the interior design and works as a host and sommelier. They source food and drinks from handpicked producers. If something is not available locally, such as salsiccia or chorizo, they develop regional alternatives with the producers. Die Herzogin is now one of Maria Alm's top gourmet establishments and has been awarded a Gault Millau toque. [dieherzogin.at](http://dieherzogin.at) (German only)

## STYRIA

## The culinary collective with attitude – Kuliktiv

Kuliktiv unites four young, award-winning women from the Austrian gastronomy scene: Viktoria Fahringer, Helena Jordan, Jaimy Reisinger and Sandra Scheidl. They each bring their expertise – from the kitchen to pastry, wine and service. Together they create unique culinary experiences beyond classical restaurant structures. Kuliktiv is primarily present at events, pop-ups and live cooking sessions, deliberately focusing on increasing the visibility of women within the industry. Styrian pastry chef Jaimy Reisinger, considered one of the exciting young voices of the local culinary scene, is part of it. With her new concept BIJA Dining (BIJA is derived from the Sanskrit word for “seed” which symbolises origin) she takes pâtisserie out of the classic framework and understands dessert as a holistic, reduced and aesthetic experience. She is a prime example for a new generation of female chefs that combine craftsmanship, creativity and conceptual strength. [kuliktiv.com](http://kuliktiv.com) (German only)

## TIROL

## Emperor snail producer Simone Embacher

Simone Embacher, a trained tourism specialist, has worked all over the world: in Berlin in the film industry, in Thailand at a diving centre, as chief stewardess on a luxury yacht. In 2018 she moved back to Ellmau at the foot of the Wilder Kaiser and in 2019 she founded three companies: as a ceramicist, owner of a social media agency and snail breeder. Her interest in snails was sparked by a newspaper article that addressed the long tradition of snails as food and their culinary quality. Simone began to learn more about snails, observing their behaviour and preferences. Equipped with this knowledge she raised 500 vineyard snails and founded Tirol's first snail farm. By doing so she wanted to provide more sustainability for Tirolean gastronomy and a new interpretation of old forms of enjoyment. Today Simone has more than 50,000 snails, which she mainly feeds with herbs she grows herself. She has had no shortage of customers from the start, especially local restaurants.

[kaiserschnecke.at](http://kaiserschnecke.at)

## The open Unterwirt hosts



Katrin and Sabrina Steindl run the Unterwirt in Ebbs with a clear vision: hospitality is lived community. As hosts they consciously focus on networking, exchange and visibility – especially for female chefs and women in the gastronomy industry. They do not see their establishment merely as a restaurant, but as an open space for dialogue, culinary arts and new perspectives. With a strong focus on community, Katrin and Sabrina promote collaborations, events and formats that empower women in the kitchen and within the hospitality industry. This creates a place where contemporary gastronomy, approach and mutual support go hand in hand. [unterwirt.at](http://unterwirt.at) (German only)

## Up-and-coming chef Lisa Morent



Lisa Morent already helped out in the kitchen of her parents' establishment as a school girl. She saw it as the logical way to become a chef. After completing her apprenticeship in Vorarlberg, Lisa returned to her home in Zöblen in the Tannheimer Valley and has been bringing new ideas to the kitchen and concept of traditional family business s'Morent ever since. As a certified cheese expert and sommelier, Lisa combines professional knowledge with great curiosity and creativity. She places outstanding products in the forefront and tells stories with her dishes that reflect the topography and character of the Tannheimer Valley.  
**morent.at** (German only)

### VORARLBERG

## The bakers: Sabine and Xavier



Sabine from the Großes Walsertal and Xavier from Brittany met in the mountains of Vorarlberg. During a hike they had the idea of turning their passion for sweets and baking into a profession. Both had the necessary know-how: Xavier as a trained maître crêpier, Sabine as a skilled amateur baker. So in 2016 they founded their cookie factory and shop in the Großes Walsertal, where they have been making delicious biscuits for ten years now. Whether with lemon, chocolate and almonds, walnut or fruits with cinnamon: Sabine and Xavier bake sustainably, using only organically certified ingredients, inspired by the handwritten recipes of Sabine's grandmother. Their cookies have long been available beyond the borders of Vorarlberg and they look forward to celebrating the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their company in 2026.  
**sabineundxaver-gourmet-manufaktur.com**

## Plant-based pioneer Larissa Andres



Larissa Andres is one of the defining voices of vegetarian-vegan cuisine in Vienna. Together with her partner Jonathan Wittenbrink she runs fine-dining restaurant JOLA, which receives international attention for its creative, entirely plant-based cuisine and is recommended by the Michelin Guide. Larissa and Jonathan have expanded their concept with restaurant lara: a relaxed all-day-dining establishment serving vegetarian-vegan cuisine that combines enjoyment and accessibility. Larissa's signature is evident at both sites – modern, minimal and consistently plant-based – and positions Vienna as an exciting hotspot for contemporary vegetarian cuisine.  
**jola.wien**

## Aroma artist Parvin Razavi

Cooking has accompanied Parvin Razavi since she was a child. She grew up in Iran and moved to Austria with her parents at the age of eight. She got to know and love traditional Persian cuisine through her mother and later worked as a blogger, cookbook author and food journalist. Parvin began her career as a chef in her mid-thirties. After various positions, she has been leading restaurant &flora at Hotel Gilbert in Vienna as Creative Head Chef since 2021. Her dishes focus on vegetables, whilst meat takes on the role of the side. Guests love her focus on local seasonal produce and the great variety of flavours with Oriental, Austrian and international influences. Gault Millau named Parvin Razavi Newcomer of the Year in 2023 and awards her cuisine three toques.  
**undflora.at**