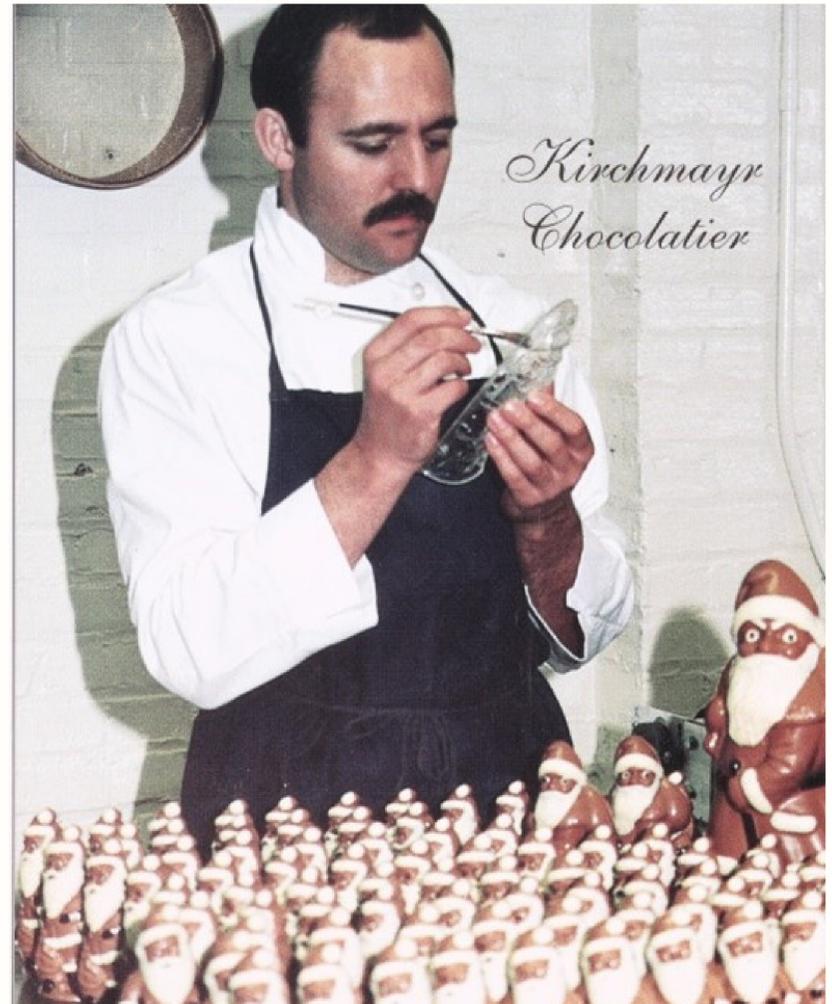


FOOD FOR THOUGHT: A CELEBRATION OF INTERNATIONAL MIGRANTS DAY

ALBERT KIRCHMAYR AND THE VERY GRUMPY SANTA CLAUS

Albert Kirchmayr was born in 1959 in Niederhofen, Swabia, Germany. During his traineeship as a cook, his wanderlust was ignited. He was very keen to travel the world and started with a holiday to France, Spain and Austria at the young age of 18. After completing his traineeship, Albert took his first job in Switzerland, followed by employments in Sweden and Bermuda. While in Bermuda he learned of vacant positions in Vancouver, Canada, and Baltimore, USA. During his time working as a chef in Baltimore, Albert Kirchmayr started thinking about founding his own company. His first attempt at being a self-employed company owner failed after his business partner parted ways with Albert Kirchmayr. The dream of an own company persisted but was also developed further: Albert Kirchmayr began dreaming of becoming a chocolatier.



Credits: Sammlung Deutsches Auswandererhaus/Collection German Emigration Center

In order to learn the craft of making fine chocolates, Albert Kirchmayr moved back to Germany and worked for five years at a confectioner's in Munich. Additionally, he attended a course in Switzerland to widen his understanding of the "sweet" trade. After his intensive training in the art of chocolate making, Albert Kirchmayr decided that the time for opening his own chocolate shop had come. In 1979 he bought the required tools, moved back to Baltimore, and founded "Kirchmayr Chocolatier." Among his quality selection, he offered chocolate Santa Clauses made according to German traditions.



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Many of Albert Kirchmayr's customers perceived these Santa Clauses as "very grumpy" and would not buy the fine figurines. For this reason, Albert Kirchmayr asked the mould manufacturer to specifically design a "happy" looking Santa Claus for his business, which would (hopefully) make his customers happy too.

"Kirchmayr Chocolatier" ran successfully for 32 years, but in the spring of 2020 Albert Kirchmayr, "heavy-heartedly," decided to close his business due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Many newspapers in Baltimore and surroundings announced the sad news and an overwhelming number of customers got in touch with Albert Kirchmayr, now 64 years old, as an expression of gratitude.

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