

Origins of the Chaîne des Rotisseurs



At the time when guilds built the cathedrals, Europe also experienced the beginnings of fine music, literature, painting, theatre, the fine arts and also the art of cooking. The guilds set up their internal structures with Apprentices, Journeymen, and Masters, titles which were awarded after presenting a ' masterpiece' to their peers.

In 1248, Saint Louis, King of France, thanked the craftsmen which had contributed towards the construction of the Sainte Chapelle by founding the guild of the 'oyeurs', the geese roasters, because geese were a poultry greatly appreciated during the Middle Ages. The royal award together with the coat of arms for the master rotisseurs was bestowed in 1610. During five centuries the Brotherhood of the Roasters cultivated and developed culinary art until it was disbanded together with all the other guilds in 1793 by the French Revolution.

Fortunately, this was not the end of culinary art after World War Two, five French gastronomes decided to revive the spirit of the old guild and in 1950 the Confrerie de la Chaîne des Rotisseurs was formed in Paris under the guidance of Curnonsky, A. Becart, J. Valby, L. Giraudon and M. Dorin.

This association of people dedicated to the art of fine cooking devoted itself to developing and promoting gastronomic values with special emphasis on skewer and grilled dishes whilst at the same time widening its focus to table art in the broadest sense of the word.

By reviving the traditions most deeply rooted in French culture, which Brillat Savarin pertinently described in his 'Physiology of Taste' by the words: ' you are born a rotisseur and you become a cook', the Chaîne des Rotisseurs is restoring a heritage which was never really lost. Through its presence in 120 countries this organisation is spreading French culinary values throughout the world and asserting France's international role in the field of culinary art.