



Belgian Café Culture

Regula Ysewijn

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- A nostalgic look at the most beautiful traditional cafes in Belgium and the stories they harbour

“North or South, the soul of Belgium is in its cafés. I don't know of any book that captures their soul more beautifully and accurately than this one.” – Joe Stange, CAMRA's Good Beer Guide Belgium

This book is an ode to Belgium's traditional beer cafés, to their landlords and -ladies, and to the regular customers who have become part of the interior. It is also a plea to handle the café patrimony of Belgium with the greatest care. Because we have been taking these little cafés for granted for far too long and now their existence has become fragile, despite the fact that they are an important part of our social and cultural heritage.

Regula Ysewijn is a Belgian culinary historian, writer, and photographer. She focuses on food and social history of Britain and the Low countries and consults for organisations such as the UK's National Trust, TV programmes and museums. Ysewijn is the author of six books among which: *Pride and Pudding* and *Oats in the North*, *Wheat From the South* have received international acclaim. She is also a judge on the Flemish version of the *Great British Bake Off*.

For this book Regula visited 45 traditional cafés in Belgium. From the oldest café in the country (it opened in 1515) to the oldest Belgian café landlady, Juliette, who is 96. She visited cafés with beautiful Art Deco interiors, and cafés with the charm and warmth of a living room. In each of these establishments she talked to the landlords and -ladies and to the people who have become part or the soul of these cafés, and she managed to capture all of this in beautiful, touching photographs.