

GASTRONOMY

Traditional. Simple. Healthy. Local. These are the words that come to mind when you hear Nordic gastronomy.

The Nordic kitchen is all about going back to basics – and adding new and exciting twists to traditional recipes. Nordic food has never gained as much interest as it does today, and all over the region – from the happening cities like Copenhagen to the Swedish countryside in Åre – you will find Michelin star restaurants as well as other award-winning establishments like the Faroe Islands' culinary crowning glory, Koks.

The essence and soul of Nordic food is in its ingredients. The Nordic people have lived off of the land around them for thousands of years and the dishes that the world has come to admire in the recent years all had their humble beginnings with nothing but the few ingredients they could muster from their surroundings.

In Iceland and the Faroe Islands, where vegetation is scarce but sheep are a plenty, you will find that most dishes and meals include lamb, mutton or some part of the sheep. In Norway, where fish is in radiant abundance, you will find fresh servings of the finest seafood whilst in Finland, reindeer is the traditional fare. In Sweden, you have the proud potato while in Denmark, revel in the majesty of the open sandwich (the smørrebrød).

Each country may have their own specialties and eccentricities – Iceland's fermented shark, Norway's lutefisk, and Sweden's surströmming to name a few – but they are all bound by the common culinary philosophy of experimentation, resourcefulness and finding perfection in the simple.

No matter the dish, any great meal should always be paired with a suitable beverage. This is the true Nordic way. And while the Nordic people may pale in comparison to the Germans when it comes to drinking beer, microbreweries have sprung in every corner of the Nordic region and in competitions held across the globe, you will find at least one Nordic country in proud representation. For those who are partial to spirits, there is a wide array of local aquavits to try, or if in Iceland, a shot of Black Death.

But what makes Nordic gastronomy all the more special is that it inspires people to eat locally and seasonally. In the Nordic region, you will find that eating is not just about relishing the tastes and aromas of the food, but also the company as you eat together and share the happenings of your day. It is in the Nordic region, where you will find even the classiest of Michelin restaurants offering private tables as well as community tables to encourage people to share their experiences about the food.

From international haute cuisine to hearty and traditional fare – the Nordic countries have it all!