

Gotland culinary heritage

The central role of regional food traditions in the islands culture has resulted in Gotland becoming a member of the network Culinary Heritage Europe, which works to promote and stimulate the development of local businesses. That includes restaurants, farming and processing of foodstuffs, fishing, both local and international, in which the businesses have a clear regional connection and an expressed intent to profile and further develop the cuisine of the entire region. Even farm shops that offer locally grown vegetables of high quality and local specialties can be members of Regional Cuisine. The culinary heritage chefs hat is a mark of quality for regional food in Europe.

A taste of Gotland

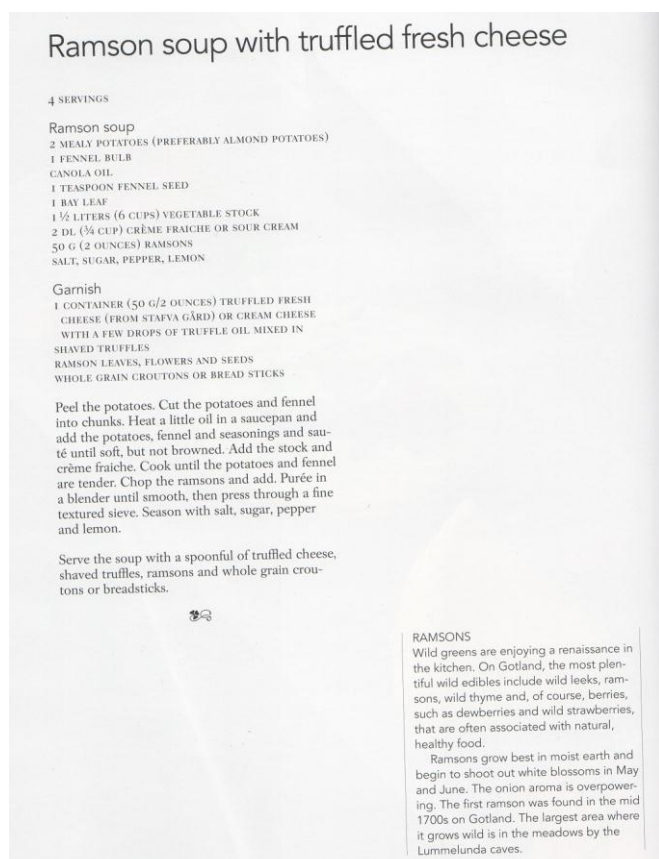
Is a book produced in cooperation with Ica Bokförlag and the Gotland County agricultural society. In the book Marita Jonsson tells of the magnificent Gotland landscape and Fredrik Malmstedt and Laila Löfkvist provide recipes for Gotland specialties. Bruno Ehrns took all the wonderful photos.

The county governor Cecilia Schelin Seidegård and the chairman of the Gotland Agricultural society 's administrative committee has written the foreword to the book A taste of Gotland.

The foreword ends with these words:

"Taste our special dishes! The recipes in this book are all composed of local products typical of the island, and with feelings that only a master chef can express. Let the food and the photos give you an experience of something different and original."

Some of the recipes from the book are presented on this page by Riina Noodapera, Rural advisor at the Gotland agricultural society.





Lamb in dill with carrots and potatoes

Lamb in dill is a Swedish favorite! If you make this dish in August, you can use fresh dill crowns! Here I have added some fine, newly picked mini-carrots to give a lovely freshness, sweetness and crispiness to the dish.

4 SERVINGS

1 ¼ KG (2 ½ LB) LAMB SHOULDER
2 ONIONS
2 CARROTS
DILL STALKS (DILL CROWNS IN SEASON)
SALT, 1 TEASPOON/LITER (QUART) WATER
3 BAY LEAVES
10 ALLSPICE BERRIES
5 WHOLE CLOVES
10 BLACK PEPPERCORNS
10 WHITE PEPPERCORNS
1 TABLESPOON DILL SEED
½ TABLESPOON FENNEL SEED
6 SPRIGS FRESH THYME

Cut the meat into 4 cm (1 ¾ inch) chunks. Peel the onions and carrots and cut into chunks. Place meat, vegetables and dill in a pot and add cold salted water to cover (if you have lamb bones, add them for more flavor). Place the seasonings in a teaball, place in the pot and cover. This way, it is easy to remove the seasonings later. Heat to boiling, then lower heat and let simmer for 30–45 minutes, until the meat is tender. Remove the meat, onions and carrots, strain the cooking liquid and discard the bones. Reduce the cooking liquid over high heat to intensify the flavor.

Dill sauce

2 TABLESPOONS BUTTER
2 TABLESPOONS ALL-PURPOSE FLOUR
8 DL (3 ¼ CUPS) LAMB STOCK FROM COOKING
THE MEAT
3 DL (1 ¼ CUPS) LIGHT CREAM
1 DL (½ CUP) CRÈME FRAÎCHE
5 TABLESPOONS (1/3 CUP) SUGAR
3 TABLESPOONS 12% VINEGAR CONCENTRATE
(OR 6 TABLESPOONS VINEGAR)
ZEST AND JUICE OF 1 LEMON
SALT
200 G (7 OUNCES) DILL

Melt the butter in a saucepan, sprinkle over the flour and gradually whisk in the lamb stock, whisking until smooth. Add the cream, crème fraîche, sugar, vinegar and lemon. Heat to boiling and season to taste. It is important to balance the sweet, sour and salty flavors. Add the meat, onions and carrots. Chop the dill and add.

Serve with boiled potatoes and crispbread.



MEAT

Boiled salt pork and lamb were the most common meats in earlier times. Sometimes a roast was served on Sundays, as was roast rooster. Mutton, or lamb in Gotland, was served at the dinner table. Lamb skulls were a delicacy served in the autumn, when animals were slaughtered. The skulls were cooked in salted, seasoned water and then gratinéed in the oven. Lamb skull feasts are still held today, and it is an honor to be invited!

Gotland cheeses with carrot marmalade

All the cheeses from Stafva farm dairy are made from the milk of the farm's own cows. Their grotto cheese is aged for around seven weeks in the Lummelunda caves until mold has spread over the cheeses. After that, they are stored at the dairy for around three months.

East Friesian milk sheep graze at Häftling farm in northwest Gotland. The milk is made into different kinds of sheep cheeses at the farm dairy.

Hejnumkällingen cheeses are made from cow milk at Prästgården (the priest's farm) in Hejnum. The farm dairy was established in February, 2009. Its Blåskimmer (blue) cheese is aged for three to five months before it is released onto the market.

The cheeses in the picture are from the top down on the left:

HEJNUMKÄLLINGENS SNÖVIT (SNOW WHITE), FLAVORFUL
SOFT WHITE CHEESE WITH RIND
STAFVA GROTTBLÅ (GROTTO BLUE), AGED IN THE LUMME-
LUNDA CAVES
HEJNUMKÄLLINGENS BLÅSKIMMER, FLAVORFUL BLUE
CHEESE
STAFVA BLÅ, CREAMY BLUE CHEESE

From the top down on the right:

STAFVA VIT, FLAVORFUL SOFT WHITE CHEESE WITH RIND
STAFVA GODA (GOOD), FIRM CHEESE
STAFVA OCKRA, SOFT CHEESE WITH YELLOW RIND
CARROT MARMALADE FROM THE WIDEGREN FAMILY
HÄFTING SHEEP CHEESE



Old-fashioned Gotland apple cake with vanilla custard

4 SERVINGS

Apple cake

5 DL (2 CUPS) APPLESAUCE
2 ½ DL (1 CUP) BREADCRUMBS
1 EGG
150 G (5 OUNCES) MELTED BUTTER
2 TABLESPOONS LIGHT CORN SYRUP
½ DL (¼ CUP) ALMOND FLOUR OR GROUND
ALMONDS
1 TEASPOON CINNAMON

Preheat the oven to 175 C (350 F). Combine all ingredients and pour into a greased 22 cm (9 inch) pan. Bake for around 45 minutes. Cool on a rack for 15 minutes, then remove from the pan. Serve with vanilla custard.

Vanilla custard

2 DL (1 CUP) LIGHT CREAM
1 VANILLA BEAN, SPLIT LENGTHWISE
3 EGG YOLKS
40 G (3 ½ TABLESPOONS) SUGAR

Scald the cream with the vanilla bean. Whisk together the egg yolks and sugar. Whisk in the cream mixture. Heat in a saucepan to 83 C (180 F), whisking constantly. Chill, remove the vanilla bean and strain.



WALNUTS AND ALMONDS

In Visby, stately walnut and almond trees, as well as apricot trees, fig bushes and mulberry bushes, grow in walled-in gardens. You can also see beautiful walnut trees here and there in the countryside. The mild winter climate along the sea tempers the cold and makes it possible to cultivate these trees in Gotland.

Walnuts are picked and placed in baskets that are stored hung up high outside, where mice and squirrels can't reach them. They stay fresh and soft for a long time.





Fried flounder with beets and fresh herbs

4 SERVINGS

25 SMALL BEETS
SALT
THYME
SUGAR
4 FLOUNDER
CANOLA OIL AND BUTTER
GARLIC
DILL CROWNS
BUTTER

To serve with
BROWNED BUTTER
2 LEMONS
TINY BEET AND SPINACH LEAVES
FRESH HERBS, SUCH AS BEACH PURSLANE, HEATHER
BLOSSOMS AND WATERCRESS
BOILED NEW POTATOES

Cut off the beet greens and use the tiny leaves as salad greens. Cook the beets in water with salt, thyme and sugar until tender. When cooked, peel under running water.

Cut the heads off the fish and rinse thoroughly. Dry well and fry in oil in a hot pan with garlic and dill, basting the fish with the juices as it cooks. Finish off with butter.

Toss the beets in browned butter. Serve the flounder with lemon, greens, herbs, browned butter and boiled new potatoes.



Champagne and elderflower granite

4 SERVINGS

2 DL (1 CUP) SUGAR
8 RINSED ELDERBERRY FLOWERHEADS
½ DL (¼ CUP) FRESH LEMON JUICE
½ DL (¼ CUP) CHAMPAGNE

Heat the water and sugar to boiling and pour over the flowerheads. Let cool. Strain the syrup, reheat to boiling and pour over the flowers two more times. Strain the flowers through a fine sieve, pressing to release all the juices. Stir in the remaining ingredients.

Freeze. Scrape the ice and serve in frozen glasses.



ELDERBERRY TREES

Most farms on Gotland have at least one elderberry tree. According to folklore, the little people who took care of the farm lived in them. In earlier times, the black berries of this tree were the most important part of the plant. They were cooked into juice that was supposed to protect against colds. The flowers were dried and then brewed into tea. Today, the fresh flowers are picked and mixed with lemon to make juice, which is sold in shops all over the island.

COFFEE KLATCH

(see seven kinds of cookies page 110)
An authentic Gotland coffee klatch is supposed to include 16 kinds of bread and cakes! In addition to food, there was also a coffee klatch to celebrate birthdays ending with 5 or 0, weddings and funerals. Sometimes, there were even more kinds of cakes, as guests would bring their own specialties to the party. And there was seldom any duplication, as everyone had a special recipe, and it was decided in advance who would bake what.

There was supposed to be two kinds of sweet bread, saffron rolls (yes, on Gotland, saffron rolls are eaten year-round, a relic of Viking journeys to the orient) and flat long sweet buns, two cakes and lots of cookies, such as goro, butter twists, antler cookies, sugar shingles, chocolate cookies, almond shells, lard cookies, cream twists, cones, macaroons, doughnuts, crullers...

And as if that was not enough, tortes with cream and preserves were served to the guests later. Guests were not supposed to eat everything while sitting at the table, however they were expected to try a little of each sort. At the end of the table were bags, so that everyone could take cakes home afterwards!





Saffron oven pancake with vanilla whipped cream and dewberries

4 SERVINGS

Pancake

2 ½ DL (1 CUP) PORRIDGE RICE
1 PACKET (LARGE PINCH) SAFFRON
½ CINNAMON STICK
1 TABLESPOON GROUND CARDAMOM
3 DL (1 ¼ CUPS) LIGHT CREAM
½ DL (¼ CUP) HONEY
½ DL (¼ CUP) LIGHT CORN SYRUP
3 EGGS
4 TABLESPOONS (¼ CUP) SUGAR
2 TABLESPOONS COGNAC

Make rice porridge according to the directions on the package, but add the saffron, cinnamon and cardamom to the cooking liquid. Cool slightly. Preheat the oven to 175°C (350°F). Combine cream, honey, syrup and eggs and whisk together lightly. Beat into the porridge, then stir in the sugar and cognac. Pour into a baking pan and bake until set, around 30 minutes.

Caramelized almonds
1 DL (½ CUP) SUGAR
1 DL (½ CUP) ALMONDS

Melt the sugar in a saucepan over medium heat until it caramelizes and turns a rich brown. Do not allow to burn. Stir in the almonds. Pour onto greased baking parchment. When cool, reserve a few whole almonds for garnish and chop the rest.

Dewberries

100 G (4 OUNCES, AROUND 1 CUP) DEWBERRIES (OR BOYSENBERRIES, RASPBERRIES OR OTHER BERRIES)
50 G (½ CUP) CONFECTIONER'S SUGAR

About an hour before serving, sprinkle the berries with sugar and let steep at room temperature until serving.

Vanilla whipped cream

½ VANILLA BEAN, SPLIT LENGTHWISE
1 ½ DL (2/3 CUP) WHIPPING CREAM
SUGAR

Scrape the seeds from the vanilla bean and add to the cream. Whip, adding sugar to taste.

Garnish

CARAMELIZED WHOLE ALMONDS
FRESH CHERVIL (OPTIONAL)

Cut the saffron pancake into 10 cm (4 inch) by 2 cm (¾ inch) lengths and sprinkle with chopped caramelized almonds.

Serve with berries and vanilla-flavored whipped cream. Garnish with whole almonds and chervil, if desired.



SAFFRON PANCAKES AND DEWBERRY JAM

Are there any local desserts? On Gotland, a saffron oven pancake is THE dessert for all festive occasions!

I believe that the use of saffron stems from Gotland's earliest days, when the Vikings traveled to the orient and brought it back to the island. Here the spice lives on, in desserts and breads, not just at Christmas time. An authentic Gotland saffron pancake also includes raisins and almonds, which also came from faraway places years ago.

Dewberries, sometimes called blue or black raspberries, grow well in ditchbanks. These tart berries are a fine complement to the hearty rice pancake.

Seven kinds of cookies

Goro 45 COOKIES

210 G (7 ½ OUNCES) BUTTER
210 G (1 CUP) SUGAR
2 EGGS
2 EGG YOLKS
460 G (1 LB ¼ CUPS SIFTED) FLOUR
1 TEASPOON AMMONIUM CARBONATE OR 2 TEASPOONS BAKING POWDER

Note: You need a special goro iron to make these cookies.

Melt the butter and let it cool. Add the remaining ingredients, mixing well. Form into a ball, cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight. Roll out into sheets, cut to fit the iron and bake until golden.

Currant bars AROUND 30 PIECES

200 G (7 OUNCES) BUTTER
6 DL (2 ½ CUPS) SUGAR
4 EGGS
6 DL (2 ½ CUPS) FLOUR
1 TEASPOON VANILLA SUGAR OR ½ TEASPOON VANILLA EXTRACT
3 DL (1 ¼ CUPS) RED CURRANTS
1 DL (½ CUP) SLICED ALMONDS

Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F). Melt the butter. Remove from the heat and add sugar, eggs, flour and vanilla. Spread the batter onto an oven tray lined with baking parchment. Sprinkle with currants and almonds. Bake around 20 minutes, until golden. Cool. Cut into 5x5 cm (2x2 inch) pieces.

Rolled chocolate cookies

AROUND 100 COOKIES
210 G (7 ½ OUNCES) BUTTER
210 G (1 CUP) SUGAR
1 EGG
½ TABLESPOON VANILLA EXTRACT
3 TABLESPOONS COCOA
325 G (3 ¾ CUP) FLOUR
1 EGG (FOR BRUSHING)
PEARL SUGAR

Beat the butter and sugar until fluffy. Add the egg, vanilla and the dry ingredients, mixing well. Form into a ball, cover with plastic and refrigerate for several hours. Preheat the oven to 175°C (350°F). Roll into a thin sheet. Cut with cookie cutters and place on greased or parchment lined baking sheets. Brush with beaten egg and sprinkle with pearl sugar. Bake for around 10 minutes.

Oatmeal cups AROUND 45 CUPS

1 ½ DL (2/3 CUP) SUGAR
4 ½ DL (SCANT 2 CUPS) ROLLED OATS
1 TABLESPOON FLOUR
1 DL (½ CUP) RAISINS
½ TEASPOON BAKING POWDER
2 TEASPOONS VANILLA SUGAR OR 1 TEASPOON VANILLA EXTRACT
1 EGG
150 G (5 OUNCES) MELTED BUTTER

Preheat the oven to 200°C (400°F). Combine the dry ingredients. Add the egg and melted butter, mixing well. Spoon into muffin tins lined with cupcake papers. Bake for around 5 minutes.

Coconut snails

AROUND 35 COOKIES
200 G (7 OUNCES) SOFT BUTTER
200 G (1 ¾ CUPS) FLOUR
3 TABLESPOONS SOUR CREAM
1 EGG FOR BRUSHING
PEARL SUGAR

Filling:
1 EGG WHITE
1 DL (SCANT ½ CUP) SUGAR
50 G (1/3 CUP) COCONUT
RED FOOD COLORING

Filling: Beat egg white until stiff. Fold in sugar, coconut and a few drops of food coloring.

Preheat the oven to 200°C (400°F). Knead the butter and

flour into crumbs. Stir in the sour cream, mixing until smooth. Form into a ball. Roll out to a 15 cm (6 inch) sheet. Spread the filling over half the dough, and fold the other half over. Cut 1 ½ cm (5/8 inch) strips and twist them once. Place on a greased or parchment lined baking sheet. Brush with egg and sprinkle with pearl sugar. Bake for around 10 minutes.

Raisin biscuits

AROUND 45 COOKIES
200 G (7 OUNCES) SOFT BUTTER
2 ½ DL (1 CUP) SUGAR
50 G (½ CUP) CHOPPED ALMONDS
5 DL (2 CUPS) FLOUR
1 TABLESPOON LIGHT CORN SYRUP
2 DL (¾ CUP) RAISINS
1 TEASPOON BAKING SODA

Preheat the oven to 175°C (350°F). Beat the butter and sugar until fluffy. Add the remaining ingredients, mixing well. Form the dough into 40 cm (16 inch) rolls. Cut ½-1 cm (¼ inch) wide slices and place on a greased or parchment lined baking sheet. Bake for around 8 minutes, until golden. Cool on the baking sheet.

Lard wreaths

AROUND 50 COOKIES
200 G (7 OUNCES) LARD/BUTTER
200 G (1 ¾ CUPS) FLOUR
1 ½ DL (2/3 CUP) SOUR CREAM
4 CL (2 ½ TABLESPOONS) SCHNAPPS, AQUAVIT OR VODKA
SUGAR

Preheat the oven to 175°C (350°F). Melt the fat. Add the remaining ingredients, mixing well. Roll out to a 2-3 mm thin sheet. Cut into rings with a cookie cutter. Place on a greased or parchment lined baking sheet. Bake for around 10 minutes. Roll in sugar while still warm.





Smoked flounder with new potatoes, lemon and aioli

4 SERVINGS

4 SMOKED FLOUNDER (PREFERABLY FROM ÖSTERGARN)

800 G (1 ¾ LB) NEW POTATOES
1 BUNCH DILL
20 G (1 ½ TABLESPOONS) BUTTER
2 LEMONS

Boil the potatoes with the dill stalks until tender. Drain and add the butter. Halve the lemons.

Aioli

4 TABLESPOONS (¼ CUP WATER)
2 EGG YOLKS
JUICE OF 1 LEMON
3 DL (1 ¼ CUPS) VEGETABLE OIL
SALT
1 GARLIC CLOVE, CHOPPED

Combine water, egg yolks and a little of the lemon juice. Whisk until frothy. Add the oil in a thin stream, whisking constantly. Season with salt, garlic and lemon juice.

Serve the flounder with potatoes, lemon and aioli. Garnish with dill.



SMOKED FISH

Fish is warm smoked in Sysne. Sten Nordin (page 16) built his smoker himself, and he fires it with pine cones, as was often done on the island earlier. Sten likes to preserve old traditions. First, the fish is salted for around an hour, then some are seasoned with different flavorings, before the fillets are laid on a frame. Around 10 kilos (22 pounds) are smoked at a time. He smokes the fish for around one hour at 60 C (140 F). Fresh fish, the sea that froths in the autumn winds, and gulls that are attracted by the aroma. Even in late November, when the roads on Östergarnsland seem so deserted, more and more people come to buy fish. So simple but so good!