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Take home a taste of the Øresund Region

Many people fall in love with the flavours and cuisine of the Øresund Region when visiting and, thankfully, with a burgeoning industry of artisanal producers and specialist farms it is now easier than ever to take those tastes home with you.

The Øresund Region is the larder - or kitchen cupboard - of Scandinavia. With an excellent, mild climate perfect for the growing of crops, fruits and vegetables, and for raising cattle, the Øresund provides everything the contemporary and classic kitchen could need. Across the region there are specialist producers and artisanal cottage industries catering to the booming demand for the special products and ingredients of the Øresund in Scandinavia and beyond.

The list of 'must try' tastes and flavours for visitors to the Danish side of the Oresund is virtually endless.

Special drinks

Denmark is, of course, famous for its beer, although it is only in recent years that a growth of microbreweries, like Nørrebro Bryghus, has brought Danish beer to the attention of beer lovers overseas. These days even the mighty Carlsberg produces so-called gourmet beers with unique flavour profiles specially designed to match food.

The Danes drink a good deal of 'soft' or fruit cordials, with elderflower and wild berry flavours particularly popular. They are also fond of a rather fiery potato spirit called Schnapps, or Akvavit, which they traditionally drink with lunch and seafood.

In Skåne one of the more interesting developments in local drinking habits has been the arrival of the region's first vodka distillery. The new potatoes grown on the Bjäre Peninsula are of such a high quality that they are now used to make 'single estate' and 'vintage' potato vodkas. This Karlssons Vodka is now available to buy in stores in the region. The same potatoes grown here are also used to make the highest quality gourmet chips or crisps.

The Øresund's bounty



Seafood is one of the great strengths of the Øresund kitchen. You might not think fish would be easy to take home with you, but pickled herrings – with vinegars, herbs and spices, or even curry sauce - and smoked fish (eels are a speciality on both sides of the Oresund) transport easily enough and are about as authentic a taste of the local cuisine as you will find.

Herring is often served for lunch on rugbrød, an unleavened dark rye bread similar to the German pumpernickel. This is the famous Danish open sandwich, or *smørrebrød*, another must-try Danish speciality which, along with herring and eel, can feature eggs, meat balls, beetroot or just about anything else as a topping.

The Danish mayonnaise

Remoulade often turns up on a classic *smørrebrød* lunch. This mayonnaise-like dressing is made from celeriac and the Danes love to slather it over everything from their excellent new potatoes to *pølser* - or hot dogs - sold from stands throughout the country. You'll find it too on the traditional Danish koldbord, their answer to the Swedes' smorgasbord, a cold buffet which will also feature cold meats and the famous Danish salamis – another good food product to take home as a souvenir.

Something sweet

The Danes have a notoriously sweet tooth – some even eat the famous Danish pastries (in Denmark they call them *wienerbrød*, or Vienna bread) for breakfast! Sweet memories to take home from a visit to this side of the Oresund include Anthon Berg marzipan chocolates and the traditional marzipan cake, *kransekager*. Do beware, however, Danes bearing liquorice as it probably won't be the sweet kind you are used to: the Danes are inordinately fond of strong, salt liquorice, or *salt lakrids*, which has to be one of the great 'acquired tastes'.

Swedish specialities

Many of the products that are popular on the Danish side of the Øresund are also found in Skåne, on the Swedish side. Skåne also has a strong dairy and fishing industry but, of course, there are specialities that are unique to this rich culinary region also.

Perhaps the most famous is the *spettekaka* cake, made from meringue. The *spettekaka*, which is classed by the EU as a regional speciality, used

to be baked on a spit over an open fire, although that is rare these days, but it is still often made by women in small, local bakeries. It is formed over a hot metal cone and can have up to ten layers.

Spettkaka is often eaten at family get togethers, weddings or traditional celebrations. Beware, cutting the spettkaka is a delicate art requiring a special *spettkaka* knife to avoid an explosion of meringue but, once divided up, is excellent served with ice cream, berries or whipped cream.

Another renowned local dish is *aggakaka*, an egg cake or omelette, usually sweet but which can be served with everything from jam to bacon. You will find it served throughout the more traditional guest houses and inns in the region.

One food product which comes from the heart of the Øresund – literally - is the pasta made from durum wheat grown on the island of Ven. A few years ago it was discovered that the soil on this island was perfect for growing the wheat used to make pasta and now a farm here run by Britta Ossler, draws hundreds of visitors during the summer to buy flour and pasta here.

Other famous products from the Swedish side of the Øresund include the smoked eels from the Kivik area, best tasted during a traditional Scanian eel festival. The main eel season lasts from August to November. During the festivals, which also take place at this time of year, the eel are prepared in a number of different way – grilled, poached, smoked, in soup or aspic, etc – and traditionally eaten with wormwood schnapps.

The Swedish side of the Øresund is also famed for its apple orchards and the fruit and apple products it supplies. The fruit from the orchards at Appletshus in Kivik are used to produce superb juices, jams and fruit soups which are excellent souvenirs to take away. You can even buy Scanian calvados made from the local fruit.

Another local food producer whose fame has spread well beyond the region is the bakery and café, Olof Viktors, in Glimmingebro in the southern part of the region close to the coast and Ystad. This superb bakery is located in an historic farm house where they make their own jams, smoked salt, breads, and the aforementioned *spettekaka*. Olof Viktors, run by the writer and journalist Rolf Dahlstrom, also bakes the famous Swedish knacke bread (crisp, unleavened bread, often shaped in large, flat discs with a whole in the middle used to hang it up), and traditional Scanian dark rye bread, or *Kavring*, all of it baked in a traditional, wood fired oven.

Berry good fruit

Apples are not the only fruit to be found here. Both the Swedish and Danish sides of the Øresund Region produce top class strawberries and other red berries – the Danes use red currants to make their famously unpronounceable *rødgrød med fløde* – a dessert made with red berry sauce with cream. Meanwhile, Fladergården, in the north east of Skåne, is famed as the 'elderberry farm', where they serve and sell elderberry jams and juices made to medieval recipes.

Facts about Copenhagen / Øresund

The third phase of the Project Copenhagen / Øresund, runs from 2007 – 2009. The budget is over DKK 81m, including DKK 8.3m from the EU's INTERREG IIIA. The markets targeted by the project are Germany/Switzerland, Great Britain/Ireland, USA, China, Italy and Spain. Copenhagen / Øresund partners are SAS, SPANAIR, Copenhagen Airport, the Oresund bridge, Avis, Malmö Tourism, Position Skåne, VisitDenmark and Wonderful Copenhagen. The aim is to place the Øresund region on the world map and make the destination more accessible.

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