

Dear fellow Cultural Leader,

This book should not be used as a book of presentations, but rather an idea book for you meetings.

We have to rethink the local Lodge meeting, and turn each one into a social event with a small business portion. Our declining membership, and above all our members that never come to the meetings, are clearly showing us that things need to change.

I have tried to find events that take place in each month in all the Scandinavian countries, and that might inspire you to have an event of your own.

I have included traditional holidays as well as popular annual festivals, and also a biography of a famous Scandinavian person in each month. Some months don't have any holidays, but might have a market or festival that you can make "your own".

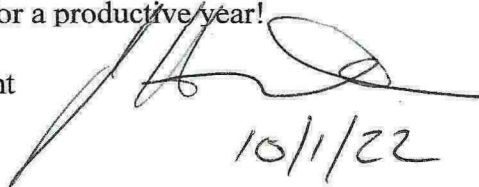
Food is always a draw, and there are a few recipes in here as well. Play on that and find the cooks in your lodge that might want to try some new things. There are thousands of Scandinavian recipes on the web and they are easy to find via Google or Yahoo. All the information in this book is taken right off the internet, and there is so much more out there for the taking.

I hope that you will find some inspiration in here to have your own Viking feast, or "herring tasting" or Apple festival. It doesn't take that much to create something different that people will like, and we all have to work at changing things up. Change is good and desperately needed, and the most important is to have FUN!

If you incorporate other people in the lodge to help you and spread the work load, you will find that it keeps them more interested as well. Find the hidden talents! Most people know how to do something really well. If you let them have a hand in it, they will continue to come out.

Best wishes for a productive year!

Inger Hanright
GLCD



10/1/22

JANUARY

New Years Eve

Knut's Day / Julgrans plundering (Sweden)

Thorrablót – Midwinter feast (Iceland)

Winter swimming

Swedish New Year – the origins

In accordance with the Roman Calendar, the Swedish New Year begins on 1 January. In pre-industrial society, it was a part of the Christmas-time celebrations. In contrast to Christmas, however, it was mainly a festive occasion for young people. They saw in the year with food, drink and merriment. To mark the transition, and to see off the old year, they fired guns or yelled and screamed, or kicked up a row in some other way.

The turn of the year was considered a magical time, when people tried to foresee the future. One way of telling your future was to mould lead in water and then interpret the figures this produced. Another was to toss shoes. If your shoe landed with the toe pointing towards the door, it meant you would move away or even die during the year

New Year's Day was thought to be symbolic for the year as a whole. So it was important not to carry anything out of the house, as this meant discarding happiness for the rest of the year. If the sun shone on New Year's Day, a good year could be expected. Ever since 1893, when the custom began at the Skansen open-air museum in Stockholm, the country's churches have rung in the New Year at midnight.

In these modern times, Swedes celebrate like most people over here with friends, a nice dinner and dress up in party clothes. Public celebrations are everywhere, and lots of fireworks.

FINNISH NEW YEAR CELEBRATION

An essential part of the Finnish New Year's Eve festivities are the numerous fireworks displayed throughout the country, being the highlight of the evening. Most of these are consumer fireworks, fired by private citizens. Professional fireworks displays are sometimes conducted by many towns, organizations, clubs or companies.

In wait of the midnight, many people spend the evening celebrating with their family and friends, either at home or attending the numerous New Year's parties in restaurants and nightclubs. Others may spend the evening comfortably at home, watching the colourful fireworks cracking across the skies outside, starting as the midnight approaches. Also more formal gala dinners, concerts and balls, requiring a booking well in advance, are organized by many restaurants, clubs and organizations.

When having an informal New Year's party at home, usually a smörgåsbord, the Nordic buffet table, is set for the guests, consisting of simple hot or cold dishes, snacks and desserts with coffee and tea.

Besides eating, some entertainment may be arranged for the party, like games for kids or making of New Year's resolutions for grownups. Any pastime activity is especially appreciated by children, who are eagerly waiting for the highlight of the evening, the fireworks display.



At midnight, people usually pop outside in the crisp winter night to fire or just watch the fireworks fired by others. Glasses of champagne or sparkling wine are raised to make a toast to the new year ahead. After midnight, if the evening will yet continue, it is a good idea to have a late night snack with hot drinks waiting for the hungry guests.

New Year's Eve magic

Similar to Midsummer night, New Year's Eve has traditionally been the time for fortune telling and predicting of the future. People have tried to secure a good fortune for the coming year or get a glimpse of the future events by performing various magical tasks and tricks. Some of these tricks have remained until our times as an amusement and games practised for fun in New Year's parties.

Casting of tin

One of the most popular tricks performed is the casting of tin. Everyone gets a small piece of tin, cast in the shape of a miniature horseshoe, a traditional symbol of good luck (see the picture on right). The horseshoe is melted and the liquid metal poured quickly in a bucket of cold water, making it harden into a more or less irregular-shaped, solid clump.



The shape and shadow of the resulting cast are examined and interpreted to predict the various future events of the coming year. Different shapes have different meaning, promising either good luck or health, wealth, happiness, sorrow, sickness, *etc.* If the cast breaks down to pieces, it is a sign of "bad luck".

Predicting the future

Another popular game for "predicting the future" is to place various small objects under cups or plates turned upside down. The persons attending the game lift one cup at a time, revealing the object hiding under it. Each object has a special meaning, symbolizing things like love, happiness, wealth, sorrow, pain, or even death. When children are to lift the cups, the objects symbolizing grave and sad things, like sickness or death, are removed, in order not to frighten them.

- The objects used and the things they symbolize are usually as follows: **Ashes or black soil/mould** = death
- **Baby doll** = children
- **Coin** = wealth
- **Four-leaf clover** = good luck
- **Horseshoe** = good luck
- **Key** = gaining a house/apartment of your own
- **Piece of black yarn or a black button** = sorrow or death
- **Piece of blue yarn** = gaining a loyal friend
- **Piece of bread** = secure income, carefree living
- **Piece of red yarn or a red button** = happiness or wealth
- **Piece of white yarn** = happiness, sickness or death
- **Piece of yellow yarn** = disappointment
- **Pin** = sickness or pain
- **Ring** = engagement or marriage
- **Sugar cube** = easy living, "sweet success"
- **White button** = happiness
- **Empty cup** = "nothing special"

The meanings for the various objects above derive from the old, agrarian society, and some of them are of course pretty outdated, at least in the modern western world — like the piece of yellow yarn being also a symbol for having an illegitimate child.

You can bring the game more up to date by making up your own, more suitable meanings for the various objects. Pictures of the objects may also be drawn on squares of paper or cardboard, scrambled and placed facing down on the table to be lifted up one at a time, to see what the future will bring.

Love and relationships

There are also special tricks for revealing some of the ever-intriguing aspects concerning love, courtship marriage, mostly performed by young girls on the New Year's Eve:

In picture on right: detail of "Svetlana guessing on her future" by Karl Briullov (1799 - 1852).



- If a girl stares in a mirror in a dark room lit only by a candle, she might catch a glimpse of her future husband staring back at her in the mirror. (There are many variations to this trick.)
- If a girl wets her scarf in the water into which the melted New Year tin was cast and places it under her pillow for the night, she will see her future spouse in a dream. (The same goes for boys and handkerchiefs.) A coin can be placed under the pillow instead of the wetted scarf/handkerchief.
- Going into the pigsty, a girl asks a pig whether she will be married during the following year. If the pig will grunt, the answer is yes, if it remains silent, the answer is no

Danish New Year

In Denmark it is a good sign to find your door heaped with a pile of broken dishes at New Years. Old dishes are saved year around to throw them at the homes where their friends live on New Years Eve. Many broken dishes were a symbol that you have many friends.

New Year's Eve is framed by two important items broadcast on television and radio, respectively the monarch's New Year Speech at 6pm and the striking of midnight by the Town Hall Clock in Copenhagen, which marks the start of the new year.

Many Danes party with various kinds of good food followed by champagne and marzipan ring cake at midnight. The New Year is greeted with fireworks after midnight; they include both noisy bangs and rockets, which light up the night sky in many different colors. In many parts of the country, the traditional New Year's Eve menu is boiled cod, or stewed kale and cured saddle of pork.

New Year Celebrations in Norway

In Norway, New Year is considered as the time of celebrations, amusements, and carousing. People leave no stone unturned to make sure that they bid a grand farewell to the Old Year, and welcome New Year with lots of bliss and joy. Without drawing any distinction, everyone irrespective of their age and gender is encouraged to be a part of these celebrations. They eat, drink, dance, and celebrate till the midnight time arrives, when fireworks shows are set off.

On New Year's Eve, almost everyone makes sure to get into the hottest party of the town. Both, the inhabitants, as well as the tourists party all day and all night till the early hours of the first day of the New Year. The spectacular time, and the fun and cheer reaches its optimum with the arrival of midnight, with the clock turning twelve. Apart from those present at public parties and those on the streets, people who are spending New Year's time with their friends and families at house also come out of their houses to witness the sky turning out different colors and lights. Toasts are raised, followed by the exchanging of wishes and greetings for the coming time with one another.

Family Time on New Year

Public celebrations and parties are given as much significance, as spending time with friends and family. Even if going to a public event, one makes sure to celebrate and spend ample time with family and close friends on the special occasion. Someone can be find partying hard in any night club, pub or discotheque on New year's Eve, but the same person can be find chilling out at home, on a nearby beach, or on some beautiful countryside site. Usually, the house celebrations have close friends and members of the extended family, coming to celebrate the time. A special feast is organized with special dishes on a platter. Wine is considered to be compulsory part with which celebrations truly takes off. Traditional dishes of pork, lamb, and turkey are a must. Eating pork is considered to be a symbol of abundance of food resources in one's life in the coming year. Apart from eating and drinking, music and dance are integrally involved with New Year celebrations in Norway.

New Year Traditions in Norway

There is also a tradition where small children go to all the houses in the neighborhood, while singing special New Year songs. In turn, people give them candies. There is also a Halloween like tradition followed in Norway during the time of New Year, which is referred as 'Nyttarsbukk'. As a part of it, people dress up fancily, and make a visit to friends and family members who in turn treat them with drinks. As a part of New Year traditions, people also prepare the symbolic dish of rice pudding with an almond hidden in it. It is sweet in taste, and eating it is believed to confer one with a sweet year ahead. Also, the one who gets the hidden almond out of the rice pudding is considered to have a lucky year ahead, with lots of wealth and fortune and favor.

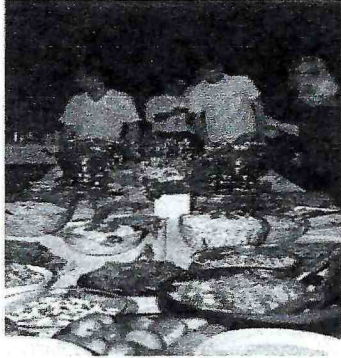


JULGRANSPLUNDRING - KNUT'S DAY January 13

Knut's day is the traditional last day of the holiday season. This is the day when Swedish families get together, eat what is left of the Christmas food and goodies, un decorate the tree, and throw it out.

It's a great event for kids, to play silly games (musical chairs, snatch-a-gift etc.), do ring dances around the tree, sing Christmas songs and eat candy. Once all the ornaments have come off the tree, you hang candy canes or other treats in it, and the kids get to "plunder" it.

It is a great event to do in a single or multi lodge setting. Everyone can get rid of the leftovers, and kids and grandkids can come and have fun in a relaxed setting.



Thorrrablot: Iceland's Midwinter Celebration

The annual festival takes place every year starting in mid-January.

Near the beginning of each year during the ancient Viking month of Thor, Iceland celebrates Thorrrablot to commemorate the Norse god of Thunder. The Vikings once celebrated this mid-winter month with dancing, singing, drinking and merriment, and it continues to be celebrated to this day. Traditionally, the menu consists of unusual culinary delicacies, including rotten shark's meat (hákarl), boiled sheep's head, (svið) and congealed sheep's blood wrapped in a ram's stomach (blóðmör).

During the month of Thor in modern-day Iceland, these traditional delicacies can often be found on grocery store shelves and in restaurants. Icelanders then wash down their meals with Brennivín, also known as "Black Death" – a potent schnapps made from potato and caraway. After the Thorrrablot feast, traditional songs, games and storytelling are accompanied by dancing – and in true Icelandic style, celebrations continue until the early hours of the morning!

Have your own Thorrrablot, and substitute the traditional Icelandic Viking foods with smoked salmon, smoked venison, shrimp, herring, roast beef or lamb or any other foods that you like. A little Aquavit or chilled vodka or something non-alcoholic, like cranberry juice will do nicely. Have a Viking party and tell stories and make up poems. Traditional Norse mythology stories can be found in books and on the internet. Many of them are quite funny since the Vikings had a good sense of humor.

Egill Skallagrímsson

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

This is an Icelandic name. The last name is a patronymic, not a family name; this person is properly referred to by the given name Egill.

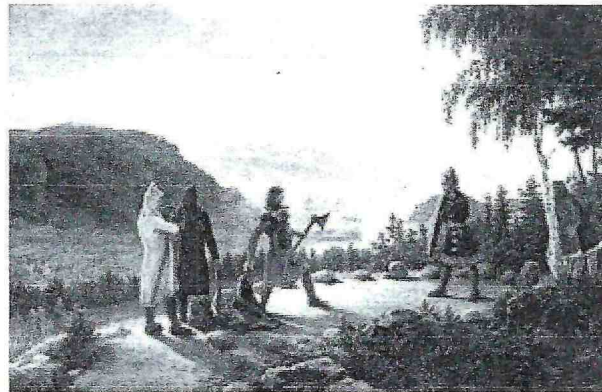


Picture of Egil in a 17th-century manuscript of Egils Saga

Egill Skallagrímsson also known as **Egil Skallagrímsson**^[1] (c. 910 – c. 990)^[2] was a Viking-Age poet, warrior and farmer.^[1] He is also the protagonist of the eponymous *Egil's Saga*. *Egil's Saga* historically narrates a period from approximately 850-1000 CE, being written somewhere between 1220 and 1240.^[1]

Life[edit]

The following is based on the Icelandic saga "Egil's saga"; like many sagas, it can be unreliable as a source of historical fact.



Egill engaging in holmgang with Berg-Öundur; painting by Johannes Flintoe.

Egill was born in Iceland, the son of Skalla-Grímr Kveldúlfsson^[3] and Bera Yngvarsdóttir, and the grandson of Kveld-Úlfr ("Evening Wolf"). His ancestor, Hallbjorn, was Norwegian-Sami.^[4]

When Grímr arrived in Iceland, he settled at Borg, the place where his father's coffin landed. Grímr was a respected chieftain and mortal enemy of King Harald Fairhair of Norway.

Egill composed his first poem at the age of three years. He exhibited berserkbehaviour, and this, together with the description of his large and unattractive head, has led to the theory that he might have suffered from Paget's disease.

At the age of seven, Egill was cheated in a game with local boys. Enraged, he went home and procured an axe, and returning to the boys, split the skull of the boy who cheated him, to the teeth. After Berg-Önundr refused to allow Egill to claim his wife Ásgerðr's share of her father's inheritance, he challenged Önundr to a holmgang.

Later, after being grievously insulted, Egill killed Bárðr of Atley, a retainer of King Eirik Bloodaxe and kinsman of Queen Gunnhildr, both of whom spent the remainder of their lives trying to take vengeance. Seething with hatred, Gunnhildr ordered her two brothers to assassinate Egill and his brother Þórólfr, who had been on good terms with her previously. However, Egill slew the Queen's brothers when they attempted to confront him.

That same summer, Harald Fairhair died. In order to secure his place as sole King of Norway, Eirik Bloodaxe murdered his two brothers. He then declared Egill an outlaw in Norway. Berg-Önundr gathered a company of men to capture Egill, but was killed in his attempt to do so. Before escaping from Norway, Egill also slew Rögnvaldr, the son of King Eirik and Queen Gunnhildr. He then cursed the King and Queen, setting a horse's head on a *Nithing pole* and saying,

"Here I set up a *níð*-pole, and declare this *níð* against King Eiríkr and Queen Gunnhildr," — he turned the horse-head to face the mainland — "I declare this *níð* at the land-spirits there, and the land itself, so that all will fare astray, not to hold nor find their places, not until they wreak King Eiríkr and Gunnhildr from the land." He set up the pole of *níð* in the cliff-face and left it standing; he faced the horse's eyes on the land, and he carved runes upon the pole, and said all the formal words of the curse. (ch. 57).

Gunnhildr also put a spell on Egill, which made him feel restless and depressed until they met again.

Soon afterwards, Eiríkr and Gunnhildr were forced to flee to the Kingdom of Northumbria by Prince Hákon. In Saxon England, they were set up as King and Queen of Northumbria in rivalry with King Athelstan of England. Ultimately, Egill was shipwrecked in Northumbria and came to know who ruled the land. Egil sought out the house his good friend Arinbjorn where they armed themselves and marched to Eiríkr's court. Arinbjorn told Egil "now you must go and offer the king your head and embrace his foot. I will present your case to him." Arinbjorn presented Egil's case and Egil composed a short *Drapa*, reciting it with Eiríkr's foot in his hand, but Eiríkr was not impressed. He explained that Egil's wrongs to him were far too great to be forgiven so easily. Gunnhild called for the immediate execution of Egil, but Arinbjorn convinced the king not to kill him until the morning. Arinbjorn told Egil that he should stay up all night and compose a mighty *drapa* fit for such a king. In the morning Egil went before the king and recited a great *drapa*. Eirik was so surprised by the quality of the poem that he had no choice but to give Egil his life. Egill also fought at the Battle of Brunanburh in the service of King Athelstan.^[5]

Ultimately, Egill returned to his family farm in Iceland, where he remained a power to be reckoned with in local politics. He lived into his eighties and died shortly before the Christianisation of Iceland. Before Egill died he buried his silver treasure

near Mosfellsbær. In his last act of violence he murdered the servant who helped him bury his treasure.

When a Christian chapel was constructed at the family homestead, Egill's body was re-exumed by his son and re-buried near the altar.

Issue[edit]

Egill had five children with Ásgerðr Björnsdóttir: Þorgerðr Egilsdóttir, Bera Egilsdóttir, Böðvar Egilsson, Gunnar Egilsson and Þorsteinn Egilsson. In later years, Iceland's Myrar clan claimed descent from him.

Poems[edit]

Apart from being a warrior of immense might in literary sources, Egill is also celebrated for his poetry, considered by many historians to be the finest of the ancient Scandinavian poetry.^[*citation needed*] and *Sonatorrek*, the dirge over his own son, has been called "the birth of Nordic personal lyric poetry". His poems were also the first Old Norse verses to use end rhyme.^[6] The following works are attributed to Egill:

1. *Aðalsteinsdrápa*. *Drápa* for the Anglo-Saxon King Æthelstan.
2. *Höfuðlausn* ("The Head Ransom", sometimes referred to as "Head-Ransom"), with which Egill bought his life from Eiríkr Bloodaxe, who had sentenced him to death in England.
3. *Sonatorrek* ("The Loss of a Son"). After the death of his son Böðvar who drowned during a storm.
4. *Arinbjarnarkviða*. Dedicated to his companion Arinbjörn
5. *Skjaldardrápa*.
6. *Berudrápa*.
7. *Lausavísur*.
8. Fragments

The following is one of Egill's *Lausavísur* (no. 3), found in chapter 40 of *Egils Saga*:

Edition^[7]

*Þat mælti mín
móðir,
at mér skyldi
kaupa
fley ok fagrar
árar,
fara á brott með
víkingum,
standa upp í
stafni,
stýra dýrum
knerri,
halda svá til
hafnar
höggva mann ok
annan.*

Translation by Herman Pálsson and Paul Edwards^[8]

"My mother wants a price
paid
To purchase my proud-oared
ship
Standing high in the stern
I'll scour for plunder.
The stout Viking steersman
Of this shining vessel:
Then home to harbour
After hewing down a man or
two."

More literal translation (Wikipedia)

"Thus spake my
mother
That for me
should they buy
A barque and
beauteous oars
To go forth with
vikings.
Stand in the stern,
Steer a dear
vessel,
Hold course for
a haven,
Hew down many
foemen."

Runes[edit]

Egill was also a scholar of runes. His apparent mastery of their magic powers assisted him several times during his journeys. During a feast at Atla-isle, Bard's attempt to poison Egill failed when a rune carved by Egill shattered his poisoned cup. Runes were also employed by Egill during the raising of the Nithing Pole against King Eirik Bloodaxe and Queen Gunnhildr.

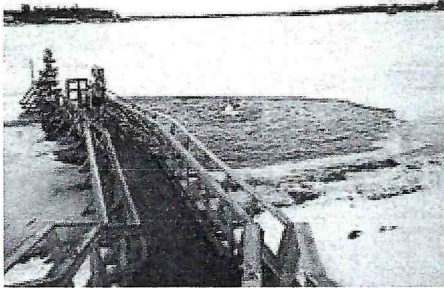
At a companion's request, he examined a sick woman. A local land owner, after being denied her hand in marriage, had attempted to carve love-runes. Instead, he had mistakenly carved runes causing illness. Egill burned the offending runes and carved runes for health, and the woman recovered. He then sang a poem declaring that "Runes none should grave ever/Who knows not to read them."

Egill in popular culture[edit]

- Egill remains a very popular figure in Iceland, with a beer brewery, Ölgerðin Egill Skallagrímsson, named after him.
- There is a talk show on Icelandic television called *Egill's Silver*, named after Egill's hidden treasure. This, however, was also a double joke, since the host's first name is Egill.
- "Egill's Silver" is also the name of a song by Megas, from his first album.
- In the SCA Barony of Adiantum there is an "Egil Skallagrímsson Memorial Tournament" held annually on memorial day weekend.
- The novelist Poul Anderson (a member of the SCA) wrote *Mother of Kings*,^[9] a historical fantasy centered on Gunnhildr and the long feud that she, Eiríkr, and their children had with Egill. The novel is based on *Heimskringla* and *Egils Saga*.

Winter swimming

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia



Ice swimming in Finland



Two Russian women prepare to swim in a frozen lake.

Winter swimming is the activity of swimming during the winter season, typically in outdoor locations (open water swimming) or in unheated pools or lidos. In colder countries it may be synonymous with **ice swimming**, when the water is frozen over. This requires either breaking the ice or entering where aspring prevents the formation of ice. It may also be simulated by a pool of water at 0 °C, the temperature at which water freezes. The International Ice Swimming Association requires that the water is colder than 5 °C for ice swimming competitions.^[1]

In Eastern Europe and Russia winter swimming is part of the celebration of the Epiphany. Competitions for winter swimming also exist. Many winter swimmers swim with standard swimming costumes rather than with wetsuits or other thermal protection. Famous winter swimmers include Henri Kaarma, Ram Barkai, Lynne Cox and Lewis Gordon Pugh.

Also, many locations in North America and Western Europe hold **polar bear plunges**, commonly to celebrate New Year's Day, although participants are not expected to swim and generally most do not swim.

Maintaining the hole in the ice

One way that the hole is maintained at regular ice swimming places is with a pump that forces the water to circulate under the hole, preventing ice from forming. Small ice-holes can also be kept open by keeping a lid over the hole to prevent ice forming.

Most ice swimming places also use a specific heated "carpet" going from the locker rooms to the ice-hole,^[citation needed] both to make walking to the hole more pleasant and for safety as otherwise the water dripping from returning swimmers would freeze and create a dangerously slippery surface to walk on.

National traditions

Northern Europe

In Finland, Northern Russia, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia the ice swimming tradition has been connected with the sauna tradition. Unlike dousing, it is not seen as an ascetic or religious ritual, but a way to cool off rapidly after staying in a sauna and as a stress relief.

Ice swimming (*avantouinti*) on its own is especially popular in Estonia and Finland. There is an Avantouinti Society, and swimming holes are also maintained by other groups such as the Finnish skiing association (Suomen Latu). The Finnish Sauna Society maintains an avanto for sauna goers.

There are lots of places where you can swim without sauna in Finland during winter. Helsinki has several places for avantouinti, with dressing-rooms and sometimes with saunas. There is also a number of ice swimming and winter sauna locations around Tampere.^[2]

Western Europe

United Kingdom

Famous locations include the Serpentine Lake in Hyde Park, London, and Highgate Ponds in Hampstead. The largest fresh water pool in the UK is the Tooting Bec Lido in South West London which is home to the South London Swimming Club. The pool is 100 yards in length, i.e. nearly twice as long as an Olympic pool. As the winter approaches and the water temperature drops then swimmers stay in for less and less time, swimming just one or two widths rather than several lengths. Races take place all year including on Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

Belgium

There are some clubs where people swim all year in a pool, a lake, or a river. Locations are Bruges, Boom, Dendermonde, Wachtebeek, Theux and Huy. The most famous race is across the Meuse river each last Sunday of February since 1963.

China

There are reportedly 141 winter swimming organizations across China with a membership of more than 200,000. The younger swimmers are under ten years of age and the older ones in their 80s. In Beijing, there are the winter swimming places such as Shichahai(什刹海), Yu Yuantan(玉渊潭) and Xihu swimming pool in Qinghua University, etc. In Harbin, northern China, many ice swim in the Songhua River. Also Jinan is a place of annual winter swimming festival. The big event is swimming across Lake Daming about 300 meters.

In Taiyuan, where air temperature often goes below -10 °C in winter, hundreds of men and women ice swim each day in the Fen River.

Eastern Europe and Russia



An ice hole is cut in the form of a cross in Russia to celebrate the Epiphany

In Russia and other Eastern European countries where Eastern Orthodox Christianity is the prevalent religion ice swimming is connected with the celebration of the Epiphany. The Epiphany is observed on 19 January according to the Julian calendar of the Russian Orthodox Church. The day marks the baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan. To celebrate this, holes are cut in the ice on rivers, lakes or other bodies of water, usually in the form of a Christian or Orthodox cross. Around midnight, believers submerge themselves three times in the water to honor the Holy Trinity, after a priest says a prayer.^{[3][4]}

Ice swimming on the Epiphany is relatively new. It was practiced by only a few before the October Revolution of 1917 and occurred even less frequently in the time of the Soviet Union, when Christians were persecuted. However, the ritual became very popular in the 1990s since the Dissolution of the Soviet Union.^[5] In Moscow alone, 30,000 believers swam in ice holes in 37 fonts during the Epiphany of 2010.^[4] There is a popular belief that the practice erases a person's sins, but this is not endorsed by the Russian Orthodox Church.^[5] The ritual is also performed in Belarus, Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.^[6]

Ice swimming is also practiced during the entire winter by Walrus Clubs, whose members are called "walruses" (Russian: моржи, "morzhi").^[7] In other Eastern European countries such as Bulgaria and Romania, the Epiphany is celebrated on 6 January. There it is tradition for Orthodox priests to cast wooden crosses in the water, which are then retrieved by the believers. It is popularly believed that the person who finds the cross is freed from evil spirits.^[8] Other countries where this is done include Serbia and Montenegro.^[9]

North America



Professor Sugarman, the "human polar bear", circa 1900.

The members of Canadian and American "polar bear clubs" go outdoor bathing or swimming in the middle of winter. In some areas it is unusual or ceremonial enough to attract press coverage. "Polar bear plunges" are conducted as fund-raisers for charity, notably the Special Olympics, Cosmo Kramer briefly joins a New York polar bears club in the sitcom *Seinfeld*.

The Russian immigrant professor Louis Sugarman of Little Falls, NY was the first American to become a famous ice swimmer in the 1890s. He attracted worldwide attention for his daily plunge in the Mohawk River, even when the thermostat hit 23 below zero, earning him the nickname "the human polar bear".^[10] The oldest ice swimming club in the United States is the Coney Island Polar Bear Club of Coney Island, New York, founded in 1903 by Bernarr MacFadden.^[11] The club organizes an annual polar plunge on New Year's Day as well as regular swims in the Atlantic Ocean every Sunday from November to April.^[12]

Chicago has recently thrown its hat in the lake for these types of events throughout the winter season. One of the largest being the Lakeview Polar Bear Club's annual Celebration of Shrinkage in late January.

Health risks

Winter swimming can be dangerous to people who are not used to swimming in very cold water. After submersion in cold water the cold shock response will occur, causing an uncontrollable gasp for air. This is followed by hyperventilation, a longer period of more rapid breathing. The gasp for air can cause a person to ingest water, which leads to drowning. As blood in the limbs is cooled and returns to the heart, this can cause fibrillation and consequently cardiac arrest. The cold shock response and cardiac arrest are the most common causes of death related to cold water immersion.^[13]

Winter swimming isn't dangerous for healthy persons, but should be avoided by individuals with heart or respiratory diseases, obesity, high blood pressure and arrhythmia, as well as children and the elderly.^[3] Through conditioning, experienced winter swimmers have a greater resistance to effects of the cold shock response.^[14]

Hypothermia poses a smaller risk. According to Tucker and Dugas, it takes more than approximately 30 minutes even in 0 °C water until the body temperature drops low enough for hypothermia to occur. Many people would probably be able to survive for almost an hour.^[13] There is no consensus on these figures however; according to different estimates a person can survive for 45 minutes in 0.3 °C water, but exhaustion or unconsciousness is expected to occur within 15 minutes. Consuming alcohol before winter swimming should be avoided because it speeds the onset and progression of hypothermia.^[15]

Care should be taken when winter swimming in swimming pools and seas near the polar regions. The chlorine added to water in swimming pools and the salt in seawater allow the water to remain liquid at sub-zero temperatures. Swimming in such water is significantly more challenging and dangerous. The experienced winter swimmer Lewis Gordon Pugh swam near the North Pole in -1.7 °C water and suffered a frostbite injury in his fingers. It took him four months to regain the sense in his hands.^[16]

Health benefits

Apart from risks, scientific studies also provide evidence for health benefits. Winter swimming contributes to better general well-being. Winter swimmers experience less stress and fatigue and more vigor. They report to have a better memory function, better mood and feel more energetic, active and brisk. Swimmers who suffer from rheumatism, fibromyalgia or asthma report that winter swimming relieves pain.^[17]

There are indications that winter swimmers do not contract diseases as often as the general population. The incidence of infectious diseases affecting the upper respiratory tract is 40% lower among winter swimmers when compared to a control group. Short term exposure of the whole body to cold water produces oxidative stress, which makes winter swimmers develop improved antioxidative protection.^[18]

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FEBRUARY

Valentines Day in
Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Iceland and Finland

Fat Tuesday (Sweden Feb 17)

Sami National Day (Norway, Sweden, Finland)

Anders Zorn - artist

Valentine's Day in Norway:

In Norway, Valentine's Day has become a very important part in the social calendar for many, especially younger folks. In Norway, according to the legends, the sight of birds mating are a sure sign of spring and love. So Valentine's Day in Norway has become associated with that, and Norwegians tend to look for birds especially on February 14. Spring celebrations and Valentine's Day celebrations have become interlinked over the years. In Norway's big cities like Oslo on February 14 you can see stores displaying red hearts and other Valentine goodies.

Valentine's Day in Denmark:

After cautiously warming to the trend, Denmark has begun to embrace Valentine's Day traditions. One of the popular Valentine's Day customs in Denmark is sending of white flowers called 'Snowdrops'. Also on this day, young couples swap funny little poems or love notes, known as 'gaekkebrev'. The sender of a 'gaekkebrev' writes a rhyme for his beloved, though he signs the message with dots, not a name. If the recipient guesses the name correctly, she receives an egg at Easter! Various Valentine's Day events are held, e.g. live concerts and flower displays.

Valentine's Day in Sweden:

Valentine's Day in Sweden is celebrated by Swedish couples in a variety of ways - by visiting a nice restaurant, going to a club with live music, or watching the sunset from the beach. Back in the 1960s, flower-sellers in Sweden – inspired by their American counterparts – began to promote Valentine's Day. Today, huge amounts of roses, jelly hearts and pastries are sold and exchanged by lovers. The young Swedes in particular have adopted the custom. Sweden's idea behind Valentine's Day is to show your love and appreciation of another.

Valentine's Day in Iceland:

Valentine's Day in Iceland, compared to many other countries is pretty austere. Iceland sees a generous use of flowers. Sending flowers to the beloved is a very common custom and several types of bouquets are available. Glorious rose bouquets are available all over the country, starting from neighborhood shops to specialist florist shops. Another noticeable feature of Valentine's Day in Iceland is the festive food.

Valentine's Day in Finland:

Celebrating Valentine's Day in Finland is a very young, but also very popular tradition. Despite the fact that Finland has celebrated Valentine's Day only since the 1980s, it's now a beloved annual event. There are dedicated dances and events. Finns call Valentine's Day "Ystävänäpäivä", literally meaning "Day of Friendship".

Fettisdagen



A typical semla.

Fettisdagen (*The Fat Tuesday*) is the Swedish name for the Tuesday after the Quinquagesima and the day between "Shrove Monday" and "Ash Wednesday". Because it is the last day before the Lenten fast, a tradition has developed of eating buns, called "fastlagsbullar", "fettisdagsbullar" (Fat Tuesday Buns) or "semla". The day is also called "White Tuesday" because the buns are made out of white flour. The day is called "Mardi Gras" in France, "laskiainen" in Finland, and "Fastelavn" in Denmark. In the UK it is known as Shrove Tuesday or Pancake Day.

Recipe for Semla:

Makes about 15

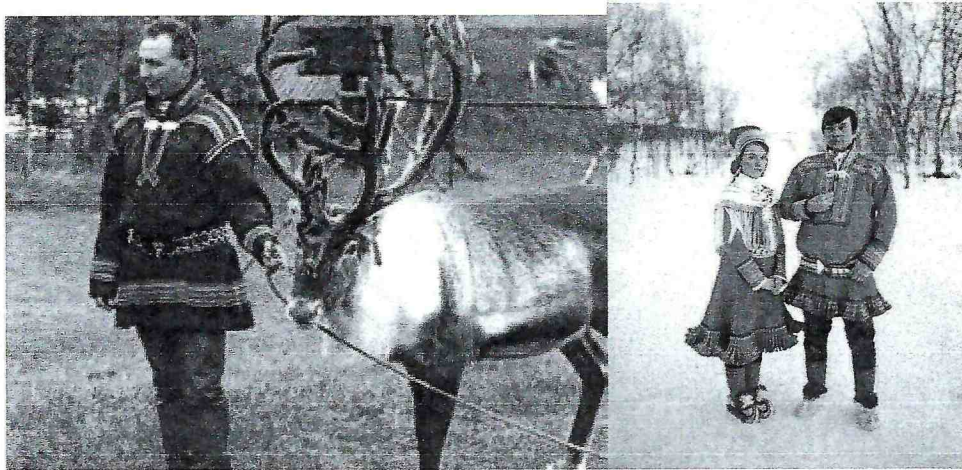
50 gr (2 oz) fresh yeast or 2 pkg dry yeast
4 oz margarine or butter
1 ½ cups milk
½ tsp salt
½ cup sugar
1 egg, slightly whisked
4 cups of flour (add 3 1/2 first and add the rest if needed)
1 tsp ground cardamom

Melt the butter in a saucepan and then pour in milk. Heat until lukewarm for fresh yeast or a little warmer for dry yeast, take off heat and mix in the yeast. Set aside for a few minutes until it starts to form bubbles.

Mix flour, sugar, salt, cardamom in a bowl. When yeast is ready mix the milk in with the flour mixture, add the egg and work it to a smooth dough, adding the rest of the flour if too sticky.

Let rise in a warm place for about 30 min. then divide dough into 15 pieces and roll into buns. Put them on a baking sheet, let rise again for 30 min and then bake at 450 degrees for 5-10 min. After cooling, cut a "lid" off the top, scoop out a hollow and mix the breadcrumbs with grated almond paste and a couple of tbsps heavy cream. Whip the rest of the heavy cream, and fill buns with almond filling and top with whipped cream and the "lid". Sprinkle some powdered sugar over.

Can be eaten as is, or placed into a bowl of heated milk and eaten with a spoon.



Sami National Day

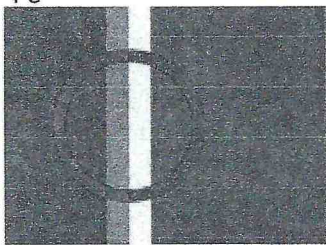
February 6, the Sami flag is raised in recognition of Sami National Day. Businesses sometimes remain closed on Sami National Day, and in Norway this day is celebrated with lots of festivities and Sami flags on government buildings.

Sami National Day is a special day for all Sámi, regardless of where they live. On Sami National Day, the flag is displayed and the Song of the Sami People is often sung.

The Sami (known as Lapplanders in the past) first celebrated Sami National Day in 1993 as a union of the indigenous voices across Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia.

The date of Sami National Day is a significant one, because it marks the first Sami National Council meeting held in Trondheim, Norway, in 1917.

Fe



The Sami people live in northern Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia and still herd reindeer as they have for thousands

of years, although many of them also own businesses or have regular jobs too.

They have their own religion, and language and live in a clan system. They are known for their colorful clothing which is specific for the area they live in. They are avid craftsmen, and sami craft items fetch a high price these days because of the quality of both materials and craft. They have many similarities with the Inuit and Native American tribes in culture, but are not genetically connected to any of these peoples.

Anders Zorn

Anders Zorn

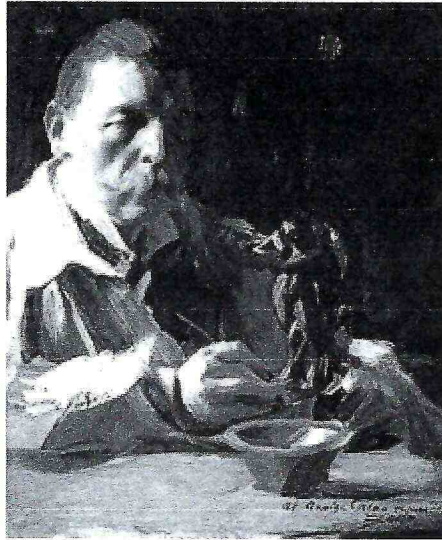


Anders Zorn 1908

Birth name	Anders Leonard Zorn
Born	18 February 1860 Mora, Sweden
Died	22 August 1920 (aged 60) Stockholm, Sweden
Nationality	Swedish
Field	Painting Sculpture Printmaker in etching
Training	Royal Swedish Academy of Arts, Stockholm



Anders and Emma Zorn around 1885.



Self Portrait with Faun and Nymph



Reveil, the artist's wife



☞ *Sommaröje*, 1886. Sweden's priciest painting ever; sold at 26 million SEK on June 3, 2010.

Anders Leonard Zorn (18 February 1860 – 22 August 1920) was one of Sweden's foremost artists. He obtained international success as a painter, sculptor and printmaker in etching.

Biography

Zorn was born and raised on his grandparents' farm in Yvraden, a hamlet near the village of Utmeland in the parish of Mora, Dalarna. He studied until the age of twelve in the school at Mora Strand before progressing in the autumn of 1872 to a secondary grammar school in Enköping.

From 1875 to 1880 Zorn studied at the Royal Swedish Academy of Arts in Stockholm, where he amazed his teachers with his talent. Members of Stockholm society approached him with commissions. This was how Zorn met his wife, Emma Lamm, early in 1881. Her background was different from Zorn's. Coming from a wealthy family, she was interested in art and culture. Zorn traveled extensively to London, Paris, the Balkans, Spain, Italy and the United States, becoming an international success as one of the most acclaimed painters of his era. It was primarily his skill as a portrait painter that gained Zorn international acclaim based principally upon his incisive ability to depict the individual character of his model. His subjects included three American Presidents, one of whom was Grover Cleveland in 1899, as well as his wife, along with William H Taft and Theodore Roosevelt. At 29, he was made a Chevallier de la Legion de honneur at the Exposition Universelle 1889 Worlds Fair in Paris.

- **Portrait paintings**



The King of Sweden, King *Oscar II* , 1898.



The Queen consort of Sweden and Norway, Queen *Sophia* 1909



William Howard Taft, 27th President of the United States 1911



President *Grover Cleveland*

Collection

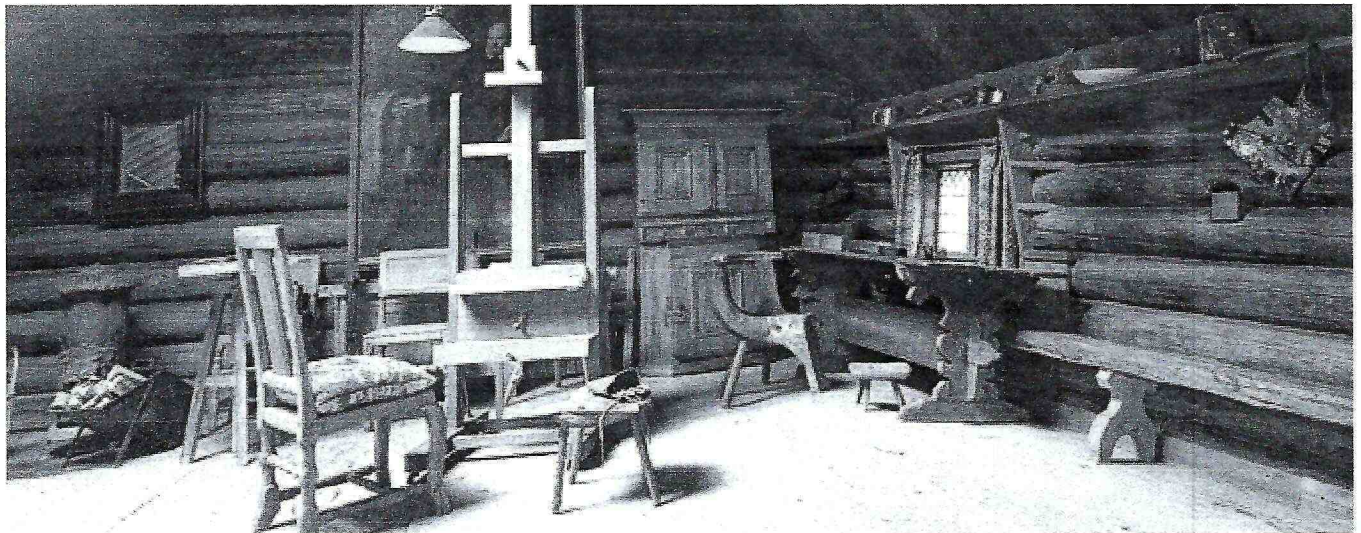
Zorn's art made him wealthy and he was thus able to build up a considerable collection of art. The objects were not only bought in his native country but also during the many travels he made abroad. In their joint will, Anders and Emma Zorn donated their entire holdings to the Swedish State.

Some of his most important works can be seen at the National Museum of Fine Arts in Stockholm. Among them is *Midsummer Dance* (1897), a depiction of dancers in the evening light of a rural Midsummer Eve celebration. Other museums holding major works by Zorn include the Musée d'Orsay in Paris, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. The Zorn Collections, located in Mora and Garberg, Älvdalen, consist of four museums dedicated to the life and works of Anders Zorn. The main museum - Zornmuseet - was designed by Ragnar Östberg and opened in 1939. Shown there, are extensive works of Zorn and his collected art by Rembrandt Harvensz Van Rijn, 'The Hovingham Master' (Poussin's follower), Bruno Liljefors, Albert Edelfelt, and Pehr Hilleström. The Bellman Prize (Bellmanpriset) is a literature prize for "an outstanding Swedish poet", every year awarded by the Swedish Academy. The prize was established by Anders Zorn and his wife Emma in 1920.

Zorngården

In 1886, Anders Zorn and his wife Emma, had bought land close to Mora church and here they moved a cottage from his maternal grandfather's farm. When Anders and Emma Zorn decided to return to Sweden after several years abroad, they began to enlarge the cottage. Zorngården was completed in 1910.

Zorngården remains today much as it was at the time of Emma Zorn's death in 1942. It is a fine example of an artist's home from the turn of the century. With inspiration from English and Swedish architecture, it is today an excellent example of the architectural freedom that characterizes the years around 1900.

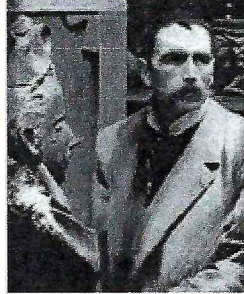


Anders Zorns atelier at his house, Zorngården in Mora

The main part of Zorngården consists of Zorn's home and a museum with his art, but there are two other museums that also are part of the Zorn Collections. Gammalgården is in the

southern part of Mora and consists of 40-something timber houses that Zorn bought to make sure that the old art of building such houses would not be forgotten. Gopsmor, Zorn's refuge when under stress, is in the municipality of Älvdalen, and is only open for visitors in July

Self Portraits



Self portrait, undated



Self Portrait with Fur. 1915



Self Portrait with Hat 1907

Paintings

While his early works were often brilliant, luminous watercolors, by 1887 he had switched firmly to oils. Zorn was a prolific artist. He became an international success as one of the most acclaimed portrait painters of his era. His sitters included three American Presidents, nobility, the Swedish king and queen and numerous members of high society. Zorn also painted portraits of family members, friends, and self-portraits. Zorn is also famous for his nude paintings. His fondness of painting full-figured women gave rise to the terms *Zorn's kulla ordalakulla*, an unmarried woman or girl from Dalecarlia, as the women were called in the local dialect of the region Zorn lived.



Dalakulla having a bath, Sandhamn, 1906

The paintings have the freedom and energy of sketches, using warm and cool light and shade areas^[13] with contrasting areas of warm and cool tones, and an understanding of colour contrasts and reflected lights. Zorn's accomplished use of the brush allows the forms and the texture of the painted subject to reflect and transmit light. In addition to portraits and nudes, Zorn excelled in realistic depictions of water, as well as scenes depicting rustic life and customs.

Other major works

- *Martha Dana (later Mrs. William Mercer)* (1899) Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
 - *George Peabody Gardner* (1899) Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
 - *Traveling companion (Mr. Charles Deering)* (1904) Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
-

Works



Midsummer Dance, 1897



Dalecarlian Girl Knitting. Cabbage Margit, 1901



Hins Anders, fiddler or spelman, 1904 (Thielska Galleriet)

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MARCH

Vasaloppet (Sweden)

Waffle Day (Sweden)

Ingvar Kamprad – founder of IKEA

Ingvar Kamprad

The founder of the IKEA empire

Ingvar Kamprad



Ingvar Kamprad in Haparanda, Sweden 2010.

Born	30 March 1926 (age 88) Älmhult, Sweden
DECEASED	
Occupation	Founder of IKEA
Net worth	▲ US\$46.6 billion (May 2014) ^[1]
Spouse(s)	Margaretha (deceased)
Children	Peter, Jonas, Matthias, Annika Kihlbom ^[2]

Ingvar Feodor Kamprad ; born 30 March 1926) is a Swedish business magnate. He is the founder of IKEA, a Swedish retail company specialising in furniture.

Early life

Kamprad was born in Pjätteryd , Sweden. He was raised on a farm called Elmtaryd near the small village of Agunnaryd in Ljungby municipality in the province of Småland, Sweden. His paternal grandfather was from Germany but moved the family to Sweden.

Career

Kamprad began to develop a business as a young boy, selling matches to neighbors from his bicycle. He found that he could buy matches in bulk very cheaply from Stockholm, sell them individually at a low price, and still make a good profit. From matches, he expanded to selling fish, Christmas tree decorations, seeds, and later ballpoint pens and pencils. When Kamprad was 17, his father gave him a cash reward for succeeding in his studies.

IKEA was founded in 1943 at Kamprad's uncle Ernst's kitchen table. In 1948, Kamprad diversified his portfolio, adding furniture. His business was mostly mail-order. The acronym IKEA is made up of the initials of his name (Ingvar Kamprad) plus those of Elmtaryd, the family farm where he was born, and the nearby village Agunnaryd.

In June 2013, Ingvar Kamprad resigned from the board of Inter IKEA Holding SA and his youngest son Mathias Kamprad replaced Per Ludvigsson as the chairman of the holding company. Following his decision to step down, the 87-year-old founder explained, "I see this as a good time for me to leave the board of Inter IKEA Group. By that we are also taking another step in the generation shift that has been ongoing for some years." Mathias and his two older brothers, who also have leadership roles at IKEA, work on the corporation's overall vision and long-term strategy.

Net worth

According to Swedish business weekly *Veckans Affärer*, he is one of the wealthiest people in the world. This report is based on the assumption that Kamprad owns the entire company, an approach that both IKEA and the Kamprad family reject. Kamprad retains little ownership in the company, having transferred his interest to Stichting INGKA foundation and INGKA Holding, as part of a complex tax sheltering scheme that leaves his actual degree of control vague.

In March 2010, *Forbes* magazine estimated his fortune at US\$23 billion, making him the eleventh richest person in the world. A year later, he fell from 11th place to 162nd after his lawyers produced documents that prove the foundation he created, and heads, in Liechtenstein owns IKEA, and its bylaws bar him and his family from benefiting from its funds. In October 2012, Ingvar Kamprad was listed as the fifth wealthiest person in the world in the Bloomberg Billionaires Index, with an estimated net worth of \$42.6 billion. As of February 2014, Ingvar's net worth was reported by *Forbes* to be \$4.2 billion.

Stichting INGKA Foundation^[edit]

The Dutch-registered Stichting INGKA foundation is named after Ingvar Kamprad (*i.e.* ING + KA) who owns INGKA Holding, the parent company for all IKEA stores. The charitable foundation was reported by the business newspaper *The Economist* in May 2006 to be technically the world's wealthiest charity – with an estimated value of at least US\$36 billion in 2006 (larger than the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation) – but its primary purpose is corporate tax -optimization and anti-takeover protection for IKEA.^[7] Kamprad is chairman of the foundation.

Works

While generally a private person, Kamprad has published a few notable works. He first detailed the IKEA concept of frugality and enthusiasm in a manifesto entitled *A Testament of a Furniture Dealer*. Written in 1976, it has since been considered the fundamental ideology of the IKEA furniture retail concept. He also worked with Swedish journalist Bertil Torekull on the book *Leading by Design: The IKEA Story*. In the autobiographical account, he further describes his philosophies and the trials and triumphs of the founding of IKEA.

There are many stories about Ingvar Kamprad that are a part of his heritage. When he talks to IKEA staff at different locations, his main theme is often management by example, and he uses himself as an example. He always travels economy class in planes, and if he goes by train, if possible, he will sit in second class. He never stays at expensive hotels, and his theme from the *A Testament of a Furniture Dealer*, simplicity, is totally integrated in all activities within IKEA.

Fascist involvement

In 1994, the personal letters of the Swedish fascist activist Per Engdahl were made public after his death, and it was revealed that Kamprad had joined Engdahl's pro-fascist New Swedish Movement in 1942, at the age of 16. Kamprad had raised funds for and recruited members to said group at least as late as September 1945. When Kamprad quit the group is unknown, but he remained a friend of Engdahl until the early 1950s. Kamprad devotes two chapters to his time in Nysvenska Rörelsen in his book, *Leading By Design: The IKEA Story* and, in a 1994 letter to IKEA employees, called his affiliation with the organization the "greatest mistake of his life." Kamprad has explained his teenage engagement in New Swedish Movement as being politically influenced by his father and grandmother in Sudet-Germany. In 2011, journalist Elisabeth Åsbrink revealed that the Swedish secret service created a file on Kamprad already in 1943 titled "Nazi" and that Kamprad in an interview in 2010 told her: "Per Engdahl is a great man, and I will maintain that as long as I live".

Personal life

Kamprad has lived in Epalinges, Switzerland, since 1976. According to an interview with TSR, the French-language Swiss TV broadcaster, Kamprad drives a 1993 Volvo 240, flies only economy class, and encourages IKEA employees always to write on both sides of a piece of paper. He reportedly recycles tea bags and is known to pocket the salt and pepper packets at restaurants. In addition, Kamprad has been known to visit IKEA for a "cheap meal". He is known for purchasing Christmas paper and presents in post-Christmas sales. The firm he created is still known for the attention it gives to cost control, operational details and continuous product development, allowing it to lower its prices by an average of 2-3% over the decade to 2010, while continuing its global expansion. Kamprad explains his social philosophy in his "Testament of a Furniture Dealer": "It is not only for cost reasons that we avoid the luxury hotels. We don't need flashy cars, impressive titles, uniforms or other status symbols. We rely on our strength and our will!" Kamprad owns a villa in upmarket Switzerland, a large country estate in Sweden and a vineyard in Provence, France. Additionally, Kamprad was known for driving a Porsche for several years.

While working with furniture manufacturers in Poland earlier in his career, Kamprad became an alcoholic. In 2004, he said that his drinking was under control.

Kamprad's second wife, Margaretha Kamprad-Stennert, died from an undisclosed disease in 2011. In June 2013, Ingvar Kamprad announced that he intended to move back to Småland in Sweden by the end of the year

Vasaloppet

Vasaloppet (literally, *The Vasa race*) is an annual long distance (90 km) cross-country ski race (ski marathon) held on the first Sunday of March in northwestern Dalarna, Sweden between the village of Sälen and town of Mora. It is the oldest, the longest, and the biggest (in terms of participants) cross-country ski race in the world. In the 80th race, held on 7 March 2004, some 15,500 skiers competed in the main event. More than 40,000 participated in one of the seven different races held during the first week of March. The race was first run in 1922, inspired by a run by King Gustav Vasa in 1520. The winner of the first race was Ernst Alm from Norsjö, 22 years old, who is also the youngest ever winner of the race. Vasaloppet is one of the races in the long distance cup Ski Classics.



Women's Vasa (*Tjejvasan*), start 2006

Legend



King Gustav I of Sweden (Vasa)

In 1520, the young nobleman Gustav Ericsson Vasawas escaping from the troops of Christian II, king of Denmark, Sweden and Norway (the Kalmar Union). Much of the Swedish nobility was in opposition to the king, and had nicknamed him *Christian the Tyrant*. In a move to silence the opposition, Christian invited the Swedish aristocracy to a reconciliation party in Stockholm, only to have them, including Gustav's parents, massacred in what came to be known as the Stockholm Bloodbath.

Gustav was escaping through Dalarna, fearing for his life if he were discovered by the king's troops, when he spoke to the assembled men of Mora and tried to convince them to raise a levy and start a rebellion against King Christian. The men refused to join the rebellion, and Gustav started toward Norway to seek refuge. However, he was later caught at Sälen by two Mora brothers on skis - the men in Mora had changed their minds after hearing that the Danish rulers had decided to raise taxes, and they now wanted Gustav to lead the rebellion. On 6 June 1523, Gustav Vasa was crowned king of Sweden, having defeated the Danish king Christian and dissolved the Kalmar Union. Sweden has been fully independent ever since.

World cup race

- The Swedish Vasaloppet is included in the Worldloppet Ski Federation, a series of long-distance cross-country skiing races.
- In 2006, the Vasaloppet was included in the FIS Cross-Country World Cup; a large complement of World Cup racers joined the men's field for the full 90 km distance. Owing to the distance—40 km longer than the longest race usually skied in the World Cup—as well as the proximity to the just-concluded Olympic Games in Torino, the race was again dominated by long-distance specialists rather than World Cup racers. Daniel Tynell won the race, just ahead of Jerry Ahrlin, while Anders Aukland - who has skied on both the Norwegian national World Cup team and in marathons like the Vasaloppet - finished third.

The women's World Cup Vasaloppet was held over 45 km the previous day, rather than being integrated with the full Vasaloppet. Marit Bjørgen of Norway won easily, though the field included only World Cup racers, since the marathon specialists chose to race in the full-distance event the next day.

Vasaloppet week

The week preceding Vasaloppet is known as Vasaloppet week. Races held during this week include:

- KortVasan (short - 30 km)
- TjejVasan (ladies - 30 km)
- HalvVasan (half - 45 km)
- UngdomsVasan (9–16 years old) (3–9 km)
- Öppet spår (non-competitive 90 km)
- StafettVasan (relay 90 km)
- SkejtVasan (free technique 30 km and 45 km).
- Vasaloppet (90 km)

During the race, people along the track supply cups of water and blueberry soup. The blueberry soup has become legendary.

Here is how to make it:

SWEDISH BLUEBERRY SOUP:

Prep Time: 5 minutes

Cook Time: 20 minutes

Total Time: 25 minutes

Yield: Serves 4

Ingredients:

- 4 cups blueberries or huckleberries, fresh or frozen
- 4 cups water
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 3 tablespoons potato starch flour or cornstarch
- 3 tablespoons water

PREPARATION:

Wash the blueberries well (defrosting them first if frozen); pick out any bad or shrivelled ones. Combine the water and sugar in a large saucepan and bring to a boil, stirring to dissolve the sugar. Add the berries, return to a boil, then reduce heat to medium-high. Maintain a steady simmer for 15-20 minutes, until many of the berries have broken down.

Whisk together the potato starch flour and the water, then stir it into the soup to thicken it. Once the soup has thickened, taste for sweetness and add more sugar, if desired.

Serve warm, either as a dessert soup like dried fruit sweet soup or as a breakfast soup - or do as the Swedes do, pour it in a thermos, and head for the slopes.

Våffeldagen (Waffel Day)



Waffles, a Swedish specialty

On the 25th of March every year, Swedes dust off their waffle irons to indulge in newly baked waffles with jam and lightly whipped cream. The tradition actually stems from a misunderstanding. The original Christian celebration on that day, Lady Day, in Swedish "Vårfrudagen", became in the vernacular "Våffeldagen" which means Waffel Day.

Swedes started making waffles baked in square irons used directly the open fire already in the 17th century. The nowadays so characteristic rounded iron making heart shaped waffles came around in the 19th century.

The whole idea with waffles, in Sweden and anywhere else, is to get them crispy; this is really what differentiates them from pancakes. To do so one need a hot iron and good batter. The batter can be varied in infinite ways, but is usually based on flour, water, butter and cream or milk.

The jam is preferably made of either half and half of blueberries and raspberries (drottning sylt) or cloudberry. In Sweden, today being a truly multicultural society, people enjoy an array of different

styles of waffles, including Norwegian waffles spiced with cardamom, waffles the American way with ice cream or syrup, or Belgian waffles with icing sugar.

Make your own Swedish waffels

1.25 cups cold water

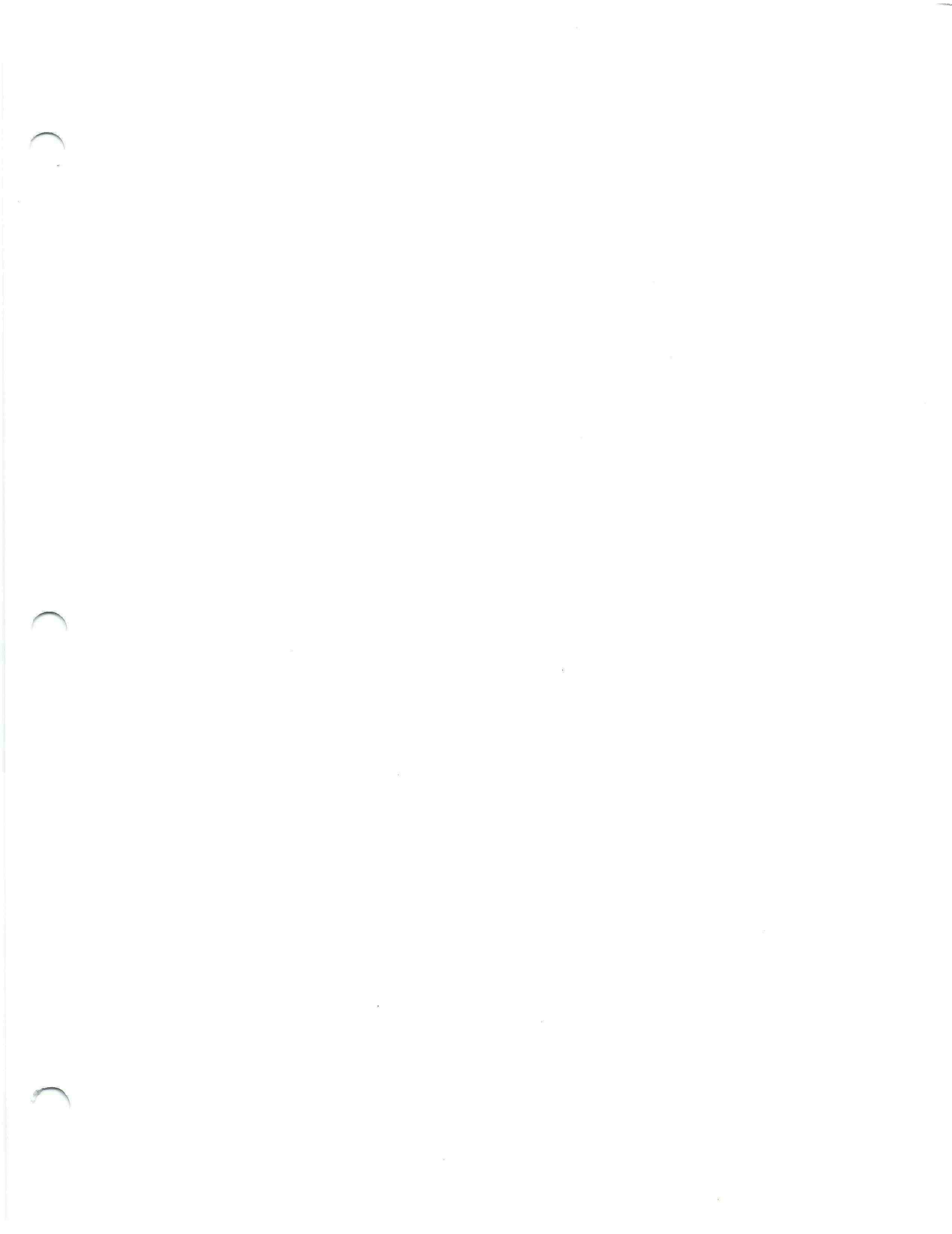
1.5 cups flour

1 pinch of salt

2 cups whipping cream

Butter for the waffle iron. Whipping cream and raspberry, strawberry or cloudberry jam to put on top.

1. Mix water, flour and salt until smooth. Whip cream until stiff and fold together with batter.
2. Bake with butter in a waffle iron at full power and put them on a grid to cool.
3. Beat the cream and place on waffles with jam.



APRIL

Easter (All countries Apr 5)

National Veterans Day (Finland)

Max Von Sydow – Swedish actor

Valborg's Mass – Valpurgis Night

Easter in Norway:

In Norway, Easter break is longer than in many other European countries. The Easter holidays start Wednesday afternoon before Maundy Thursday, and end on Tuesday morning after Easter Monday. This makes for a nice long Easter weekend in Norway. A quite peculiar national trait in Norway is solving crimes during Easter. Publishers churn out series of books known as "Easter-Thrillers" or Påskekrimmen. Even the milk cartons change to have murder stories on their sides!

Another popular pastime is Yathzee. Norwegians also like to decorate a lot during Easter, especially with yellow chicken figurines, drawings, etc. Outdoor lovers often spend Easter break skiing on one of Norway's popular ski resorts.

"Easter" in Norwegian is *Påske*.

Easter in Denmark:

In Denmark, the Easter decorations in homes and shops are green and yellow and often feature daffodils or newly-grown branches. Eggs are colored and are often added as decoration.

There is a unique Danish Easter tradition: The custom of sending teaser letters. A few weeks before Easter (generally done on Valentine's Day), Danes cut out letters on which they write a secret poem. They send the letter anonymously (accompanied by a snowdrop flower) and only sign it with dots for their name. If the recipient can guess or find out who sent the Easter poem, he or she receives the reward in form of an egg at Easter.

Denmark's traditional Easter food consists of types of eggs and Danish locals often add to this chicken, fish, or lamb at Easter.

"Easter" in Danish is *Påske*.

Easter in Finland:

Easter in Finland is traditionally celebrated with easter-egg hunts for the children, and many Finns go to church on Easter Sunday. The eggs (hard-boiled, chocolate or candy eggs) are hidden in the house or outside in the garden by parents. Then, the children are sent outside and can keep whatever Easter goodies they find.

"Pääsiäinen" means Easter in Finnish.

You will find that Easter decorations in Finland show lots of colored eggs and yellow flowers (e.g. daffodils). Some Finnish families sow grass in small pots before Easter, and put eggs in them when the grass has grown. Another Easter tradition in Finland you might see is children walking between houses, handing out twigs or decorations, asking for a few coins in exchange. Traditional Easter food in Finland can be ham, poultry, or lamb.

Easter in Sweden:

In Sweden, common Easter traditions include egg painting. Children dressed up as Easter witches with long skirts, colorful headscarves and painted red cheeks, go from house to

house in the neighborhood and present the occupants with paintings and drawings in the hope of getting sweets in return. According to Swedish folklore, during Easter the witches fly to Blåkulla (the Blue Mountain) to meet the devil.

Small branches and twigs of willow or birch are a common sight in every Swedish house during the Easter holidays. Feathers and small decorations are also placed on these twigs in a vase.

For lunch/dinner on Holy Saturday, families traditionally feast on a smörgåsbord of herring, salmon, potatoes, eggs and other kinds of food. Most businesses are closed in Sweden during the Easter holidays.

"Easter" in Swedish is *Påsk*.

National veterans' day (Finnish: *kansallinen veteraanipäivä*) is a remembrance day for all the war veterans in Finland. It is celebrated on 27 April.

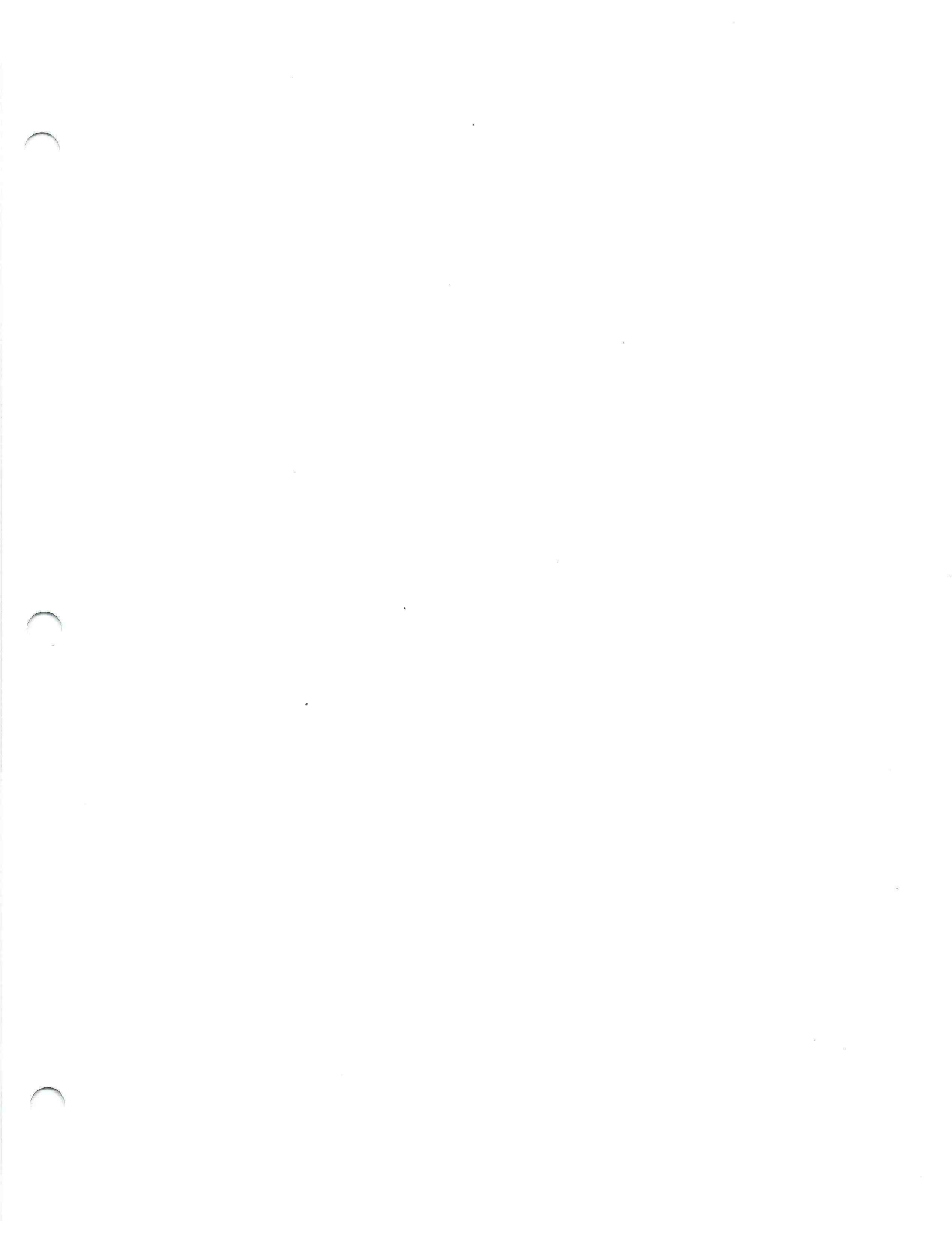
On 27 April 1945, the very last German troops had left Finland and crossed the border to Norway (then occupied by Nazi-Germany) in the municipality of Enontekiö and the Finnish defense forces achieved the three-country border of Norway, neutral Sweden and Finland. According to the Moscow Armistice Finland was obliged to demand the German troops to leave Finland by 15 September 1944, which was technically impossible.

The Germans executed the operation Tanne Ost to occupy Suursaari from the Finns and defend the Estonian coast from the Soviet Baltic Navy on the Eastern isles of the Baltic Sea. The Finns, on their behalf, at the request of the Allied Moscow Armistice controlling committee, attacked the Germans in Tornio, which was the end of the phony war and the beginning of the real war of Lapland.

The **Lapland War** (Finnish: *Lapin sota*; Swedish: *Laplandskriget*; German: *Laplandkrieg*) was fought between Finland and Germany from September 1944 to April 1945 in Finland's northernmost Lapland Province. While the Finns saw this as a separate conflict much like the Continuation War, German forces considered their actions to be part of the Second World War. A peculiarity of the war was that the Finnish army was forced to demobilise their forces while at the same time fighting to force the German army to leave Finland. Even if the day reminds a victory day, it is not celebrated as such. Among the events there are services in the Evangelical Lutheran churches, honorary guards on the war hero tombs, deposing wreath and the collecting money for the charity of the last war veterans' needs.

History

On the initiative of the war veteran organizations, the state council (cabinet) declared 27 April 1986 the national veterans' day. The first national veterans' day was celebrated the first time in Lahti, 27 April 1987. There is one main event and several smaller main events in the various regions and many local events.



Max von Sydow

Max von Sydow



Von Sydow at the 2006 San Sebastián International Film Festival

Born	Carl Adolf von Sydow 10 April 1929 (age 85) Lund, Skåne, Sweden
Occupation	Actor
Years active	1949–present
Spouse(s)	Kerstin Olin (1951–1979; two sons) Catherine Brelet (1997–present)

Carl Adolf "Max" von Sydow (born 10 April 1929) is a Swedish actor who has also held French citizenship since 2002.^[2] He has starred in many films and had supporting roles in dozens more in many languages, including Swedish, Norwegian, English, Italian, German, Danish, French and Spanish. Von Sydow received the Royal Foundation of Sweden's Cultural Award in 1954, was made a *Commandeur des Arts et des Lettres* in 2005, and was named a *Chevalier de la Légion d'honneur* on 17 October 2012.

Some of his most memorable film roles include

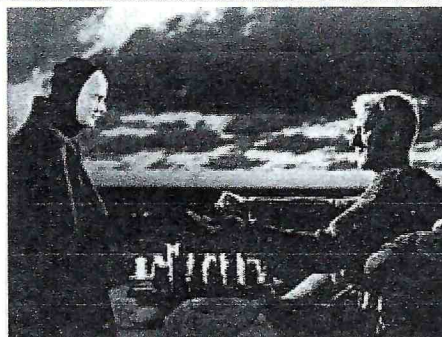
Knight Antonius Block in Ingmar Bergman's *The Seventh Seal* (1957), the first of his eleven films with Bergman, and the film that includes the iconic scenes in which he plays chess with Death; Martin in *Through a Glass Darkly*(1961); Jesus in *The Greatest Story Ever Told*(1965); Oktober in *The Quiller Memorandum*(1966); Karl Oskar Nilsson in *The Emigrants*(1971); Roy Lindberg in *Eblekrigen (The Applewar)*(1971).Father Lankester Merrin in *The Exorcist* (1973); Joubert the assassin in *Three Days of the Condor* (1975); Ming the Merciless in *Flash Gordon* (1980); the villain Ernst Stavro Blofeld in the James Bond film *Never Say Never Again* (1983); Liet-Kynes in *Dune*(1984); Frederick in *Hannah and Her Sisters* (1986); Lassefar in *Pelle the Conqueror* (1987), for which he received his first Academy Award nomination; Dr. Peter Ingham in *Awakenings*(1990); Lamar Burgess in *Minority Report* (2002) and The Renter in *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close* (2012), which earned him his second Academy Award nomination.

Early life

Max von Sydow was born **Carl Adolf von Sydow**, to a wealthy family, in Lund, Skåne. His father, Carl Wilhelm von Sydow, was an ethnologist and professor of Irish, Scandinavian, and comparative folklore at the University of Lund. His mother, the former Baroness Maria Margareta "Greta" Rappe, was a schoolteacher.^{[4][5][6]} Von Sydow was raised as a Lutheran and later became an agnostic.^[7]

He attended Lund Cathedral School, and learned German and English starting at the age of nine. At school, he and some friends founded an amateur theatre company. He completed National Service before studying at the Royal Dramatic Theatre ("Dramaten") in Stockholm, where he trained between 1948 and 1951 with the likes of Lars Ekborg, Margaretha Krook and Ingrid Thulin. During his time at Dramaten, he made his screen debut in Alf Sjöberg's films *Only a Mother* (*Bara en mor*, 1949), and *Miss Julie* (*Fröken Julie*, 1951), a screen version of Strindberg's scathing drama.

Career



Von Sydow plays chess with Death in Ingmar Bergman's *The Seventh Seal*

In 1955, he moved to Malmö, where he met his mentor, Ingmar Bergman. His first work with Bergman occurred on stage at the Malmö Municipal Theatre. Von Sydow later would work with Bergman on films such as The Seventh Seal (Det sjunde inseglet, 1957), Wild Strawberries (Smultronstället, 1957) and The Virgin Spring (Jungfrukällan, 1960). In The Seventh Seal, von Sydow is the knight who plays a chess game with Death. The chess scenes and the film were international breakthroughs for actor and director alike. It was in these films where von Sydow honed and perfected his craft.

Von Sydow came to dominate the screen as he did the stage, becoming an idol of the international arthouse film scene. Critical recognition came as early as 1954 when he was awarded the Royal Foundation Culture Award. He worked profusely on both stage and screen while in Scandinavia, resisting the increasing calls from the United States to go to Hollywood. After being seen in Bergman's Academy Award-winning films and having been first choice for the title role of Dr. No, von Sydow finally went to America after agreeing to star in the film which led to much greater recognition, in the role of Jesus in George Stevens' all-star epic The Greatest Story Ever Told (1965). As his talents were soon in demand in other American productions, von Sydow and his family relocated for some time to Los Angeles. From 1965, he became a regular on the American screen while maintaining a presence in his native Sweden. In 1969, he appeared in John Huston's The Kremlin Letter, and in 1971 gave a powerful, quiet performance in Jan Troell's acclaimed The Emigrants alongside actress Liv Ullmann. Though often typecast as a villain, he was rewarded in the United States with two Golden Globe nominations, for Hawaii in 1966 and The Exorcist in 1973.



Two hundred years to the day since King Gustav III, who founded Dramaten, was assassinated, von Sydow attended a meeting there on 16 March 1992 commemorating the date.

In the mid-1970s, von Sydow moved to Rome and appeared in a number of Italian films, becoming friendly with another screen legend, Marcello Mastroianni. In the U.S., he played a memorably professional Alsatian assassin in Three Days of the Condor (1975), a role which won him the KCFCC Award for Best Supporting Actor.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, he appeared in Flash Gordon (1980), Strange Brew (1983), David Lynch's Dune(1984), and Woody Allen's Hannah and Her Sisters (1986). In 1985, he was a member of the jury at the 35th Berlin International Film Festival.^[6] He was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Actor for his performance in the Danish film Pelle the Conqueror (1987), which won an Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film.



Von Sydow at the 2013 Cannes Film Festival.

Von Sydow has since won the Australian Film Institute's Best Actor Award for his title role in Father (1989), the Guldbagge Best Director Award for his only directorial foray, Katinka (*Ved vejen*, 1988), based on a novel by Herman Bang, and the Best Actor Award at the Tokyo International Film Festival for The Silent Touch (*Dotknięcie ręki*, 1993). He received international acclaim for his performance as Nobel Prize–winning novelist Knut Hamsun in Jan Troell's biopic Hamsun.

He received his third Swedish Guldbagge and his second Danish Bodil for his depiction of a character often described as his King Lear. In 1996, he starred in Liv Ullmann's Private Confessions (*Enskilda samtal*). Back in Hollywood, he appeared in What Dreams May Come.

He was acclaimed for his role as an elderly lawyer in Scott Hicks' Snow Falling on Cedars. In 2002, von Sydow had one of his largest commercial successes, co-starring with Tom Cruise in Steven Spielberg's science fiction thriller Minority Report. In 2003, he played mentor character Eyvind in the European TV adaptation of the Ring of the Nibelung saga. The show set ratings records and was released in the US as Dark Kingdom: The Dragon King. In 2007,

von Sydow starred in the box-office hit *Rush Hour 3*. He followed that with Julian Schnabel's foreign film *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly*, based on the memoir by Jean-Dominique Bauby.

Recently, von Sydow appeared in Showtime's drama series *The Tudors*, where he portrayed Cardinal Otto Truchsess von Waldburg, a German-born clergyman who tries to organize the defeat of King Henry VIII. He also appeared in Martin Scorsese's 2010 film adaptation of *Shutter Island* and Ridley Scott's 2010 adaptation of *Robin Hood*, playing Robin's blind stepfather, Sir Walter Loxley.

Von Sydow voices the character of Esbern in *The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim*, which was released on 11 November 2011. He narrated the initial teaser trailer for the game.^{[9][10]}

In April 2013, von Sydow was honored at the Turner Classic Movie (TCM) Festival in Hollywood, with screenings of two of his classic films, *Three Days of the Condor* and *The Seventh Seal*.^[11]

In March 2014, von Sydow guest starred in the animated sitcom *The Simpsons*.

On April 29, 2014, it was announced that von Sydow had been cast in *Star Wars Episode VII*.

Personal life

On 1 August 1951, von Sydow married actress Christina Inga Britta Olin (born 1926 – died 1998); the couple had two sons, Clas and Henrik, who appeared with him in the film *Hawaii*, playing his son at different ages. He and Olin divorced on 26 February 1979.

Von Sydow married French filmmaker Catherine Brelet on 30 April 1997 in *Provence*. He received French citizenship in 2002 and holds only French citizenship now.

Walpurgis Night

Walpurgis Night



Walpurgisnacht in Heidelberg

Observed by The Czechs, Dutch, Estonians, Finns, Germans, Latvians and Swedes

Type Cultural

Celebrations Bonfires, dancing

Date 30 April or 1 May

Frequency annual

Related to May Day, Beltane

Walpurgis Night is the English translation of *Walpurgisnacht*, the German name for the night of 30 April, so called because it is the eve of the feast day of Saint Walpurga, an 8th-century abbess in Germany. In German folklore Walpurgisnacht is believed to be the night of a witches' meeting on the Brocken, the highest peak in the Harz Mountains, a range of wooded hills in central Germany between the rivers Weser and Elbe. The first known written occurrence of the English translation 'Walpurgis Night' is from the 19th century. Local variants of Walpurgis Night are observed across Europe in the Netherlands, Germany, the Czech Republic, Sweden, Lithuania, Latvia, Finland and Estonia.

Name



Title illustration of Johannes Praetorius (writer) (de)' *Blocksbergs Verrichtung* (1668)

The current festival is, in most countries that celebrate it, named after the English missionary Saint Walpurga (ca. 710–777/9). As Walpurga was canonized on 1 May (ca. 870), she became associated with May Day, especially in the Finnish and Swedish calendars. The eve of May Day, traditionally celebrated with dancing, came to be known as *Walpurgisnacht* ("Walpurga's night"). The name of the holiday is *Walpurgisnacht* in German and Dutch, *Valborgsmässoafton* in Swedish, "Vappen" in Finland Swedish, *Vappu* in Finnish, *Volbriöö*, (*Walpurgi öö*) in Estonian, *Valpurģijos naktis* in Lithuanian, *Valpurģu nakts* or *Valpurģi* in Latvian, *čarodějnice* and *Valpuržina noc* in Czech.

The German term is recorded in 1668 by Johannes Praetorius (de) as *S. Walpurgis Nacht* or *S. Walpurgis Abend*. An earlier mention of *Walpurgis* and *S. Walpurgis Abend* is in the 1603 edition of the *Calendarium perpetuum* of Johann Coler,¹ who also refers to the following day, 1 May, as *Jacobi Philippi*, feast day of the apostles James the Less and Philip in the Catholic calendar.

The 17th century German tradition of a meeting of sorcerers and witches on May Day is influenced by the descriptions of Witches' Sabbaths in 15th and 16th century literature.

Walpurgis Night is very similar to Chaharshanbe Suri, an Iranian ceremony which is held on the last Wednesday of winter to celebrate spring and Iranian new year, Nowruz. Chaharshanbe Suri is also held in other parts of greater Iran.

Czech Republic

30 April is *pálení čarodějnic* ("burning of the witches") or *čarodějnice* ("the witches") in the Czech Republic, the day when winter is ceremonially brought to the end by the burning of rag and straw witches or just broomsticks on bonfires around the country. The festival offers Czechs the chance to eat, drink and be merry around a roaring fire.

Estonia

In Estonia, *Volbriöö* is celebrated throughout the night of 30 April and into the early hours of 1 May, where 1 May is a public holiday called "Spring Day" (*Kevadpüha*). *Volbriöö* is an important and widespread celebration of the arrival of spring in the country. Influenced by German culture, the night originally stood for the gathering and meeting of witches. Modern people still dress up as witches to wander the streets in a carnival-like mood.

The *Volbriöö* celebrations are especially vigorous in Tartu, the university town in southern Estonia. For Estonian students in student corporations (fraternities and sororities), the night starts with a traditional procession through the streets of Tartu, followed by visiting each other's corporation houses throughout the night.

Finland

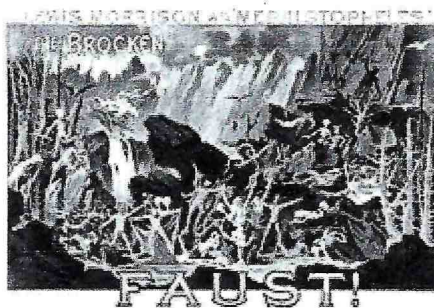


People at a Vappu picnic in Kaivopuisto in 2008

In Finland, Walpurgis day (*Vappu*) is one of the four biggest holidays along with Christmas Eve, New Year's Eve, and Midsummer (*Juhannus*). Walpurgis witnesses the biggest carnival-style festival held in the streets of Finland's towns and cities. The celebration, which begins on the evening of 30 April and continues to 1 May, typically centres on copious consumption of sima, sparkling wine and other alcoholic beverages. Student traditions, particularly those of the engineering students, are one of the main characteristics of *Vappu*. Since the end of the 19th century, this traditional upper-class feast has been appropriated by university students. Many *lukio* (university-preparatory high school) alumni (who are thus traditionally assumed to be university bound), wear a cap. One tradition is to drink sima, a home-made low-alcohol mead, along with freshly cooked funnel cakes.

In the capital Helsinki and its surrounding region, fixtures include the capping (on 30 April at 6 pm) of the *Havis Amanda*, a nude female statue in Helsinki, and the biennially alternating publications of ribald matter called *Äpy* and *Julkku*, by engineering students of Aalto University. Both are sophomoric; but while *Julkku* is a standard magazine, *Äpy* is always a gimmick. Classic forms have included an *Äpy* printed on toilet paper and a bedsheet. Often, the magazine has been stuffed inside standard industrial packages, such as sardine cans and milk cartons. For most university students, *Vappu* starts a week before the day of celebration. The festivities also include a picnic on 1 May, which is sometimes prepared in a lavish manner, particularly in Ullanlinnanmäki in Helsinki city.

Germany



Lewis Morrison as "Mephistopheles" in Faust! – "The Brocken". Poster for a theatrical performance of Goethe's play showing Mephistopheles conjuring supernatural creatures on the German mountain, the Brocken (or Blocksberg), which according to the tale is the scenery for the Walpurgisnight, from 30 April to 1 May.

In Germany, **Walpurgisnacht**, the night from 30 April to 1 May, is the night when witches are reputed to hold a large celebration on the Brocken and await the arrival of spring.

Walpurgis Night (in German folklore) the night of 30 April (May Day's eve), when witches meet on the Brocken mountain and hold revels with their gods..."

Brocken is the highest of the Harz Mountains of north central Germany. It is noted for the phenomenon of the Brocken spectre and for witches' revels which reputedly took place there on Walpurgis night.

The Brocken Spectre is a magnified shadow of an observer, typically surrounded by rainbow-like bands, thrown onto a bank of cloud in high mountain areas when the sun is low. The phenomenon was first reported on the Brocken.

Sweden

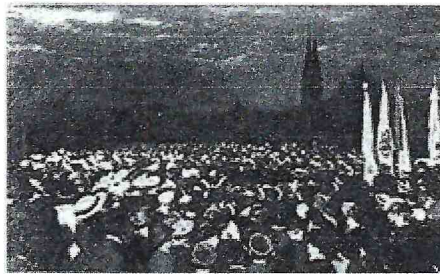
While the name Walpurgis is taken from the eighth-century English missionary Saint Walburga, "Valborg", as it is called in Swedish, has very little to do with religion and everything to do with the arrival of spring. The forms of celebration vary in different parts of the country and between different cities. Walpurgis celebrations are not a family occasion but rather a public event, and local groups often take responsibility for organising them to encourage community spirit in the village or neighbourhood.



Walpurgis Night bonfire in Sweden

In the Middle Ages, the administrative year ended on 30 April. Accordingly, this was a day of festivity among the merchants and craftsmen of the town, with trick-or-treat, dancing and singing in preparation for the forthcoming celebration of spring. Sir James George Frazer in *The Golden Bough* writes, "The first of May is a great popular festival in the more midland and southern parts of Sweden. On the eve of the festival, huge bonfires, which should be lighted by striking two flints together, blaze on all the hills and knolls."^[6]

Walpurgis bonfires are part of a Swedish tradition dating back to the early 18th century. At Walpurgis (*Valborg*), farm animals were let out to graze and bonfires (*majbrasor*, *kasar*) lit to scare away predators." In Southern Sweden, an older tradition, no longer practiced, was for the younger people to collect greenery and branches from the woods at twilight. These were used to adorn the houses of the village. The expected reward for this task was to be paid in eggs.



A large crowd, mostly students in typical Swedish white student caps, participating in the traditional Walpurgis Night celebration with song outside the Castle in Uppsala. The silhouette of the cathedral towers may be seen in the background. To the right are banners and standards of the student nations. Image from c. 1920.

Choral singing is a popular pastime in Sweden, and on Walpurgis Eve virtually every choir in the country is busy. Singing traditional songs of spring is widespread throughout the country. The songs are mostly from the 19th century and were spread by students' spring festivities. The strongest and most traditional spring festivities are also found in the old university cities, such as Uppsala and Lund, where undergraduates, graduates, and alumni gather at events that last most of the day from early morning to late night on April 30th, or *siste april* ("The Last Day Of April") as it is called in Lund, or *sista april* as it is called in Uppsala. For students, Walpurgis Eve heralds freedom. Exams are over and only the odd lecture remains before term ends. On the last day of April, the students don their characteristic white caps and sing songs of welcome to spring, to the budding greenery and to a brighter future.

More modern Valborg celebrations, particularly among Uppsala students, often consist of enjoying a breakfast including champagne and strawberries. During the day, people gather in parks, drink considerable amounts of alcoholic beverages, barbecue, and generally enjoy the weather, if it happens to be favorable.

In Uppsala, since the mid-1970s, students honor spring by rafting on Fyrisån through the center of town with rickety, homemade, in fact quite easily wreckable, and often humorously decorated rafts. Several nations also hold "Champagne Races" (Swedish: *Champagnegalopp*), where students go to drink and spray champagne or somewhat more modestly priced sparkling wine on each other. The walls and floors of the old nation buildings are covered in plastic for this occasion, as the champagne is poured around recklessly and sometimes spilled enough to wade in. Spraying champagne is, however, a fairly recent addition to the Champagne Race. The name derives from the

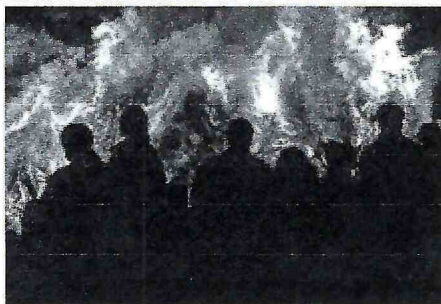
students running down the downhill slope from the Carolina Rediviva library, toward the Student Nations, to drink champagne.

In Linköping, the students and public gather at the courtyard of Linköping Castle. Spring songs are sung by the Linköping University Male Voice Choir, and speeches are made by representatives of the students and the university professors.

In Gothenburg, the carnival parade, The Cortège, which has been held since 1909 by the students at Chalmers University of Technology, is an important part of the celebration. It is seen by around 250,000 people each year. Another major event is the gathering of students in Trädgårdsföreningen to listen to student choirs, orchestras, and speeches. An important part of the gathering is the ceremonial donning of the student cap, which stems from the time when students wore their caps daily and switched from black winter cap to white summer cap.

In Umeå, there is a tradition of having local bonfires. During recent years, however, there has been a tradition of celebrating Walpurgis at the Umeå University campus. The university organizes student choir songs, there are different types of entertainment and a speech by the president of the university. Different stalls sell hot dogs, candies, soft drinks, etc.

The Netherlands[edit]



Walpurgis night bonfires

As in all Germanic countries, Walpurgisnacht was celebrated in areas of what is now the Netherlands.^[7] It is not celebrated today due to the national *Koningsdag* falling on the same date, though the new *koningsdag* (king's day) is on the 27th of April. The island of Texel celebrates a festival known as the 'Meierblis (nl)' (roughly translated as 'May-Blaze') on that same day, when bonfires are lit near nightfall, just as on Walpurgis.^[citation needed] Occasional mentions to the ritual occur, and at least once a feminist group co-opted the name to call for attention to the position of women (following the example of German women's organizations^[8]), a variety of the Take Back the Night phenomenon.^[9]

Still, in recent years a renewed interest in pre-Christian religion and culture has led to renewed interest in Walpurgis Night as well.^[10] In 1999 suspicions were raised of a Walpurgis festival celebrated by Satanists in Putten (Gelderland) with local Christian parties in local government calling for a ban, but that such a festival existed, and that it was Satanic, was believed only by those political parties.^[11] Rumors that Satanic sects celebrate Walpurgis Night come from other towns as well, with the local churches in Dokkum (Friesland) organizing, in 2003, a service to pray to the Holy Spirit to counter such Satanic action.^[12]

MAY

Scandinavian Traditions in May

Constitution Day/ Syttende Mai (Norway May 17)

Recipe for Norway's National Dish

Elliot Ness – famous crime fighter

General Prayer Day (Denmark) May 16

Recipe for Prayer Day Buns

SCANDINAVIAN TRADITIONS IN MAY

May is a celebrated month in all the Scandinavian countries. It starts with May 1st, which is celebrated internationally as Labor day, and usually features great parades by all the trade unions and most political parties as well.

Families like to go out for picnics, and in Finland it continues into the night, as a carnival with special foods and entertainment.

All the countries also have student celebrations in this month. University students go out and play pranks, and raise hell. But they also march and sing and most people enjoy their spring antics, even though it can become a little boisterous at times. In Sweden, Finland and Denmark they wear white caps with black brims. In Norway they are red.

Liberation Day is celebrated in both Denmark, on May 5, and in Norway on May 8, the respective days, when German WWII occupation ended for them.

Iceland hosts a great art festival for two weeks in May, that brings many international artists to their country and tourists also.

Denmark celebrates "Great Prayer Day" in May, which nowadays usually consists of walking around the city to hear the church bells ring and eating warm wheat buns.

All the countries also celebrate Ascension Day, which usually but not always falls in May.

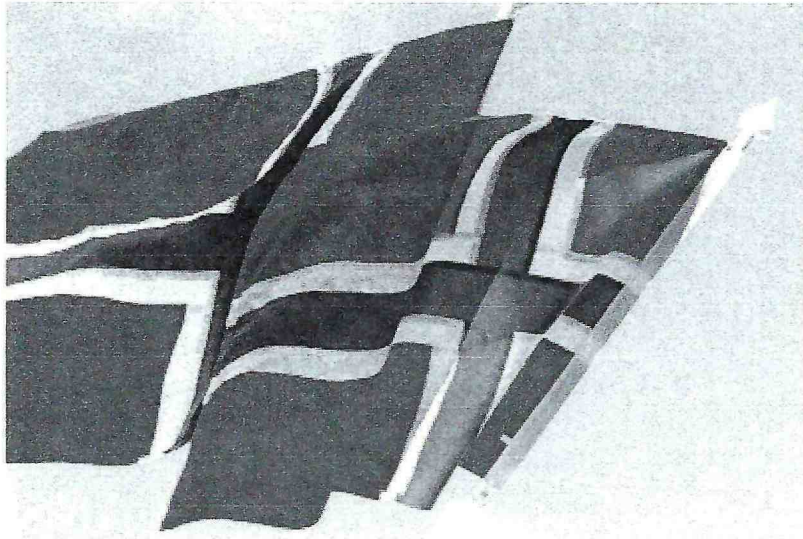
The traditions surrounding this holiday are many and varied. It's a popular weekend for weddings. In older times people walked around the parish borders, to mark them and teach younger people where they were. Farmers might take a walk around their properties for the same reason.

In Sweden, on Ascension Day morning at sunrise, people go out into the woods to listen for the first cuckoo. If it comes from the east or west it's considered a lucky sign, not so much if from another direction. We call it "Gökotta".

As far as food goes, fish and eggs are very popular for parties. In Finland they drink Mead for their celebrations and they make small fried pastries like funnel cakes. Pickled herring is big everywhere and tall "Kranse kake" with lots of Norwegian flags on syttende mai of course. The Danes love their beer and snaps and so do the Swedes. It's a celebration of everything SPRING!

SYTTENDE MAI, NORWAY'S CONSTITUTION DAY

MAY 13, 2014 BY WHITNEY LOVE 2 COMMENTS



This year marks the 200-year anniversary of Syttende Mai, or the 17th of May as it colloquially referred to. This year Syttende Mai celebrations all over the world will be extra special in marking of the day the Norwegian constitution was signed in Eidsvoll, Norway in 1814.

Although condemned in its early years by the Swedish and then Norwegian king, this celebration of Norwegian statehood marks one of the occasions every year Norwegians wear their traditional outfits called bunads, take to the streets in parades, celebrate with family (plus eat lots of cakes and drink strong, dark coffee). Syttende Mai occurs during the end of the school year and gives high school students in Norway a chance to put an end to all of their russing!

HISTORY

Syttende Mai, or 17th of May as it colloquially called or Constitution Day (*Grunnlovsdagen* in Norwegian) as it is more formally called, celebrates the day the Norwegian constitution was signed in Eidsvoll, Norway on May 17,

1814. Syttende Mai is an annual celebration of all things Norwegian. It celebrates Norway's declaration as an independent nation from Sweden although full independence would come in 1905.

PARADES

Every city and town in Norway has at least a children's parade to celebrate Syttende Mai. Children and their adult counterparts march down the streets of their neighborhood in bunads or their best formal clothing, waving flags or playing their instruments if they are apart of their school's marching band. In larger cities, such as Stavanger, there is also commonly a parade for the adults in town to march in celebration of Syttende Mai. The largest parade on Syttende Mai is in Oslo, the Norwegian capital, and includes more than 75 schools and marching bands. The Oslo parade route includes a trip past the Royal Palace, where the Norwegian Royal Family greets parade participants and passer byers from the main balcony.

Outside of Norway, Norwegians and Norwegian descendants all over the world celebrate Syttende Mai. The largest population of Norwegian emigrants travelled to the U.S., which means the U.S. also has the largest Syttende Mai parades outside of Norway. In the U.S., parades, speeches and fun runs are held in towns and cities with sizable Norwegian emigrant populations such as Seattle, Washington, Brooklyn, New York, Stoughton, Wisconsin, Minneapolis, Minnesota and Billings, Montana. The Syttende Mai parade in Seattle lays claim to being the third largest in the world behind Bergen and Oslo.

ICE CREAM, HOT DOGS AND LOTS OF CAKES

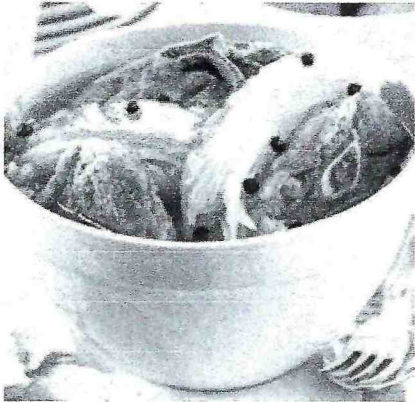
Norwegians celebrate Syttende Mai by eating of ice cream (*is* in Norwegian) and hot dogs (*pølse* in Norwegian) during the parades or shortly after. Later in the day, after the parades have finished, Norwegians tend to gather with other family members for *smørbrød* (open-faced sandwiches) served with milk, juice and carbonated water as well as coffee and tea. Several varieties of cakes are also served on Syttende Mai, including the classic *bløtkake* (a cousin to the

very British Victoria sponge), Sukseskake ("success cake") or Verdensbeste ("The Best Cake in the World"). More coffee is of course served to help wash it all down.

NORWAY'S NEW NATIONAL DISH TO CHANGE

In January 2014, in celebration of the bicentenary of the signing of the Norwegian constitution, Food and agriculture minister Sylvi Listhaug launched a competition to find a new Norwegian national dish. Listhaug called for this competition in order to get Norwegians to think seriously about their national dish, fårikål, as well as their regional specialties. Entrants to the contest must be sourced from ingredients produced in Norway. Norwegians have been celebrating fårikål, a dish comprised of boiled cabbage and lamb meat, as the Norwegian national dish since 1972.

The contest, which has its own Norges nasjonalrett 2014 Facebook page, started no less than a fire storm, with some asking for Listhaug's resignation instead of updating their beloved national dish. While the controversy has died down since the contest was first announced, some have started to wonder if the new national dish will also reflect the more recent immigrant groups to Norway. So far, dishes like Norwegian meatballs in brown sauce, lapskaus, fiskeboller in white sauce and poached salmon among others have been gaining ground as the new national dish in Norway.



Fårikål (lamb-cabbage stew)

Ingredients (serves 6)

- 2 ½ kg lamb/hogget/mutton on the bone (shoulder, shank or neck) cut into 3cm slices
- 2 ½ kg green cabbage
- 500ml water
- 6 tsp whole black peppercorns
- Salt, to taste (about 3 tsp or so)

Method

1. Cut the cabbage into quarters down the core and cut each quarter into 3-4 wedges (the idea is to keep part of the core on each segment, which will hold the leaves together and prevent the whole thing disintegrating while cooking).
2. Pour the water into a large casserole pot. Place a layer of lamb, then a layer of cabbage into the pot, seasoning each layer with salt and some of the whole peppercorns as you go.
3. Repeat this layering process until you have used up all the ingredients. The final layer on the top should always be cabbage.
4. Cover tightly and bring to the boil
5. Simmer over a very low heat for 2-3 hours until the lamb is really tender and falling off the bone (check the water level now and then, making sure the pan doesn't run dry).
6. Serve on warmed plates with boiled potatoes, flatbrød, and homemade lingonberry jam. The juices in the bottom of the pot make an excellent gravy.

Elliot Ness

Elliot Ness



Bureau of Prohibition
Cleveland Division of Police

April 19, 1903 – May 16, 1957 (aged 54)

Place of birth Chicago, Illinois

Rank Chief Investigator of the Prohibition Bureau for
Chicago in 1934
Director for Public Safety for Cleveland, Ohio

Elliot Paul Ness (April 19, 1903 – May 16, 1957) was an American Prohibition agent, famous for his efforts to enforce Prohibition in Chicago, Illinois, and the leader of a legendary team of law enforcement agents nicknamed The Untouchables.

Early life

Eliot Ness was born April 19, 1903 in Chicago, Illinois. He was the youngest of five siblings born to Norwegian immigrants, Peter and Emma Ness. Ness attended Christian Fenger High School in Chicago. He was educated at the University of Chicago, where he was a member of the Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity, graduating in 1925 with a degree in economics. He began his career as an investigator for the Retail Credit Company of Atlanta. He was assigned to the Chicago territory, where he conducted background investigations for the purpose of credit information. He returned to the University to take a course in criminology, eventually earning a Master's Degree in the field.

Career

1927–1931

In 1926, Ness' brother-in-law, Alexander Jamie, an agent of the Bureau of Investigation (which later became the Federal Bureau of Investigation in 1935), influenced Ness to enter law enforcement. He joined the U.S. Treasury Department in 1927, working with the 300-strong Bureau of Prohibition, in Chicago.

Following the election of President Herbert Hoover, U.S. Treasury Secretary Andrew Mellon was specifically charged with bringing down gangster Al Capone. The federal government pursued his illegal activities in two areas: income tax evasion and violations of prohibition. Ness was chosen to head the operations under the National Prohibition Act (informally known as the Volstead Act), targeting the illegal breweries and supply routes of Capone.

With Chicago's corrupted law-enforcement agents endemic, Ness went through the records of all Prohibition agents to create a reliable team, initially of 50, later reduced to 15 and finally to just 9 men called, "The Untouchables". Raids against illegal stills and breweries began immediately; within six months Ness claimed to have seized breweries worth over one million dollars. The main source of information for the raids was an extensive wire-tapping operation. An attempt by Capone to bribe Ness's agents was seized on by Ness for publicity, leading to the media nickname, "The Untouchables." There were a number of assassination attempts on Ness, and one of his close friends was killed.

The efforts of Ness and his team brought major damage to Capone's operations. Ness's efforts eventually led the IRS to prosecute Capone for income tax evasion, which led to Capone's downfall. In a number of federal grand jury cases in 1931, Capone was charged with 22 counts of tax evasion and also 5,000 violations of the Volstead Act. On October 17, 1931, Capone was convicted on five of the tax evasion charges, after the Volstead Act violations were dropped. He was sentenced to 11 years in prison, and following a failed appeal, he began his sentence in 1932.

1931–1957



Marker at Lake View Cemetery

Ness was promoted to Chief Investigator of the Prohibition Bureau for Chicago and in 1934 for Ohio. Following the end of Prohibition in 1933, he was assigned as an alcohol tax agent in the "Moonshine Mountains" of southern Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee; and, in 1934, he was transferred to Cleveland, Ohio. In December 1935, Cleveland mayor Harold Burton hired him as the city's Safety Director, which put him in charge of both the police and fire departments. He headed a campaign to clean out police corruption and to modernize the fire department.

In 1938 Ness's personal life was completely transformed while his career began to have some ups and downs. He concentrated heavily on his work, which may have contributed to the divorce that year from his first wife Edna (Staley). He declared war on the mob, and his primary targets included "Big" Angelo Lonardo, "Little" Angelo Scirrca, Moe Dalitz, John Angerola, George Angersola, and Charles Pollizi. Ness was also Safety Director at the time of several grisly murders that occurred in the Cleveland area from 1935 to 1938. Unfortunately, his otherwise remarkably successful career in Cleveland withered gradually. Cleveland critics targeted his divorce, his high-profile social drinking, and his conduct in a car accident, but he continued with the next Mayor, Frank Lausche.

Ness remarried in 1939, to illustrator Evaline Michelow. The Nesses moved to Washington, D.C. in 1942 where he worked for the federal government, directing the battle against prostitution in communities surrounding military bases, where venereal disease was a serious problem. Later he made a number of forays into the corporate world, all of which failed from his lack of business acumen. In 1944, he left to become chairman of the Diebold Corporation, a security safe company based in Ohio.

After his second divorce and third marriage, he ran unsuccessfully for mayor of Cleveland in 1947, after which he was expelled from Diebold in 1951. In the aftermath, Ness began drinking more heavily and spending his free time in bars telling (often exaggerated) stories of his law enforcement career. He also spent himself into debt. Ness was forced into taking various odd jobs to earn a living, including as an electronics parts wholesaler, a clerk in a

bookstore, and selling frozen hamburger patties to restaurants. By 1953, he came to work for an upstart company called Guaranty Paper Corporation, which specialized in watermarking legal and official documents to prevent counterfeiting. Ness was offered a job because of his expertise in law enforcement. The company soon moved from Cleveland to the quiet rural town of Coudersport, Pennsylvania, where operating costs were lower. He made a decent income from GPC and moved with his wife and adopted son into a modest rental house. Once again, he enjoyed going to local bars and regaling amazed audiences with his tales of crime fighting.

He collapsed and died at his home in Coudersport, Pennsylvania of a massive heart attack on May 16, 1957, at the age of 54. Collaborating with Oscar Fraley in his last years, he co-wrote the book *The Untouchables*, which was published a month after his death. This book, among others about the Untouchables by Oscar Fraley, was heavily spiced with fiction including fictional characters and events to make the books more appealing to a general audience. The 21-page manuscript that Ness himself wrote for the book was a more trustworthy source and only included the real events that Ness experienced during his career. His manuscript is housed in the archives of the Western Reserve Historical Society in Cleveland, Ohio. The Western Reserve Historical Society houses additional Ness papers, including a scrapbook (1928-1936), copies of newspaper clippings (1935-1950), a typewritten manuscript detailing Ness' career in Chicago, and miscellaneous papers, including a report on the Fidelity Check Corporation and Guaranty Paper, of which Ness was president.

Personal life

Ness was married to Edna Staley (1900–1988) from 1929 to 1938, illustrator Evaline Ness (1911–1986) from 1939 to 1945, and artist Elisabeth Andersen Seaver (1906–1977) from 1946 until his death in 1957. He also had an adopted son Robert (1946–1976). Ness's ashes were scattered in one of the small ponds on the grounds of Lake View Cemetery, in Cleveland. Vigil, Vicki Blum (2007). *Cemeteries of Northeast Ohio: Stones, Symbols & Stories*. Cleveland, OH: Gray & Company, Publishers. ISBN 978-1-59851-025-6

Legacy

Television programs and feature films have been made based on the life of Eliot Ness, and the legend surrounding his work in Chicago. The two best-known of these include the 1950s/1960s TV series titled *The Untouchables*, which starred Robert Stack as Ness and which Walter Winchell narrated, and Brian De Palma's film of the same title, *The Untouchables*, which starred Kevin Costner as Ness and also featured Sean Connery and Robert De Niro. These two fictionalized portrayals, more than actual history, have inspired numerous novels, a second, short-lived TV series, comic books, and references in animated cartoons and rap lyrics.

On January 10, 2014, Illinois' US Senators proposed naming the headquarters of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives in Washington, DC after Ness. If approved, it would be called the Eliot Ness ATF Building. However, Chicago Aldermen Ed Burke (14th Ward) and James Balcer (11th Ward) opposed the resolution in an article in the Chicago Tribune. In a news release, Burke said, "Eliot Ness had a checkered career after leaving the federal government. I simply do not think his image matches the actual reality of his legacy."

General Prayer Day

National Holiday in Denmark

STORE BEDEDAG (Great Prayer Day) is a special Danish festival falling on the 4th Friday after Easter Sunday, at the earliest on 17 April and at the latest on 21 May.

It is basically a collection of minor Christian holy days consolidated into one day.

The Great Prayer Day was put on the Statute book in 1686 and combined several lesser fast and prayer days.



Under the law, all trade, work, etc were forbidden on this day. The bakers came up with the idea of baking some wheat buns which could then be heated up and eaten the following day.

It gradually became common throughout the country to eat the hot buns on the evening before Great Prayer Day.

In Copenhagen it has been common to go for a walk on Langelinie, on the ramparts around Christianshavn; a custom, which can be traced back to 1747 when Copenhagen Cathedral 'Vor Frue Kirke' (The Church of Our Lady) had a new carillon.

The day was heralded the previous evening by ringing the church bells

See next sheet for recipe for wheat buns "Hveder" and make your own!

"Hveder" with inspiration from "Maden i mit liv": - 25 buns

- 100 g butter - melted
- 250 g water
- 250 milk
- 25 g yeast
- 2 eggs
- 2 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 teaspoons cardamon
- ½ teaspoon vanilla sugar
- 300 g whole grain wheat flour
- 700 g wheat flour

1. Add melted butter, milk, water and yeast in the bowl on the mixer. Mix slowly (speed 1) for ½ minute.
2. Afterwards add in eggs, salt, sugar, vanilla sugar and cardamon. mix slowly (speed 1) for ½ minute.
3. Pour in the flour, continue to knead the dough on speed 1 for 10 minutes.
4. Place the dough in bowl with a closing lid, let the dough raise for 2 hours.
5. Divide the dough in equal sizes of 80-90 g. Place the bun pieces in a baking tray covered with baking paper.
6. Place the baking tray with dough in the oven without heat together with another tray filled with boiling water. Let the buns raise and "grow" together in the steam for 30 minutes.
7. Take water and bun dough out of the oven.
8. Heat up the (conventional) oven to 200°C.
9. Bake the buns in the baking tray at 200°C for 30 minutes placed in the middle part of the oven.
10. Cold down the buns
11. Cut the wheat bun into 2 pieces - lets those roast at 200°C for 6-8 minutes
12. Served hot or cold together with butter - plenty of butter, cheese and some fantastic home-made jam.



June

Denmark's National Day June 5

Sweden's National Day June 6

Iceland's Independence Day June 17

Midsummer

Lasse Hallström – Swedish film director

Sjomannadagur – Sea Farers Day in Iceland

Viking festivals in Denmark and Iceland

DENMARK'S NATIONAL DAY

Known locally as Constitution Day, Independence Day in Denmark is on **June 5**, which is the national holiday. It is called Constitution Day because it commemorates the anniversary of the signing of the constitution of 1849 (making Denmark a constitutional monarchy) and the constitution of 1953.

Denmark celebrates its Independence Day through a public holiday.

Unfortunately, Constitution Day in [Denmark](#) is not widely used for celebrating the constitution through public events as in other countries, especially Independence day/constitution day in Norway. However, it does leave families free to spend this day with each other - after all, June 5 is also Father's Day in Denmark! In Danish, Constitution Day is called "Grundlovsdag".

Sweden's National Day is on **June 6**. This national holiday is also called the Day of the **Swedish Flag** and has a long history - and two reasons for the date. Let's find out more about Flag Day!

Swedes celebrate Flag Day (similar to an "Independence Day") in memory of the founding of the kingdom of Sweden by the coronation ceremony of Gustav Vasa on June 6, 1523 as well as the confirmatory of the constitution law on June 6 of 1809. This date was selected to be the official National Day of Sweden in the year 1983. It had actually been celebrated already as the Day of the Swedish Flag since 1916.

Sweden's Independence Day has been a public holiday only since 2005, and is only now starting to be celebrated with ceremonies and events. On this day, immigrants who have become Swedish citizens are honored publicly with a diploma and a Swedish Flag of their own.

In Swedish, the Day of the Swedish Flag is "Svenska flaggans dag".

ICELAND'S INDEPENDENCE DAY

Icelandic Independence Day is **June 17**, a major annual event in Iceland commonly known as National Day.

On June 17 each year, Reykjavik hosts Independence Day parades, street theater, sideshows and dancing.

Icelanders love to celebrate this national holiday

Iceland National Day in Icelandic is "þjóðhátíðardagurinn" (the day of the nation's celebration).

In 1944, the Scandinavian country of Iceland declared full independence from the Danish crown.

Icelanders selected June 17 to be the official holiday because it was the birthday of Jon

Sigurdsson who is regarded as Iceland's champion to the nationalist cause.



MIDSOMMAR/ Midsummer

This is next to Christmas/Jul, our oldest holiday. It has been celebrated in Northern Europe since the stone age. It traditionally falls on the first Saturday after the actual solstice, and is celebrated in all the Nordic countries, England and Germany.

In some parts of Scandinavia they light big bonfires, and this is the oldest way of celebrating for us. The tradition of Midsummer poles is thought to have migrated north from continental Europe, where they started as Maypoles and were part of the spring celebrations everywhere. The rooster that you sometimes find at the top of the pole, is a remnant of a practice to put a fake parrot at the top and let the young men shoot at it with bows and arrows to prove themselves manly in front of all the girls.

The marriage myths surrounding this holiday are many. Depending on local custom the girls would walk backwards around a well 7 times and then look backwards in a mirror and whoever they saw in the mirror would be their intended, or jump over 7 fences and pick 7 or 9 different wildflowers and put them under your pillow to dream about who you were going to marry. You could also put a couple of coins or a freshly picked peapod with 7 or 9 peas in it, under the pillow. 7 and 9 and 11 were considered magical numbers. When the dew fell early in the morning, you could go out and roll in it naked to ensure good health for the coming year. Some people collected it and used it as medicine or as a special ingredient in bread baking. This was also an active night for fairies and trolls, so great care had to be taken not to be bewitched or lured into the woods. This was the night when "Näcken", the river spirit in the form of a beautiful naked young man, sat in the river playing his magic fiddle to lure people into the water.

If you have ever been to any of the Scandinavian countries during Midsummer, when it's warm and not raining, it's not hard to see how all this superstition has come about. The night is filled with an alluring light, and the compulsion to stay outside the whole time is very strong.

Most Swedes go out to the country with family or friends and eat Matjes herring with sour cream and chives and fresh new potatoes, just pulled out of the ground.

Aquavit or iced vodka is mandatory with the dinner, and strawberries with ice cream or whipped cream for dessert.

In the church year it is John the Baptists day and is celebrated throughout the country. This holiday has always been decorated with what nature has to offer, so tree branches are cut to be tied to doorposts, ceiling beams and railings everywhere. Wildflowers abound, and everyone makes a wreath out of flowers to wear.

Birch branches were the most common, and so got the most use, but the maple leaf was actually considered the very finest to decorate with along with oak and beech leaves.

It was also common to strip leaves from the branches and lay them out in patterns on the floor.

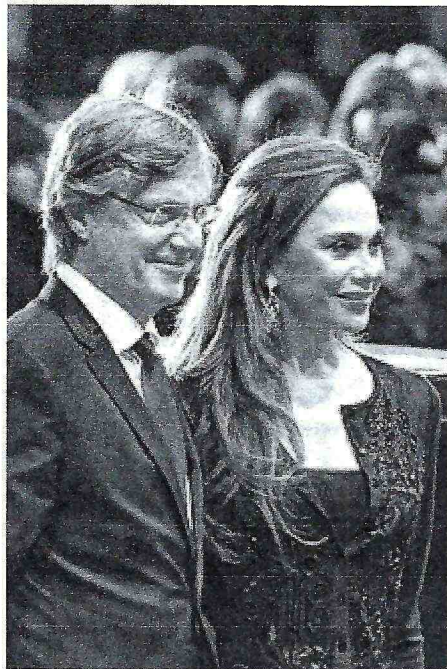
Midsummer poles were made up in every town with great care, involving a lot of people in the dressing and vary greatly in appearance from town to town.

Many people today dress their own small poles at their summerhouses. It's fun to do and can involve small trees, leftover lumber, or a variety of "bases". Be creative! My father once made one from a rake handle and a hula hoop! As long as it's covered in leaves and flowers, who's going to know what's underneath?

Dancing around the pole is also mandatory. In Sweden the people dance the "little frogs", but any ring dance is fine. Or just walk around it with the kids and sing. It's a good excuse to get together with everyone and have a good time!

Lasse Hallström

Lasse Hallström



Hallström and wife Lena Olin at the 2013 Berlin International Film Festival

Born	Lars Sven Hallström 2 June 1946 (age 68) Stockholm, Sweden
Occupation	Film director, screenwriter
Years active	1973–present
Spouse(s)	Malou Hallström (m.1974; div. 1981) Lena Olin (m. 1994)
Children	3

Lars Sven "Lasse" Hallström (born 2 June 1946) is a Swedish film director and screenwriter. He was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Director for *My Life as a Dog* (*Mitt liv som hund*) (1985) and later for *The Cider House Rules* (1999).

Early life

Hallström was born in Stockholm, Sweden. His father was a dentist and his mother was the writer Karin Lyberg (1907–2000). His maternal grandfather, Ernst Lyberg, was the Minister of Finance in the first cabinet of Carl Gustaf Ekman (1926–1928) and leader of the Liberal Party of Sweden (1930–1933).

Career

As young Hallström attended Adolf Fredrik's Music School in Stockholm. He learned his craft making music videos, in particular for the group ABBA. Since the international success of *My Life as a Dog* (1985), for which he was nominated for Academy Awards for writing and directing, Hallström has worked in American movies. His first notable American success was *What's Eating Gilbert Grape* (1993). He reached his greatest level of prominence when he was nominated for an Academy Award for best director for the critically acclaimed movie *The Cider House Rules* (1999) and then later directed the well-received film *Chocolat* (2000), both of which were nominated for the Academy Award for Best Picture.

His 2012 film *The Hypnotist* was selected as the Swedish entry for the Best Foreign Language Oscar at the 85th Academy Awards, but it did not make the final shortlist.

He is set to direct Walt Disney's *The Hundred-Foot Journey*, which will have a release date of August 8, 2014. The film is based on the book of same name written by Richard C. Morais. Steven Spielberg will produce the film with Oprah Winfrey and Juliet Blake.

Other work

Almost all of ABBA's promotional films were directed and shot by Hallström, with the only (seven total) exceptions being "When I Kissed the Teacher" (1977); "Chiquitita" (1979), which was made by the BBC; "I Have a Dream" (1979); "On and On and On" (1980); "Lay All Your Love on Me" (1981); "The Day Before You Came" (1982) and "Under Attack" (1982), which were both directed by Kjell Sundvall and Kjell-Åke Andersson. In 1999, Hallström directed the music video for Northern Line's debut single "Run for Your Life".

Personal life

Hallström married media personality and actress Malou Hallström (died 3 February 2005) in 1974, from which he has one child, Johan (born 1976). The couple divorced in 1981. In 1990, he met fellow Swede, actress Lena Olin; they married on 18 March 1994. The couple currently reside in Bedford, New York, and have two children, Tora (born 1995) and producer and director F. Auguste Rahmberg (born 1986). They also have a home located in the Stockholm archipelago.

Filmography

- 1975 – *A Guy and a Gal*
- 1977 – *ABBA: The Movie*
- 1979 – *Father to Be*
- 1981 – *Tuppen*

- 1983 – *Happy We*
- 1985 – *My Life as a Dog*
- 1986 – *The Children of Noisy Village*
- 1987 – *More About the Children of Noisy Village*
- 1991 – *Once Around*
- 1993 – *What's Eating Gilbert Grape*
- 1995 – *Something to Talk About*
- 1999 – *The Cider House Rules*
- 2000 – *Chocolat*
- 2001 – *The Shipping News*
- 2005 – *An Unfinished Life*
- 2005 – *Casanova*
- 2007 – *The Hoax*
- 2009 – *Hachi: A Dog's Tale*
- 2010 – *Dear John*
- 2011 – *Salmon Fishing in the Yemen*
- 2012 – *The Hypnotist*
- 2013 – *Safe Haven*
- 2014 – *The Hundred-Foot Journey*

SJOMANNADAGUR (SEA FARER'S DAY) IN ICELAND

Sjomannadagur, this year it was May 31-June 1, is a weekend honoring the role that fishing and fishermen have played in Icelandic history.

It's celebrated in the coastal towns and cities of Iceland. The biggest celebration is in the harbor of Reykjavik.

It's a big deal here because most of Iceland's prosperity has historically derived from the sea. Even now, fishing is the biggest industry.

Every ship in Iceland remains in harbor over the weekend and all sailors have the weekend off to take part in the maritime festivities!

Last year the festival was extra special, as it marked 100 years since the harbor was constructed, as well as the 75th anniversary of the first fisherman's celebration in Reykjavik.

The Seaman's Union sponsors many events. These include competitions in rowing and swimming, tugs-of-war, and sea rescue competitions, strongman competitions, and aero plane stunts. For the family there are fun activities, such as the fish-on-ice promenade which displays (in buckets of ice) about 30 different local species of fish, from the common to the rare and strange looking. There are children's parades, traditional dancing, games and discounts on Puffin and whale watching.

There is a feast of herring and mackerel, grilled shellfish and pylsur, Iceland's famous hot dogs.

There is music as well. The most popular fisherman's music being performed by Icelandic musicians.

There is a walk through display of black and white pictures depicting fishermen at sea.

The ship Sæbjörg, which is a floating school for the sea-rescue operations in Iceland, gives rides and demonstrations to the public.

There are also lots of other both historical and new ships in the harbor to look at

The evening wraps up with dancing music and bonfires and drinks of course.

On the more solemn side, medals are awarded for rescue operations of the past year. Most celebrations begin with a church service and a trip to the local cemetery to honor sailors lost at sea.

The proceeds from the day's events throughout the country go to the national fund that supports old seamen's homes.

VIKINGESPIL

Vikingspil (Danish for "Viking Plays") is the annual viking theater in Frederikssund, Denmark. This event is the most well-known and longest-running cultural play in Denmark and also offers a Viking Revue show and two Viking Markets. Performances at this event take place each evening for two weeks, beginning around the summer solstice in Scandinavia.

Each year, a different play based on viking folklore and mythology is performed by over 100 members (adults and children of all ages) of the viking community in Frederikssund...and mead (Mjød, the viking beer) can also be purchased.

Frederikssund Viking Market:

The Frederikssund Viking Market has become part of the Viking Plays. You can find the Viking Market on Kalvø near the town of Frederikssund. There is a northern market with stalls, food and beverages and souvenirs. The southern Viking Market by the Viking Camps is a "historically correct" market. This is one of the best shopping areas for Viking crafts on the Danish island of Zealand.

The life of the Vikings can be witnessed in the authentic Viking Camp on the "Viking Peninsula" Kalvø. Free guided tours of the Viking area are offered in the afternoon on Saturdays and Sundays.

ICELAND'S VIKING FESTIVAL

The Viking Festival is an annual festival in mid-June in Hafnarfjordur, just south of Reykjavik, where you can see Viking-style costumes, musical instruments, jewelry and crafts at the **Viking Village**.

It goes on for 6 days, and visitors at the Viking Festival see sword fighting (by professional Vikings!) and demonstrations of marksmanship with bows and muscle power. You can listen to Viking songs and lectures at the festival, or grab a bite at the Viking Restaurant nearby. It's one of the most popular annual events in Iceland.



JULY

Östersjöfestivalen – Baltic Sea Festival

Olavsoka – St Olav's Day in the Faroe Islands

Finnish Tango Festival – Tangomarkkinat

St Bridget/ St Birgitta – Swedish saint

ÖSTERSJÖ FESTIVALEN

The Östersjöfestivalen is **Swedish** for the Karlshamn Baltic Festival, a large annual event in Karlshamn, **Sweden**. This is the biggest free festival in southern Sweden and **takes place in mid July every year**. The event attracts a quarter million visitors annually.

Each summer, the Karlshamn Baltic Festival attracts performers and artists from the regions around the Baltic Sea. During this time in July, Karlshamn's streets are full with musicians offering great music that can fit anyone's taste (jazz, blues, rock, even latin-american music!)

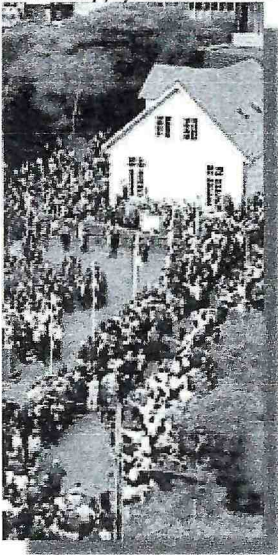
The Baltic Festival also has a big street parade, a Baltic song contest, a vintage car rally, food and drink vendors and a traditional market. There are also quite a few events taking place on and in the waters of the Baltic Sea around Karlshamn, Sweden!

OLAVSOKA

The Ólavsøka (Olavsoka) Festival is an annual festival on the Faroe Islands to celebrate Saint Olav's Day. Olvasoka takes place on July 28-29 each year.

The Olavsoka Festival in Torshavn on the Faroe Islands proves that the old Viking traditions have survived to this day. Olvasoka, or Olav's Festival, turns the Faroe Islands into one big celebration.

The biggest attraction at the Olavsoka Festival is the boat race in the harbor where traditional wooden rowing boats participate. Dance and entertainment, sports, and exhibitions accompany the Olavsoka Festival. Directions aren't necessary. If you're on the Faroe islands in late July, you won't be able to miss Olavsoka events.



FINNISH TANGO

Finnish tango music is an established variation of the Argentine tango but whose rhythm follows the Ballroom tango. It was one of the most popular music forms for decades in Finland. Brought to Europe in the 1910s by traveling musicians, Finns began to take up the form and write their own tangos in the 1930s. By the 1940s about half of the entries on the popular music charts were occupied by tangos, and the post war period saw tangos spread from a popular urban phenomenon to their enthusiastic adoption by the countryside as well. Special characteristics of Finnish tango include the change of rhythm to beguine during chorus. Also habanera rhythm is used often. The bandoneon was replaced by the accordion and drums were added.

The Finnish tango is distinguished from other forms of tango by its almost exclusive performance in minor keys and themes reflecting established conventions in Finnish folklore. As the head of the Finnish National Broadcaster's gramophone library explains, "The central themes of Finnish tango lyrics are love, sorrow, nature and the countryside. Many tangos express a longing for the old homestead, or a distant land of happiness. The changing seasons of Finnish nature are frequently used metaphors: the spring breaks the hold of the winter, and flowers appear, creating new expectations. Autumn rains and dark evenings are symbols of crushed hopes."^[3]

One of the highlights of Finnish summers is the Tangomarkkinat, or tango festival, held annually since 1985 in the central Finnish town of Seinäjoki. The festival attracts more than 100,000 participants annually (from a population of just over 5 million) and is capped by the coronation of the tango King and Queen, who receive much domestic media attention and often recording contracts as well.

The most well known Finnish tango composers are Olavi Virta (No. 1: "Hopeinen Kuu" aka Guarda Che Luna; others: "Punatukkaiselle tytölleni"), Toivo Kärki ("Liljankukka") and Unto Mononen ("Satumaa").

Tango, the dance

Tango was first performed in Finland by Finns in 1913. Since then tango has evolved in Finland to a distinctive form.

Finnish tango as a dance has characteristics that differ from both competitive and Latin American tango(s). There is a close contact in the pelvis, upper thighs, and the upper body. Finnish tango is often taught with a SSQQ (slow, slow, quick, quick) basic step sequence, with QQS or SQQ used for the beguine or habanera parts so often found in Finnish tango

pieces, although a skilled dancer might use slows and quicks just as he wishes to match either the melody or the rhythm. Dips and rotations are frequent. There are no kicks or aerials in Finnish tango. Typically feet stay close to the floor, except in dips the follower might slightly raise the left leg.

Compared to Argentine tango, Finnish tango is more related to (slow) foxtrot, but the feel is different because the weight shift happens close to the end of the beat and the pushing foot will accelerate only to pause next to the grounded one before it moves forward to a long step that is made even longer by pushing off the other leg in the end. Finnish tango requires a lot of space.

The Tangomarkkinat festival also hosts dancing competitions, among them Finnish tango. Also non-Finnish contestants participate.



Bridget of Sweden

Saint Bridget (Birgitta) of Sweden



Altarpiece in Salem church, Södermanland, Sweden (restored digitally)

Widow

Born	1303 Uppland, Sweden
Died	23 July 1373 Rome, Papal States
Honored in	Roman Catholic Church Lutheran Church
Canonized	7 October 1391 by Pope Boniface IX
Majorshrine	Vadstena

Feast	23 July 8 October (Traditionalist Catholics)
Attributes	Pilgrim's hat, staff & bag; crown, writing-book.
Patronage	Europe, Sweden, Widows

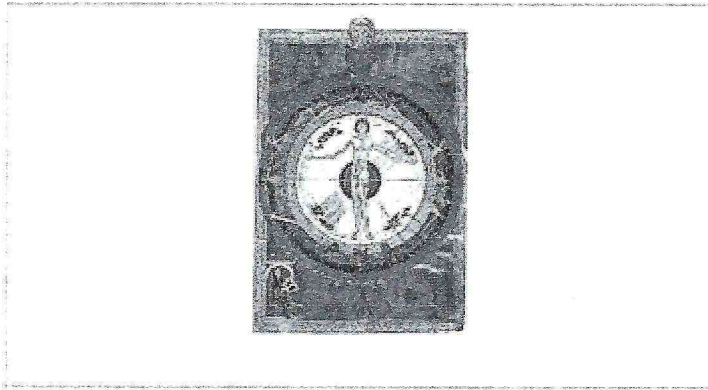
Bridget of Sweden (1303 – 23 July 1373; also *Birgitta of Vadstena*, *Saint Birgitta* (Swedish: *den heliga Birgitta* or *Birgitta Birgersdotter*), was a mystic and saint, and founder of the Bridgettines nuns and monks after the death of her husband of twenty years. She was also the mother of Catherine of Vadstena.

She is one of the six patron saints of Europe, together with Benedict of Nursia, Saints Cyril and Methodius, Catherine of Siena and Edith Stein.

Biography



St. Bridget in the religious habit and the crown of a Bridgettine nun, in a 1476 breviary of the form of the Divine Office unique to her Order



The most celebrated saint of Sweden was the daughter of the knight Birger Persson of the family of Finsta, governor and lawspeaker of Uppland, and one of the richest landowners of the country, and his wife, a member of the so-called Lawspeaker branch of the Folkunga family. Through her mother, Ingeborg, Birgitta was related to the Swedish kings of her era.

In 1316, at the age of 14 she married Ulf Gudmarsson of the family of Ulvåsa, Lord of Närke, to whom she bore eight children, four daughters and four sons. Six survived infancy, which was rare at that time. One daughter is now honored as St. Catherine of Sweden. Bridget became known for her works of charity, particularly toward Östergötland's unwed mothers and their children. When she was in her early thirties, she was summoned to be lady-in-waiting to the new Queen of Sweden, Blanche of Namur. In 1341 she and her husband went on pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela.

In 1344, shortly after their return, Ulf died at the Cistercian Alvastra Abbey in Östergötland. After this loss, Birgitta became a member of the Third Order of St. Francis and devoted herself wholly to a life of prayer and caring for the poor and the sick.

It was about this time that she developed the idea of establishing the religious community which was to become the Order of the Most Holy Saviour, or the Brigittines, whose principal house at Vadstena was later richly endowed by King Magnus IV of Sweden and his queen. One distinctive feature of the pre-Reformation houses of the Order was that they were double monasteries, with both men and women forming a joint community, though with separate cloisters.

In 1350, a year of jubilee, Bridget braved a plague-stricken Europe to make a pilgrimage to Rome accompanied by her daughter, Catherine, and a small party of priests and disciples. This was done partly to obtain from the Pope the authorization of the new Order and partly in pursuance of her self-imposed mission to elevate the moral tone of the age. This was during the period of the Avignon Papacy within the Roman Catholic Church, however, and she had to wait for the return of the papacy to Rome from the French city of Avignon, a move for which she agitated for many years.

It was not until 1370 that Pope Urban V, during his brief attempt to re-establish the papacy in Rome, confirmed the Rule of the Order, but meanwhile Birgitta had made herself universally beloved in Rome by her kindness and good works. Save for occasional pilgrimages, including one to Jerusalem in 1373, she remained in Rome until her death on 23 July 1373.

In her pilgrimages to Rome, Jerusalem and Bethlehem, she sent "back precise instructions for the construction of the monastery" now known as Blue Church, insisting that an "abbess, signifying the Virgin Mary, should preside over both nuns and monks."

Although she never returned to Sweden, her years in Rome were far from happy, being hounded by debts and by opposition to her work against Church abuses. She was originally

buried at San Lorenzo in Panisperna before her remains were returned to Sweden. She was canonized in the year 1391 by Pope Boniface IX, which was confirmed by the Council of Constance in 1415. Because of new discussions about her works, the Council of Basel confirmed the orthodoxy of the revelations in 1436.

Visions



The Vision of St Bridget. The Risen Christ, displaying his wound from Longinus, inspires the writing of St Bridget. Detail of initial letter miniature, dated 1530, probably made at Syon Monastery, England, a Bridgettine House. (BL Harley MS 4640, f.15)

As a child, she had already believed herself to have visions; these now became more frequent, and her records of these *Revelationes coelestes* ("Celestial revelations") which were translated into Latin by Matthias, canon of Linköping, and by her confessor, Peter, prior of Alvastra, obtained a great vogue during the Middle Ages.^[1] These revelations made Bridget something of a celebrity to some and a controversial figure to others.^[3]

Her visions of the Nativity of Jesus had a great influence on depictions of the Nativity of Jesus in art. Shortly before her death, she described a vision which included the infant Jesus as lying on the ground, and emitting light himself, and describes the Virgin as blond-haired; many depictions followed this and reduced other light sources in the scene to emphasize this effect, and the Nativity remained very commonly treated with chiaroscuro through to the Baroque. Other details often seen such as a single candle "attached to the wall," and the presence of God the Father above, also come from Bridget's vision.

The Virgin kneels to pray to her child, to be joined by St. Joseph, and this (technically known as the *Adoration of the Child*) becomes one of the commonest depictions in the fifteenth century, largely replacing the reclining Virgin in the West. Versions of this depiction occur as early as 1300, well before Bridget's vision, and have a Franciscan origin, by which she may have been influenced, as she was a member of the Franciscan Order. Her visions of Purgatory were also well known.¹

In addition, "she even predicted an eventual Vatican State, foretelling almost the exact boundaries delineated by Mussolini for Vatican City in 1921."

Pope Benedict XVI spoke of Bridget in a general audience on 27 October 2010, saying that the value of St. Bridget's Revelations, sometimes the object of doubt, was specified by the Blessed John Paul II in the letter *Spes Aedificandi*: "Yet there is no doubt that the Church," wrote my beloved predecessor, "which recognized Bridget's holiness without ever

pronouncing on her individual revelations, has accepted the overall authenticity of her interior experience."

The Fifteen 'Our Father and Hail Mary prayers'

Saint Bridget prayed for a long time to know how many blows Jesus Christ suffered during His terrible Passion. Rewarding her patience, one day He appeared to her and said, "I received 5480 blows upon My Body. If you wish to honor them in some way, recite fifteen Our Fathers and fifteen Hail Marys with the following Prayers, which I Myself shall teach you, for an entire year. When the year is finished, you will have honored each of My Wounds."

The prayers became known as the **Fifteen O's**, because in the original Latin, each prayer began with the words *O Jesu*, *O Rex*, or *O Domine Jesu Christe*. Some have questioned whether Saint Bridget is in fact their author; Eamon Duffy reports that the prayers probably originated in England, in the devotional circles that surrounded Richard Rolle or the English Brigittines.

Whatever their origin, the prayers were quite widely circulated in the late Middle Ages, and became regular features in Books of Hours and other devotional literature. They were translated into various languages; an early English language version of them was printed in a primer by William Caxton. The prayers themselves reflect the late medieval tradition of meditation on the passion of Christ, and are structured around the seven last words of Christ. They borrow from patristic and Scriptural sources as well as the tradition of devotion to the wounds of Christ.

During the Middle Ages, the prayers began to circulate with various promises of indulgence and other assurances of supernatural graces supposed to attend from their regular recitation over the course of a year. These indulgences were repeated in the manuscript tradition of the Books of Hours, and may constitute one major source of the prayers' popularity in the late Middle Ages. They promise, among other things, the release from Purgatory of fifteen of the devotee's family members, and that they would keep fifteen living family members in a state of grace.

The extravagance of the promises made in these rubrics – one widely circulated version promised that the devotee would receive "his heart's desire, if it be for the salvation of his soul" — attracted critics early and late. In 1538, William Marshall enjoined his readers to "henseforth ... forget suche prayers as seynt Brigittes & other lyke, whyche greate promyses and perdons haue falsly auauanced." In 1954, the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* found the alleged promises (though not the prayers themselves) unreliable, and directed local ordinaries not to permit the circulation of pamphlets containing the promises.

In memory

In 1651 the Brigitta Chapel was erected in Vienna, and in 1900 the new district Brigittenau was founded. Adjacent to Skederid Church, built by Bridget's father on the family's land, a memorial stone was erected in 1930.

In 1 October 1999 Pope John Paul II named St Bridget as a patron saint of Europe. Her feast day is celebrated on 23 July, the day of her death. Her feast was not in the Tridentine Calendar, but was later inserted in the Roman Catholic calendar of saints in 1623 for celebration on 7 October, the day she was canonized by Pope Boniface IX in the year 1391. Five years later, her feast was moved to 8 October (although the Church in Sweden celebrates it on the 7th), where it remained until the revision of the Roman Catholic Calendar of Saints in 1969, when it was set on the date currently used.^[18] Some continue to use the earlier General Roman Calendar as in 1954, the General Roman Calendar of Pope Pius XII, and the General Roman Calendar of 1962.

The Third Order of St. Francis includes her feast day on its Calendar of Saints on same day as the general Church, honoring her as a member of the Order.

Bjärka-Säby Monastery has a portrait of Bridget of Sweden venerated by Christians of several denominations. An hour away from this monastery, Vadstena Abbey, also known as Blue Church, contains relics of the saint, with her body being venerated by both Lutheran and Catholic believers.

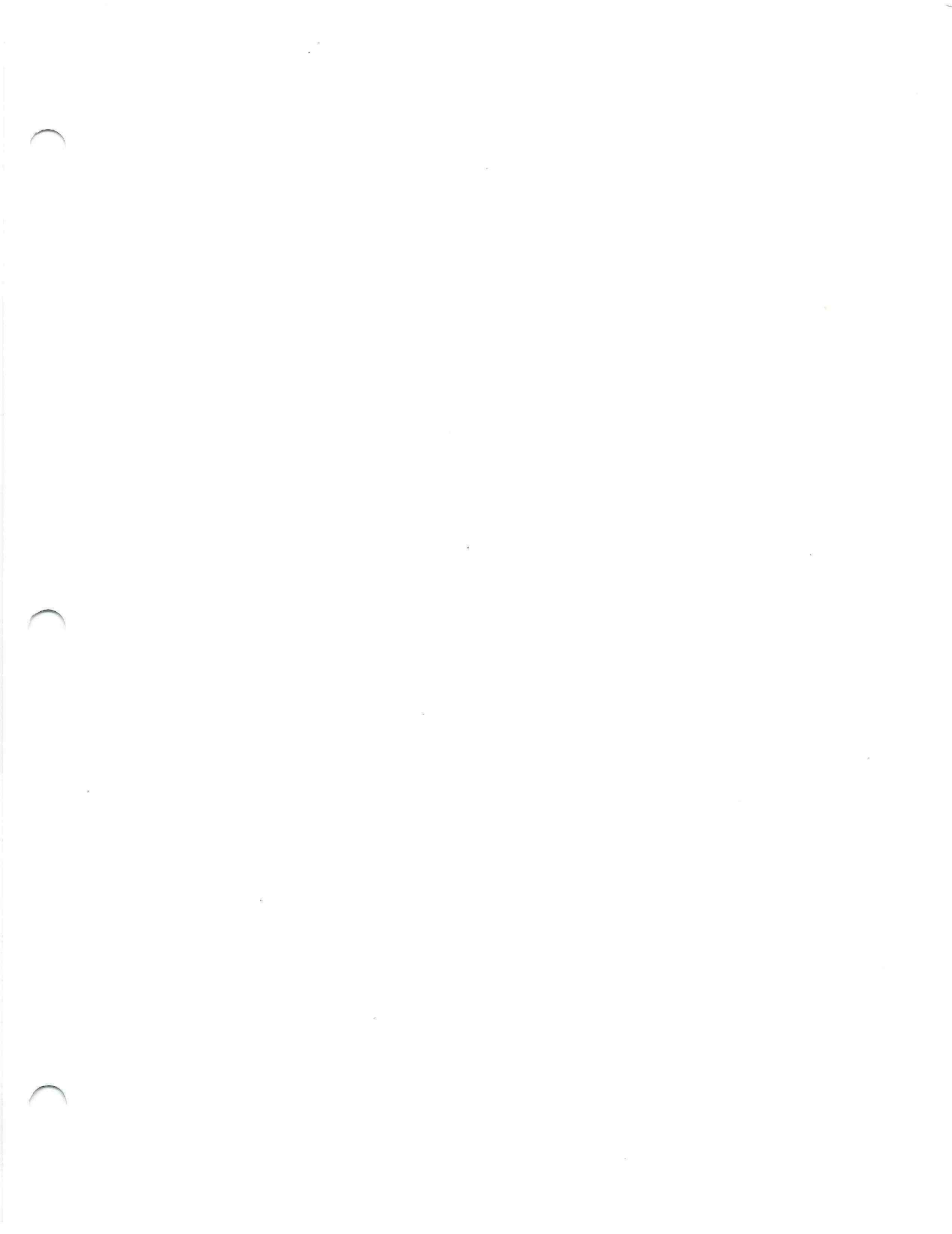
Critical evaluation over time

In Sweden itself, different images of Bridget have prevailed over the centuries: the Swedish nationalist image, the ecumenical, the European, the spiritual and mystical, the crazy.

Martin Luther called her *die tolle Brigit* ("the crazy Bridget"), Olaus Petri called her revelations "day dreams", and Queen Christina of Sweden said she preferred to be counted among the sensible rather than among the saints, compared because she too betook herself to Rome. Some 19th-century writers presented her as a forerunner of the Protestant Reformation due to her criticism of popes, bishops and other clergy for not living in accordance with the teaching of their religion. However, she never criticized that teaching or the church as such.

Of her as depicted in his play *Folkungasagan* August Strindberg explained Bridget as "a power-hungry, vainglorious woman who intentionally vied for sainthood", adding "of this unpleasant woman and according to the historical documents I made the uncontrollable ninny now in my drama, although in her honor I let her awaken to clarity about her silliness and her arrogance."

In *Throne of a Thousand Years* (1996) it is described how Bridget damaged King Magnus and Queen Blanche by accusing them of "erotic deviatons, extravagance and murderous plots", criticism particularly noted by *Dala-Demokraten* as likely to upset Swedish nuns. With the translation of her Latin works into Swedish, however, there is now more understanding and appreciation of her in some Swedish circles.



AUGUST

Växjö Emigrant Festival (Sweden)

Tove Jansson – Finnish author and illustrator

Norwegian Food festival

Etne Market (Norway)

Crayfish party (Sweden)

VÄXJÖ EMIGRANT FESTIVAL

The Emigration Festival in Växjö in southern Sweden is an entertaining annual event for anyone with or without Swedish roots.

Växjö's Emigration Festival takes place in mid-August for three days, focusing on

Scandinavia's most popular emigration area. Over 1 million people emigrated from here, and it is captivating to celebrate with a colorful mix of locals and visitors.

The "House of Emigrants" in Växjö, contains an interesting exhibit of personal and official documents about countless Swedes leaving the area in hopes of a better life across the big pond. There's even an "Emigrant Cafe" and the "Emigrant Shop". The house is closed Sundays and Mondays.

Tove Jansson

Tove Marika Jansson (9 August 1914 – 27 June 2001) was a Swedish-speaking Finnish novelist, painter, illustrator and comic strip author. For her contribution as a children's writer she received the Hans Christian Andersen Medal in 1966.

Brought up by artistic parents, Jansson studied art from 1930 to 1938 in Stockholm, Helsinki and then Paris. Her first solo art exhibition was in 1943. At the same time, she was writing short stories and articles for publication, as well as creating the graphics for book covers and other purposes. She continued to work as an artist for the rest of her life, alongside her writing.

Jansson is best known as the author of the *Moomin* books for children. The first such book, *The Moomins and the Great Flood*, appeared in 1945, though it was the next two books, *Comet in Moominland* and *Finn Family Moomintroll*, published in 1946 and 1948 respectively, that brought her fame.

Starting with the semi-autobiographical *Bildhuggarens dotter* (*Sculptor's Daughter*) in 1968, she wrote six novels and five books of short stories for adults.

Biography



Tove Jansson in 1923

Tove Jansson was born in Helsinki, Grand Duchy of Finland. Her family, part of the Swedish-speaking (Swedish: *finlandssvensk*) minority of Finland, was an artistic one: her father Viktor Jansson was a sculptor and her mother Signe Hammarsten-Jansson was a graphic designer and illustrator. Tove's siblings also became artists: Per Olov Jansson became a photographer and Lars Jansson an author and cartoonist. Whilst their home was in Helsinki, the family spent many of their summers in a rented cottage on an island near Porvoo, 50 km east of Helsinki.

Jansson studied at University College of Arts, Crafts and Design in Stockholm in 1930–33, the Graphic School of the Finnish Academy of Fine Arts in 1933–1937 and finally at L'École d'Adrien Holy and L'École des Beaux-Arts in Paris in 1938. She displayed a number of artworks in exhibitions during the 30s and early 40s, and her first solo exhibition was held in 1943.

Aged 14, she wrote and illustrated her first picture book "Sara och Pelle och näckens bläckfiskar" ("Sara and Pelle and the Water Sprite's Octopuses") although it was not published until 1933, and had drawings published in magazines in the 1920s. During the 1930s she made several trips to other European countries, and wrote and illustrated short stories and articles which were also published in magazines, periodicals and daily papers. During this period, Jansson designed many book covers, adverts and postcards, and, following her mother, she drew illustrations for *Garm*, an anti-fascist Finnish-Swedish satirical magazine.

Briefly engaged in the 1940s to Atos Wirtanen, she later during her studies met her future partner Tuulikki Pietilä. The two women collaborated on many works and projects, including a model of the Moominhouse, in collaboration with Pentti Eistola. This is now exhibited at the Moomin museum in Tampere.

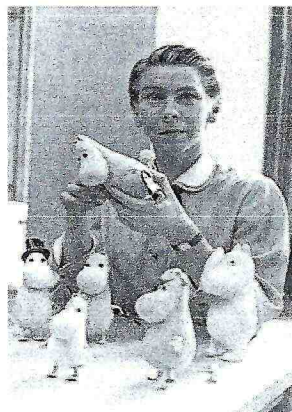
Jansson wrote and illustrated her first Moomin book, *The Moomins and the Great Flood*, in 1945, during World War II. She said later that the war had depressed her and she had wanted to write something naïve and innocent. This first book was hardly noticed, but the next Moomin books, *Comet in Moominland* (1946) and *Finn Family Moomintroll* (1948), made her famous. She went on to write six more Moomin books, a number of picture books and comic strips. Her fame spread quickly and she became Finland's most widely read author abroad. For her "lasting contribution to children's literature" she received the biennial, international Hans Christian Andersen Award for Writing in 1966.

Jansson continued painting and writing for the rest of her life, although her contributions to the Moomin series became rare after 1970. Her first foray outside children's literature was *Bildhuggarens dotter* (*Sculptor's Daughter*), a semi-autobiographical book written in 1968. After that, she authored five more novels, including *Sommarboken* (*The Summer Book*) and five collections of short stories. Although she had a studio in Helsinki, she lived many summers on a small island called Klovharu, one of the Pellinki Islands near the town of Porvoo. Jansson's and Pietilä's travels and summers spent together on the Klovharu island in Pellinki have been captured on several hours of film, shot by Pietilä. Several documentaries have been made of this footage, the latest being *Haru, yksinäinen saari* (*Haru, the lonely island*) (1998) and *Tove ja Tooti Euroopassa* (*Tove and Tooti in Europe*) (2004).

Jansson died on 27 June 2001. She was 86 years old.

Career

Comic strip artist



Tove Jansson in 1956.

Tove Jansson worked as illustrator and cartoonist for the Swedish-language satirical magazine *Garm* from the 1930s to 1953. One of her political cartoons achieved a brief international fame: she drew Adolf Hitler as a crying baby in diapers, surrounded by Neville Chamberlain and other great European leaders, who tried to calm the baby down by giving it slices of cake – Austria, Poland, Czechoslovakia, etc. Jansson also produced illustrations during this period for the Christmas magazines *Julen* and *Lucifer* (just as her mother had earlier) as well as several smaller productions. Her earliest comic strips were produced for productions including *Lunkentus (Prickinas och Fabians äventyr, 1929)*, *Vårbrodd (Fotbollen som Flög till Himlen, 1930)*, and *Allas Krönika (Palle och Göran gå till sjöss, 1933)*.

The figure of the Moomintroll appeared first in Jansson's political cartoons, where it was used as a signature character near the artist's name. This "Proto-Moomin," then called Snork or Niisku, was thin and ugly, with a long, narrow nose and devilish tail. Jansson said that she had designed the Moomins in her youth: after she lost a philosophical quarrel about Immanuel Kant with one of her brothers, she drew "the ugliest creature imaginable" on the wall of their WC and wrote under it "Kant". This Moomin later gained weight and a more pleasant appearance, but in the first Moomin book *The Moomins and the Great Flood (originally Småtrollen och den stora översvämningen)*, the Immanuel-Kant-Moomin is still perceptible. The name "Moomin" comes from Tove Jansson's uncle, Einar Hammarsten: when she was studying in Stockholm and living with her Swedish relations, her uncle tried to stop her pilfering food by telling her that a "Moomintroll" lived in the kitchen closet and breathed cold air down people's necks.

In 1952, after *Comet in Moominland* and *Finn Family Moomintroll* had been translated into English, a British publisher asked if Tove Jansson would be interested in drawing comic strips about the Moomins. Jansson had already drawn a long Moomin comic adventure, *Mumintrollet och jordens undergång* ("Moomintrolls and the End of the World"), based loosely on *Comet in Moominland*, for the Swedish-language newspaper *Ny Tid*, and she accepted the offer. The comic strip *Moomintroll*, started in 1954 in the *Evening News*, a newspaper for the London area and London commuters (no longer in business). Tove Jansson drew 21 long Moomin stories from 1954 to 1959, writing them at first by herself and then with her brother Lars Jansson. She eventually gave the strip up because the daily work of a comic artist did not leave her time to write books and paint, but Lars took over the strip and continued it until 1975.

The series was published in book form in Swedish, and books 1 to 6 have been published in English, *Moomin: The Complete Tove Jansson Comic Strip*.

Inspiration for Moomins

Critics have interpreted various Moomin characters as being inspired by real people, especially members of the author's family, and Jansson spoke in interviews about the backgrounds of, and possible models for, her characters.

Pietilä's personality inspired the character Too-Ticky in *Moominland Midwinter*. and Moomintroll and Little My have been seen as psychological self-portraits of the artist.

The Moomins, generally speaking, relate strongly to Jansson's own family – they werebohemian, lived close to nature and were very tolerant towards diversity.

Moominpappa and Moominmamma are often seen as portraits of Jansson's parents. Jansson remained close to her mother until her mother's death in 1970; even after Tove had become an adult, the two often travelled together, and during her final years Signe also lived with Tove part-time.

Author



Cover of *Finn Family Moomintroll* (1948)

Jansson is principally known as the author of the Moomin books – stories for children that involve Jansson's creations, the Moomins. They are a family of trolls who are white, round and smooth in appearance, with large snouts that make them vaguely resemble hippopotamuses.

The first Moomin book, *The Moomins and the Great Flood*, was written in 1945. Although the primary characters are Moominmamma and Moomintroll, most of the principal characters of later stories were only introduced in the next book, so *The Moomins and the Great Flood* is frequently considered a forerunner to the main series. The book was not a success (and was the last Moomin book to be translated into English), but the next two installments in the Moomin series, *Comet in Moominland* (1946) and *Finn Family Moomintroll* (1948), brought Jansson some fame. The original title of *Finn Family Moomintroll*, *Trollkarlens Hatt*, translates as "The Magician's Hat".

The style of the Moomin books changed as time went by. The first books, up to *Moominland Midwinter* (1957), are adventure stories that include floods, comets and supernatural events. *The Moomins and the Great Flood* deals with Moominmamma and Moomintroll's flight through a dark and scary forest, where they encounter various dangers. In *Comet in Moominland*, a comet nearly destroys the Moominvalley (some critics have considered this an allegory of nuclear weapons). *Finn Family Moomintroll* deals with adventures brought on by the discovery of a magician's hat. *The Exploits of Moominpappa* (1950) tells the story of Moominpappa's adventurous youth and cheerfully parodies the genre of memoirs. Finally, *Moominsummer Madness* (1955) pokes fun at the world of the theatre

Painter and illustrator

Although she became known first and foremost as an author, Tove Jansson considered her careers as author and painter to be of equal importance. She painted her whole life,

changing style from the classical impressionism of her youth to the highly abstract modernist style of her later years. Jansson displayed a number of artworks in exhibitions during the 1930s and early 1940s, and her first solo exhibition was held in 1943. Despite generally positive reviews, criticism induced Jansson to refine her style such that in her 1955 solo exhibition her style had become less overloaded in terms of detail and content. Between 1960 and 1970 Jansson held five more solo exhibitions.

Jansson also created a series of commissioned murals and public works throughout her career, which may still be viewed in their original locations.

In addition to providing the illustrations for her own Moomin books, Jansson also illustrated Swedish translations of classics such as J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit* and Lewis Carroll's *The Hunting of the Snark* and *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (some used later in Finnish translations as well). She also illustrated her late work, *The Summer Book* (1972).

Theatre

Several stage productions have been made from Jansson's Moomin series, including a number that Jansson herself was involved in.

In 1974 the first Moomin opera was produced, with music composed by Ilkka Kuusisto.

Jansson's cultural legacy



Tove Jansson and Finnish Children's Culture commemorative coin (2004)

The biennial Hans Christian Andersen Award conferred by the International Board on Books for Young People is the highest recognition available to a writer or illustrator of children's books. Jansson received the writing award in 1966.

Jansson's books, originally written in Swedish, have been translated into 45 languages. After the *Kalevala* and books by Mika Waltari, they are the most widely translated works of Finnish literature.

The Moomin Museum in Tampere displays much of Jansson's work on the Moomins. There is also a Moomin theme park named Moomin World in Naantali.

Since 1988, Finland's Post has released several postage stamp sets and one postal card with Moomin motifs. In 2014, Jansson herself was featured on a Finnish stamp set.

In 2014 the City of Helsinki honored Jansson by renaming a park in Katajanokka as Tove Jansson's Park (Finnish: *Tove Janssonin puisto*, Swedish: *Tove Janssons park*). The park is located near Jansson's childhood home.

In March 2014 the Ateneum Art Museum opened a major centenary exhibition showcasing Jansson's works as an artist, an illustrator, a political caricaturist and the creator of the Moomins. The exhibition will run in Helsinki until September after which it will embark on a tour in Japan, visiting five Japanese museums.

NORWEGIAN FOOD FESTIVAL

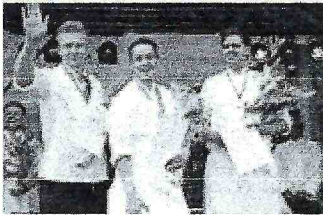
The Norwegian Food Festival is an annual Norwegian event taking place in Alesund every year in **late August**.

During the Norwegian Food Festival, the Norwegian town of Alesund offers visitors a week full

Of Scandinavian cuisine in all variations, food and wine seminars, outdoor concerts, and competitions in which the winning chefs cook their hearts out to win the King's Trophy.

Environment and agriculture are also represented at the Norwegian Food Festival. It draws thousands of visitors annually and is a truly tasty experience.

Called "Den norske Matfestivalen" in the Norwegian language, the festival is also Norway's oldest food festival.



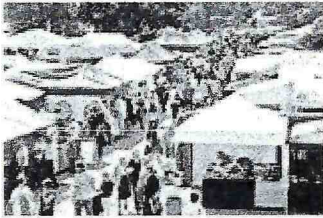
THE ETNE MARKET

The Etne Market Days, an annual event in western **Norway**, attracts over 40,000 visitors each year. The Market Days are a large annual market taking place in the **first week of August**.

In Norwegian, this annual outdoor event is called "Etnemarknaden".

Western Norway's biggest outdoor market is well known for offering visitors and locals alike lots of interesting things to do. At this event, enjoy watching animal shows, varying types of entertainment, craft skills demonstrated by local craftsmen, or visit one of the concerts with both local and international music.

This annual event takes place in the town of Etne, located on the west coast of Norway. The town lies approx. 2 hours north of Stavanger.



The Swedish crayfish party

– the origins

Crayfish have been eaten in Sweden since the 1500s. For a long while, only the aristocracy enjoyed these delicacies, as popular suspicion of shellfish was widespread. Originally, crayfish meat was used for sausage, ragout, patties or puddings.

In the mid-1800s, people started eating crayfish as they are eaten today. The crayfish feast or crayfish supper in the month of August spread through the middle classes. In the 1900s, crayfish became a national delicacy and people in all sectors of society began celebrating the occasion. The price of crayfish fell as a result of imports from Turkey and elsewhere. The crayfish feast, at which people gather to eat, drink and be merry, is a typically Swedish festivity marking the end of the summer.





SEPTEMBER

Aarhus festival (Denmark)

Kivik Apple Market (Sweden)

Karen Blixen – Danish author

AARHUS FESTIVAL

Every year from **late August into early September**, Aarhus (Århus) offers Denmark travelers a major cultural event: The Aarhus Festival.

The Aarhus Festival takes place for 10 days each year and always offers a fresh theme with new performances and entertainment. Over 300 events are included in the Danish city's cultural celebration, such as dance, films, exhibitions, and activities for kids.

The musical side of the Aarhus Festival offers visitors something for every taste, ranging from classical music and operas to rock and jazz concerts performed by Danish and international special guests. The program always depends on the theme of that year.

The festival's performances are located at concert halls in Aarhus, churches, parks, and many other local venues.

Fun Fact: The patron of the Aarhus Festival is Her Majesty Queen Margrethe of Denmark!



KIVIK APPLE MARKET

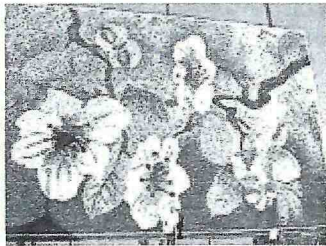
The Kivik Apple Market is probably one of the most unique annual events you have ever visited. This event has a creative and a delicious side to it.

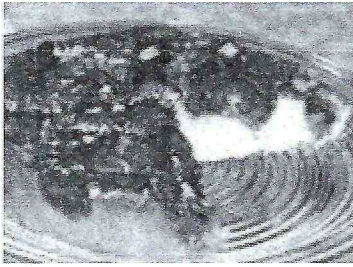
To find the Kivik Apple Market, visit the town of Kivik in southern Sweden in late September to experience this annual festival.

The area around Kivik has long been an important supplier of Sweden's fruit, so in 1988, the town of Kivik held the first annual Kivik Apple Market festival in late September, the end of the Swedish harvesting season.

The eye-catcher at the Apple Market in Kivik must be the "apple art": pieces of art that look like paintings, but are actually pieced together by tons and tons of colorful apples, like a mosaic! The paintings made of apples look beautiful, but weigh up to 4 tons.

Other activities at the Kivik Apple Market include apple tasting, live music, and a visit to a real apple brewery.





Swedish Apple Cake

Whether served alone as a midday coffeecake or with vanilla sauce (vaniljsås) as a winning dessert, Swedish Apple Cake (appelkaka) is a treat no matter what the occasion. Arrange the apple slices in a pinwheel pattern on top of the batter to create a bakery-class cake.

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 1 hour

Total Time: 1 hour, 10 minutes

Ingredients:

- 3 Tbsp. almond rusk crumbs, biscotti crumbs, zwieback crumbs, or fine dry bread crumbs
- 1 cup butter, at room temperature
- 1 cup plus 3 Tbsp. sugar
- 4 eggs
- 1 1/4 cups cake or all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 2 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 4 apples, each pared and sliced into 8 wedges
- 1/3 cup coarsely chopped almonds

Preparation:

Preheat oven to 350°. Butter the bottom and sides of a 10-inch springform pan or cake pan. Sprinkle the crumbs in the pan, being sure to coat the bottom and sides as evenly as possible.

In a mixing bowl, combine 1 cup sugar with butter. Add one egg at a time until all are incorporated. Sift together the flour and baking powder. Gradually mix the dry ingredients into the bowl until a smooth batter is formed.

Pour batter into pan. Toss the apple slices in the cinnamon and 3 Tbsp. remaining sugar, then press each one lightly into the batter to form a decorative pattern. Scatter chopped almonds across the top. Bake for 1 hour, or until a toothpick inserted in the center of the cake comes out clean.

Serves 12.

Karen Blixen

Baroness Karen von Blixen-Finecke



Karen Blixen, 1959. Photo: Carl Van Vechten

Born	17 April 1885 Rungsted, Denmark
Died	7 September 1962 (aged 77) Rungsted, Denmark
Occupation	Writer
Notable work(s)	<i>Out of Africa</i> , <i>Seven Gothic Tales</i> , <i>Shadows on the Grass</i> , "Babette's Feast"

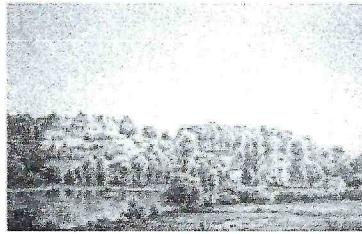
Karen von Blixen-Finecke (17 April 1885 – 7 September 1962), née **Karen Christenze Dinesen**, was a Danish author also known by her pen name **Isak Dinesen**. She also wrote under the pen names **Tania Blixen**, **Osceola** and **Pierre Andrézel**. Blixen wrote works in Danish, French and English.

Blixen is best known for *Out of Africa*, her account of living in Kenya, and one of her stories, *Babette's Feast*, both of which have been adapted into highly acclaimed, Academy Award-winning motion pictures. Prior to the release of the first film, she was noted for her *Seven Gothic Tales*, for which she is also known in Denmark.

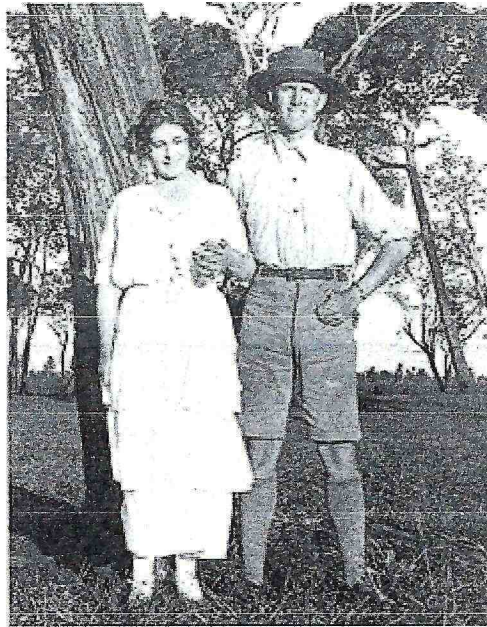
Peter Englund, permanent secretary of the Swedish Academy, described it as "a mistake" that Blixen was not awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature during the 1930s.^[1] Although never awarded the prize she finished in third place behind Graham Greene in 1961, the year Ivo Andrić was awarded the prize.

Biography

Early years



The Mattrup seat farm, 1861



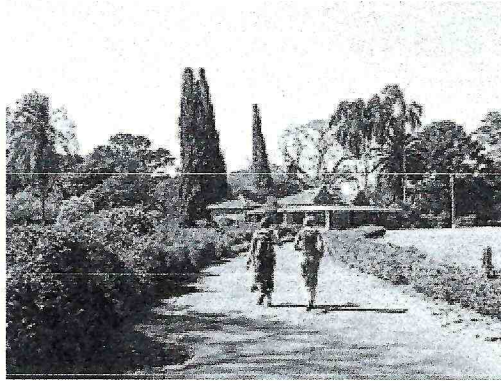
Karen Blixen with her brother Thomas on the family farm in Kenya in the 1920s.

Karen Dinesen was born on 17 April 1885 in the manor house Rungstedlund north of Copenhagen, as the daughter of writer and army officer Wilhelm Dinesen, and his wife Ingeborg, nee Westenholz, and was the older sister of Thomas Dinesen. Her mother came from a wealthy Unitarian bourgeois merchant family. From August 1872 to December 1873, Wilhelm Dinesen had lived among the Chippewa Indians in Wisconsin, where he fathered a daughter, who was born after his return to Denmark. Wilhelm Dinesen hanged himself in

1895, when Karen was ten. He suffered from syphilis which resulted in bouts of deep depression.

Karen spent some of her early years at her mother's family home, the Mattrup seat farm near Horsens. She was later schooled in art in Copenhagen, Paris, and Rome. She began publishing fiction in Danish periodicals in 1905 under the pseudonym Osceola.

Life in the African Great Lakes



51

The Karen Blixen Museum in Kenya.

In 1913, Karen Dinesen became engaged to her second-cousin, the Swedish Baron Bror von Blixen-Finecke, after a failed love affair with his brother. The couple moved to Kenya, which was at the time part of British East Africa. In early 1914, they used family money to establish a coffee plantation there, hiring local workers; predominantly the Kikuyu people who lived on the farmlands at the time of their arrival. About the couple's early life in the African Great Lakes region, Karen Blixen later wrote,

Here at long last one was in a position not to give a damn for all conventions, here was a new kind of freedom which until then one had only found in dreams!

The two were quite different in education and temperament, and Bror Blixen was unfaithful to his wife. She was diagnosed with syphilis toward the end of their first year of marriage. According to Dinesen's biographer Judith Thurman, there is reason to doubt that Bror Blixen was the cause. Although Dinesen's illness was eventually cured (some uncertainty exists), it created medical anguish for years afterward. The Blixens separated in 1921, and were divorced in 1925.

During her early years in Kenya, Karen Blixen met the English big game hunter Denys Finch Hatton, and after her separation she and Finch Hatton developed a close friendship which eventually became a long-term love affair. Finch Hatton used Blixen's farmhouse as a home base between 1926 and 1931, when he wasn't leading one of his clients on safari. He died in the crash of his de Havilland Gipsy Moth biplane in 1931. At the same time, the failure of the coffee plantation, as a result of the worldwide economic depression and the unsuitability of her farm's soil for coffee growing, forced Blixen to abandon her beloved farm. The family corporation sold the land to a residential developer, and Blixen returned to Denmark, where she lived for the rest of her life.

Life as a writer



Jurij Moskvitin (middle) accompanying Karen Blixen/Isak Dinesen (right) meeting composer Igor Stravinsky (left) at the Copenhagen City Hall in 1959.

On returning to Denmark, Blixen began writing in earnest. Her first book, *Seven Gothic Tales*, was published in the US in 1934 under the pseudonym Isak Dinesen. This first book, highly enigmatic and more metaphoric than Gothic, won great recognition, and publication of the book in Great Britain and Denmark followed. Her second book, now the best known of her works, was *Out of Africa*, published in 1937, and its success firmly established her reputation as an author. She was awarded the Tagea Brandt Rejselegat (a Danish prize for women in the arts or academic life) in 1939.

During World War II, when Denmark was occupied by the Germans, Blixen started her only full-length novel, the introspective tale *The Angelic Avengers*, under another pseudonym, Pierre Andrezel; it was published in 1944. The horrors experienced by the young heroines were interpreted as an allegory of Nazism.

Her writing during most of the 1940s and 1950s consisted of tales in the storytelling tradition. The most famous is "Babette's Feast", about a chef who spends her entire 10,000-franc lottery prize to prepare a final, spectacular gourmet meal. *The Immortal Story*, was adapted to the screen in 1968 by Orson Welles, a great admirer of Blixen's work and life. Welles later attempted to film *The Dreamers*, but only a few scenes were ever completed.

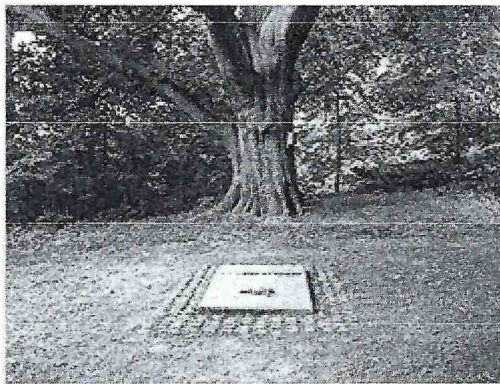
Blixen's tales follow a traditional style of storytelling, and most take place against the background of the 19th century or earlier periods. Concerning her deliberately old-fashioned style, Blixen mentioned in several interviews that she wanted to express a spirit that no longer existed in modern times, that of destiny and courage. Indeed, many of her ideas can be traced back to those of Romanticism. Blixen's concept of the art of the story is perhaps most directly expressed in the story "The Cardinal's First Tale" from her fifth book, *Last Tales*.

Though Danish, Blixen wrote her books in English and then translated her work into her native tongue. Critics describe her English as having unusual beauty.^[who?] Her later books usually appeared simultaneously in both Danish and English. As an author, she kept her public image as a charismatic, mysterious old Baroness with an insightful third eye, and established herself as an inspiring figure in Danish culture, although shunning the mainstream.

Blixen was widely respected by contemporaries such as Ernest Hemingway and Truman Capote, and during her tour of the United States in 1959, writers who visited her included Arthur Miller, E. E. Cummings, and Pearl Buck. She also met actress Marilyn Monroe with her husband Arthur Miller. The socialite Babe Paley gave a lunch in her honour at St. Regis with Truman and Cecil Beaton as guests, and Gloria Vanderbilt gave her a dress by Mainbocher. The photographer Richard Avedon took one of his famous pictures of her during her stay in New York. She was admired by Cecil Beaton and the patron Pauline de Rothschild of the Rothschild family.

She was awarded the Danish Ingenio et Arti medal in 1950.^[4] In 2012, the Nobel records were opened after 50 years and it was revealed that Blixen was among a shortlist of authors considered for the 1962 Nobel Prize in Literature, along with John Steinbeck (winner), Robert Graves, Lawrence Durrell and Jean Anouilh.^[5] Blixen became ineligible after dying in September.

Illness and death



Karen Blixen's grave in Rungstedlund, Denmark

Although it was widely believed that syphilis continued to plague Blixen throughout her lifetime, extensive tests were unable to reveal evidence of syphilis in her system after 1925. Her writing prowess suggests that she did not suffer from the mental degeneration of late stages of syphilis, nor from cerebral poisoning due to mercury treatments. She did suffer a mild permanent loss of sensation in her legs that could be attributed to chronic use of arsenic in Africa.

Others attribute her weight loss and eventual death to anorexia nervosa

During the 1950s Blixen's health quickly deteriorated, and in 1955 she had a third of her stomach removed because of an ulcer. Writing became impossible, although she did several radio broadcasts.

In her analysis of Blixen's medical history, Linda Donelson points out that Blixen wondered if her pain was psychosomatic even though she blamed it in public on the emotive syphilis: "Whatever her belief about her illness, the disease suited the artist's design for creating her own personal legend."¹

Unable to eat, Blixen died in 1962 at Rungstedlund, her family's estate, at the age of 77, apparently of malnutrition. The source of her abdominal problems remains unknown, although gastric syphilis, manifested by gastric ulcers during secondary and tertiary syphilis, was well-known prior to the advent of modern antibiotics.

Rungstedlund Museum



The Karen Blixen Museum in Rungstedlund, Denmark

Blixen lived most of her life at the family estate Rungstedlund, which was acquired by her father in 1879. The property is located in Rungsted, 24 kilometres (15 mi) north of Copenhagen, Denmark's capital. The oldest parts of the estate date to 1680, and it had been operated as both an inn and a farm. Most of Blixen's writing was done in Ewald's Room, named after author Johannes Ewald. The property is managed by the Rungstedlund Foundation, founded by Blixen and her siblings. It was opened to the public as a museum in 1991. In 2013 The Karen Blixen Museum joined the Nordic museum portal CultureNordic.com.

Legacy

The Nairobi suburb that stands on the land where Blixen farmed coffee is now named Karen. Blixen herself declared in her later writings that "the residential district of Karen" was "named after me". And Blixen's biographer, Judith Thurman, was told by the developer who bought the farm from the family corporation that he planned to name the district after Blixen.

Blixen was known to her friends not as "Karen" but as "Tania." The family corporation that owned her farm was incorporated as the "Karen Coffee Company". The chairman of the board was her uncle, Aage Westenholz who may have named the company after his own daughter Karen. However, the developer seems to have named the district after its famous author/farmer rather than the name of her company.

There is a Karen Blixen Coffee House and Museum in the district of Karen, located near Blixen's former home.

Karen Blixen's portrait was featured on the front of the Danish 50-krone banknote, 1997 series, from 7 May 1999 to 25 August 2005. She also featured on Danish postage stamps that were issued in 1980 and 1996

Family

Blixen's great-nephew, Anders Westenholz, was also an accomplished writer, and has written books about her and her literature, among other things.

Quotes

I had a farm in Africa, at the foot of the Ngong Hills. – *Out of Africa*, 1937

To be lonely is a state of mind, something completely other than physical solitude; when modern authors rant about the soul's intolerable loneliness, it is only proof of their own intolerable emptiness. – *Out of Africa*, 1937

The cure for anything is salt water: sweat, tears or the sea. – *The Deluge at Norderney, Seven Gothic Tales*, 1934

When in the end, the day came on which I was going away, I learned the strange learning that things can happen which we ourselves cannot possibly imagine, either beforehand, or at the time when they are taking place, or afterwards when we look back on them." – *Out of Africa*, 1937

He belonged to the olden days, and I have never met another German who has given me so strong an impression of what Imperial Germany was and stood for." – About General Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck, German commander during the East Africa Campaign.

Through all the world there goes one long cry from the heart of the artist: Give me leave to do my utmost!" – "Babette's Feast", 1953

OCTOBER

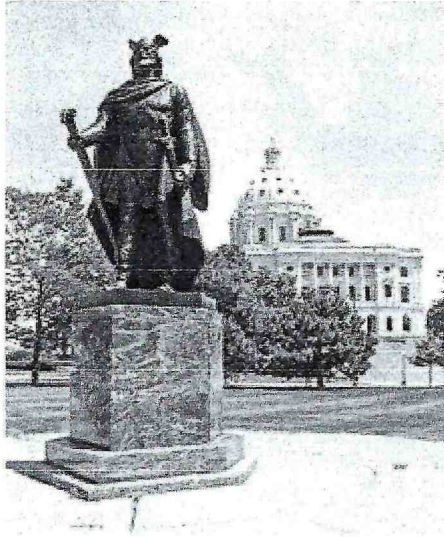
Leif Eriksson Day

Halloween in Copenhagen

The Baltic herring market in Helsinki

Leif Erikson

Leif Erikson



Statue of Leif near the Minnesota State Capitol in St. Paul

Born	c. 970 probably Iceland
Died	c. 1020 probably Greenland
Nationality	Norse/Icelandic (Norwegian descent)
Occupation	Explorer
Known for	Discovering Vinland (Part of North America; possibly Newfoundland)
Religion	Norse paganism; converted to Christianity c. 999

Partner(s) Thorgunna (c. 999)

Children Thorgils, Thorkell

Relatives Erik the
Red (father), Thorvald, Thorstein and Freydís (siblings)

Leif Erikson or Leif Ericson Old Norse: *Leifr Eiríksson*; Icelandic: *Leifur Eiríksson*; Norwegian: *Leiv Eiriksson* c. 970 – c. 1020) was a Norse explorer regarded as the first European to land in North America (excluding Greenland), nearly 500 years before Christopher Columbus. According to the Sagas of Icelanders, he established a Norse settlement at Vinland, tentatively identified with the Norse L'Anse aux Meadows on the northern tip of Newfoundland in modern-day Canada.

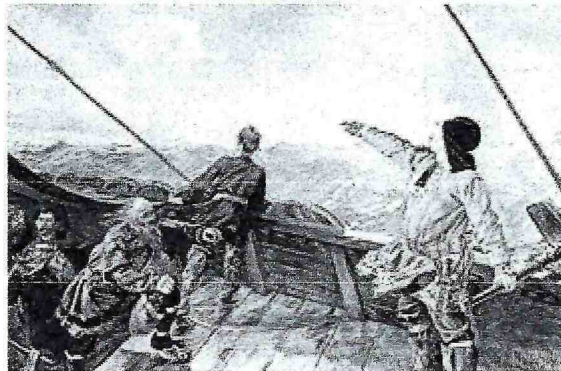
It is believed that Leif was born in Iceland around the 970s—the son of mother Thjóðhildr and father Erik the Red, an explorer and outlaw from Western Norway. Erik founded the first Norse colonies in Greenland, and was based at the family estate *Brattahlíð* in the so-called Eastern Settlement, where Leif had his upbringing. Leif had two known sons: Thorgils, born to noblewoman Thorgunna in the Hebrides; and Thorkell, who succeeded him as chieftain of the Greenland settlement.

Early life

Leif was the son of Erik the Red and his wife Thjodhild, and the grandson of Thorvaldr Ásvaldsson. His year of birth is most often given as c. 970 or c. 980. Though Leif's birthplace is not accounted for in the sagas, it is likely he was born in Iceland, where his parents met—probably somewhere in *Breiðafjörður*, and possibly at the farm *Haukadal* where Thjóðhild's family is said to have been based. Leif had two brothers, Thorsteinn and Thorvaldr, and a sister, Freydís.

Thorvald Asvaldsson was banished from Norway for manslaughter and went into exile in Iceland accompanied by young Erik. When Erik was himself banished from Iceland, he travelled further west to an area he named Greenland, where he established the first permanent settlement in 986. Tyrker, one of Erik's thralls, had been specially trusted to keep in charge of Erik's children, as Leif later referred to him as his "foster father".

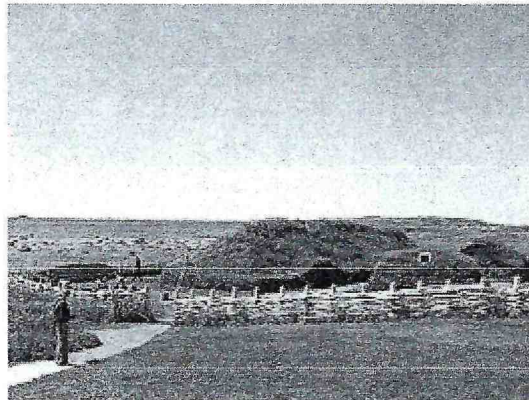
Discovering Vinland



Leif and his crew travelled from Greenland to Norway in 999. Blown off course to the Hebrides and staying for much of the summer, he arrived in Norway and became a *hirdman* of King Olaf Tryggvason. He also converted to Christianity and was given the mission of introducing the religion to Greenland. The *Saga of Erik the Red* and the *Saga of the Greenlanders*, both thought to have been written around 1200, contain different accounts of the voyages to *Vinland*. The two only known strictly historical mentions of *Vinland* are found in the work of Adam of Bremen c. 1075 and in the *Book of Icelanders* compiled c. 1122 by Ari the Wise. According to the *Saga of Erik the Red*, Leif apparently saw *Vinland* for the first time after being blown off course on his way to introduce Christianity to Greenland.

According to a literal interpretation of Einar Haugen's translation of the two sagas in the book *Voyages to Vinland*, Leif was not the first European to discover America, nor the first to make landfall there: he had heard the story of merchant Bjarni Herjólfsson who claimed to have sighted land to the west of Greenland after having been blown off course. Bjarni reportedly never made landfall there, however. Later, when travelling from Norway to Greenland, Leif was also blown off course, to a land that he did not expect to see, where he found "self-sown wheat fields and grapevines". He next rescued two men who were shipwrecked in this country and went back to Greenland (and Christianised the people there). Consequently, if this is to be trusted, Bjarni Herjólfsson was the first European to see America beyond Greenland, and the two unnamed shipwrecked men were the first people known to Europeans to have made landfall there.

Leif then approached Bjarni, purchased his ship, gathered a crew of thirty-five men, and mounted an expedition towards the land Bjarni had described. His father Erik was set to join him but dropped out after he fell from his horse on his way to set sail, an incident he interpreted as a bad omen. Leif followed Bjarni's route in reverse and landed first in a rocky and desolate place he named *Helluland* (Flat-Rock Land; possibly Baffin Island). After venturing further by sea, he landed the second time in a forested place he named *Markland* (Forest Land; possibly Labrador). Finally, after two more days at sea, he landed in a luscious place with plentiful stores of salmon. As winter approached, he decided to encamp there for the winter, and broke his party into two groups - one to remain at camp and the other to explore the lands. During one of these explorations, Tyrker discovered that the land was full of vines and grapes. Leif therefore named the land *Vinland*. There, he and his crew built a small settlement, which was called *Leifsbúðir* (Leif's Booths) by later visitors from Greenland. After having wintered over in *Vinland*, Leif returned to Greenland in the spring with a cargo of grapes and timber. On the return voyage, he rescued an Icelandic castaway and his crew, earning him the nickname "Leif the Lucky".



Modern recreation of the Norse site at L'Anse aux Meadows.

Research done in the early 1960s by Norwegian explorer Helge Ingstad and his wife, archaeologist Anne Stine Ingstad, identified a Norse settlement located at the northern tip of Newfoundland. It has been suggested that this site, known as L'Anse aux Meadows, is Leif's settlement of *Leifsbúðir*. The Ingstads demonstrated that Norsemen had reached America about 500 years before Christopher Columbus. Later archaeological evidence suggests that *Vinland* may have been the areas around the Gulf of St. Lawrence and that the L'Anse aux Meadows site was a ship repair station and waypoint for voyages there. That does not necessarily contradict the identification of L'Anse aux Meadows with *Leifsbúðir* since the two sagas appear to describe *Vinland* as a wider region which included several settlements. The *Saga of Erik the Red* mentions two other settlements in *Vinland*: a settlement called *Straumfjörðr*, which lay beyond *Kjalarnes* promontory and the Wonderstrands, and one called *Hóp*, which was located even farther south.

Personal life

Leif was described as a wise, considerate, and strong man of striking appearance. During his stay in the Hebrides, he fell in love with noblewoman Thorgunna who gave birth to their son Thorgils. Thorgils was later sent to Leif in Greenland, but he did not become popular. After his first trip to *Vinland*, he returned to the family estate of *Brattahlíð* in Greenland, and started preaching Christianity to the Greenlanders. His father Erik reacted coldly to the suggestion that he should abandon his religion, while his mother Thjóðhildr quickly became a Christian and built a church called Thjóðhild's Church. Leif is last mentioned alive in 1019, and by 1025 he had passed on his chieftaincy of *Eiríksfjörðr* to another son, Thorkell. Nothing is mentioned about his death in the sagas—he probably died in Greenland some time between these dates. Nothing further is known about his family beyond the succession of Thorkell as chieftain.

Legacy

Norse and medieval Europe

Leif's successful expedition in *Vinland* encouraged other Norsemen to also make the journey. The first apparent contact between the Norse and the indigenous people, so-called *skrælingjar*, was made by his brother Thorvald, and resulted in hostilities and killing. In the end there were no permanent Norse settlements in *Vinland*, although sporadic voyages at least to *Markland* for forages, timber and trade possibly lasted for centuries. The casual tone of references to these areas may suggest that their discovery was not seen as particularly significant by contemporaries, or that it was assumed to be public knowledge, or both. Knowledge of the *Vinland* journeys might have spread around medieval Europe, as writers such as Adam of Bremen made mention of remote lands to the west. It has been suggested that the knowledge of *Vinland* might have been maintained in European seaports in the 15th century, and that Christopher Columbus, who claimed in a letter to have visited Iceland in 1477, could have heard stories of it.

United States



U.S. commemorative stamp
issued October 9, 1968,
Leif Erikson Day

Stories of Leif's journey to North America had a profound effect on the identity and self-perception of later Nordic Americans and Nordic immigrants to the United States. The first statue of Leif (by Anne Whitney) was erected in Boston in 1887, as many believed that Vinland could have been located at Cape Cod; not long after, another casting of Whitney's statue was erected in Milwaukee. A statue was also erected in Chicago in 1901, having been originally commissioned for the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition to coincide with the arrival of a reconstructed Viking ship from Bergen, Norway. Another work of art made for the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition, the painting *Leiv Eiriksson oppdager Amerika* by Christian Krohg, was in the possession of a Leif Erikson Memorial Association in Chicago before being given back to the National Gallery of Norway in 1900.

For the centenary of the first official immigration of Norwegians to America, President Calvin Coolidge stated at the 1925 Minnesota State Fair, to a crowd of 100,000 people, that Leif had indeed been the first European to discover America. Further statues of him were erected at the Minnesota State Capitol in St. Paul in 1949, near Lake Superior in Duluth in 1956, and in downtown Seattle.

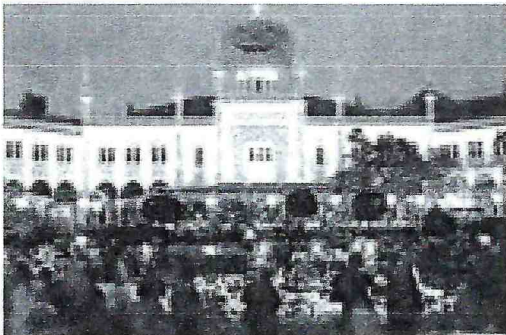
The date October 9 has been used to remember Leif Erikson in the United States. In 1929, the Wisconsin Legislature passed a bill to make October 9 "Leif Erikson Day" in the state; the bill was signed by Governor Walter J. Kohler, Sr. in May of the same year. That date was not chosen to commemorate any event in the life of the explorer. Rather, it marked the first organized immigration from Norway to the United States when the ship *Restauration*, coming from Stavanger, arrived in New York Harbor on October 9, 1825. In 1964 the United States Congress authorized and requested the president to proclaim October 9 of each year as "Leif Erikson Day".

HALLOWEEN IN COPENHAGEN

Halloween in Tivoli Gardens is Copenhagen's famous Halloween event to see. The Tivoli in Copenhagen will stay open during the Danish annual fall break (autumn holidays) in the middle of October.

Each **mid-October**, Tivoli is transformed into an enchanted Halloween-universe. Pumpkins, smiling scarecrows, funny witches and Tivolis own 'heroes' help to create a funny scare for children of all ages.

During Halloween in Tivoli in Copenhagen, ALL rides will be open. Inside the Main Entrance the Tivoli is setting up a Harvest Fair containing all manners of exciting things to do with the autumn season. Around the Mill, a village was built, containing many fun activities for the children. They can make pumpkin heads, brew magic potions, catch spiders and buy assorted Halloween trinkets.

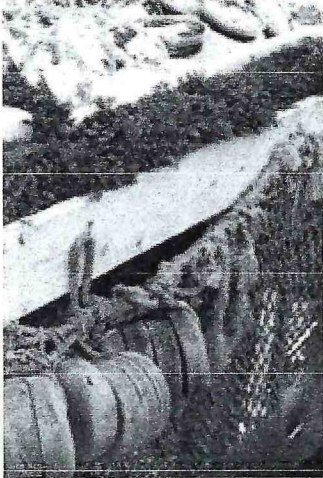


THE BALTIC HERRING MARKET

The Baltic Herring Market in **Helsinki**, Finland, is a popular week-long seafood festival. The Baltic Herring Market is a fish fair that has been taking place annually in **early October** since 1743.

During the Baltic Herring Market, fishermen provide their best Baltic herring cooked in different ways, with different tastes. You also find crafts and wool clothing, and witness the Herring Market jury selecting the year's best marinated fish and herring surprise.

The Baltic Herring Market is hosted by the city of Helsinki and takes place prominently on the Market Square in the center of Helsinki.



Swedish Herring Rissoles (Sillbullar)

Ingredients

Potatoes	3 Medium
Onions	2
Butter	2 Tablespoon
Fresh herring	3 , skinned and filleted
Nutmeg	1 Teaspoon
Red currant jelly	1 Cup (16 tbs)
Oil	1/2 Cup (8 tbs)
Salt	To Taste
Pepper	To Taste

Directions

- 1 Wash the potatoes without peeling them, and cook them in salted boiling water. Peel and finely chop the onions.
- 2 Melt the butter in a pan, and cook the onions, without letting them color too much, for 7 or 8 minutes. Put them to one side and leave to cool.
- 3 When the potatoes are cooked, cool them in cold water, then peel them and mash them to a puree.
- 4 Put the herring fillets through the grinder. Add the onions, potatoes, a little salt, pepper and a little grated nutmeg. Mix well together, then shape into round flat rissoles.
- 5 Put the red currant jelly and 2/3 cup water in a saucepan and heat slowly.
- 6 Heat the oil in a skillet. When it is hot, cook the rissoles for about 10 minutes, turning them over once or twice.
- 7 Heat a serving dish and a sauce-boat.
- 8 Arrange the rissoles on the dish. Pour the hot red currant jelly sauce into the sauceboat and serve very hot.

NOVEMBER

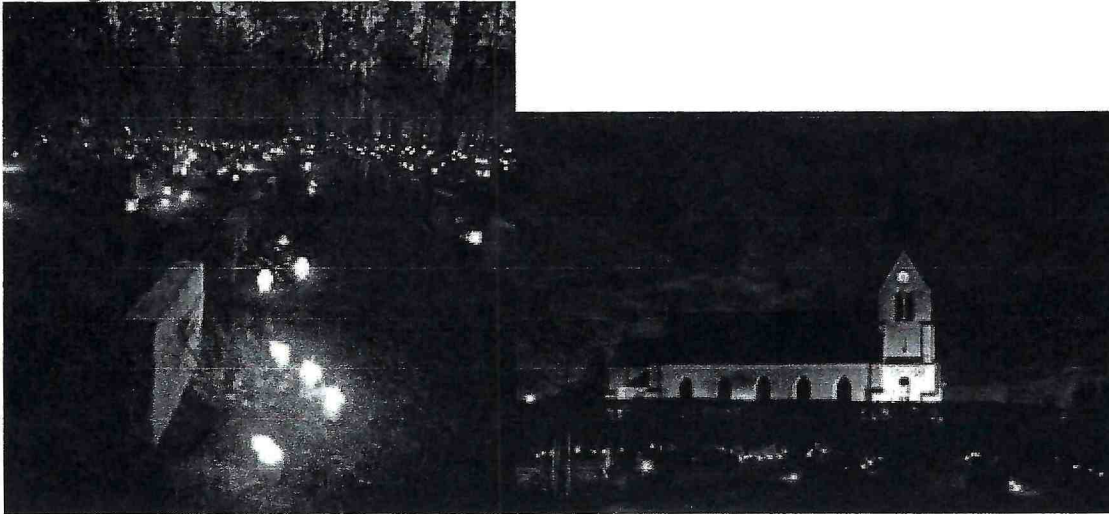
All Saints Day

Mårten Gås – Feast of St Martin

Anni-Frid Lyngstad – Norwegian singer

ALLA HELGONS DAG – ALL SAINTS DAY

This holiday is of rather recent vintage in Sweden. Popular demand for a holiday honoring the memory of departed friends and relatives grew steadily through the course of the first half of the present century. Two world wars undoubtedly did their part in feeding the demand, as did increased contact with Catholic cultures. As a result, for the first time in modern Swedish history a holiday was reinstated in the Swedish calendar in 1952. All Saints' Day is now celebrated on the Saturday following the 30th of October. Families lay wreaths and flowers on the graves of their loved ones. As night falls, graveyards are aglow with twinkling candles and lanterns.



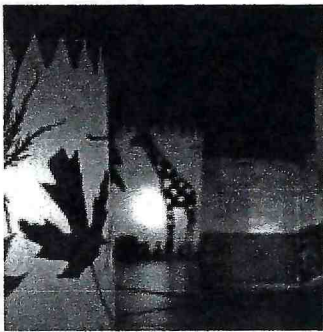
MÅRTEN GÅS – FEAST OF ST MARTIN

November 11 is the feast day of St. Martin who, legend has it, was a kind man who led a quiet and simple life. The most famous legend of his life is that he once cut his cloak in half to share with a beggar during a snowstorm, to save the beggar from dying of the cold.

St. Martin was born in what today is Hungary, in 316/317 A.D. He joined the Roman army as a youth, was baptized at 18, and in 371 A.D. became the third bishop of Tours, France.

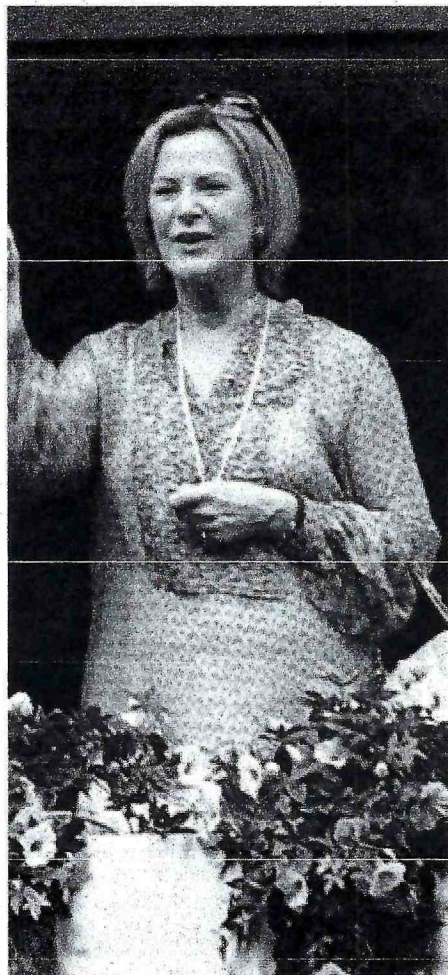
In Scandinavia, it is the night before St. Martin's Day that is the time for celebration.

Many locals in Sweden and Norway eat out in restaurants on the evening before St. Martin's Day (Swedish: Mårten Gås) and enjoy a rather large goose meal. This filling goose banquet involves beak to tail eating; all parts of the goose are used, accompanied by soup, spirits, side dishes, goose-liver sausage, and potatoes. Then you enjoy the roasted goose, stuffed with apples and prunes. The goose fat is used to prepare the side dishes, which can include red cabbage, roasted apples and potatoes. What a meal!



Frida Lyngstad

Frida Lyngstad
(Frida)



Anni-Frid Lyngstad in Stockholm, 2008

Background information

Birth name Anni-Frid Synni Lyngstad

Also known as Frida

Born	15 November 1945 (age 68)
Origin	Bjørkåsen, Ballangen, Norway
Genres	Pop, pop rock
Occupations	Singer
Instruments	Vocals, piano
Years active	1967–1984, 1996–present
Labels	EMI Polar Music Andersson Records Atlantic Records (USA)
Associated acts	Benny Andersson, ABBA, Phil Collins

Princess Anni-Frid

Countess of Plauen

Spouse	Prince Heinrich Ruzzo Reuss of Plauen
House	House of Reuss
Born	15 November 1945 (age 68) Bjørkåsen, Ballangen, Norway

Princess Anni-Frid Synni Princess Reuss of Plauen (German: *Prinzessin Anni-Frid Synni Prinzessin Reuss von Plauen*) (15 November 1945), widely known as **Frida Lyngstad** or by just the mononym **Frida**, is a Swedish pop and jazz singer. Born in Norway to a Norwegian mother and a German father, she grew up in Sweden, and was a member of the famous Swedish group ABBA between 1972 and 1982. After the break-up of ABBA, she continued an international solo singing career.

In 1963, she married Ragnar Fredriksson at age 17. Immediately after their divorce in 1970, Frida courted eventual ABBA band member Benny Andersson, co-habiting together until they officially married in 1978. The couple divorced in 1981. In 1992, Anni-Frid married Heinrich Ruzzo Prince Reuss of Plauen, who was a German Prince of the former sovereign House of Reuss. The prince died of lymphoma in October 1999. She currently lives in Zermatt, Switzerland, sharing a home with her British boyfriend, Henry Smith, 5th Viscount Hambleden, since 2008.

Early life

Anni-Frid Synni "Frida" Lyngstad was born in Bjørkåsen, a small village in Ballangen near Narvik, in northern Norway, to a Norwegian mother, Synni Lyngstad (19 June 1926 – 28 September 1947), and a German father, soldier Alfred Haase (1919 – January 2009), just after the end of the Second World War and the German occupation of Norway. Lyngstad's father returned to Germany when his troops were evacuated.

In early 1947, Lyngstad, her mother, and her maternal grandmother, Arntine Lyngstad ("Agný"), left her birthplace, fearing reprisals against those who had dealings with the Germans during the occupation. This could entail not just insults and threats, but also forced separation of infants from their parents and relatives.

Lyngstad was taken by her grandmother to Sweden, where they settled in the region of Härjedalen and her grandmother took any available job. Her mother remained in Norway and worked for a period in the south of the country. She soon joined her mother and daughter in Sweden, and the three moved to Malmköping (72 km from Stockholm). Her mother soon died of kidney failure, aged 21. Lyngstad was raised solely by her grandmother. In June 1949, they both relocated to Torshälla (just outside of Eskilstuna), where Agny Lyngstad worked as a seamstress. Frida Lyngstad grew up in Torshälla and began attending school there in August 1952. Close contact with her family in Norway (notably her uncle and four aunts) continued, and Lyngstad recalls summer holidays spent with them at her birthplace. She was especially close to her Aunt Olive, who once stated that she saw how lonely and subdued Frida was and, as a result, always did her best to make her feel loved and welcomed during visits.

Lyngstad believed that her father, Alfred Haase, had died during the war on his way back to Germany as his ship was reported to have sunk. However, in 1977, the German teen magazine *Bravo* published a poster and a complete biography with details of Lyngstad's background, including the names of her father and mother. It was seen by Lyngstad's half-brother, Peter Haase, who went to his father and asked him if he had been in Ballangen during the war. A few months later, Lyngstad met Haase in Stockholm for the first time.

Career

1958–1969: Early work

Lyngstad stated in several interviews that her grandmother frequently sang songs to her (notably old Norwegian songs), which resulted in her love for music. She soon showed musical talent at a very early age, beginning in her first years at school. On Fridays, she was often asked by her teacher to sing in front of the class and soon became known in school and in the neighborhood for her beautiful voice. Although her grandmother encouraged her to sing (according to Lyngstad herself), she never attended any of her performances. Her

grandmother died shortly before ABBA formed and therefore never experienced the success of the group.

At the age of 13, she got her first job as a dance band and schlager singer in 1958, with The Evald Eks Orchestra. Evald Ek himself remembers: *"It was hard to believe, such a young person could sing that well. She was so easy to rehearse with and she was never shy onstage. The only thing I taught her was to sing out. In those days, she had a tendency of holding back her voice a little"*. With the Evald Eks Orchestra, the 13-year-old Lyngstad, performed every weekend in front of a dancing audience. The sets often lasted up to five hours. The songs she liked most to sing were the evergreens; *"All of Me"*, *"Night and Day"* and *"Begin the Beguine"*. To advance and develop, she also started to take singing lessons. Later, she teamed up with a 15-piece 'big band', who performed a jazz repertoire covering Glenn Miller, Duke Ellington and Count Basie; her vocal idols being Ella Fitzgerald and Peggy Lee. In 1963, she formed her own band, the Anni-Frid Four.

On 3 September 1967, Frida won the Swedish national talent competition, "New Faces", arranged by record company EMI and held at Skansen, Stockholm. The song she chose to sing was "En Ledig Dag" ("A Day Off"). The first prize in this contest was a recording contract with EMI Sweden. Unbeknownst to Lyngstad, the winner of the contest was also expected to appear the same evening in the country's most popular TV show at that time, *Hylands Hörna*. This happened on the same day Sweden switched from driving on the left side of the road to the right side. Driving on that day was discouraged, so most of the nation was watching TV that night. Frida performed her winning song live. (The performance can be seen on *Frida - The DVD*)

This first exposure to a wider television audience caused a sensation, and many record companies and producers contacted Frida immediately. EMI executives, fearing they might lose their new singer, took the precaution of driving from Stockholm to Frida's home in Eskilstuna the next morning with a recording contract for her to sign. EMI producer Olle Bergman remembers: *"We got so interested and fond of her and I thought she had everything a person needs to become something."*

On 11 September 1967, Frida recorded the vocals for "En Ledig Dag", which was to become her first single for EMI Sweden. Professional and self-assured on this first day in the studio, she recorded the vocals in just one take. The early songs she recorded for EMI Sweden are included in the EMI compilation *Frida 1967-1972*, digitally remastered and released by EMI Sweden in 1997.

On 29 January 1968, she performed this song on national TV, and at this occasion briefly met future ABBA member Agnetha Fältskog, who also performed her first single in the same programme. Lyngstad toured Sweden in 1968, and recorded several singles for EMI. She decided to move to Stockholm to start working full-time as a singer.

In 1969, she participated in Melodifestivalen – the Swedish heats for the Eurovision Song Contest – with the song "Härlig är vår jord" ("Our Earth Is Wonderful"), and finished fourth.

1970–1971: Pre-ABBA

Her first album, *Frida*, produced by her then-fiancé Andersson, was released in 1971. The album received unanimously generous praise from the critics and the press, who especially noted the precision and versatility of Lyngstad's voice. For example Sweden's biggest morningpaper "Dagens Nyheter" (Daily News) wrote: *"Professional, sure and certain LP-debut ... low-key but self-assured personality with sprinkles of temperament, humor and tenderness. And she sings in such a way that you understand that she's got something between her ears – she sings, in other words, in a very intelligent way"*. She now scored her first Swedish No.1 hit with "Min Egen Stad" ("My Own Town"). All four future members of

ABBA sang back-up vocals on this song. The album is now included in the EMI compilation *Frida 1967-1972*.

Frida continued to play in cabarets, and tour and regularly perform on TV and radio. Subsequently, her relationship with Andersson, and friendship with Björn Ulvaeus and Agnetha Fältskog led to the formation of ABBA. In 1972, after five years at EMI Sweden, Lyngstad changed record companies and moved to the Polar Music label. She recorded the single "Man vill ju leva lite dessemellan" ("One wants to live a little from time to time"), which became her second No. 1 hit on the Swedish charts.

1972–1982: The ABBA years

Main article: ABBA



ABBA in 1974, from left to right: Benny Andersson, Anni-Frid Lyngstad (Frida), Agnetha Fältskog, and Björn Ulvaeus

At first, Lyngstad was hesitant to perform with her boyfriend Benny Andersson, his best friend Björn Ulvaeus and his wife, Agnetha Fältskog. Their first project together was the cabaret act *Festfolk*, which flopped in the winter of 1970–1971. The following year, 'Frida' toured on her own while the other three future ABBA members started performing together on a regular basis.^[8] Eventually, she rejoined them. Andersson and Ulvaeus were busy producing other artists, but soon discovered the qualities of Lyngstad's and Fältskog's voices combined: ABBA came to life.

Frida sang solo parts in the following ABBA songs: "Andante, Andante", "Cassandra", "Fernando", "Gonna Sing You My Lovesong", "I Have a Dream", "I Let The Music Speak", "I Wonder (Departure)", "The King Has Lost His Crown", "Knowing Me, Knowing You", "Like an Angel Passing Through My Room", "Lovers (Live a Little Longer)", "Me and Bobby and Bobby's Brother", "Me and I", "Money, Money, Money", "The Name Of The Game", "One Man, One Woman", "Our Last Summer", "Put On Your White Sombrero", "Should I Laugh or Cry", "Super Trouper", "Tropical Loveland", "The Visitors", "The Way Old Friends Do", "When All Is Said And Done" and "You Owe Me One", and her voice was of course clearly audible on most other ABBA tracks as well.

Lyngstad clearly enjoyed the spotlight more than the other three members of ABBA. She truly liked to tour and to meet audience members one-to-one.^[9] She took an active part in co-designing the famed ABBA costumes for their tours and TV performances.^[10] Since the

members of ABBA went their separate ways, Frida has been the only one who openly regrets there has never been a reunion to date.



Frida Lyngstad and Benny Andersson 1976

Her next solo album, in Swedish, was *Frida ensam*, (*Frida Alone*), released in 1975 during the ABBA years, and produced by Benny Andersson. This album includes her successful Swedish version of "Fernando", which stayed at the no. 1 spot in the Svensktoppen radio charts for 9 weeks, but was never released as a single. The album was recorded between sessions of the ABBA albums "Waterloo" and "ABBA". Due to the rising popularity of the group, the album took 18 months to record. It became an enormous commercial and critical success in Sweden, topping the Swedish album charts for six weeks and remaining in the charts for 38. The album was mostly a collection of covers of songs by artists like the Beach Boys, 10cc and David Bowie, receiving positive reviews from *Melody Maker*. "The album portrays Frida as a very strong and emotive singer and shows the true value of the music, that if sung properly and with enough feeling it transcends all language barriers". This album was such a big success, it eventually went platinum.

1982–1984: International solo career



Lyngstad in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, October 1982

In 1982, during ABBA's last year as a working band, Frida recorded and released her first post-Abba solo album. This was also her first solo album in English. The Phil Collins-produced album was called *Something's Going On*, and became a big success for Frida worldwide. A much rockier sound was found on many of the songs and Phil Collins' drum sound contributed a lot, especially on the lead single. The album sold 1.5 million copies and spawned the successful single "I Know There's Something Going On", which topped the charts in Switzerland, Belgium, Costa Rica and France, where it stayed No 1 for five weeks. The song also reached the top five in Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, Norway and Australia amongst others. In the United States, the single reached #13 in March 1983 on the Billboard Hot 100 and #9 on Radio & Records, and was the 20th biggest selling single in the US that year

1985–present: Later career

In 1986 Frida was in the choir for the recording of her former husband Benny Andersson's song "Klinga Mina Klockor". Also in 1987, Lyngstad recorded the single "Så Långe Vi Har Varann" ("As Long As We Have Each Other") with the Swedish pop group Ratata, one of Lyngstad's favourites.

In 1990, Lyngstad became a member of the committee of the Swedish environmental organization *Det Naturliga Steget* (*The Natural Step*). The organization wanted a "famous face" to help them reach the public, and in 1991 she became chairwoman for the organization *Artister För Miljön* (*Artists For The Environment*). In 1992, Lyngstad performed live at the Stockholm Water Festival at the Kings Castle and released the environmental charity single with her cover of Julian Lennon's song "Saltwater". All the money from this single went to charity. In 1993, on Queen Silvia's 50th birthday, Frida was asked to perform "Dancing Queen" on stage, as performed by ABBA when the king and queen got married. Frida contacted The Real Group and together they performed the song at the Stockholm Opera House in front of the king and queen. The Swedish prime minister at the time, Ingvar Carlsson, also present that night, said it was an ingenious step to do "Dancing Queen" a cappella. This performance was filmed by Swedish TV and can be seen in *Frida - The DVD*.

Over the years she has collaborated with many other artists, both Swedish and others, recording and appearing in shows and on TV.

On 15 November 2005, to celebrate Lyngstad's 60th birthday, Universal Records released the box set *Frida*, consisting of all the solo albums she recorded for Polar Music, all digitally remastered and including a set of bonus tracks. Also included is *Frida - The DVD*. On this 3½ hour DVD Lyngstad talks about her entire career in the music business. Filmed in the Swiss Alps, she talks about her singing technique and about her career both before and after Abba and explains how songs were performed and recorded. In collaboration with Swedish TV, SVT, the DVD includes many rare TV clips from her early performances, like her first TV performance with "En Ledig Dag", ("A Day Off"). Also included are TV-documentaries about the making and recordings of *Something's Going On* and *Djupa andetag* (*Deep Breaths*).

In September 2010, a new album by musician Georg Wadenius titled "Reconnection" was released. Frida and George had discussed working together for many years, as they had long been good friends. The album opens with her rendition of the traditional tune Morning Has Broken popularized by Cat Stevens. This song by Cat Stevens, is a favourite for Frida and the song was also on the playlist in the church for Frida and Prince Ruzzo's wedding on August 26, 1992.

On 16 February 2011 BBC Radio 4 broadcast a 45 minute play featuring Frida and the play's writer, long term fan and performer Christopher Green. The play, *Like An Angel Passing Through My Room*, was billed as 'a story about love. The unconditional love of a devoted fan ... about a real and an imagined intimacy.' It was a project several years in the making; what started as an upbeat reflection on fame and the notion of being a fan, developed into a

meditation on the communication between two people and coping with the blows life deals. In an interview with Frida she and Green talked about her long recovery from the death of her husband in 1999. The play is reflective but with a comic sensibility.

Personal life

Marriage to Ragnar Fredriksson (1963–1970)

On 3 April 1963, at age 17, Frida married salesman and fellow musician Ragnar Fredriksson. They had two children: Hans Ragnar (born 26 January 1963) and Ann Lise-Lotte (25 February 1967 – 13 January 1998). They separated early in 1969 and were officially divorced on 19 May 1970. On the very same day, Lyngstad's grandmother, Arntine, died, aged 71.

Relationship (1969–1978) and marriage to Benny Andersson (1978–1981)

In 1969, Lyngstad met Benny Andersson. By 1971, they were living together, but did not marry until 6 October 1978, during the height of ABBA's success.

However, after less than three years of marriage, they separated in February 1981, and were divorced in November the same year.

Marriage to Prince Reuss (1992–1999)

In 1982, Lyngstad left Sweden and moved to London. In 1986, she relocated to Switzerland, and lived with her boyfriend, architect Prince Heinrich Ruzzo Reuss of Plauen (1950–1999) in his family castle in Fribourg.

In 1988, Lyngstad became a grandmother when her daughter, Ann Lise-Lotte, gave birth to a son named Jonathan.

On 26 August 1992, Lyngstad married Prince Reuss. By this marriage, she has two stepdaughters, the twins Princess Henriette Reuss and Princess Pauline Reuss (both born 2 June 1977, Oslo, Norway).

Through her marriage to Prince Reuss, who had been a student at the same boarding school as Crown Prince Carl Gustaf – who later became the King of Sweden – Lyngstad became acquainted with the Swedish royal family and eventually became close friends with Sweden's Queen Silvia.

On 13 January 1998, Lyngstad's daughter, Ann Lise-Lotte Casper (*née* Fredriksson), died of injuries sustained in a car accident in Livonia, New York – a town 20 miles south of Rochester, New York.

The prince died of lymphoma in October 1999.

Other relations and interests

Lyngstad remains involved in charity work, and stated in a 2005 interview that she had no interest in ever returning to a music career.

She currently lives in Zermatt, Switzerland, sharing a home with her British boyfriend, Henry Smith, 5th Viscount Hambleden, since 2008.

DECEMBER

Jul/Christmas traditions in:

Finland

Denmark

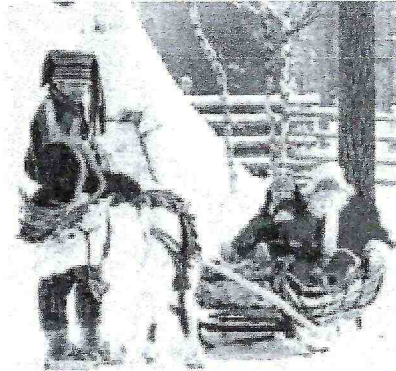
Sweden

Norway

Finland's Independence Day

Rene` Redzepi – Danish Chef at the
“Best restaurant in the world”

Finnish Christmas Traditions:



Christmas traditions in Finland are centered on the home and family. The sense of warmth of the family home and the merriment of the season are accentuated amidst the harsh reality of a far north winter.

Finland is the home of Santa, and every Finnish child knows that Santa lives on the Mountain of Korvatunturi in the town of Savukoski. This town is in the northern section of Finland called Lapland. There are many many reindeer in Lapland and, after all, Why wouldn't Santa live where his reindeer are?

By Christmas Eve morning, the children are all awash with excitement for they know that Finland is the first country on the list of Santa's stops. As a matter of fact, he stops there on Christmas Eve with gifts for every one.

Finnish families celebrate St. Lucia's Day, as do most of the Scandinavian countries. The celebration of Christmas occurs from December 24th to the 26th. Several weeks before hand, during the advent season, homes are prepared, cookies are baked, and decorations are made ready.

The standard fare for a Christmas eve breakfast is rice pudding. Thick and Creamy, it is served hot and topped with cinnamon, sugar and other spices. What a yummy way to serve a hot meal that will warm them throughout their morning excursions. Papa and the children will go and get the tree. With a bit of shopping left to be done, Mama heads to the market early for all the stores will close at noon.

Christmas traditions in Finland have become known to over 140 countries largely because of a traditional event that has occurred every year, save one, since the mid 1300's. In the city of Turku, in southern Finland, the people gather just before noon. After the Turku Cathedral Bell strikes twelve, the Declaration of Christmas Peace is read.

The Declaration of Christmas Peace



Tomorrow, God willing, is the graceful celebration of the birth of our Lord and Savior; and thus is declared a peaceful Christmas time to all, by advising devotion and to behave otherwise quietly and peacefully, because he who breaks this peace and violates the peace of Christmas by any illegal or improper behavior shall under aggravating circumstances be guilty and punished according to what the law and statutes prescribe for each and every offence separately.

Finally, a joyous Christmas feast is wished to all inhabitants of the city.

This Finnish Christmas tradition is so famous that it is broadcast over all the air waves and TV. The ceremony ends with a flourish as the trumpets play the National Anthem.

If you have gotten a chill thinking about Christmas in the frozen country of Finland, perhaps you will warm up a bit when you hear that everyone in Finland, after a light Christmas Eve lunch, heads out to take the sauna bath. This sounds like one of the best Christmas traditions in Finland (maybe in the whole world) What a nice way to ease tensions before guests come to dinner.

Dinner, of course, is a sumptuous feast. There is ham or *joulukinkki* pork roast, casseroles with carrots and rice, or rutabaga. Several kinds of fish including herring and cod, lots of whole grain breads, prune tarts, and berry pudding. The holiday drink is glogg, which is a mulled wine.

About 5 or 6 o'clock, families go to the cemeteries to leave candles on the graves of loved ones who won't be there to celebrate Christmas any longer. Thousands of flickering light, reflecting against the snow and trees create a memorable scene.

A bit later in the evening there is a knocking at the door, *Joulupukki* Santa has arrived. Unfortunately papa misses his arrival because he had to go do the evening chores. *Joulupukki* boldly asks, "Are there any good children in the house". Of course there always is, and Santa never misses handing out presents. The children love to sing *Joulupukki Laula* or *Peteir Punakuono* (Rudolph) or other such songs to him, before he leaves to visit the rest of the world.

Christmas day except for morning services is strictly a stay at home family day and very quiet. However, everyone visits friends and family on the 26th.

Merry Christmas - Hyvaa Joulua

Finnish Rice Pudding

Cook 1 1/4 cup of rice in boiling water till just tender.
Strain and add rice to 5 cup of very hot whole milk.
Boil slowly for 10 minutes and add the following mixture

- 1 egg well beaten
- 1/3 cup of cream
- 2/3 cup of sugar
- 3 Tbsp flour
- 1/2 tsp of salt

cook as a slow boil for a few more minutes
Serve hot with a dusting of cinnamon, sugar, cardamon
and milk.

Danish Christmas Traditions

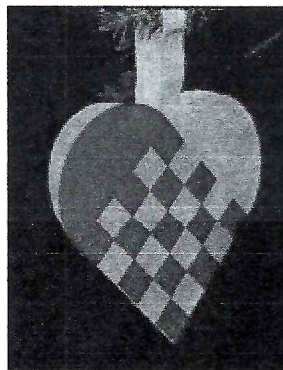
Danish Christmas traditions: Denmark is the country of charming family Christmas traditions.

Baking Christmas cookies is a family tradition that begins weeks before Christmas during the Advent season. Whether it is rolling, cutting, stirring, decorating, or nibbling; everyone takes part.

Gathering around the table with Grandma and Grandpa, and Mom and Dad to decorate the *burne kager* (gingerbread cookies) is a tradition the youngest children especially enjoy. The dough was made several weeks earlier and stored in the refrigerator so that it's flavor would meld properly. Danish butter cookies and *peppernoder* (peppernuts) are also favorites.

Plates of Christmas cookies are shared and passed between family and friends. It is said that if a visitor leaves your home in Denmark without being fed, he will carry away the Christmas spirit. So, of course, that just isn't allowed. Food is shared liberally with everyone, especially Christmas cookies.

Danes love to decorate their homes for Christmas. Advent wreaths with their candles, *Nissers* (little gnome like elves), evergreen boughs, mistletoe, and holly are placed throughout the house. If a family lives in a rural area, the whole family sets out with the sled to find and cut their perfect *juletrae* (Christmas tree).



Before that happens though, a special Danish Christmas tradition occurs. A day is set apart. This day is called cut and paste day. Everyone, including the teenagers, sit down together and spend the day making and decorating homemade Christmas ornaments.

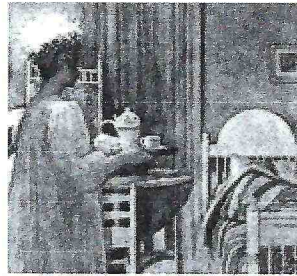
Much like Americans string popcorn for their tree, Danish people make and use strings of small red and white Danish flags. Red and white checked heart shaped baskets and cornucopias filled with treats are favored ornaments.

Lille Juleaften (Little Christmas Eve), December 23 rd., can be the busiest day of the year. Last minute shopping is done. Presents are wrapped and the house is given a

Swedish Christmas Tradition

A Swedish Christmas Tradition lights up the holidays in winters that are very dark indeed.

December 13th at dawn:



"Filip, get up!"

"Elsa, it's too early, School's not for hours."

"There's no school, silly. I've brought you rolls and coffee."

"Oh, I forgot. I forgot it was St Lucia's day. Umm! Yummy. Who lit the candles on your crown?"

"I did, I told Mum I would be very careful."

"You're leading the parade today aren't you, Elsa"

"That's right, Filip. It was an honor to be the girl who was voted on. It will be great fun. Get up now, and don't go back to sleep."

"I won't."

The Lucia parade commemorates a young Sicilian girl, who was martyred for her faith. Elsa will wear a white gown and carry a candle. There will be a parade complete with caroling. How Lucia, a Sicilian, became popular in Sweden is a mystery. Legend has it that she appeared in a glow of light, bringing food during the midst of a famine. The name Lucia means light.

A couple of days before Christmas Eve, *Julafton*, according to Swedish Christmas tradition, the Swedish family will decorate their *Julgran* Christmas tree.

On Christmas Eve there is a large, wonderful feast that lasts for hours. Entrées such as ham, a goose, Lutfish, and rice porridge are a few of the traditional dishes. If you are the lucky finder of the almond in your rice porridge, it means that you will be married within a year.

After the lengthy feast, the tree is lit, a bit of porridge is set out, and while everyone sleeps.....*Tomte* or *Jultomtem* comes, which one depends on your own family Christmas traditions. *Tomte* is a small gnome who lives under the floor and looks

25-30 December

The days between Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve are typically spent going to brunches and dinners with family and friends. Many people go out in the evening, so there is more life in the city centre, and people rush around exchanging presents that weren't quite what they wanted.

Christmas food, drinks and snacks



The most popular Christmas Eve dinner is the *ribbe* (pork ribs or pork belly, bone in), but *lutefisk* (cod cured in lye), *pinnekjøtt* (dry-cured ribs of lamb), boiled cod, ham roast and turkey are also common dishes. Most Norwegian restaurants have Christmas specialities on the menu in November and December. Many Norwegians like to have a Christmas beer with the food - a malty beer that is available from November.

The *risengrynsgrøt* (hot rice pudding) is an old, traditional dish; this is what the barn gnome eats! In the countryside, many people put a bowl outside for the barn gnome. If there is pudding left, we can make it into *risikrem* - cold rice pudding mixed with whipped cream, a common Christmas dessert served with a red sauce.

A drink we often serve during Advent and Christmas is *gløgg* - a warm, spicy drink similar to German Glühwein. And if you would like a snack with the *gløgg*, try a *pepperkake*! A *pepperkake* is a Norwegian gingerbread cookie, and tons of them are sold, made and consumed during the Christmas season. Many parents bake them with their children, and the most patient ones also make a gingerbread house. The house is first used as a decoration, and then eaten at the end of the holidays.

Christmas is high season for snacks and candy. Enormous amounts of marzipan is sold before Christmas. According to the marzipan manufacturer Nidar, Norway's less than 5 million people manage to eat more than 40 million marzipan figures during this period.

You will also see bowls of chocolate and nuts in most homes.

Decorating for Christmas

Before Christmas we decorate the house with wreaths, angels, gnomes, hearts, stars, and maybe a nativity scene or a gingerbread house. More and more people also decorate their houses on the outside with lights and wreaths. Most families have a Christmas tree in the living room. It has a star at the top and is decorated with garlands, tinsel and ornaments.

Pepperkaker Recipe

150g dairy butter

1dl sugar syrup

2dl sugar

1dl whipping cream

1/2 tsp cloves

1/2 tsp dried ginger

1/2 tsp pepper

2 tsp cinomon

1 tsp baking powder

about 450g plain flour

Method

Mix butter, syrup and sugar in a pot. Heat until sugar is completely melted. Let it cool slightly and add cream. Sift in spices, baking powder and most of the flour. Stir until it forms a stiff dough.

Leave in the fridge over night. Then knead with rest of flour and roll out about 3mm thick. Use cookie cutters (or more traditionally, just a knife to make shapes). Place on baking sheet on oven tray and bake at 175°C until golden brown (about 10 mins). Cool cookies before decorating.

Tip: Dip cookie cutters in flour first so the cookie mixture doesn't stick. If you want to hang your pepperkake on the Christmas tree make a good hole in the dough of each cookie before cooking – a pen cylinder does just the trick.

FINLAND INDEPENDENCE DAY

Finland's **Independence Day** is a national public holiday held on 6 December to celebrate Finland's declaration of independence from the Russian Republic. The movement for Finland's independence started after the revolutions in Russia, caused by disturbances inside Russia from hardships connected to the First World War. This gave Finland an opportunity to withdraw from Russian rule. After several disagreements between the non-socialists and the social-democrats over who should have the power in Finland, on 4 December 1917, the Senate of Finland, led by Pehr Evind Svinhufvud, finally made a Declaration of Independence which was adopted by the Finnish parliament. Independence Day was first celebrated in 1917. However, during the first years of independence, 6 December in some parts of Finland was only a minor holiday compared to 16 May, the Whites' day of celebration for prevailing in the Finnish Civil War.

During the early decades of independence, Independence Day was a very solemn occasion marked by patriotic speeches and special church services. From the 1970s onwards, however, Independence Day celebrations have taken livelier forms, with shops decorating their windows in the blue and white of the Finnish flag, and bakeries producing cakes with blue and white icing. Today, rock stars and entertainers have been accepted as worthy interpreters of Finnish patriotism.

It is traditional for Finnish families to light two candles in each window of their home in the evening. This custom dates to the 1920s; but even earlier, candles had been placed in Finnish windows on poet Johan Ludvig Runeberg's birthday as a silent protest against Russian oppression. A popular legend has it that two candles were used as a sign to inform young Finnish men on their way to Sweden and Germany to become jägers, that the house was ready to offer shelter and keep them hidden from the Russians.

René Redzepi

René Redzepi in the restaurant Zaldiarán (Vitoria-Gasteiz)

Born 15 December 1977 (age 36)
Copenhagen, Denmark

Education Apprenticeship

Website

<http://noma.dk/>

René Redzepi (born 16 December 1977) is a Danish chef and co-owner of the two-Michelin star restaurant Noma in the Christianshavn neighborhood of Copenhagen, Denmark. His restaurant was voted the best restaurant in the world in 2010 San Pellegrino Awards, 2011, 2012 and 2014. Redzepi is noted for his work for the reinvention and refinement of a new Nordic cuisine and food that is characterized by inventiveness and clean flavours.

Career

After choosing a culinary career, he trained at the restaurant *Pierre André* which had just opened in Copenhagen and soon received a Michelin star. He first visited El Bulli as a guest in 1998 and subsequently worked there during the 1999 season. Back in Copenhagen he started working at Kong Hans Kælder, which had been one of the city's leading gourmet restaurants since the mid-1970s. In 2001 he spent four months working under Thomas Keller at The French Laundry in California, but returned to Kong Hans Kælder and Copenhagen.

In December 2002, Redzepi was contacted by Claus Meyer, who had been offered to operate a restaurant at the North Atlantic House, a former 18th century warehouse which was being turned into a cultural centre for the North Atlantic region. Noma was opened in 2004 with Redzepi as the head chef.

Early life and family background

Redzepi was born on 15 December 1977 in Copenhagen, to an immigrant father from the Yugoslav republic of Macedonia, and a Danish mother. His father is of Albanian ethnic descent. His family moved to SR Macedonia and lived there until the start of Yugoslav wars.

Awards and accolades

- 2006: 33rd Best Restaurant in the World Restaurant Top 50|*Restaurant* magazine Top 50
- 2007: 15th Best Restaurant in the World Restaurant Top 50|*Restaurant* magazine Top 50
- 2008: 10th Best Restaurant in the World Restaurant Top 50|*Restaurant* magazine Top 50
- 2008: Users of the website TripAdvisor rated Noma as the best restaurant in the world.
- 2008: named International Chef of the Year at the Lo Mejor de la Gastronomía conference in San Sebastian, Spain
- Since 2008: Michelin Guide, two stars
- 2009: 3rd-best restaurant in the world *Restaurant* magazine Top 50 and "Chefs' Choice"
- 2010: Best Restaurant in the World
- 2011: Best Restaurant in the World
- 2012: Listed in TIMES 2012 100 most influential people in the world
- 2012: Best Restaurant in the World
- 2014: Best Restaurant in the World