

FOOD & TRAVEL

Eating well, above the Arctic Circle in Lapland

By Niece Regis
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

Kiviniemi, SWEDEN — Fall is moose hunting season in Sweden, reminding me of a recent trip in June when my wild-food-obsessed husband considered flying home with several frozen moose hearts packed in his checked luggage. The thought of taking them through customs still makes me shudder.

We had flown to Lapland — above the Arctic Circle — to share Midsummer and birthday celebrations with our friend Roger Savonen and 60 members of his family. We flew into Kiruna, the northernmost airport in the country, and drove 45 minutes to his family's vacation cabins along the Kalix River in the forest of Kiviniemi, 8 miles from the mining town of Svappavaara and the nearby Ice Hotel in Jukkasjärvi. It was my first trip to Sweden, and all the highway signs seemed to be directing me to various departments in IKEA. (Which might be true if IKEA stocked live moose and reindeer herds munching on abundant foliage.)

The day of the midnight sun is a big event in Sweden, comparable to our Fourth of July. As is the custom in America, this grand holiday involves a lot of eating, albeit with foods that were unusual to me but common for Swedes who hunt, fish, and forage in this stunning and vast tundra landscape.

Our introduction to the Swedish lifestyle and cuisine didn't take long. Outside our riverside cabin (electricity: yes; running water: no; outhouse: yes; wood-fired sauna: yes), the rich and pungent scent of recently caught Arctic char being smoked wafted from the 10-foot-tall, pine timber smoker that was built by Savonen's father.

Twelve Americans had flown in for the festivities, and at our welcome-to-Sweden dinner, the charcuterie platter — decorated with sprigs of pine boughs — included smoked moose meat, smoked moose heart, smoked reindeer steak, and dried reindeer meat, the latter being a kind of reindeer jerky that is brined for several days, then hung outside to dry for several weeks.

Putting aside my initial reaction (eek!), I tried them all and was surprised by the intense but not-gamey taste of each, which paired well with bottles of malty Mariestads beer. The moose heart, in particular, was a guest favorite: lean, dense, flavorful and fine-grained. The main course that evening, open-fire grilled grayling, was caught by our hosts that day.

This meal was a warmup for the following day's solstice extravaganza.

We woke to rain that dampened the ground but not our spirits. (Our trip was less "Land of the Midnight Sun" and more "Land of the 24-hour Daylight-Infused Clouds.") Tables were decorated in a tent adjacent to the family's late-19th-century farmhouse where last-minute



NECEE REGIS FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE



preparations were underway, supervised by Savonen's mother, Berit. Peeled potatoes were cut in strips for "Jansson's Temptation," a savory casserole baked in layers with onions, anchovies, and cream. Meanwhile, moose meatballs simmered on the stove in a rich meat stock and cream sauce, and cheese was grated for Vasterbottensostpaj, otherwise known as Swedish Cheese pie, a decadent flan made with eggs,

heavy cream, and a hard, aged cow's milk cheese with a taste similar to Parmesan.

The rain stopped around 3 o'clock, in advance of the guest arrivals. In addition to the baked dishes, the buffet was set with a mind-boggling smorgasbord of smoked fish, including whitefish, grayling, yellow perch, and Arctic char, all caught in the nearby river, and eel from southern and central

rivers. An optional sauce, romsås, was a smooth concoction of crème fraiche, fish roe, and dill. Added to this cornucopia of delights were three varieties of deviled eggs, creamy potato salad, roasted potatoes, bright green salads, sliced and smoked moose, reindeer steaks, and — another surprise — smoked reindeer tongue, a fine-grained meat with a delicate flavor.

Although the family hunts moose during the fall season, and fishes year-round (ice fish-

ing is a popular pastime), they and other Swedes are not allowed to hunt reindeer. According to Swedish law, only the indigenous Sami can own reindeer herds. (At the open-air Sami Village Museum in Jukkasjärvi, we learned the history of these nomadic peoples who have lived in the area for 10,000 years. In the museum's small restaurant, we lunched on reindeer burgers and whole Arctic char, cooked over an open fire.)

Between bouts of eating (and drinking) at the Midsummer party, merriment abounded in the form of singing and dancing, sometimes both at once as we swirled in concen-

tric circles around the ivy and flower bedecked maypole. After dessert, a simple affair with classic strawberry cake, fresh fruit, and authentic French macrons crafted by Savonen, it was time for the traditional brännboll game. I never quite figured out the rules — part baseball with no pitcher, part who-knows-what — but it was heaps of fun. When the game ended, I looked at my watch: 11:30 p.m., and the sky was as bright as it had been all day. Midnight meant it was time to head to the sauna and outdoor hot tub, with intermittent dips in the chilly river.

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From top: The charcuterie platter included moose and reindeer meat; Arctic char in the pine timber smoker; the Midsummer buffet.

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MOVIE THEATER DIRECTORY

SHOWINGS ARE LISTED FOR THE 10-11 P.M. TIME SLOT

INFO VALID 10/23/19 ONLY

- () Bargain show times are shown in parentheses
- * Restrictions apply/No Passes
- ♿ Handicapped accessible
- 📺 Stadium Seating
- 👂 Hearing Impaired
- AD Audio Description
- CC Rear Window Captioning
- DOL Dolby Stereo
- DIG Digital Sound
- DSS Dolby Surround Sound
- D Descriptive Video Service

The Boston Globe Movie Directory is a paid advertisement. Listings appear at the sole discretion of each cinema. Towns may appear out of alphabetical order so that listings will remain unbroken from column to column

ARLINGTON

CAPITOL THEATRE
204 Massachusetts Ave. 781-648-4340

👂 CC DIG AD
www.capitoltheatreusa.com
ABOMINABLE (PG) 3:45
AD ASTRA (PG-13) 7:15
GEMINI MAN (PG-13) 4:55, 7:30
JUDY (PG-13) 4:30, 7:20
MALEFICENT: MISTRESS OF EVIL (PG) 3:30, 7:45
THE ADDAMS FAMILY (PG) 3:30, 5:30, 7:40

BOSTON

SIMONS IMAX THEATRE
New England Aquarium, Central Wharf
617-973-5200
♿ ♿ DIG
www.neaq.org
NO FILMS SHOWING TODAY

BROOKLINE

COOLIDGE CORNER THEATRE
290 Harvard St. 617-734-2500
♿ 📺
www.coolidge.org
PARASITE (R) 11:00, 2:00, 4:15, 7:00, 9:45
JOKER (R) * 9:55
JOKER (R) 11:15, 1:30, 4:00, 6:30
PAIN AND GLORY (R) 11:30, 1:45, 4:45, 7:15, 9:15
DOWNTON ABBEY (PG) 1:35, 4:05, 6:45, 9:30

LEXINGTON

LEXINGTON VENUE
1794 Massachusetts Ave. 781-861-6161
♿ 📺 CC AD DOL DSS
<http://lexingtonvenue.com/>
JUDY (PG-13) 4:00, 6:45
DOWNTON ABBEY (PG) 3:45, 6:30

SOMERVILLE

SOMERVILLE THEATRE
55 Davis Square 617-625-5700
♿ 📺 CC DIG AD
<http://somervilletheatre.com/>
DOWNTON ABBEY (PG) 4:30, 7:15
JOKER (R) 4:00, 7:00
LINDA RONSTADT: THE SOUND OF MY VOICE (PG-13) 5:30
ONCE UPON A TIME... IN HOLLYWOOD (R) 7:45
ZOMBIELAND: DOUBLE TAP (R) 5:00, 7:30

