

Journeys to South Karelia's Culinary History



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Ruokamaakunta Nyt!

11 000 vuotta eteläkarjalaista gastronomiää jatkuvassa kattauksessa



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LAPPEENRANNAN MUSEOT



Vipuvoimaa EU:lta 2014-2020



Rahoitetaan osana Euroopan unionin covid-19-pandemian johdosta toteuttamia toimia

GOSAIMAA



Vipuvoimaa EU:lta 2014-2020



gosaimaa Oy:n Saimaan matkailun kilpailukykyä ja uudistamista kalusteiden elämyksen ja verkostojen avulla -hanke, APPIKAS, EAKR, rahoitetaan osana Euroopan unionin covid-19-pandemian johdosta toteuttamia toimia (DEACT 42).

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Preface


After the last Ice Age, when the edge of the ice in the area now known as Finland began to retreat northwest, the first residents arrived in South Karelia. Some of the oldest dwelling places in Finland, dating back nearly 11,000 years, have been discovered in Kuurmanpohja, Joutseno. One thing we know for certain about the inhabitants of these dwellings is that they prepared and ate food.

Over the millennia, inhabitants have changed, borders have moved and the climate, flora and fauna in the area have varied – perhaps several times and in different directions – but there has always been something to eat. The basic features of the landscape have also remained the same. The geographical location of today’s South Karelia on the southeastern edge of the Lake Saimaa basin, on both sides of the first Salpausselkä ridge, is also the backbone of the region’s culinary culture.

South Karelia has always been situated along the passage between east and west and, with the emergence of state borders, also along the eastern route from south to north. Therefore, ideas and influences regarding food and culture have moved through this area in different directions throughout history. The best ideas have been captured and embedded in our tradition.

This book features South Karelian food served in an uncomplicated way, drawing on history and tradition, but with a modern touch. The goal has been to offer recipes that give ideas and inspiration for both home cooks and professional food service providers. The recipes of the work have been developed and tested under the leadership of Chef Jukka Moilanen and in cooperation with local food producers and developers at workshops and events within the project entitled *Ruokamaakunta Nyt! – 11 000 vuotta eteläkarjalaista gastronomiiaa jatkuvassa kattauksessa (Food Province Now! – 11,000 years of South Karelian gastronomy in continuous table setting)*.

We ourselves found tremendous inspiration and enthusiasm and made numerous new discoveries. One example of such discoveries was the historical information that nuts were already eaten and probably even cultivated in the region in the Stone Age. Another important point is that today there are many producers of top-quality vegetable oils, herbal and berry products, among others, in the province.

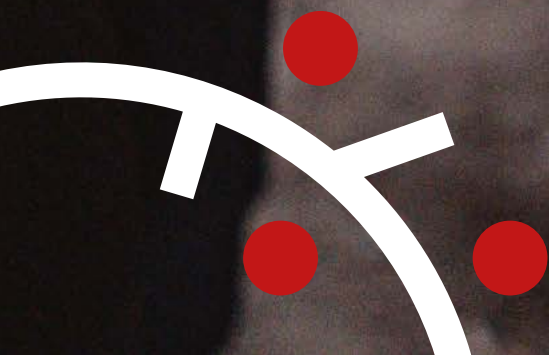


The structure of the book loosely follows the chronology from the Stone Age to the present day. In between recipes, we shed light on the food theme from the perspective of historical information. The images also intertwine history and the present day. As a kind of a hidden message, we would like to show that many things perceived as modern-day phenomena actually have a strong connection to history. For example, those who enjoy broad beans today in order to favour plant protein would easily find culinary companions in the South Karelia of the 7th or 8th century, which is when this trendy plant was first introduced to Finland. And those who love to spend time in a forest or on a lake and use berries, herbs, mushrooms and fish, can easily identify with the Stone Age hunter-gatherers.

Although the latest technological innovations amazingly enable such things as the production of dietary protein from carbon dioxide with the help of electricity, so far we are still living in a reality where food is produced using organic natural resources. One of the most important cornerstones of the Finnish and also South Karelian food culture is that we are still able to utilise nutrition that grows in nature. And that we also have the right to do so.

For this reason, we want to dedicate this book to Ilma Lindgren from Imatra. In September 1914, she had her freshly picked lingonberries confiscated by a landowner. After more than five years of litigation, the Supreme Court ruled the case in favour of Ilma Lindgren, and this ruling still serves as the basis of the *everyman's rights* that entitle us to roam in nature, collect berries, mushrooms and herbs, and practise simple fishing without any separate permits or fees.

Imatra, 16 November 2023
Editors



Lakeland nature, history and delicacies at the roots of Finnish tourism



The Saimaa region is an attractive destination for food tourism – as proof of this, it has been awarded the prestigious international European Region of Gastronomy status for the year 2024. This status is more than just a tribute, it is a promise of delicious experiences and a rich culinary culture that makes our region unique.

South Karelia is the southernmost province in the Saimaa region and the cradle of tourism in Finland. There are two cities in the province: Imatra is known for Finland's oldest tourist attraction, Imatrancoski rapids, which is mentioned already in the Finnish national epic Kalevala, and the adjacent castle-like building of Valtionhotelli (the State Hotel). Lappeenranta, founded in 1649, has such attractions as a historical fortress, a beautiful port area and the Saimaa Canal. In addition to the two cities, South Karelia pampers visitors with the beaches and waters of Lake Saimaa and many other hidden gems. Whether you start your tour from the south or the north, memorable scenery is guaranteed. In Luumäki, you can learn about turning points in Finnish history in the home of President P. E. Svinhufvud, Kotkaniemi, and the Salpa

Line, a bunker line built after the Winter War. In Savitaipale, you can enjoy magnificent sights such as a spectacular granite church, the Hakamäki museum area and the Kärnäkoski fortress built by General Suvorov, and hike in the UNESCO Global Geopark network of Saimaa including, for example, Lake Kuolimo. A visit to Taipalsaari gives you a hint of how nature nurtures the traveller with unique and varied landscapes. Actually, one half of the area of Taipalsaari is occupied by Lake Saimaa, and there are various hiking routes and campsites along the lakeside.

Ruokolahti is best known for the church hill and Kummakivi ('the odd stone'), a large boulder balancing on a smaller rock. Rautjärvi's most popular sights include River Hiitolanjoki, which has been restored for the salmon run, and the beautiful Haukkavuori viewing and border point, which is also a great place for family picnics. Also visit Parikkala, the northernmost municipality of South Karelia where the main attraction is definitely Parikkala Statue Park, which some even characterise as a scary experience. The total distance from Luumäki to Parikkala via Lemi, Savitaipale,



Taipalsaari, Ruokolahti and Rautjärvi is only about 200 kilometers.

The heart of the region is Lake Saimaa, the largest lake in Finland and the fourth largest in Europe. It was also listed by the Wall Street Journal as one of the five most beautiful lakes in the world in 2014. Saimaa covers an area of 4,460 square kilometres and hosts a labyrinth of 13,000 islands. The 15,000-kilometre coastline is longer than that of all of France. The Saimaa region is also popular among holiday home owners: there are about 70,000 cottages with saunas on the shores of the lake.

By far the biggest attraction in Saimaa is nature, the archipelago and lake landscapes, and clear water. If you're lucky, you might even spot a Saimaa ringed seal basking on a rock on a summer day. The waters of Lake Saimaa, dotted with thousands of islands, offer excellent opportunities for boating. Lovely lake scenery can be admired from both sailing boats and motor boats. Various cruises are also available for exploring the lake environment.

There are numerous pleasant activities for groups and individual travellers in the Saimaa region. The region's cultural life is rich and diverse, mixing history with the present. The area boasts unique geological, archaeological, cultural and historical attractions. Activities in nature, hotel and spa holidays, sauna bathing, cycling, cruises and the beautiful lake scenery are key elements for visitors to Lappeenranta and Imatra and the surrounding area. Small boutique hotels and

cabins are easily accessible all year round and create the best experiences for visitors of all ages.

There are plenty of accommodation options in the Saimaa region, from which you can choose the one that best matches the type of your holiday, your travel group and personal preferences. You can stay at a spa hotel, city centre hotel, cottage, family room or farm.

The culinary culture of the Saimaa region offers a diverse journey to Finnish food and culinary traditions. In the Lappeenranta and Imatra region, local traditions have always been respected. For example, the traditional method of tossing rieska bread dough is still used. You can count on eating well in the restaurants of Lappeenranta and Imatra, keeping up the culinary heritage of the region, and a key feature in Karelian culinary tradition is that you should never go hungry or thirsty! The local restaurants serve both traditional and modern food, delicacies that respect local produce and tell the unique story of Lake Saimaa. Whether you want a relaxed family meal or a festive dinner, you're sure to find the right restaurant option for every occasion.

The culinary culture of the Saimaa region is a unique blend of local flavours and traditions that reflect the diversity of the Finnish culinary heritage. Over the millennia, history has shaped the culinary culture of Eastern Finland, and this history is still preserved, for example, in the preparation of Lemi särä lamb dish according to a thousand-year-old recipe, which features a cooking time of more

than 8 hours. The traditions of Eastern Finland blend influences from the East and the West smoothly and deliciously. Our food tells the story of our past and at the same time celebrates the future. As an epitome of this, we have the traditional Karelian pie with its numerous variations for all tastes.

Enjoy stunning lake scenery, fascinating cultural attractions, inspiring local food and the heartfelt Karelian hospitality.

Further information about the region:
www.gosaimaa.com



South Karelian cuisine



South Karelia is located on the border of the eastern and western cultural spheres, and influences from both directions can be seen in the region's culinary tradition. The South Karelian food economy shares many common features with the Karelian Isthmus, North Karelia and the Savo region. Strong elements in the culinary heritage include the preparation of various pies and casseroles, and the use of oven is an important part of Karelian food preparation. A speciality in the food economy is the abundant use of mushrooms, which was a habit unknown or shunned elsewhere in Finland until the Second World War.

The traditional folk food economy consisted of products conserved in different ways. Fresh food was usually only available as a result of slaughtering, fishing and berry picking. Lake Saimaa, River Vuoksi and the region's numerous other lakes and rivers provided good fishing opportunities, and fish played an important role in the South Karelian food economy. Fishing was carried out throughout the year and the fish was preserved by curing, fermenting and drying.

Vegetables and root vegetables have been used in abundance in South Karelia, and the cultivation of beans, for example, has centuries-old traditions in our region. Beginning in the early 20th century, gar-

den plants such as carrots and beetroot started to become more common. At the same time, the growing of garden berries and fruits also gained popularity. This was influenced by the advisory and educational work of various organisations, such as the Martta organisation and Rural Women's Advisory Organisation.

Typical South Karelian vegetarian dishes included various porridges made from vegetables and thickened using rye or barley flour or sourdough. Vegetables were also used in various soups, oven dishes and bakes. Wild berries were eaten fresh in the summer, and lingonberries were also preserved for the winter. Crushed lingonberries were served, for example, in a salad with grated swede or as a pudding prepared by adding rye flour and letting the pudding sweeten in the oven.

Electrification and the increasing use of refrigeration and freezing equipment enabled the year-round use of fresh produce. As a result of industrialisation, people in the urban areas of the province moved to work in industries such as the forest industry, and self-sufficiency decreased. Industrialisation also gave rise to the local food and beverage industry.

Changes in food culture were also visible in artefacts. Traditional folk tools made



from wood began to give way to industrially manufactured items.

The rural food culture reflected annual celebrations and holidays. During the harvest festival Kekri (also known as key-ri), Christmas, shrovetide and Easter, the table was set with unusual festive foods. For example, the Christmas season was the most important annual holiday season, and preparations for it began weeks earlier. Everyday food was very simple and consisted mainly of vegetables and cereals, but the holiday meal featured several different dishes, including meat dishes such as roast meat or aspic (meat jelly). Fresh bread, pies and buns were baked for the feast. Raisin soup and rice porridge were also typical festive dishes. The Easter meal featured milk and egg dishes. Barrel beer (also known as taari in Finnish) was often prepared as a drink for the holidays, although it was laborious and time-consuming to make.

Weddings and funerals were big occasions to which a large number of villagers and relatives from near and far were invited. A designated hostess was usually hired to organise the party. There had to be plenty to offer, and the dishes were partly the same as on annual holidays. The festivities lasted for two or three days and included several meals. Until the 1940s, the most important funeral food was soup, most typically pea soup. Since the Second World War, soup has gradually disappeared from the funeral menu.



11,000 years of South Karelian gastronomy

approx. 9000 BC

Signs of permanent human settlement in the area of current South Karelia, for example, the Stone Age dwelling of Joutseno Saarenoja II.

Gathering and hunting as a livelihood.

5250-2250 BC

First findings of cereal pollen (buckwheat and barley) in the Kymenlaakso region.

approx. 2000 BC

First signs of animal husbandry.

approx.

300-600 BC

Cultivation stabilises, rye and barley as the first species.

800

Field cultivation emerges alongside slash-and-burn agriculture. Vegetation changes indicating livestock grazing start much earlier.



Late 18th century

Use of potatoes increases.

Coffee arrives in the region.

Early 19th century

Raising cattle for slaughter increases export of butter to e.g. St Petersburg is a growing secondary industry.

1866

Distilling of spirits is prohibited.

1910-20s

Growing garden plants and berries becomes more common.

1960s

The special, filled meat pasties *Atomi* ("atom") and *Vety* ("hydrogen") are invented.

1850s

Grocery and household goods stores appear in rural areas.

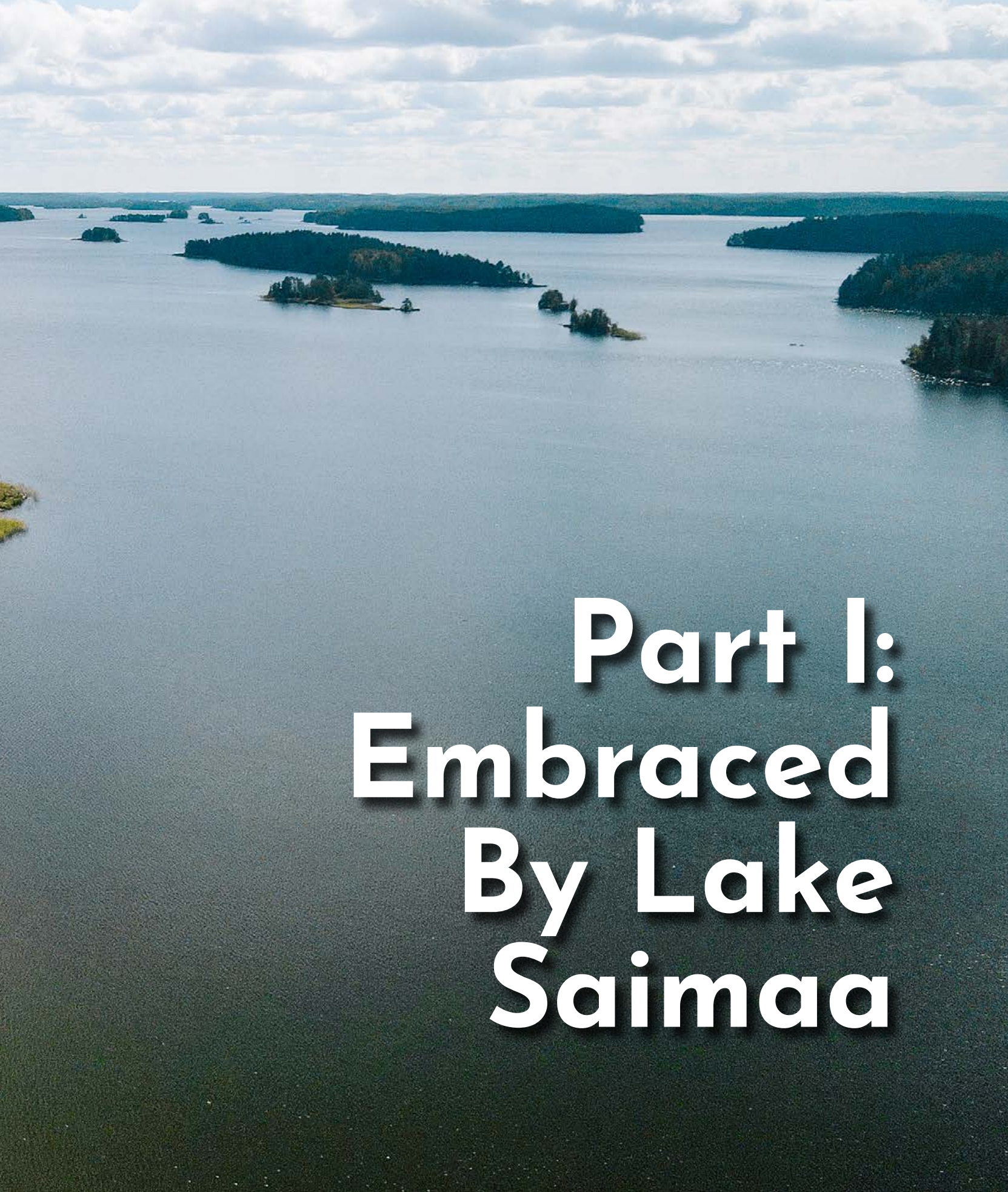
Use of coffee and tea increases.

Late 19th century

Lappee farmers start making Viipuri bagels as a side industry.

The region's first dairies are established in Parikkala.



An aerial photograph of Lake Saimaa, showing a vast expanse of blue water dotted with numerous forested islands and peninsulas. The sky is filled with soft, white clouds. The text 'Part I: Embraced By Lake Saimaa' is overlaid in the lower right quadrant in a large, white, bold font with a subtle drop shadow.

**Part I:
Embraced
By Lake
Saimaa**



Stone Age offerings of nature



Stone Age periods:

- *Mesolithic Stone Age 9000–5300 BC*
 - Early Mesolithic 9000–8500 BC
 - Middle Mesolithic 8500–6500 BC
 - Late Mesolithic 6500–5300 BC
- *Neolithic Stone Age 5300–1800 BC*
 - Early Neolithic 5300–4000 BC
 - Middle Neolithic 4000–2800 BC
 - Late Neolithic 2800–1800 BC

Several Stone Age dwelling sites can be found in South Karelia. Saarenoja II in Joutseno, Lappeenranta, is an Early Mesolithic dwelling, one of the oldest in Finland.

The Stone Age climate in this region was about 1–3 degrees warmer than at present, and usually also more humid. It resembled the climate of Central Europe today.

The people of the Stone Age were hunter-gatherers and they wandered around their familiar living areas year after year, depending on where the food was best available in each season. The hunter group was probably a large family. Favourable dwelling places could be inhabited permanently. Farming began at the end of the Neolithic period, at the latest. Archaeological study findings do not give a complete picture of the Stone Age person's diet, as the preservation of materials in Finnish soil varies. For example,

bone is only preserved if burnt and plant material only in charred format or in oxygen-free conditions. The use of plants, in particular, is believed to have been significantly broader than has been thought or interpreted from the findings.

Food was preserved, smoked and dried for the winter. Apparently, fermentation was also used as a preservation method. The dwellings were mainly located by the water, and fishing was a significant source of food. Fishing was probably practised all year round. Traps, nets, fish weirs and simple wooden hooks, gorges, were used as fishing tools.

Based on bone findings, the clearly most common fish species in the South Karelia and Saimaa region was pike. In addition, bones of cyprinids, perch, bream and pike-perch have been found. Burbot was also part of the Stone Age people's diet, and it was probably caught in the winter, from holes made in the ice.



In terms of game, the species most predominant in the bone findings are beaver, elk and deer. Bones of mountain hare, otter, bear and birds have also been found. There are also some unidentified bones. Hunting was carried out with bows and spears. During the later Neolithic Stone Age, people started using pits to catch elk and deer. In South Karelia, hunting pits can be found, for example, in the Stone Age dwelling site of Rovastinoja in Savitaipale.

In earlier research, less attention has been paid to the role of plants in people's diet, as the preserved material indicative of the use of plants is scarce. However, plant needles, scales and seeds have been found.

Nuts were a significant part of the Stone Age diet and may have even been cultivated. Water chestnuts grew in the South Karelia region; the remains of them have been found in Jäkälänjärvi, Savitaipale, and Niitniemi, Luumäki. Water chestnut no longer grows in Finland, but the European hazel, commonly known as hazelnut, can be found both wild and grown.

The most widely recognised berries in our region were bearberry, raspberry and crowberry. Presumably, other berries such as juniper berry, bird cherry, lingonberry, bilberry and northern red currant, were also used.

In addition to berries, a variety of grasses and their grains were used such as goose-foot, sorrel and dock, as well as the root

tubers of dropwort and seeds and roots of yellow water lilies. People certainly also gathered other natural products, such as mushrooms and birds' eggs, probably honey as well.

Cultivation began in Finland at the turn of the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods. There is little evidence of the beginning of cultivation in South Karelia, so the knowledge is based on assumptions stemming from data from other parts of Finland. The closest known find is from Huhdasjärvi, Jaala, in the North Kymenlaakso region. Studies have revealed the pollen of a cultivated plant, buckwheat, dated to about 5250 BC. In addition to buckwheat, traces of barley pollen dating back to about 4250 BC and 2250 BC were detected in the analyses. Early cultivation was a small-scale activity. Hunting and gathering remained as the basis of food procurement until the end of the Stone Age and in many places even long after that.





Walnut-lingonberry salsa “Stone-Age style”

2 dl walnuts crushed
150 g frozen/fresh lingonberries
Parsley
Yarrow blossoms (*fresh or dried*)
1 dl lime juice
1–2 tbsp honey
1–2 dl hemp/linseed oil
Salt and black pepper

Combine all the ingredients and allow the mixture to sit in the fridge for about two hours.



Roasted root vegetable chips

600 g thin slices of peeled root vegetables
(beetroot, carrot, parsnip, potato)
Salt
Linseed/hemp oil

Slice the vegetables using a cheese slicer, mandolin or peeler.
Put the slices in a bowl and add some oil. Coat the slices throughout with oil.

Place the slices on baking trays on baking paper and sprinkle/grind sea salt on them.

Roast in the oven at 200°C for 18–20 minutes until the chips are cooked through and have a light brown colour.

Enjoy with walnut lingonberry salsa.



Blackcurrant leaf and raspberry sorbet

5 dl liquid
(*water, juice, sparkling drink*)

100 g sugar

500 g berries

60 g starch syrup

30 g black currant leaves

1 dl lemon/lime juice

Lime/lemon zest

(*only the green/yellow part*) **grated**

1 gelatin sheet or $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp agar agar

Put the liquid, sugar, berries, blackcurrant leaves and syrup in a saucepan. Boil for 2–3 minutes.

Blend into a purée, strain and add the gelatin or agar agar that has been soaked in cold water. The function of the gelatin/agar agar is to slow down the melting of the sorbet.

(If using agar agar, dissolve it in cold water and add it as a thin strip to the boiling liquid. Boil for at least two minutes.)

Cover and cool for 45 min.

Finish the mixture in an ice cream maker. If you don't have an ice cream maker, put the sorbet in a flat container in the freezer and mix it every now and then with a fork, for example, to make it flaky.

Warm herbal drink directly from nature

3 l fresh water

a handful of fresh spruce shoots

half a handful of bilberry leaves and/or lingonberry leaves

a few branches of corn mint

Put all ingredients in a saucepan and cook for at least half an hour.

Please note that the measurements are approximate. You can vary the taste of the drink by varying the herbs; try, for example, yarrow.

You can sweeten the drink with honey if you wish.

Also, keep in mind that you will need the landowner's permission to pick spruce shoots and whole twigs.



BY THE CAMPFIRE

Sugar-cured fish on spade

Fish fillet with skin on (*you can also use skinless fish cut into pieces of approx. 1 cm*)

Salt and sugar (*e.g. ½ dl sugar and ½ dl fine sea salt*)

Place the fish in a container on top of the salt and sugar mixture and cover it with the rest of the mixture.

Allow the fish to cure for 15–30 min, depending on the size of the pieces.
Rinse under running cold water and dry well.

Heat a clean space or another such platform, sprinkle a very thin layer of salt on the spade and quickly roast the fish on both sides until cooked.

You can squeeze lime or lemon on the fish before serving, or sprinkle it with cold-pressed hemp oil and twigs of dill.



Campfire lamb

Lamb sirloin, shank or leg

Spices to taste: salt, pepper, smoked paprika, wild herbs, lime/lemon or red wine

Oil

Trim the lamb sirloin of membranes (“silver skin”) and let it season for a few hours in a plastic bag (freezer or vacuum bag).

Heat the pans/spade, add the oil and sear the fillets for approx. 2 min on each side.
Leave to rest.

Serve on its own or with savoury pancakes and raspberry sauce.

If you use lamb shank or leg, let it season for 5–6 hours and cook at a low heat in the oven or in a circulator (sous vide) at 58 degrees Celsius for 6–10 hours.

Take the warm lamb to a campfire and sear on a grate to get a beautiful brown surface, and leave the meat to rest before serving.



Savoury pancake

Prepare the pancake batter in advance in a container or, for example, in a bottle.

1/2 l milk, or oat drink or other such product

2 1/2–3 dl wheat flour

1–2 eggs

50 g melted/browned butter

Pinch of salt

Fry pancakes of a suitable size (1–2 dl of batter) on a hot pan in butter.

Stir the dough well before frying.



Raspberry sauce

200 g frozen/fresh raspberries

3 dl Öljypuu Traditional salad dressing

1/2 tbsp sugar

20 g dill

Blend the ingredients into a purée, season with your favorite herbs and spices.

Leave the sauce to rest overnight.



Celery compote

1 kg celery diced into small cubes

1 dl apple vinegar

1 1/2 dl sugar (*half of this may be preserving sugar*)

Pinch of salt

Simmer the celery with the other ingredients until soft (about 1–1½ h)
in a saucepan over low heat or in a 100-degree oven.

Chop the celery leaves and add them to the cooled jam to add colour.
You can also use available fresh soft herbs such as dill, parsley,
ground elder or nettle.

This is a good condiment for fish/meat/chicken/vegetables cooked on an open fire.
Also good with cold products and salad.



Roasted root vegetables

Root vegetables of your choice, e.g. carrot, celeriac, swede, turnip or beetroot.

Boil the root vegetables in vegetable broth
(if you use beetroot, boil it separately) until almost done.
Let cool.

Roast on an open fire in a pan or pot in oil with your preferred spices and herbs.
You can pour in a splash of home-brewed beer for sweetness and malt aroma.





Rye cups

1 dl cold water

1/2 tsp salt

1 1/2 dl rye flour

1 dl wheat flour

15 g butter

Add all the dry ingredients to the water. Lastly, add the melted butter.

Roll the dough into a 2–3 cm thick bar, cut into 1/2 cm slices and pat/roll as thin as possible, use flour to make the dough easier to handle.

Turn a metal muffin tray upside down and place the dough discs between the muffin cups, forming shapes loosely resembling boats.

Bake at 250°C for approx. 5 min.

You can brush the cups with herb-induced oil and sprinkle a dash of salt on top. Or you can fill the cups with herbal spreads, pickled vegetables, etc.

If you make rye cups on an open fire, make discs of about 15–20 cm and use plenty of flour on both sides. Heat a hot stone or a 3 dl metal ladle on the fire and place the dough loosely on the stone/ladle.

Let it bake for 2–4 minutes and finish the baking on a grate, placing the cup on the grate bottom down.

You can use the rye cup as a serving dish for soup, for example.







Apple pie

Great things are created by chance and by accident, like the classic Tarte Tatin. According to legend, the French classic tarte tatin was created accidentally in late 19th century central France.

Sisters Caroline and Stéphanie Tatin had a restaurant, and they were supposed to make an ordinary apple pie to serve there. However, it was a busy in the kitchen, and the apples burned on the pan. One of the sisters came up with the idea of placing dough like a lid on top of the apples so that they would not burn any further in the oven.

And as it turns out, the rest is history.

By the way, did you know that the first attempts to cultivate apples in Finland were made as far back as the 15th century?

4 apples, cut into wedges

2 tsp cinnamon

1 dl light syrup

50 g butter, diced

Pinch of salt

1 dl sugar

2 eggs

1 dl wheat flour

1 dl oatmeal

1¹/₂ tsp baking powder

1 dl cream

50 g butter, melted



Preheat the oven to 185 °C.

Line a 24 cm cake dish with baking paper. Place the apple blocks sprinkled with cinnamon on the bottom of the dish and add the salt, syrup and diced butter.

Put the dish in the oven for 10 minutes.

Mix the dough ingredients together and pour/pipe the mixture over the apples. Bake in the oven for about 35 minutes until the surface is beautifully brown.

Leave to cool for approximately 10 minutes and turn over onto a cake dish.

Serve with seasoned whipped cream and berries.



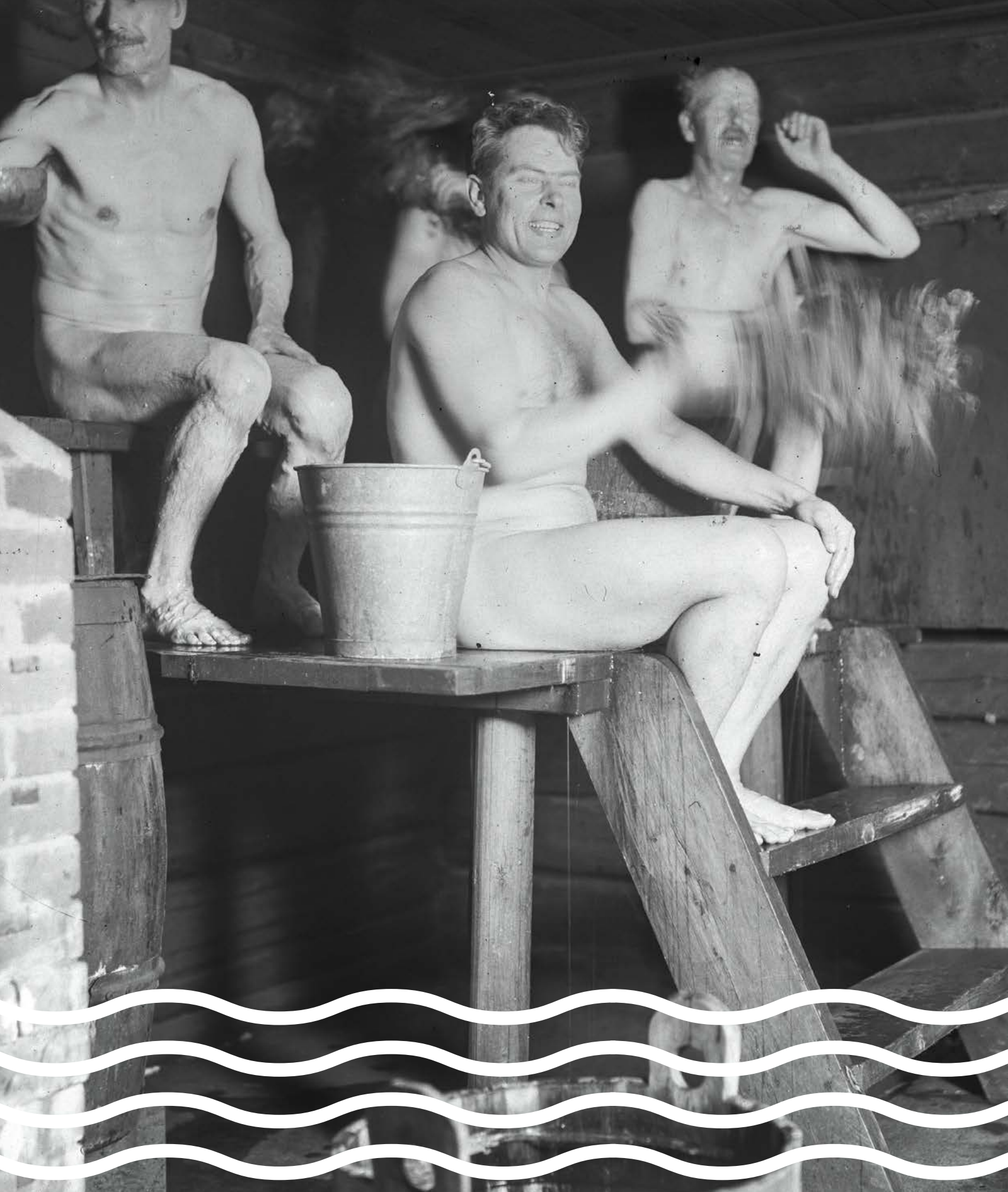
This is how you make a classic apple pie in the oven, but you can also make this sweet treat on an open fire, for example whilst on a picnic at Lake Saimaa.

Construct the pie like a tarte tatin in a metal dish or frying pan. Lift onto a grate or move some hot sand and charcoal next to the fire and place the pie on top of that to bake.

Cover the baking dish with a larger dish or metal lid and put hot coals on top. Bake for about 20–25 minutes, check the surface from time to time.

Do not let it burn!





Spirit of the steam

- history of the sauna

and sauna traditions



The first Finnish saunas were built in pits with a peat or log roof. The stove of these saunas was made from piled rocks. A similar type of stove was also used in buildings called smoke huts, which were first built between the 5th and 7th centuries. The chimneyless sauna, also known as smoke sauna, is a direct continuation of this tradition, and it remained the dominant type of sauna until the 1920s and 1930s. By the 1920s, saunas began to have chimneys. The stove material was changed from brick to sheet metal. The industrial production of sauna stoves began in the 1930s. Electric sauna stoves started gaining ground from the mid-1940s on, making it possible to build saunas even in very small spaces. Nevertheless, still in the 1950s, town houses' saunas were most commonly built in a separate building or in the basement. Then, people started to add separate wings or other such premises to saunas. In apartment buildings, basement saunas for joint use by the residents became increasingly common in the 1950s, and saunas in apartments started to emerge in the late 1960s.

As the population began to be concentrated in cities at the end of the 19th century, the need for public saunas arose, as it was not usually possible to build saunas in densely populated areas due to the fire hazard, among other things. The 1940s was the golden age of public saunas. Some of the public saunas offered various services, such as washing, massage or cupping. They sold lemonade and low-alcohol beer. Many people who visited public saunas in Lappeenranta in the 1950s and 60s have tasty memories of Olly Lemon Soda, raspberry lemonade and Karjala I beer.

There are differences in the sauna culture between western and eastern Finland. In western Finland, the sauna was used once a week, and the sauna building also served as a utility building. In Eastern Finland, the sauna was for bathing only, and people would bathe several times a week, especially during the forest slash-and-burn season. In Western Finland, the sauna was located in the yard area, whereas in the east it was usually outside the yard, by a well or spring. Some households had a small hut in front of the



sauna for changing clothes, doing laundry and other household chores.

In addition to the hut, the sauna itself could serve as a space for housekeeping activities. People smoked and dried meat and fish and cured sausage in the sauna. They could dry linens in the hot sauna, and cook homemade potions and soap in the cauldron.

In Finnish rural culture, the sauna has been a place for both birth and death.

As childbirth approached, the mother moved to the sauna and could live there for several weeks. Childbirth was often assisted by an older female relative. The newborn was washed with a soft birch whisk, which was also used for predicting the child's future.

When someone died, the sauna was where the deceased was washed and dressed.

Annual holidays, such as Christmas and Midsummer, included certain sauna rituals, as well as rites of passage. At Christmas, beer was thrown on the sauna stove so that barley would grow well the following year. Apparently, no specific foods or drinks were consumed during or after sauna bathing in rural Finnish culture; sauna beers and sausages only became traditions a few decades ago.

Sauna beer started becoming a common habit in the 1960s, when people started to associate sauna bathing not only with cleansing but also with relaxation, recovery from work and leisure time. Sausage, which we now consider to be traditional after-sauna food, has also only become more common in the past few decades.

Thanks to the heat, the sauna was a hygienic place, and it was used to repel vermin and infectious diseases. In folk culture, sauna played an important role in the treatment of diseases. Folk healers worked mainly in the sauna. The heating wood, water thrown on the stove and sauna whisk had to be of a certain type to ensure the functionality of the treatments.

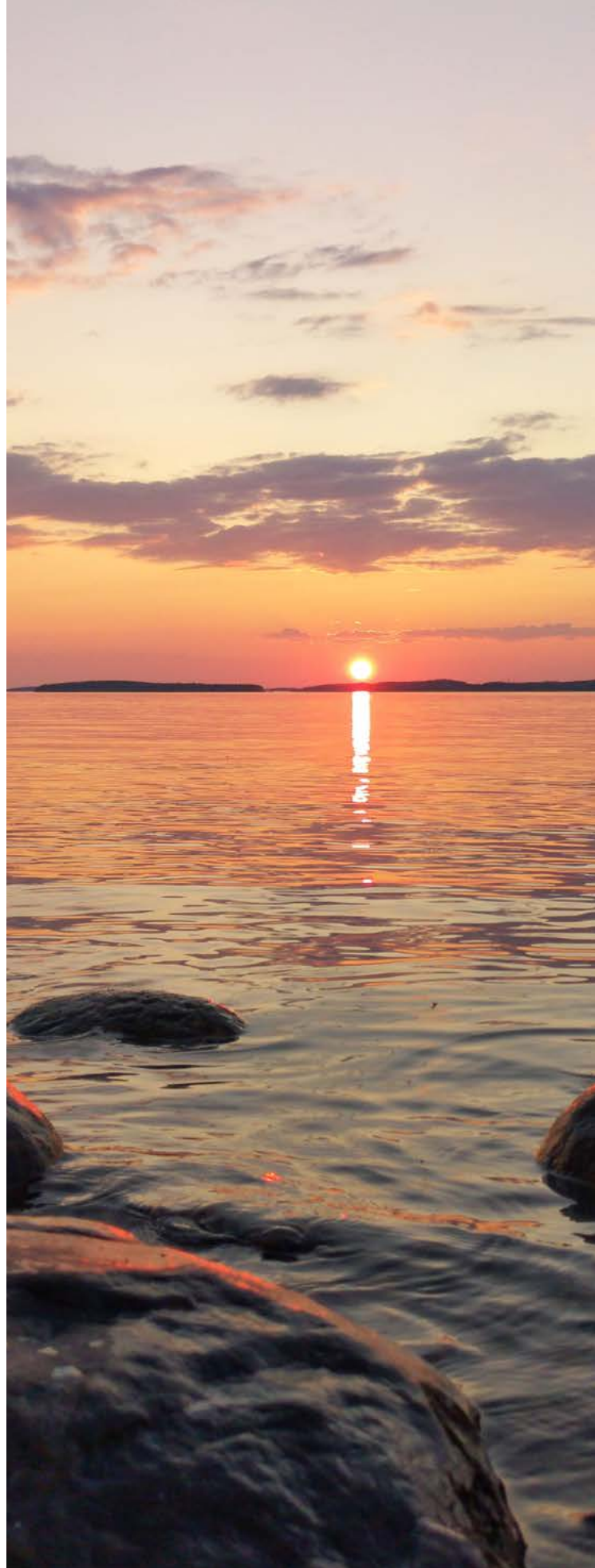
Spell of gratitude after sauna.

*Great many thanks to you who
Heated the sauna,
Carried the wood,
Threw it in the stove,
Swept the floor,
Poured the water,
Also you who soaked the whisk,
And you who gave us steam!
Oh, o-o-oh, 'twas a good bathing,
Uh, uh-uh-huh. 'twas a warm sauna.*

Finally, the thanksgiver would note how sweetly the whisk tickled each part of their body and praised:

*I got me a hundred pairs,
Maybe even two.*

Suomen Kansan Vanhat Runot (Old Finnish folk poems). Collected by Toini Kohvakka, 1933. Captured in Kaamaniemi village, Lemi. Narrator Anna Tuuliainen.





Hot cabbage on embers

800 g spring cabbage, thinly sliced

100 g onion, finely chopped

4 garlic cloves, finely chopped

1 medium-sized bell pepper, diced

30 g butter, diced

**Hemp oil/linseed oil/rapeseed oil/
other such oil**

200 g sauerkraut

2 tbsp Green Crushed Garlic, Aleksandra
*(you can try other local crushed garlic products
or leave this out altogether)*

2 tbsp honey

**Salt, thyme, black pepper,
smoked paprika, nettle**

400 g sour cream

Bunch of spring onion, chopped

Combine the cabbage, onion,
garlic and bell pepper.

Combine the sour cream, spices, honey,
sauerkraut, crushed garlic and thyme.

Place the chopped spring onion in
a separate container. Pack everything in a
cooler, not forgetting butter, oil, a baking
dish (frying pan/wok/saucepan/etc.) and
the necessary utensils.

Cook on embers:

Sauté the cabbage, onions and bell pepper in oil and butter for about 15 minutes (until the cabbage feels lightly “al dente”).

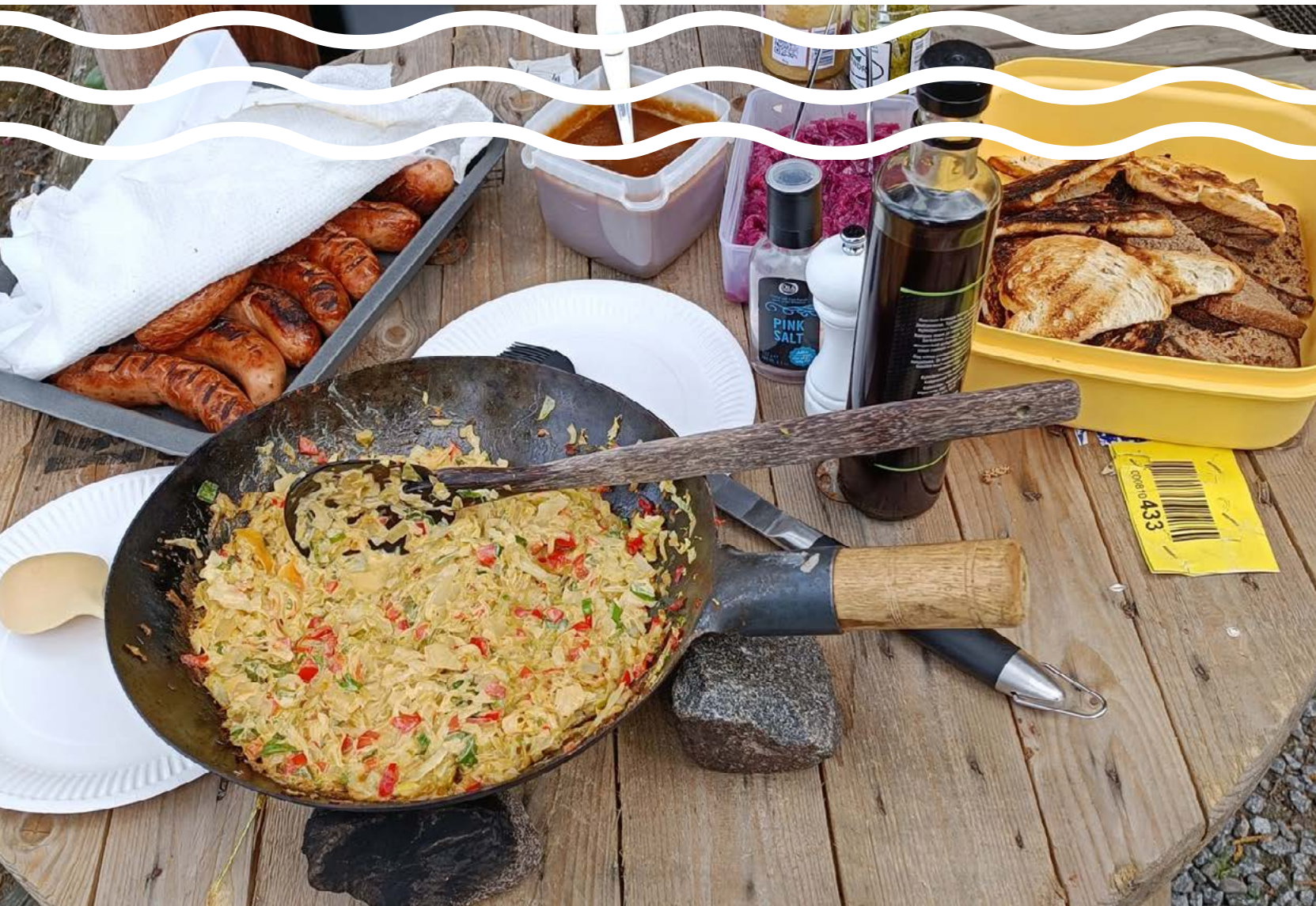
Add the sour cream, sauerkraut, honey, crushed green garlic and spice mix.

Simmer for approx. 10 min and add the spring onion.

Serve hot. Remember to provide pepper and salt mills, honey and Alexandra garlic on the table as well.

You can toast delicious country bread on a separate grate.

Tip: to turn, move the whole grate with the bread away from the campfire so that your hands do not burn.





Food Province Now! sausage (Thüringer-type)

**6 kg mixed pork cuts or
4 kg pork neck and 2 kg pork belly**

8 tbsp fine sea salt

Coriander, ginger, marjoram, thyme, black pepper, ground elder (*preferably fresh*)
(*You can also use a spice mix with approximately the same spices*)

2 kg barley groats, boiled and smoked
(*You can also boil and smoke the groats yourself*)

4 tbsp Cayenne pepper or chilli powder
(*you can also use finely chopped fresh chilli*)

3 tbsp onion powder

4 tbsp garlic paste
(*we recommend Green Crushed Garlic Aleksandra by Mätön Sillä Sipuli*)

4 tbsp smoked paprika powder

Smoke flavour in the form of smoke aroma or spice

Crushed ice

Put all bowls and meat grinder parts in the refrigerator about an hour before starting work. Put the casing skins to soak in lukewarm water.

Boil and smoke the groats (use a cold smoke generator or, alternatively, smoke aromas; note that the aroma will stick better on a hot product). Dice the meat into 3 cm cubes and freeze for 15 minutes (they may be slightly frosty). Measure all the spices in one container.

Grind the meat in a cutter or run the meat grinder 4–6 times, gradually add spices after the third grinding run with crushed ice or ice-cold water (frozen for at least ½ hours), aiming for a loose mayonnaise-like mass.

Cook a test piece and add spices if necessary.
(You can also use a food processor for mixing.)

Slide the skin over the sausage nozzle. Extrude the sausage into the skin.
Cook in approx. 80°C water for 20–25 minutes; the internal temperature
of the sausage should be 72°C.

Shock cool in ice water, dry and leave in the fridge overnight in an open container.

Pack in vacuum or freezer bags. Enjoy grilled, for example.



Winner of Karelia Sausage Festival 2023 by GoSaimaa

4 kg pork neck and 2 kg pork belly

8 tbsp fine sea salt

Coriander, ginger, marjoram, black pepper, nutmeg

4 tbsp Cayenne pepper or chilli powder
(you can also use finely chopped fresh chilli)

150 g Garlic paste *(by Mätön Sillä Sipuli)*

400 g crushed lingonberries

400 g dried cranberries, chopped

1 bunch fresh thyme

Crushed ice

Preparation:

Follow the instructions for Food Province Now! sausage above

*Message from the Food Province and GoSaimaa:
All necessary spices are in the sausage,
so let mustards and ketchups stay in the fridge!*



**Part II:
Local food
traditionally
and with
a modern twist**



Kaisa day



There are certain traditions linked to Kaisa's name's day (25 November). Also used in such forms as Katariina and Katri, the name roots back to Saint Catherine of Alexandria, who died a martyr on 25 November 305.

According to legend, several attempts were made to kill her. She was to be burned at the stake, but the fire did not catch on her. She was then condemned to death on a spiked breaking wheel, but it was shattered by the power of her prayer. Eventually, she was beheaded.

Catherine was an educated noblewoman, and she has been considered a patron saint of teachers, scientists and young women. In reference to the spiked breaking wheel as a saint's attribute, Catherine also became the patron of spinners, wool and fabric merchants, rope weavers, sailors and wagon makers.

In Finland, Kaisa Day has been celebrated since the 1280s. In Finland, Catherine was especially established as the patron saint of cattle. Kaisa day is also the name's day of Katri, Kaija, Katja, Kaisa, Kati, Kaarina, Kaisu, Riina, Katariina and Katriina.

Kaisa Day's food and drink traditions

Poems related to Kaisa Day and its traditions can be found, for example, in the archives of the Finnish Literature Society and, in particular, in the Old Finnish folk poems (Suomen Kansan Vanhat Runot) database. Most of these poems have been recovered from the Savo and Karelia regions. In them, Kaisa Day is associated with sheep, good fortune regarding cattle, as well as porridge and beer.

Shearing soup

Kaisa Day was the most important sheep shearing day of the year. At that particular time of year, the sheep had the best autumn wool.

Until the 1950s, sheep's head was cooked as a festive dish on Kaisa Day. Sheep's trotters were also eaten in the form of soup. In some households, the head was cured and eaten on Kaisa Day. Sometimes, the bones of the boiled sheep were buried back in the sheep pen to ensure good fortune for sheep in the coming year.



Sacrificial porridge

There are several mentions in folk poetry about "Kaisa's kahja" ceremonies that took place in the cow shed. Porridge was prepared in the morning and taken to the cow shed. People both ate the porridge there and sacrificed it to ensure good fortune with the cattle. Ladies knelt down and recited prayers to Catherine:

Oh sweet Katri of mine, oh dear Katri of mine, please don't kill a cow of mine.

Charlotte Europaeus recorded the following poem requesting cattle fortune from Catherine in Suomenniemi in 1848:

*Dear Karina, beautiful Karina,
Please give me a hundred horn bearers,
A hundred milk givers,
Two for the other house,
Two horn bearers,
Two milk givers!*

The following prayer is from Uukuniemi, 1896:

*Dear Katri, fair Katri,
Gift me with a cream-colour calf;
I would also bless a black one,
Wouldn't even mind if mottled,
Brown would be beloved as well!*

Apart from Catherine, porridge was also sacrificed to the (evil) house elf, sprite or devil.

According to a memoir collected from Juva, Savo, in 1898, it was customary to cook porridge for the devil on Kaarina Day. While the mistress was cooking the

porridge, the devil got bored of waiting and tried to take a cow from the shed. In distress, the mistress ran to the shed with her porridge and yelled: "*Leave the cow, eat the porridge!*" The porridge arrived in time and the cow was spared.

In a Christian country, people could be taken to court for upholding pagan customs. Records from Ruokolahti and Jääski indicate that in 1685, people were accused of eating in the cow shed on Katariina Day. In the case from Ruokolahti, the leftover porridge was taken to the house for men to eat. Apart from eating porridge, people had been drinking beer in the house all day.

Barrel beer

Beer has been the most important product to enjoy on Kaisa Day; the term used for Kaisa Day festivities, "kahja", refers to beer. It has been used as a synonym for it in folk poems: "*Osmotar was brewer of beer, Kapo was a cook of kahja.*"

Beer was brewed especially for Kaisa Day and it was often sacrificed and enjoyed in the cow shed.

Typically, beer was made in a barrel. Rye and barley malt were moistened with water and left to sweeten, and water was added every few hours. Once the liquid had cooled to a suitable temperature, yeast was added. The fermented beer was sieved and poured into a barrel lined with juniper. The closed barrel was kept in a cold cellar for a few days. When the beer was served, sugar was added if necessary,



“which some people like, but others prefer it without sugar”.

On the night of Kaisa Day, people also did superstitious deeds related to the grain that was needed to make porridge and beer: *“On the night of Kaisa Day, offer food to the elf of the barn to keep the barn full for the year to come.”*

The weather on Kaisa day

In addition to food traditions, the weather has traditionally been forecast on Kaisa Day.

The preferred weather type for Kaisa Day was a thaw: such phrases were used as “great Katri summer days” and “Kaisa

glaze ice”, which refers to a ridge of hard trampled snow or ice on a road.

It was believed that thaw weather on Kaisa Day predicted a mild winter and a good harvest, and beautiful weather until Christmas. The weather on Kaisa Day and Christmas was said to be similar, as there is almost exactly one lunar cycle between these days.

“Good ol’ Kaisa gives us summer, later Antti [name day on 30 Nov.] brings snow cover.”

“What Kaisa waters, Antti dries.”

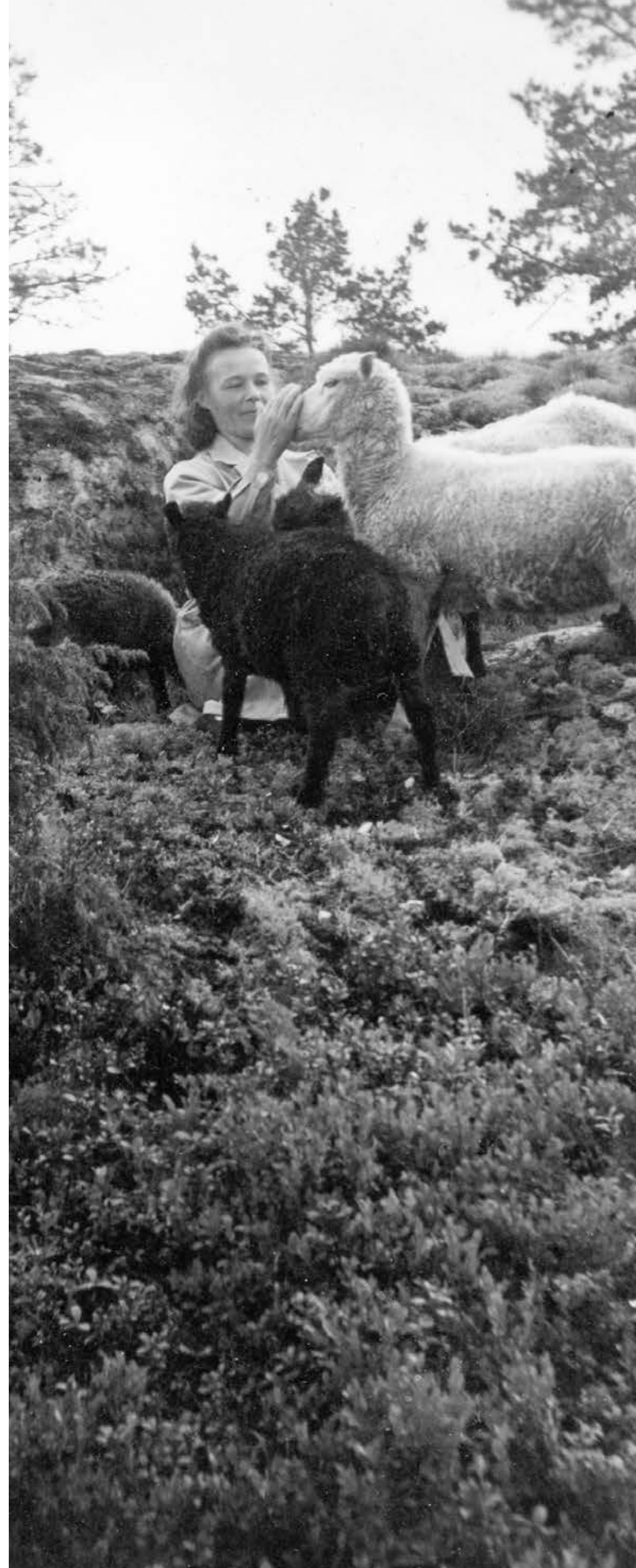
“If summery weather on Kaisa is lost, so is the entire year’s harvest.”

“If there’s no slipping on Liisa [name day 19 Nov.] and no glaze ice on Kaisa, there won’t be much bread in the year to come.”

“First it was slippery on Liisa, now cold on Katrina; Katrina will bring many a man to ground.” – Koivisto 1937.

“There’s always a great thaw come Katriina Day.” – Lapvesi 1981.

”It is usually summer on Katri’s day.” – Uukuniemi 1936.





Kaisa Day's lamb burger à la Markus Maulavirta

The food is prepared outdoors by the fire and the measurement scale is the palm of your hand, so all measurements are up to the cook.

Bark bread

(using flour made from pinewood phloem, which is the inner bark)

Use rye flour (as much as you can afford) and bark flour; the amount of bark flour must be about 20% of the amount of rye flour.

Add juniper water (see instructions below) and a dash of salt. Mix into a firm dough. Form small spheres and flatten them slightly to make small loaves about a centimeter thick.

Cook the bread slowly on an open fire, turn occasionally.

The burger patty

**A suitable amount of minced
lamb meat per person.**

Fine sea salt

Form the patty with hands moistened in juniper water (juniper branches, a dozen sea salt crystals and water, boiled for about 15 minutes and cooled).

If you still have extra energy, make:

Lingonberry sauce

Thoroughly mix sugar-sweetened crushed lingonberries with mayonnaise; or just use frost-bitten lingonberries.



Barrel beer

60 l water
2 kg rye malt
3 kg barley malt
2 cubes yeast (100g)

Moisten the malt with a small amount of lukewarm water. Leave to soak. Then add bubbling hot water and stir, and leave to soak for a couple of hours more.

On the third round, add the rest of the water and stir well. Once the liquid has cooled to a suitable temperature, add yeast.

Once the liquid has been fermented, sift it and pour into a barrel lined with juniper. Seal the barrel well. Take it to a cold cellar. Leave to sit for a few days.

When serving, you can add sugar – some people like it, but others prefer it without sugar.

Nowadays, in the absence of a barrel, you could divide the drink into several containers when taking it to sit in the cold, or use a wine-making bucket.

(Source: Pirkko Sallinen-Gimpl, Karjalan perinneruokia, Kirvu ja Ruokolhti.)



MODERN LOCAL FLAVOURS

Sourdough bread with cheese and garlic (3 loaves)

Leaven

1 1/2 dl water
200 g wheat flour
5 g yeast

Dough

approx. 6 dl water
approx. 600 g wheat flour
80 g rye flour
40 g oat bran
approx. 1 tbsp salt
3 tbsp Alexandra crushed garlic
100–150 g hard cheese, grated (*e.g. parmesan or Swiss*)

Start with the leaven. Mix the yeast with water, add the flour and leave to sit in a container covered with plastic wrap in a warm place for five hours.

Put the leaven in a food processor and add the other ingredients.
Mix for 10 min at low speed and then for 10 min at full speed.

Leave overnight to proof in the refrigerator in a deep container with a lid.

Pour the loose dough onto the table and divide into three parts. Using flour, form loaves of any shape, for example, round, or stretch the dough into long sticks.

If you have a steam oven, then first bake the bread at 100°C with steam for 3 minutes.

Bake the bread in a convection oven at 250°C for 8 min and then at 200°C for 18 min.

Take out and cool over a grid, covered with a cloth.





Kielomäki honey mead

Honey mead is often associated with Vikings, and they are known to have prepared a spirit-raising, endurance-boosting drink from honey to encourage soldiers to fight.

The herbs were selected to suit the purpose and, thanks to wild yeasts, the drink became quite alcoholic. The English word "mead" is still used for alcoholic beverages made with honey. However, the Finnish counterpart for mead, *sima*, refers to a fresh and non-alcoholic drink for the whole family.

In the Nordic countries, the gentry first made mead from honey, which was imported from the south, because beekeeping did not come to Finland until the 19th century. When sugar became available to the common people, the preparation of a fizzy drink at home spread. Gradually, "Southern delights", raisins and lemon, were added to the drink. Today, everyone can prepare tasty honey mead with local honey and enjoy it at any time of year!

At the Kielomäki Honey Farm, the honey is not heated and the farm's mead only contains ingredients produced on site.

Approx. 8 litres of water

A couple of handfuls of hop cones

1 kg honey

Yeast

Spice up with your favorite herbs, such as mint or oregano (wild marjoram)

Pour about 4 litres of bubbling hot water on top of the hop cones.
Add herbs to flavour the drink if desired.

Add about 4 litres of cold water and honey. Stir.

Once the temperature is slightly below 40 degrees, add a touch of yeast.
Let the mead brew in a bucket at room temperature for 1–2 days. Strain and bottle the drink, adding 1 tsp honey to each bottle. Keep the bottles at room temperature for a few days, until you hear a hissing sound when opening the cap. Then move the mead to a cool place to continue maturing. The drink is ready to be consumed after about a week of cool storage. Consume the drink within about a week.

The amount of yeast affects the preservation of the mead: if fermentation is achieved with a very small amount of yeast, the mead will keep better. It may stay good for a few weeks or even months.



Sparkling sorbet

5 dl sparkling drink (*we recommend the sparkling drinks of Päivi Angervo from Imatra*)

100 g sugar or approx. 1 dl honey

500 g berries

60 g starch syrup

1 dl lime juice (*lemon juice can also be used*)

Lime/lemon zest (*only the green/yellow part*) **grated**

1 gelatin sheet or ¾ tsp agar agar

Put the sparkling drink, sugar, berries and syrup in a saucepan.
Boil for 2–3 minutes.

Puree, strain, add honey and gelatin soaked in cold water
(agar agar dissolved in cold water is added in a thin strip to the boiling liquid
and allowed to boil for at least 2 minutes).

Cover and cool for 45 min.

Finish the mixture in an ice cream maker. If you don't have an ice cream maker,
put the sorbet in a flat container in the freezer and mix it every now and
then with a fork, for example, to make it flaky.



Kitchen's greetings in a basket – local snacks

Vegetable mosaic

– pickled vegetables

1-2-3 solution

1 dl spirit vinegar

2 dl sugar

3 dl water

1 bell pepper

1 red onion

100 g cucumber

100 g cauliflower buds

100 g carrots

100 g celery

1-2-3 solution: Mix 1 dl spirit vinegar, 2 dl sugar and 3 dl water, bring to boil and allow to cool.

Finely dice the vegetables (2 mm x 2 mm).

Pour the cooled 1-2-3 solution over the vegetables, allow to marinate for about 1 hour and strain out the liquid.

Add fresh herbs (wild), salt, pepper, and lime juice to taste.
Serve as a cold sauce, dip or side dish.

Cold-smoked carrots

1 large carrot

Marinade:

approx. 1 tsp smoke aroma

1 tsp white/apple wine vinegar

1 tbsp rapeseed oil

Dill or other fresh herb

Peel the carrot and make, for example, thin chips with a peeler. Place loosely in a vacuum bag or ziplock bag and cook in 80°C water for 45–60 minutes until just over al dente (not too soft). Prepare the marinade while the carrots are cooking. Pour the marinade on the warm carrot slices in the bag and leave to marinate at least overnight. Drain out the liquid and serve fresh and cold with dill or other such seasonings.



Wild herb pesto (no nuts)

40 g roasted sunflower seeds

(roast in a dry hot pan or 170°C oven 6–8 min)

One clove of garlic, finely diced

70 g wild herbs, whichever are available

1 dl hemp oil/linseed oil/rapeseed oil/other such cold-pressed oil

1 tbsp lime juice

Salt and black pepper

40 g hard cheese, grated

First, gently puree the seeds and garlic. Add the other ingredients except the cheese and continue blending. Finally, add the grated cheese. You can also finely dice all the raw materials without blending, creating a rough wild herb pesto/salsa.

Serve cold with toasted country bread and other small savoury snacks.



Dried tomatoes

500 g cherry/plum tomatoes, halved

3 tbsp linseed/hemp oil (*we recommend local Kuurma oil*)

2 tbsp lemon juice or balsamic vinegar

Hard herbs (*thyme, rosemary*)

Salt, sugar, black pepper

Put the halved tomatoes in a container and mix with the other ingredients. Leave to marinate at room temperature for half an hour. Place the tomatoes in a thin layer on baking paper on a baking tray. Roast in 200°C for approx. 25 min and let cool. Stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator, the tomatoes keep for 2–3 days. Serve, for example, as a salad with mozzarella and herbs.



Ceviche from cooked lake fish

Lake fish fillet (*e.g., whitefish, pike, perch, pike-perch*)

Cover the fish fillets with a sugar–salt mixture (1 part salt and 1 part sugar). Cover and allow to season in the cold (small fish 15–20 min and larger fish 1/2–2h).

Rinse off the salt and sugar and dry well.

Cook over a low heat (100–125°C) as desired (smoking/grilling/oven/pan frying).

Ceviche dressing

1 dl lime juice

1 red onion, finely diced

cilantro/wild herbs/dill/etc., chopped

20 g fresh chilli/paprika, finely diced

1/2 dl hemp/linseed oil

Salt and sugar

Combine all ingredients. Pour the marinade over the fish and leave to season for 20 minutes; you can also slice or dice the fish before marinating.

Serve cold as it is, or as a small savoury snack.

Vegetable peel chips

Do not throw away the washed vegetable peels – make chips from them.

Root vegetable peels in chip size

Oil

Salt, dried herbs, black pepper

Mix the oil and spices in a container and toss the peels in the mixture.

Place the chips in a thin flat layer on an oven tray covered with baking paper.

Roast at 200°C until crisp, approx. 17 min. Make sure the chips don't burn!



Spruce shoot dip

3 dl sour cream/yoghurt

A good handful of chopped fresh spruce shoots (*or other wild herbs*)

1 1/2 tbsp oil (*hemp, linseed, cold-pressed rapeseed oil, etc.*)

1/2 tbsp lime or lemon juice

Salt, sugar or honey

We recommend that you extract the flavours of fresh herbs into the oil by crushing them briefly in a mortar.

Combine all ingredients and leave to marinate in the refrigerator for about 1/2 hour.

Add sugar or honey if you want more sweetness.

This is a great dip for vegetable peel chips!



Blini pancake (oven tray-sized)

7 dl milk

120 g sour cream/yoghurt

25 g yeast

1 1/2 tsp salt

2 dl buckwheat flour

2 dl wheat flour

3 eggs

70 g butter, melted

Soak the yeast in a lukewarm mixture of milk and sour cream/yogurt, add the salt and flour.

Cover and leave to rise in a warm place (water bath) until bubbly (approx. 30 min.).

Preheat the oven to 225°C and put the oven tray in the hot oven.

Beat the eggs and melted butter into the batter.
Pour the batter onto the oven tray on top of baking paper
(be careful with the hot tray!).

Bake in the middle section of the oven for approx. 25 min
until the blini pancake is cooked.





Cheese and herb chips (4 servings)

1 1/2 dl grated Swiss cheese

1/2 dl grated Parmesan cheese

1 1/2 tbsp fresh herb chopped

(thyme/rosemary/dill/ground elder/nettle/...)

Combine the grated cheeses and herbs. Put small piles of the mixture onto a baking tray covered with baking paper (leave room for spreading). Bake at 225°C for approx. 5 min, until the edges of the chips are beautifully browned. Allow to cool.



Rye chips

Slice a rye baguette as thinly as possible and dry the slices, for example, on a baking tray at room temperature or over the oven for about 2-3 hours.



Root vegetable flatbread

2 dl root vegetable purée

1/2 tsp salt

1 egg

1 dl wheat flour

1 1/4 dl barley flour

Fresh herbs

Alexandra *(or another local brand)* **crushed garlic to taste**

Combine the purée, salt and egg and the Alexandra garlic. Mix in the flour and herbs. With floury hands, tap into small cakes, perforate.

Bake at 225°C for approx. 7 min until brown dots appear on the surface.



Toss and pinch



South Karelian bread is soft and loafy. Bread was baked weekly and eaten fresh. The dough container was not washed; it was scraped clean and the dough left behind served as leaven for the next baking session.

Everyday bread was mostly rye bread. Rieska bread was also baked using barley, oat, rye or buckwheat flour or potatoes. Rieska bread from Joutseno has become one of the traditional delicacies of South Karelia. The Joutseno rieska bread is made from barley flour. An essential part of making the rieska bread is tossing the dough in a flat, wooden vessel. The dish is lined with flour, and dough is processed in portions of one bread. The dough is tossed around in a special way with quick wrist movements to give the bread its characteristic round shape.

Pies play a big role in South Karelia's culinary culture. Pies, both open and closed, were usually made in rye dough. Pies were baked on Saturdays and were holiday and feast food. Closed pies (*kukko* in Finnish) were typical carry-along lunches. Typical pie fillings included with root vegetables, groats or fish. Rice is a newer addition. The rice pies with pinched crust started to be called Karelian pies after the Second World War when evacuees introduced them to other Finns.

Today, Karelian pies are manufactured and sold all over Finland. There are several pie bakeries in the South Karelia region. Karelian pie was granted EU Traditional Speciality Guaranteed (TSG) protection in 2003.

Wheat-crust pies were baked for special occasions, for example to celebrate newborn babies (*rotinat* in Finnish) or marriages (these were called "groom's pies"). The newborn baby celebration pie was closed and filled with rice, raisins and almonds, and had to be the size of the newborn.

In addition to bread, the daily diet included various cereal dishes, the most typical of which were porridges and dishes prepared by sweetening and fermenting. Leaven could be used for fermentation. The most common fermented foods were oat custard and sour rye pudding. The widely known Finnish specialty, malt pudding *mämmi*, was not part of the typical diet in South Karelia.



Joutseno-style rieska bread à la Terttu Ahonen (3–4 breads)

1/2 l milk

1/2 l water

approx. 30 g yeast

approx. 2 tsp salt

6–7 dl peeled barley grain flour

approx. 8 dl wheat flour

Heat the liquid to hand temperature, add the yeast. Add barley flour to produce a loose, porridge-like dough.

Place the dish in a warm place to rest, “buzz”, for approximately 30–45 minutes.

Add salt and knead adding wheat flour. Leave the dough to proof in a warm place for approx. 45 min. Toss the dough to form rieska breads in a flour-lined vessel.

Leave to rise on a cloth-covered plate for another 10 minutes.

Move onto an oven tray, perforate with a fork. Bake for approximately 20–25 minutes at 250°C.

The rieska bread is done when you hear a thumping sound when tapping on its base. Put the breads bottom up on a soft cloth for a moment so that the surface won't come off. Turn them over and cover with a baking cloth to soften the surface.

Enjoy fresh with butter.







**Part III:
Inn
hospitality
and court
gourmet**



At the inn



The inn system began to form as early as the 14th century, when the state started to issue regulations on the provision of accommodation, food and drink not only to those who handled the official affairs of the crown, but also to other travellers. For long-distance fares, there had to be an inn every couple of dozen kilometres so that the horse and driver could be replaced and travellers could get a place to sleep and a meal for a fee.

In 1649, an official order on inns was issued, and in 1734, a transport system was established, resulting in many guest-houses turning into inns. In addition to accommodation, inns had to offer transportation for mail items as well as customers to the next inn. Local farmers were obligated to give both horses and men to inns to stand by for possible transportation needs. The inn and transportation institution was at its busiest in the early 19th century. Throughout Finland, there were approximately one thousand inns, approximately 15 kilometers apart.

The inn rules were very detailed and also included instructions on food and how to serve it:

There must always be salt on the table.

Bread must not be sliced thicker than 1/2 centimeter (1/4 inch).

Travellers must not be served old butter and spoiled eggs, not even in cooked or fried food.

The food served in the inns varied to some extent, but at least bread, porridge, various root vegetables and berries, fermented dairy products, meat or fish, and butter and eggs were most likely part of the basic supply. Despite guidelines and regulations, travellers sometimes received less than high-quality food. Inns kept records, where complaints were entered. Descriptions of the food offered can also be found in travel stories:

“Here’s the usual menu for our dinner: Bread, tough, black and very tasteless, and also sour. A cup of salted butter, and sometimes, coincidentally, eggs. To drink, milk: buttermilk, fresh milk, whey milk. Besides, it was lucky if the bread wasn’t mouldy and the butter didn’t crackle under you teeth. Only milk was excellent at all times. I forgot about the smoked fish that we were served at every inn. I could never get used to it.”

Charles de Saint-Julien, who worked at the Imperial University of St Petersburg, toured Finland, especially the Saimaa region, in the summer of 1833 and recorded his impressions. Although he criticised the food of the inns as you can see above, inns also occasionally served fresh rieska bread, butter and eggs, and fresh



strawberries in particular received great admiration. He recommended one inn in Käyhkää particularly for lovers of fresh fish.

Fresh fish was also praised by the artist Severin Falkman, who fifty years later travelled in Imatra, Joutseno and Ruokolahti. During his trip, he stayed at the Siitola Inn, and his travel story contains several mentions of the tasty trout served there.

As bus traffic increased and the state repealed the hospitality requirements set for inns in the early 1930s, accommodation providers generally abandoned the title of inn and became guesthouses. The last inns were closed in 1955.

MAGIC OF THE INN

Post-marinated roasted root vegetables

2–4 carrots (different colours)

2 beetroots

2 striped beetroots

2 yellow beetroots

2 turnips

1 fennel

(2 dl pecans)

Marinade

2 cloves of garlic

1 lemon's juice and zest

1 branch rosemary

1/2 dl olive oil

2 tbsp honey

1 tsp salt

1 tsp green pepper

Peel the vegetables and cut them into bite-sized pieces. Slice the fennel.

Combine the vegetables and nuts on a baking tray.

Roast at 220°C for 10 minutes.

Take the tray out of the oven and mix the vegetables, roast for another 10 minutes.

Combine the marinade ingredients in a large bowl. Mix in the warm vegetables.

Cool in the refrigerator overnight.





Marinated chanterelles

300 g chanterelles

1 tsp oil

2 summer onions with stalks

4 tbsp parsley, finely chopped

Wine vinegar solution:

1 dl oil

2 tbsp white or honey wine vinegar

1/2 tsp salt

(1/2 tsp honey)

1/2 tsp black pepper (crushed)

a few dill stems

Clean the chanterelles and place in a large saucepan. Add the oil and cook the mushrooms over a low heat, stirring, until done so that the volume is reduced by half.

Add the shredded onions and stalks.

Turn off the stove heat but keep the mixture on the cooker, stirring, for one more minute.

Add the chopped parsley.

Pour the chanterelles and onions into a glass jar. Add whole peppercorns if you want.

Mix the oil and vinegar. Add salt and pepper to taste and honey if desired.

Pour the solution over the chanterelles and press the mushrooms into the liquid.

Make a ring of the dill stalks on the surface of the mushrooms so that they cannot rise from the oil (or cover the surface with a roll of greaseproof paper).

Close the jar tightly. Use the drained chanterelles as a side dish and the remaining oil for salad dressing or frying.

Cauliflower and potato salad

1 kg cauliflower

(0.25 g saffron)

500 g early potatoes

1/2 dl olive oil

50 g spring onion

10 g garlic, crushed

100 g roasted tomatoes

30 g flat-leaf parsley, cut herbs

1/2 dl lemon juice

1 1/2 dl linseed oil

salt, black pepper

Remove the cauliflower buds with a knife. (Save the leaves for other purposes.)

Boil the buds in water seasoned with salt and saffron, and leave to cool.

Cut the small early potatoes in half. Put the potatoes in a deep dish, add the seasoning mix and oil (1/2 dl).

Bake the potatoes in an oven at 150°C, and leave to cool.

Mix all ingredients carefully in a deep container.



Cucumber mosaic

4 pcs (400 g) outdoor cucumbers

2 tbsp spirit vinegar

2 tbsp water

1 tbsp sugar

1/4 tsp salt

1/2 dl fresh dill (chopped)

Mix the vinegar, water, sugar and salt in a large glass jar or other such container.
Stir until the sugar dissolves.

Rinse the cucumbers well. Peel stripes on them with a peeler.
Dice the cucumbers and add them to the vinegar solution.
Chop the dill (e.g. with scissors). Add it to the cucumbers.

Close the glass jar with the lid and shake to mix well.

Lingonberry sauce

150 g frozen/fresh lingonberries
3 dl Öljypuun Perinteinen salad dressing
1/2 tbsp sugar
20 g dill

Blend the ingredients into a purée, season with your favorite herbs and spices.
Leave the sauce to rest overnight.



Beef neck

Approx. 2 kg of the beef neck
Herbs, pepper and salt

Cut the neck into pieces lengthwise. Season with herbs, pepper and salt.
Put in vacuum bags. Cook in a steam oven at 58°C for at least 14 hours.

The internal temperature should be 54–56°C.

If you don't have a steam oven, you can prepare the beef neck as follows:
Heat water to 80°C in a cauldron. Put the meat in the cauldron in an airtight bag and
cook at 60°C until the desired internal temperature is reached.

The meat can also be cooked as such on a grate at 60°C until the desired internal
temperature is reached.

You can sear the surface of the beef for a nice colour before or after cooking.
Dry the meat well before searing.



Cream cheese foam

250 g cream cheese

1 dl whipping cream

2 tsp sugar

1 orange, zest (*grated*) and juice

Fresh thyme leaves crushed in a mortar with a small amount of sugar.

Whip the cream into a loose foam and add the cream cheese. Season with sugar and thyme to your taste. Add the zest and juice of the washed orange. Mix well and transfer into a piping bag.

Serve with desserts.



Marinated berries

1 l berries, e.g. raspberries, bilberries and/or sliced strawberries

$\frac{3}{4}$ – 1 dl Jaloviina brandy or orange juice

1 tbsp sugar

2 tsp lemon zest, grated

5 g fresh rosemary

Mix the sugar, rosemary and grated lemon zest with the alcohol or juice, allow to boil for a few minutes and cool under cling film at room temperature.

Add the berries and leave to marinate for at least two hours.

Apple bake

approx. 5 large apples (*or about 10 small apples*)

1 tsp cinnamon

100 g margarine (*or butter*)

1 dl soft brown sugar

3 dl oatmeal

1/2 dl wheat flour

Peel the apples and cut into wedges. Place in a greased oven baking dish and sprinkle cinnamon on top. Melt the margarine/butter, mix in the rest of the ingredients. Spread the mixture on top of the apples.

Bake in the bottom section of the oven at 200°C for about 30 minutes, or microwave for about 10 minutes at full power (800W). Serve with custard or ice cream.



Cicely-rhubarb syrup

2 kg rhubarb

6 dl water

1 vanilla pod

500 g sugar

50 g cicely

Chop the rhubarb into 1–2 cm pieces. Split the vanilla pod. Add the rhubarb, cicely, vanilla pod and water to a saucepan and bring to boil. Cook on a medium heat for about 25–30 minutes, until the rhubarb has softened to mush. Pour the mush into a container through a strainer (use strainer cloth for a brighter result), and try to get all the juice out.

Measure the amount of juice and add 40 g (approx. 1/2dl) of sugar per decilitre. Cook the juice on a low heat for about 30 minutes until it becomes syrup. If you plan to preserve the syrup, sterilise the jars/bottles while the juice is boiling down.



Manors and courts



Manor usually refers to a large estate or its main building. In Finland, manors were originally large farms owned by the gentry, or the king's crown manors. Later, manors could also be owned by peasants. In Finland, the largest number of manors can be found in areas with a long history of noble residents. In eastern Finland, there have been considerably fewer manors than in western Finland. The first records of manors in our region are about the king's manors from the 16th century, for example in Taipalsaari and Saviniemi, Jääski, as well as about the police chief family Posa's manor in Kauskila, Lappee. In eastern Finland, manors, especially donation farms, were commonly referred to as courts.

During the Swedish reign, the monarch could donate estates to the nobles as a fief in return for their services to the crown, such as military operations. For example, the origin of Neitsytniemi and Siitola manors in Imatra dates back to the fiefs given by Queen Christina in the 1630s. In addition to these estates, the Livonian Baron Ungern-Stenberg also received dozens of other farms from the area as fiefdom. The owners of these estates were often Swedish or Baltic families who did not live permanently in them. In the late 17th century, the kingdom underwent a reduction, the cancellation of land property, in which donated estates were

returned to state ownership. This also concerned the Siitola Manor. By 1691, only one donated manor remained in the Jääski district. The estates returned to the crown became horse ranches serving the crown or fringe benefit farms for officers. Siitola Manor became a fringe benefit estate for the Vyborg Horse Regiment.

After 1743, when the border line moved, the situation changed again. Many manors, crown estates in particular, became the property of the Russian emperor, who handed them over to his favourites.

Already during the Swedish reign, donation estate owners of Baltic and Russian origin brought with them phenomena unpleasant to the tenants, such as mistreatment and daily work at the courts. In the Baltic states, peasants of fief estates were in the position of serfs. At the Koitsanlahti Court, peasants lived in very poor conditions, and the estate was taken over by the crown due to peasant unrest. The ownership of the provincial courts and manors has changed and fluctuated over the centuries, and today most of them are either owned by private individuals or used for business purposes.

Many of the region's courts and manors lived through good times during the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. In the last decades of the empire, several



courts and mansions were inhabited by noble or wealthy families. They were attracted to the Imatra region by abundant salmon waters, among other things. Fish was sold, but also consumed by the families. Salmon was served at the courts' dinner tables in various forms. Meals consisted of several courses. The menu could include, for example, meat broth, pork chops or cutlets prepared in different ways, and berries and fruits with various liqueurs. French cuisine was admired, and menus were usually written in French. Sandwich buffets or zakuska services were popular. These included a variety of small snacks, such as cold fish, salads and fried mushrooms.

Court Menu

Rye greetings

Smoky fish soup

Lamb chops, red wine and rosemary sauce, roast vegetables, red onion and mushrooms

Berry cake, cicely and white chocolate parfait, sparkling berry wine melba and roasted white chocolate



Rye greetings

Surprise your guests by offering some of the cold dishes introduced in this book's sections "Kitchen's greetings in a basket" and "Magic of the Inn" on toasted or dried slices of rye bread. We recommend moistening the rye bread with hemp oil, for example.





Smoky fish soup (10 servings)

600 g potatoes

250 g carrots

150 g onions

1 1/2 l fish broth

3-4 dl dry white wine

800 g fish fillet (catch of the day)

2 dl whipping cream

50-100 g butter

sea salt, black pepper, dill, bay leaves

pumpkin seeds and herb oil

Peel and cut the vegetables, sauté them in butter. Add hot fish broth, peppercorns and bay leaves (in a tea brewing ball) and white wine. The liquid should just cover the vegetables. You can add a little salt and dill stems. Simmer until the vegetables are soft.

Clean the fish fillets, remove the skin, season in sugar and salt for approx. 15–20 min. Rinse with cold running water and dry thoroughly. You can cut the fish into bite-size pieces or shape them into rolls (rolls make the dish visually more impressive). Place the fish on a grid. For the smoke flavour, you can add smoke aroma or smoke the fish for about 15–20 minutes at low heat (125°C).

Remove the tea ball and about 2/3 of the broth from the soup (save it for later). Puree with a stick mixer until smooth, then add broth and the cream (you can also use flavoured cream products). The outcome should be nutritious puréed soup.

Check the taste and add salt if necessary.

Place the fish pieces or rolls in the middle of a hot soup plate and pour the soup around the fish. You can garnish with roasted pumpkin seeds, herb oil and dill. Fried crab/shrimp tails also bring extra flair and flavour to the soup.





Lamb chops in red wine sauce

Three lamb sirloins with ribs, approx. 1.3 kg
1 kg of seasonal root vegetables
(carrot, parsnip, cauliflower, swede), roughly sliced

Red wine sauce

1 tbsp sugar
1 tbsp red wine vinegar
3 dl red wine
3 dl meat broth
2 bay leaves
Couple of sprigs of rosemary
2 tsp cranberry jelly
Whole black peppercorns
Butter

Side dish

600 g fresh mushrooms
400 g red onion
For seasoning:
Salt, black pepper, rosemary, curry herb,
apple wine vinegar, sugar, garlic

Trim the lamb fillets of membranes and remove every other rib.

Season with salt and pepper.

Leave to season for about 1 hour at room temperature, covered.



Red wine sauce

Put 1 tbsp sugar and 1 tbsp red wine vinegar in a saucepan and let it boil for a while.

Add 3 dl red wine, 3 dl meat broth, 2 bay leaves, a couple of sprigs of rosemary, black peppers to taste and 2 tsp cranberry jelly.

Let the sauce boil and reduce for approx. 20 min.

Sieve and add 40 g butter in small knobs. Do not boil any more. Check the taste. You can reduce the amount of sugar and jelly if you do not want too much sweetness in the sauce. Keep warm.

Side dishes

Put the red onions in a saucepan with 2 tbsp sugar and 1½ tbsp red wine vinegar (or balsamic vinegar), let simmer until soft, then add a pinch of salt and available (wild) herbs. Serve hot.

Saute the mushrooms (large slices or whole) in a hot pan in butter. You can add garlic, curry herb, salt, pepper, etc.

Finishing and serving

Quickly brown the lamb in an oil-butter mixture in a hot pan. Finish in the oven at a low heat until the internal temperature is 54°C.

Leave to rest for a moment and cut into portions of one bone and 1–2 boneless pieces per serving.

Arrange the components on the plate in groups and place the lamb on top of the vegetables, for example. Try to make the portion visually airy and ascending.

Garnish with the soft herbs used in the dish.







Berry cake, cicely and white chocolate ice cream, sparkling berry wine melba and roasted white chocolate

Berry cake

Pie crust (about 500 g)

1 dl sugar

2 eggs

1 dl wheat flour

1 dl oatmeal

1 1/2 tsp baking powder

1 dl cream

50 g butter, melted

Sparkling berry wine melba

2 dl liquid (*water, juice, sparkling berry wine*)

30 g sugar

100 g berries

1 tbsp starch syrup

fresh black currant leaves

1/2–1 tbsp lemon/lime juice

Lime/lemon zest (*only the green/yellow part*) **grated**

Put the liquid, sugar, berries, blackcurrant leaves and syrup in a saucepan.
Boil for 2–3 minutes. Puree and strain.





Cicely and White Chocolate Ice Cream

300 g white chocolate

Half a handful of cicely

2 1/2 dl cream

2 1/2 dl milk

3–4 egg yolks

1 dl sugar

Vanilla pod

(can be substituted with 1 tsp vanilla sugar)

Sugar

**Fresh berries 100 g, chopped and
marinated in a sparkling drink.**

Let the marinated berries drain for a moment in a strainer (the liquid can be used for the melba).

Place the berries on the bottom of a buttered small pastry dish and pour the batter almost to the rim of the dish (leave room to rise).

Bake at 180°C for approx. 8–10 min. (check when done) and allow to cool in the dish. For easier and faster cooling, you can put the cake in the refrigerator or a cold room for a while.

Chop approx. 100 g of white chocolate and spread evenly on a baking tray on baking paper.

Roast in the oven at 170–175°C for approx. 5 min. until the chocolate is beautifully brown throughout. Crush the roasted white chocolate to decorate your portions.

Split the vanilla pod lengthwise, remove the seeds and add to the milk/cream mixture, add cicely to taste (gives a fine liquorice flavour). Boil and simmer for about 10 minutes. Allow to cool at room temperature for 15 minutes covered with cling film.

You can melt the rest of the white chocolate in a water bath or on top of the milk pot.

Mix the yolks and sugar in a round-bottomed metal container and add the sifted cream-milk mixture in a thin strip, stirring all the time. Add the melted white chocolate. Cook the mass to approx. 80°C and leave to cool. If you have an ice cream maker, pour the mixture into the machine and churn according to its instructions.

If you make a parfait in the freezer,
add about 1–2 dl of whipped cream to make it more fluffy.

Place the components on the plate in an attractive way, for example into one group or in a linear formation on one side of the plate or from corner to corner.
You can substitute the roasted white chocolate crumbs with biscuit crumbs.

Put the crumbs/roasted white chocolate under the ice cream. Decorate with crushed chocolate and, if you have fresh or marinated berries, also use them for decoration.
You can sprinkle a thin layer of powdered sugar on top of the portions.





Projects developing food tourism

This book is the result of cooperation between two South Karelian food tourism development projects. Both projects were funded as part of the European Union's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ruokamaakunta Nyt! – 11 000 vuotta eteläkarjalaista gastronomiaa jatkuvassa kattauksessa / Food Province Now! – 11,000 years of South Karelian gastronomy in continuous table setting (A78744, ERDF) was a food tourism development project, which ran from 1 September 2022 to 30 November 2023, combining research, co-development and event production. The project organised four food-themed public events linked to different historical eras, as well as a series of hubs, workshops and other events aimed at food and tourism sector operators. The project produced a large amount of digital media content, such as photos, videos and podcasts, as well as social media and TV advertising, which will remain in the use of the sector's operators after the project.

The activities were based on research data produced by Lappeenranta museums in the project, which was also used in the new permanent museum exhibition built during the project. LAB University of Applied Sciences was responsible for the implementation of food development in the project, while Kulttuuritala Nuijamies was mainly responsible for events and digital productions. The main implementer and coordinator of the entire project was the Humak University of Applied Sciences.

Saimaan matkailuun kilpailukykyä ja uudistumista kulinarististen elämysten ja verkostojen avulla / Competitive edge and renewal for tourism in the Saimaa region through culinary experiences and networks (SAKU) (A78745, ERDF) 1.6.2022–30.11.2023 was a project aiming to support the networking of entrepreneurs in the region and the development of business ecosystems in the form of a food tourism network, as well as co-development and openings fostering marketing expertise and export opportunities.

The project provided excellent support for the sustainable development goals of food tourism companies. With the help of the project's measures, an inter-company, network-based operating model will be strengthened in the Saimaa region, with a focus on the sustainable, year-round promotion of food tourism. The network, built around the gastronomy of South Karelia, will strongly support the development of food tourism in the region.

Recognition of the Saimaa region as a clean and peaceful, genuine Finnish holiday destination must be strengthened and promoted through gastronomic experiences. An important goal of the project was to uphold the main themes of food tourism in Finland – food culture, cleanliness, proximity to nature. These should be more strongly included in food supply innovations and product development, as well as in the region's and entrepreneurs' tourism marketing communications.

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”Oli kerran Lappeenranta” group on Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/547398722020854

Other resources:

South Karelia museum's permanent exhibition

Collections of Lappeenranta museums and the collection management system MuseumPlus

Folklore Archives of the Finnish Literature Society

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HUMAK[®]

Journeys to South Karelia's Culinary History

HUMAK UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

Juha Iso-Aho, Jukka Moilanen, Maria Murto, Juha-Pekka Natunen,
Noora Niemi, Riina Helppi-Kurki, Katja Vehviläinen (eds.)



Did you know that, in the Stone Age, nuts were eaten on the shores of Lake Saimaa?
What kind of food was served in a South Karelian inn in late 18th century?
Sauna and sausage belong together, but do you believe that, in a good sausage,
the spices are under the skin and not on it? Can you prepare a whole menu on a campfire?

This book takes you on a journey to the history of South Karelian cuisine and offers modern-day versions of dishes that have been eaten in the province in different eras. The recipes in the book are inspired by local produce. They invite home cooks as well as professionals on a journey of taste through the past centuries and back to the present.

