



THE SWEDISH CLUB NEWS

The Swedish Club of Houston

Preserving Swedish Heritage on the Texas Gulf Coast since 1986

Club Updates

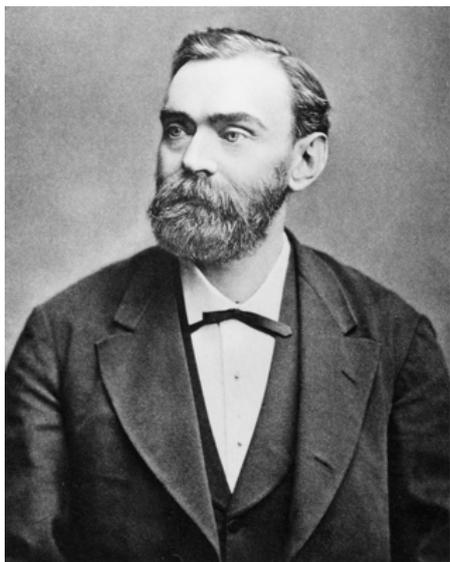
- *Sweden & America* is a joint quarterly publication of The Swedish American Center in Karlstad, Sweden, and the Swedish Council of America in Minneapolis, MN. Since we are an SCA affiliate, our members can receive a one-year subscription to *Sweden & America* for only \$10 – half the normal subscription price. If you are interested, send an email to president@swedishclub.org.
- Please join us in celebrating **The Swedish Club Annual Christmas Traditions** featuring Lucia and her Procession on Saturday December 10, 2016 at 4:00 pm at First Evangelical Lutheran Church, 1311 Holman St, Houston (same venue as last year!)
- Please plan on joining us for **Smörgåstårta** at the Annual Meeting to be held tentatively on Saturday, February 4th, 2017. We look forward to seeing everyone there!

In the News

- The Nobel committee recently announced the 2016 prize in literature was going to the American, singer, song writer Bob Dylan, recognizing his lyrics and poetry beginning in the early and mid 1960s.
- While we in Texas are enjoying unseasonably warm temperatures in November, Sweden's first snowfall is creating traffic chaos and Weather forecaster SMHI issued a Class Two snow warning for the counties of Östergötland, Kalmar and Jönköping, with between 25cm and 30cm of snow expected on Nov 6th.
- Traveling to the US from Swedish capital Stockholm is about get much easier, with the two countries signing a pre-clearance agreement on Friday that will allow American customs procedures to take place in Sweden's Arlanda international airport before passengers board their flight.

Alfred B Nobel

Chemist and founder of the Nobel Prizes



Alfred B. Nobel was born in Stockholm in 1833 to a Swedish engineer and inventor Immanuel Nobel, who is noted for inventing plywood. One of four surviving brothers from a family of 8 children, Alfred excelled in his studies, especially in chemistry and languages. He studied under several of the major chemists of the time including Nikolai Zinin, and Ascanio Sobrero, the inventor of nitroglycerine.

At age 18, he went to the United States for four years to study chemistry. Nobel filed his first patent, an English patent for a gas meter, in 1857, while his first Swedish patent, which he received in 1863, was on 'ways to prepare gunpowder'. During his life Nobel issued 355 patents internationally and by his death his business had established more than 90 armaments factories.

In 1888, the death of his brother Ludvig caused several newspapers to publish obituaries of Alfred in error. A French obituary stated "Le marchand de la mort est mort" ("The merchant of death is dead"). He was so disturbed and concerned with how he would be remembered that on November 27th, 1895, at the Swedish-Norwegian Club in Paris, Nobel signed his last will and testament and set aside the bulk of his estate to establish the Nobel Prizes, to be awarded annually without distinction of nationality. After taxes and bequests to individuals, Nobel's will allocated 94% of his total assets, 31,225,000 Swedish kronor, to establish the five Nobel Prizes. This converted to £1,687,837 (GBP) at the time. Accused of "high treason against France" for selling Ballistite, a smokeless powder explosive, to Italy, Nobel moved from Paris to Italy in 1891 where he died in 1896 after succumbing to a lingering heart ailment and suffering a stroke. He is buried in Norra begravningsplatsen in Stockholm.

This year's Nobel Prize in Literature was given to the American songwriter, Bob Dylan who has recently said he would attend the ceremony in December to accept the prize.

Sources:

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alfred_Nobel
- http://www.nobelprize.org/alfred_nobel/



Smörgåstårta, a Swedish Culinary Specialty

The Swedish word smörgås translates into English as sandwich. The literal translation may seem a little odd as it combines the words for butter and goose, the distant cousin of ducks and swans. The word said to date back to the 16th century refers to the churning of butter, where lumps of butter rise upward floating like geese on the surface of the milk. Such lumps of butter came to be spread on bread. While this defines the basic sandwich, various toppings of sliced vegetables and meats are usually included in the typical sandwich. Although unrelated in this context the Swedish language has also adopted other expressions with the word goose, such Vita Gäss for White Caps at Sea.

The smörgåstårta is a layered cake resembling a dessert or coffee tart in shape and appearance. The difference is in the composition and ingredients of a sandwich, which are salty or main course related rather than sweets. Layers typical ranging from three to four are made up of varying types of loafed bread where individual loaves are joined to allow for producing a given size layer of circular, rectangular or other shapes. Depending on the occasion, day-to-day or more festive or celebrational gatherings, there is plenty of choice in selecting ingredients and garnishments. The smörgåstårta is very popular in Sweden and other Nordic countries and is either custom prepared at home or by a bakery, typically providing a few different choices, for instance seafood, meat or cheese based or variations thereof.

Please plan on joining us for Smörgåstårta at the Annual Meeting to be held tentatively on Saturday, February 4th, 2017. We look forward to seeing everyone there!

Smörgåsbord à la Swedish Club of Houston

How to eat it...

Typically done in two trips with a new plate for each serving

Cold table...

Begin with three types of herring, dill/wine, sour cream and mustard. The hard-boiled egg halves are either deviled or topped with salmon roe. Next are the salmon dishes, either smoked salmon or gravad lax which is raw, marinated salmon. All of these dishes are served with boiled potatoes and dill. Together with this first course you also take some buttered Swedish crisp bread and cheese. A green salad and thin-sliced cucumbers in vinegar round out this plate. With this it is customary drink some Swedish Aquavit

Hot table...

Next it is time for the warm dishes. First the sliced ham with different mustards, followed by meatballs with lingon berries. You might also like to try Jansson's Temptation (frestelse), a potato casserole with onions, anchovies and cream.

Dessert

And finally at last - Blueberry Cobbler and Vanilla Ice Cream.

Finally, No Smörgåsbord can be too big or too varied but it should always contain some of the typical Swedish dishes such as mentioned above.



Path to Healthy Living

Camilla Björkman is a new resident of Katy, a new member of the Swedish Club of Houston and a Health Coach! Camilla was born and raised in Sweden, but has lived in the USA for over thirteen years. Moving to the states and having children has probably increased her awareness of differences in lifestyle between Sweden and the USA. While growing up in Sweden, a typical family lived fairly healthy without being especially mindful about it. Most families eat the majority of their meals at home, often sitting around the table enjoying the meal and the family time. School lunches are nutritious with lots of vegetables, not counting the tomato sauce on the pizza as a vegetable! There is certainly room for improvement in Sweden too, and as the world is being globalized, with more stringent schedules and the influx of fast foods or convenience foods, life there is looking a little different today than it did only twenty-five years ago! It was probably easier to make healthier choices also in the USA a generation ago, whereas today that is sadly no longer the case.

Having children and seeing first hand how different foods impact how they feel and how they act, triggered Camilla's interest in health and nutrition. After years of doing her own research reading books and articles she went back to school to become a certified Health Coach and graduated from Institute for Integrative Nutrition, New York, N.Y.

As a certified health coach, Camilla is able to serve the community and spread the knowledge about the tremendous difference our food choices make.



Raising three boys, Camilla knows that life is busy, so it's important to implement simple tools to make healthy choices achievable. It all starts with the understanding of how important real food actually is, realizing that it isn't optional to cook if you want to be healthy, understanding that it needs to be a priority, is the first step to a healthier lifestyle. Home cooked meals with whole foods are the best thing you can do for your own and your family's wellbeing.



Small changes into the daily routine go a long way, one great way to make it happen is to "cook once and eat twice". That means cook enough for leftovers, then make sure you actually eat the leftovers! Another extremely helpful way is planning. Planning makes all the difference. Think ahead of what the week looks like, know which days there are more time for cooking and use those days to do some extra meal prep for the days when time is scarce. Another fantastic thing with a healthy lifestyle is that clean meals mostly equal simple meals, for example steam or sauté vegetables with rice and/or chicken. Really, a nutrient dense dinner can be on the table in less than half an hour, and if you double the recipe, you will have dinner for two nights averaging fifteen minute meals - NO excuses - You can make it happen! For simple ideas and inspiration, please follow Health Blissfully on Facebook and check out the webpage at www.healthblissfully.com.

Live Healthy ~ Live Blissfully

Swedish Soup Traditions

Soups are a mainstay cuisine of northern regions of the world, providing a warm and nutritional meal during the colder periods of the year. Even here in Houston it will get a little cooler in the months to come where we might want to enjoy an occasional hot bowl of soup, perhaps prepared from some recipes used in Swedish cooking. That said, soups are a delicious and nutritious part of the diet any time of the year, lending themselves to ample variation in both stock ingredients and seasoning. Soup dishes are an excellent choice for both lunch and dinner, either stand alone or complemented with a salad and some delicious bread. They are a very versatile meal and recipes can be simple or elaborate and often easy and fast to prepare.



Members of the Swedish Club are well aware of the pea soup dinner served each year at the season opening dinner in January. Complements include crisp bread and pancakes with strawberry preserves for dessert. In accordance with long standing Swedish tradition, pea soup and pancakes have come to be associated with Thursdays, as a common meal, and under special festive occasions enjoyed with a glass of Swedish Arrack Punsch, based on distilled coconut, sugar cane or fruit and some brandy or cognac. Arrack was originally brought from Indonesia, in the 18th century by traders of the Swedish East India Company headquartered in Gothenburg, Sweden.

In addition to pea soup there are many other soups common to the Swedish kitchen, such as meat, sausage and fish or shellfish soups, usually containing potatoes and various root fruits, vegetable soups served in Swedish households and frequently in school kitchens, in vivid memory to those growing up in the region. All of the above have in common their ease and flexibility of preparation and that they can be quite delicious. Swedish fish soups, a favorite of many, similar to chowders are a favorite of many, where the fish type can vary widely, from cod, pike, mackerel, perch, salmon, white fish and even eel, usually slightly thickened with potatoes in water and milk.

Many may also have heard of blueberry soup, famous as a hot drink given as refreshment to participants of the Vasa cross-country ski marathon, wearing the manufacturer Ekström brand name on their jerseys. Varieties of soups are almost endless, ranging from common day-to-day types to more exotic ones such as nettle soup and red beet soups a la Russian Borsjtj and as well as adaptations from outside Scandinavia.

Exciting Swedish soup recipes can be found on the link www.sopprecept.se. Världens godaste soppor (The most Delicious Soups in the World). The text is in Swedish, but the pictures may help peek an initial interest in a particular recipe. Those participating in the Swedish Language Class may find particular joy and challenge in translating recipes of interest and cooking instructions. Let us know if you need assistance, or if you locate a comparable English language site.

Items of Note

Swedish Newspapers and Magazines

Newspapers, magazines as well as books might be of interest for those attending Swedish classes or wish to broaden their vocabulary and gain increased confidence in using the language. They are all common tools used as complement to language studies allowing the learning to be put into context, in accordance with the personal needs and interests of the student. Nowadays many or even most publications are available on their web sites, often for a fee, but frequently free of charge in abridged format.

The site tidningsinfo.se is very comprehensive, allowing access to most of Sweden's daily newspapers, news magazines and publications pertaining to various specialties, home and garden, hobbies, cars, food, medicine, electronics, science and many more. The category headers are in the Swedish language, and are in many instances sufficiently similar to English to recognize the general area.

Daily newspapers are found by clicking "Dagstidningar" on the upper left, allowing selection of Svenska Dagbladet, Dagens Nyheter, Göteborgsposten, to name just a few.

Newsletter

We encourage you to participate and share your experiences with the rest of the club. If you have had an interesting experience, have traveled or have a story to tell or pictures to share, we would love to hear from you!

Email us your thoughts at newsletter@swedishclub.org.



Needed

Raffle Items for Lucia in December

The Swedish Club of Houston invites its members and supporters to help contribute to our Lucia raffle this year. We hope to greatly increase the number and types of items that can be won!

Perhaps you have some wonderful Swedish items to offer, or other unique items. We would appreciate anything you can donate. You can provide a basket fully made, or simply provide single items to include in a basket (we will take empty baskets too).

Suggestions include gift cards, tickets to sporting or arts events, gift certificates, educational items for the kids (books in Swedish a plus), IKEA items, etc., or other products of your creativity.

If you already have the item(s) available -- or can get the items soon -- please contact either Bert Sheldon or Liane Soukup to arrange to get the items to us.

Bert: at-large-4@swedishclub.org,

Liane: at-large-5@swedishclub.org.





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The Swedish Club News is published 6 times a year by the Swedish Club of Houston.

Articles, photos, etc., are welcome. We would especially like personal news of our members, explanation of family traditions and Swedish culture, news of Swedes and of Sweden, and your favorite Swedish shops, products or resources.

Please send your news to newsletter@swedishclub.org or by post to the return address below.

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