



a guide to
SMØRREBRØD
DANISH OPEN-FACED SANDWICHES

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This book is dedicated to Sylvie, my wonderful wife for more than 55 years. Although born on the island of Mauritius in the tropics, and thus more used to rice and curry, she came to love the Danish smørrebrød and throughout the years her creations has been a delight for the eyes as well as the taste buds.

Table of Contents

Denmark - Danmark

Danish Open-faced Sandwiches - Smørrebrød

Snaps

Beer - Øl

The basics of Smørrebrød

Fish

Meat

Veggie

Cheese

 Cheese - How to serve?

What is???

 Apple Pork - Æbleflæsk

 Aspic - Sky

 Chicken Salad - Hønsesalat

 Danish Smoked Cheese - Rygeost

 Fried Onions - Ristede løg

 Hamburgers w. Soft Onions - Hakkebøf m. bløde løg

 Head Cheese - Sylte

 Italian Salad - Italiensk salat

 Liver Paté - Leverpostej

 Mayonnaise - Mayonnaise

 Meatballs - Frikadeller

 Pickled Cucumber - Syltede asier

 Pickled Cucumber Salad - Agurkesalat

 Pickled Gherkins - Drueagurker

Pickled Herring - Marinerede sild
Pickled Pumpkin - Syltede græskar
Pickled Red Beets - Syltede rødbeder
Pickled Red Cabbage - Rødkål
Pork Greaves - Fedtegrever
Pork Roast - Ribbensteg
Pork Roll - Rullepølse
Remoulade - Remoulade
Rye Bread - Rugbrød
Smørrebrød - The History Behind
Smørrebrød - How to pronounce?
Smørrebrød - How to serve?

Danish streetfood

Danish Hotdog - Hotdog
Hotdog Buns - Hotdog brød
Danish Pork Roast Sandwich - Ribbensandwich
Danish Hamburger - Bøfsandwich
Burger Buns - Burgerboller

Desserts

Danish Pastry - Wienerbrød
Danish Pancakes - Pandekager
Danish Pancake Balls - Æbleskiver

Conversion Table - Omregningstabel

Denmark - Danmark







The first mention of Denmark dates back to the 8th century and Gorm den Gamle (Gorm the Old) is mentioned as the first reigning king from 936 until his death in 958. The Danish flag (Dannebrog) is red with a white cross and according to the legend, it fell from the sky during the battle of Lyndanisse in Estonia in 1219, just as the Danish king Valdemar was about to lose the battle. This sign from heaven gave the Danes renewed hope and they finally could withdraw victorious.



Denmark, officially the Kingdom of Denmark, is a Nordic country and the southernmost of the Scandinavian nations.

Denmark is bordered to the south by Germany. The Kingdom of Denmark also comprises of two autonomous constituent countries in the North Atlantic Ocean, the Faroe Islands and Greenland. Denmark proper consists of a peninsula, Jylland and an archipelago of 443 named islands, with the largest being Sjælland and Fyn. The islands are characterised by flat, arable land and sandy coasts, low elevation and a temperate climate. Denmark has a total area of 42,924 km² (16,573 sq miles), and the total area including Greenland and the Faroe Islands is 2,210,579 km² (853,509 sq miles). Denmark has a population of 5.8 million (2020).







Denmark is considered to be one of the most economically and socially developed countries in the world. Danes enjoy a high standard of living and the country ranks highly in most metrics of national performance, including education, health care, protection of civil liberties, democratic governance, prosperity, and human development. The country ranks as having the worlds highest social mobility, a high level of income equality and is among the countries with the lowest perceived levels of corruption in the world. Denmark has one of the world's highest per capita incomes and one of the world's highest personal income tax rates.





It's heart-warming to know there's still a country where the term "fairy tale" can be used freely - from its most enduring literary legacy to its textbook castles. In a nutshell, Denmark gets it right: old-fashioned charm embraces the most avowedly forward-looking design and social developments. The country wins a regular place on lists of both the most liveable and the happiest nations on earth.

You won't have to search hard to find much-prized hygge, a uniquely Danish trait that has a profound influence on the locals inestimable happiness. Hygge is social nirvana in Denmark: a sense of cosiness, camaraderie and contentment.



While many countries are noticeable for the ever-increasing gap between the "haves" and "have-nots", Denmark seems to be populated by the "have enoughts", and the obviously rich and obviously poor are few and far between. This

egalitarian spirit allows the best of the arts, architecture, eating and entertainment to be within easy reach of everyone. Indeed, the best catchword for Denmark might be "inclusive" - everyone is welcome and everyone is catered to, be they young, old, gay, straight, and whether they travel with kids, pets or bikes in tow. Cities are compact and user-friendly, infrastructure is modern, and travel is a breeze.



It's true, Denmark doesn't have the stop-you-in-your-tracks natural grandeur of its neighbours, but its landscapes are understated - pure and simple, often infused with an ethereal Nordic light. Such landscapes are reflected in the Danish design philosophy towards fashion, food, architecture, furniture and art. Simplicity of form and function come first but not at the expense of beauty. And so you'll find moments of quintessential Danish loveliness on a long sandy beach, beside a lake, admiring a Renaissance castle, on the bike lanes of Bornholm or in a candlelit cafe that has perfected the art of hygge.







Danish Open-faced Sandwiches - Smørrebrød

Smørrebrød originally smør og brød, (butter and bread) is a traditional Danish open-faced sandwich that usually consists of a piece of buttered rye bread (rugbrød), topped with commercial or homemade cold cuts, pieces of meat or fish, cheese or spreads and garnishes.

Bread is a very important part of the Danish lunch table, primarily *rugbrød*, which is a sour-dough rye bread. It is a dark, heavy bread which is often bought sliced, in varieties from light brown rye, to very dark, and refined to whole grain. It forms the basis of *smørrebrød*, although some toppings are served on *franskbrød* (French bread), a very light, crusty wheat bread. The bread is usually buttered, though for some variants, a spread of lard is customary.

Traditional toppings include pickled herrings (plain, spiced or curried), slightly sweeter than Dutch or German herrings, thinly sliced cheese in many varieties, sliced cucumber, tomato and boiled eggs, pork liver-paste, dozens of types of cured or processed meat in thin slices, or smoked fish such as salmon, mackerel in tomato sauce, pickled cucumber and rings of red onion. Mayonnaise mixed with peas, sliced boiled asparagus and diced carrot, called *italiensk salat* (Italian salad), so named because the colours match the Italian flag, remoulade or other thick sauces often top the layered open sandwich, which is usually eaten with utensils.

More festive meals can be loosely divided into courses, fish toppings first, such as herring, fried plaice fillet, shrimps, or smoked salmon, followed by cold cuts and salads, and finally cheese with bread or crackers and a little fruit. One or several warm dishes are often served together with the cold cuts, for example breaded plaice fillet, fried medister (sausage), *frikadeller* (meatballs) with pickled red