

## **The wild, wild west –**

### **West Sweden, wild garlic & wanderlust**

Let it be said, that this is the first press trip I have been on that I did not want to leave. Literally. I wanted to move into the last house we visited, throw away the stilettos and all material possession apart, perhaps, from a decent pair of wellingtons and thermal underwear. Where was I?



Kinnekekulle. Pronounced 'shin-e-k'll-eh'. An undiscovered paradise in West Sweden on the eastern shore of the (very large) lake Vänern. It's the beginning of summer. In Sweden, that means June. It's also wild garlic (ramson) season here in Kinnekekulle. And that means they are all gone bananas for this short lived season; picking, plucking, chopping, slicing, whizzing and freezing these broad green leafy wonders that are a distant relative of the chive.



Forshems Gästgivaregård is an acclaimed and renowned slow food restaurant serving local produce—gourmet style—in the most charming of traditional Swedish guesthouses. During the wild garlic season in June, they serve a 5-course wild garlic focused menu.



The wild garlic was used in soup, pesto, and as a marinade but thankfully, not in the ice cream pictured below (which was flavoured with spruce tips—yes, spruce—and was, I must say, epic). The pheasant pictured above is served with quail egg, citrus vanilla creme, wild garlic pesto, sea buckthorn reduction, and chive flowers.





Berget Orangerie is another must-do pit stop if you are in the area. I could use a string of words to describe it, but one will do. Delightful. This is the kind of food that is made by lovely ladies, with joy, and passion for quality local ingredients. In fact, their pastry bases were so good I have thought twice about telling my mother. True.



Other good news. There's a microbrewery. And they know what they're doing. They call themselves Kinnekulle Bryggeri (Kinnekulle Brewery). Yes, well, naming a brewery never really was rocket science.





On the left above, you see what they call 'caramel' malt—lightly roasted malt. It tastes like, would you believe it, caramel. Good for rounded flavour. Fully roasted malt, 'chocolate' malt, is used only in small quantities for colour, but not too much as the flavour rings of quite intensely burned caramel/chocolate notes.

The little pellets in the middle are hops; uncooked, short-cooked and long-cooked; adding different layers of flavour to the beer. But that was not the highlight of the trip. The man in the picture here was. Hannu Sarenström.

Hannu moved to Kinnekulle a couple of decades ago to check out the countryside lifestyle with the premise that he would leave as soon as he got bored.

20+ years later, Hannu is now an iconic resident of Kinnekulle living in a wonderful Swedish country cottage.

Hannu lives for his garden, adores food, cooks gourmet meals for himself all day long and blogs about it, and has several cookbooks published. Oh, and he has famously friendly cats. The piece de resistance.



<http://www.vastsverige.com/en/west-sweden/>

<http://www.forshem.se/>

<http://www.berget-orangerie.se/>

<http://kinnekullebryggeri.se/>

<http://www.hannusarenstrom.com/>



