

FOOD

NATURALLY DELICIOUS

INGREDIENTS & FLAVOURS — INNOVATIONS — DRINKS — SAFETY



FROM FINLAND

PURE TASTE MAGAZINE

VOL. 1



HERE IS FINLAND



FACTS

The largest organic forest picking area in the world. Healthy and tasty wild berries and other natural products grow here.
Finnish Food Safety Authority, Evira 2016

The purest food in the EU
European Food Safety Authority, report on pesticide residues in food

The purest groundwater in Europe
European Environment Agency

The greenest country in the world
Yale University

The cleanest air in the world
World Health Organisation (WHO)

Finland is the 2nd largest exporter of oats
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Finnish poultry farms antibiotic-free since 2009
Finnish Food Safety Authority, Evira

A respect for healthy and nourishing food is seen in everyday Finnish life.





Finland is a country of strong contrasts where seasons and temperatures vary greatly. In the north, snow covers the land for more than half the year. The cold winters are counterbalanced by short, intensive summers that don't see a sunset and make for an extraordinary growth environment. Our exceptional climate has given rise to a unique food culture that undulates with regions and seasons, but always stays true to three elements: taste, quality and purity. Food from Finland's Pure Taste Magazine delves into these themes, giving voice to Finnish food professionals. They give their own, exclusive perspective on Finnish food and drink as well as their strengths on the international culinary arena.

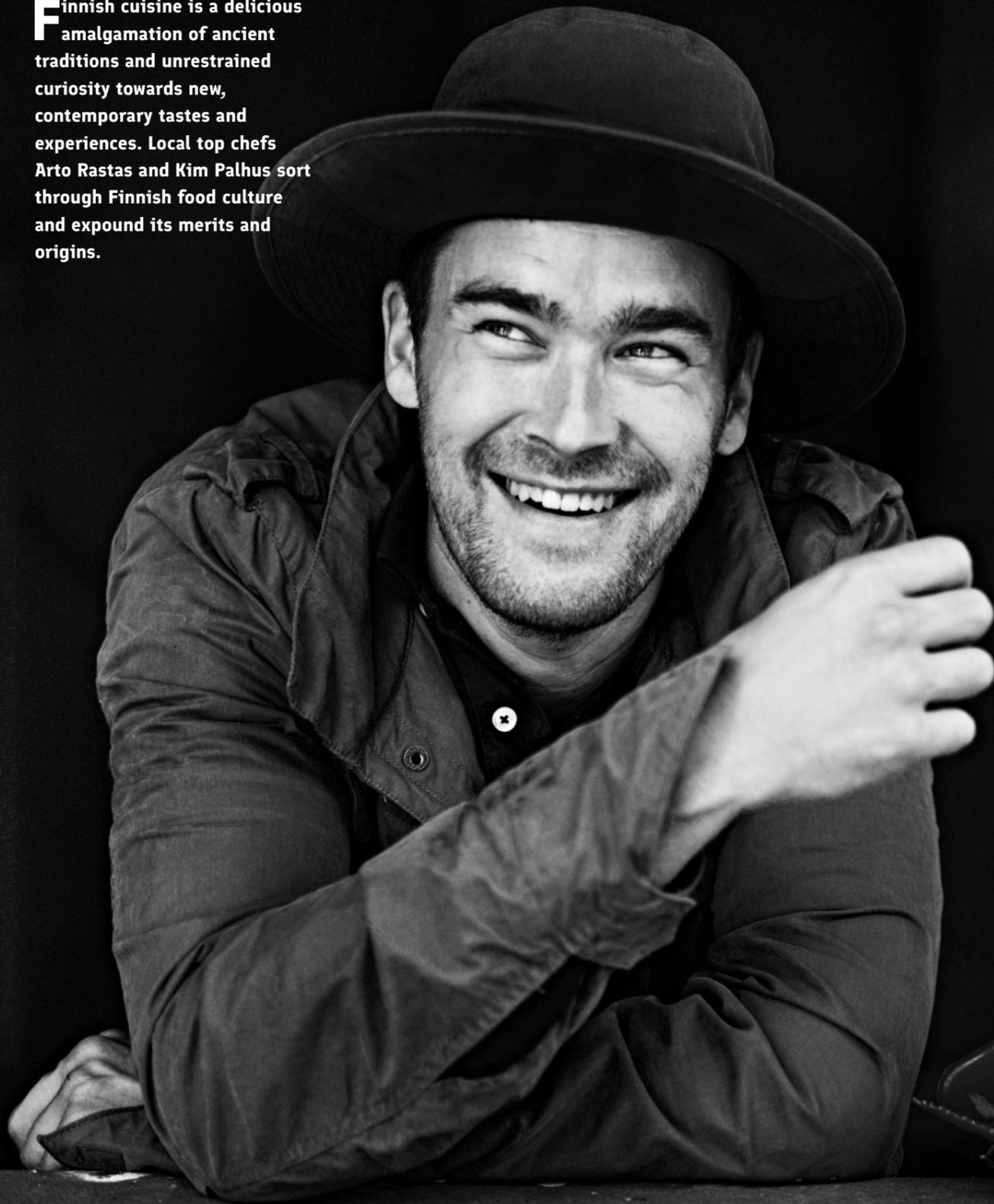
Enjoy!



INGREDIENTS & FLAVOURS

Long summer days, Arctic
air, clear waters and pure
soil enhance the unique fla-
vours of our ingredients.

Finnish cuisine is a delicious amalgamation of ancient traditions and unrestrained curiosity towards new, contemporary tastes and experiences. Local top chefs Arto Rastas and Kim Palhus sort through Finnish food culture and expound its merits and origins.



Arto Rastas,
Chef, restaurateur

What are the most interesting Finnish food trends?

A: Traditional Finnish methods of cooking and local ingredients: salt-curing, pickling and smoking. Flavours from the forests and lakes – mushrooms, berries and fish – have always played a major role.

K: We can easily set ourselves apart with ingredients that don't grow elsewhere, such as cloudberries and lingonberries. Whenever people try lingonberries at food fairs, they're always delighted with its uniquely tart-sweet flavour. Reindeer and smoked fish are big draws as well.

A: Vegetarian food is in growing demand everywhere, as people are looking for healthy, ethical ways to eat. We have a number of exciting new products as well as long traditions with vegetables.

K: Purity and quality alone are also big trends. Our exquisite mushrooms, baked goods, berries and fish cater directly to that demand.

What makes Finnish flavours so unique?

A: Finnish flavours come from Finnish nature. We have vast forests and few people, which is a recipe for pure ingredients. Since pollution is not an issue, you can pick and forage without a worry. The ingredients are as natural as can be: their characteristics aren't meddled with during growth.

K: Our growing season is very short. In fact, we're the northernmost agrarian country in the world. It's really a miracle how we can produce so much high-quality produce and flavour in such a short time. The long days and white nights do wonders for plants.

A: Finnish wild berries are really full of flavour, you can't even compare them with farmed berries. The tremendous amount of natural 24/7 sunlight really packs in the flavours. In fact, many foreigners have no idea what a wild-grown forest blueberry, bilberry, really tastes like. Our international guests are always astonished that we can go into the forest to simply pick up food and put it on a plate.

How does Finland's extreme climate affect our cuisine?

A: The south and north are two separate growth environments. Lapland's growing season is very short. Their fingerling potatoes are a great example of what we can produce in such a short time. But Finland's summer isn't the only season that provides fantastic ingredients. Spring is the time for rhubarbs and morels. Autumn brings rye and oats, root vegetables, berries and game – the bulk of our ingredients. Every single month in Finland provides top-quality food.

K: Our food culture is very rich in terms of seasonal varieties. On top of the seasons, we have an abundance of festivities with their traditions and dishes. Pickling and fermentation, something we're very familiar with, are booming international health trends. Preserving food for the winter has always been a part of life.

Finland is a fascinating country because you can see culinary traditions from a number of countries: Russia, Sweden, Norway and Iceland, for instance. And not just in ingredients, but also methodology.

Do we have any hidden gems that travellers should know about?

A: Finnish berries, without a doubt. Everyone should have a chance to experience the taste of genuine wild forest berries. And of course Finnish early potatoes, as simple as they are. I've had more than a few foreign customers freak out after tasting boiled early potatoes with butter and dill.

K: We have the richest bread culture of all the Nordic countries as well as many exclusive specialties, such as buckwheat, pickled mushrooms and cucumbers, spelt, spruce and pine shoots and syrups and jams made with shoots. Our many different flours and agriproducts also hold a lot of potential for export.

Watch a video about the secrets behind Finland's pure ingredients:
www.foodfromfinland.fi/naturallydelicious



Kim Palhus,
Chef, restaurateur,
gastronomic explorer



GRILLED CHICKEN BREAST, ROASTED PUMPKIN AND FINNISH GOAT CHEESE

(4 PORTIONS)

GRILLED CHICKEN BREAST

4 pieces of chicken breast
2 tbsp. honey
butter
salt and pepper

1. Heat up a frying pan, add butter and honey. Let the butter brown.
2. Season the chicken with salt and pepper, then quickly fry both sides until slightly brown.
3. Place the pieces in a casserole and cook in an oven at 120 °C until their internal temperature reaches 63 °C. Check the temperature with a cooking thermometer.
4. Let the pieces rest for a moment before serving.

PUMPKIN

400 g pumpkin
1/2 dl rapeseed oil
salt and pepper

GOAT CHEESE MOUSSE

1 dl cream
200 g goat cheese
1 clove of garlic
1 tbsp. tarragon
salt and pepper

1. Cut the pumpkin in half and remove the seeds with a spoon.
2. Cut into large chunks and place in a casserole with the skin down. Sprinkle with oil and season with salt and pepper.
3. You can also cut some of the pumpkin into thin slices and roast them until crispy.
4. Roast the pumpkin for 40 minutes at 200 °C.
5. While the pumpkin is in the oven, prepare the mousse. Heat up the cream in a pot with minced garlic and tarragon. Take the skin off the cheese and chop it into cubes.
6. Add the cheese into the cream and use an immersion blender to mix them.
7. Season the mousse with salt and pepper and leave it to set in the fridge for at least an hour.
8. Scoop out the soft pumpkin flesh with a spoon, mash it with a fork and season if needed.

Arto Rastas recommends a glass of craft beer or fresh spring water to make the most out of your naturally delicious meal. Finish the meal by indulging yourself with a quality drink infused with flavours from the Arctic North.

Finland is a world leader when it comes to nutritional expertise and food innovations.



INNOVATIONS



Paavo Salminen
Export Director,
Valio



image: Valio



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Juhani Sibakov
Head of Innovation,
Fazer Bakery Finland

The Finnish food industry has learned to leverage our strong heritage for innovation, just as the nation's top chefs have. Juhani Sibakov from Fazer Bakery Finland and Paavo Salminen from Valio, a national dairy manufacturer, tell us how new tastes are crafted and what kind of recipes help bring the Arctic North to the world stage.

What is most important when developing new products?

P: Superior quality. We have the world's purest milk, something we've accomplished through long-term attention on the whole production chain. There are no easy gimmicks that would work in the dairy industry. Animal welfare and product purity require constant investments and patient commitment. Many of our new innovations revolve around bringing more nutritional value to our customers while also exceeding their expectations.

J: I'd have to say that consumer needs and exceptional taste are everything. We do not make any compromises on those things. Experiences are also important. We like to create flavours that no one else provides.

What else drives your product development?

J: Finnish bakeries are very open-minded with new products. Consumers are demanding, but still open to novelties. The ongoing snack trend and constantly moving consumers create a need for products suited to various situations. We're constantly working to stay on top of the next big trends in our industry.

P: Our values are built on healthy, pure products and responsible business practices. We are one of the first dairy producers in the world to pay a sustainability premium to our dairy farmers. The farmers are committed to sustainable production methods and maintaining animal welfare – while also earning more from their efforts.

What part does creativity play in food innovations?

J: We always keep our finger on the global pulse and stay ahead of trends. Health and wellbeing is one megatrend that affects everything. We've introduced the world's first low-FODMAP rye bread and are working on the Fazer Brainhow product family, which aims to support both body and mind.

P: Gut health and lactose-free products are two growing international trends. We have been pioneering research in the field for years and can claim to be 5 to 10 years ahead of the competition. Our lactose-free products always get positive reactions from consumers.

J: Fazer's Cricket Bread is a good example of our trend-awareness and agility. When news broke of new legislation in September 2017, we were already testing prototypes in October. The product's marketing, communications plan and brand were created within a month. We worked extremely fast, since we wanted to be first on the market.

P: As Nordic cuisine is in fashion, Finland is definitely riding a global trend. Our pure, distinctive products fit into the trend effortlessly, be it with amazing berry yogurts or with staples, such as milk or cream, that are made just right.

Any leads on upcoming Finnish hit products?

J: Our root vegetable bread, where one-third of the grains are replaced with vegetables, definitely has a lot of potential. Soft rye bread is a future superfood, and oats continue to interest consumers in Finland as well as abroad. Oats are definitely a supergrain with loads of great qualities and versatility. Snack products with a long shelf life are another big opportunity.

P: Fermented milk products, such as our healthy Kefir products. A traditional Finnish delicacy!



image: Valio



CRICKET SANDWICH

(4 sandwiches)

1 Cricket Bread

Butter

16 slices of firm cheese

Fresh thyme

1. Cut the bread into large, thin slices on the diagonal. Butter sparingly, as any excess butter will only melt and burn on the pan.
2. Lay slices of cheese on the bread, 4 to 5 slices per piece of bread, then sprinkle with thyme according to taste.
3. Place a buttered slice of bread on top and press gently.
4. Heat up a griddle pan (or use a sandwich maker if you have one).
5. Place the sandwiches on the pan and add a light weight on top. Grill on low heat for 3 to 5 minutes until the cheese has melted and the bread is nicely browned.
6. Serve instantly with some fresh juice. A salad or sautéed mushrooms make for a great side dish.



DRINKS

The key to premium drinks: water and ingredients from pure Arctic nature.

**Mats Ekholm**Brewmaster and Product Developer,
Stallhagen Brewery

What makes Finnish drinks unique and where do they come from? Virpi Ali-Haapala from Finn Spring, a company specialised in spring waters and soft drinks, explains the virtues of Finnish drinking culture with Stallhagen's brewmaster Mats Ekholm.

Finland has the purest ground water in Europe. What does that mean for your customers?

V: Our high quality can be tasted by anyone, as low mineral content makes for very fresh water. The main ingredient for all our products is pure water from the Multila spring. Together with our distinctive design, it is a definite benefit over our competition, something proven by international awards for quality and taste.

M: Premium products are always in high demand, and they require the best raw materials. If you can provide quality consistently, your business will have a solid foundation.

Does quality come from materials or know-how?

V: Water is very delicate. Its processing requires extreme expertise. We use sealed units and make our bottles on-site. Automatic processes assure that we can always provide delicious, fresh spring water to the consumers.

M: The last decade has seen a lot of change. Quality has always been part of our national identity, but young entrepreneurs have started to market Finland in completely new ways. Small, brave businesses with quality products are abundant right now. And when it comes to distillery culture, Finland is leading the way. We're not afraid to use flavours from Finnish nature and don't hold back with strong aromas. Finland is at the global forefront of a new type of drinking culture, that's a fact.

What are Finland's strengths on the global food market?

V: Our strengths are pure water and wild berries, which are a cornerstone of our entire food industry.

M: Finnish legislation. Our laws protect the consumers. We have very strict control over food processing and ingredients, including their origins. The meat industry maintains an ethical approach to livestock rearing and slaughter, which is closely monitored as well. For export, that's an assurance of quality that creates a strong image.

V: Finland is a functional nation. We might be a bit reserved and not the best salesmen, but our word is our bond.

**Virpi Ali-Haapala**
Administrative Manager,
Finn Spring



OAT SMOOTHIE

(4 portions)

1 dl rolled oats
4 dl wild forest lingonberries
3 dl organic natural yoghurt
3 dl milk
1/2 dl pure Finnish honey

1. Put the berries, yogurt and milk in a blender and run until smooth.
2. Keep the blender running and add the rolled oat flakes in small batches.
3. Sweeten to your taste with pure Finnish honey.
4. Enjoy right away.



SAFETY

Supply chain integrity. Healthy animals. No hormones and low antibiotics use. Highly regulated purity. These are the hallmarks of the Finnish food industry.



Purity and reliability are two themes that always come up when discussing Finnish food. But what does that really mean? How do we maintain a consistently high level of quality? **Thimjos Ninios** from the Finnish Food Safety Authority sheds light on the most pertinent facts.

Finland has the purest food in Europe. What does that mean?

Compared to international findings, Finnish food contains fewer contaminants, if at all. Food contaminants include residues from pesticides in vegetables and antibiotics in meat. Purity is also linked to microbiological quality. Salmonella is a good example: it is very rare in Finland.

What has Finland done right for the wellbeing of animals and the environment?

Finland has a good grasp of the One Health concept. It means that the health of people, animals and the environment are closely linked with each other. Finnish legislation also considers the environment to keep our One Health in check. Conservative use of pesticides can be seen as one concrete example.

Animal welfare in agriculture is closely related to the production methods, which are also sound in Finland. For instance, our pigs get to keep their tails, which promotes wellbeing and prevents stress.

What makes Finnish primary production world-class?

Best practices have been in use for decades, which has cost a lot of time and money. Finnish farms should be proud of their accomplishments. For example, the excellent work done in the poultry industry to combat Salmonella has resulted in Finnish poultry farms being antibiotic-free since 2009. This is highly exceptional by international standards!

Finnish food is highly traceable and reliable. How have we achieved this?

Traceability and origins are very important to Finnish consumers. Therefore food producers know to provide source information, with help from legislation and internal quality standards. Food safety is the best metric for reliability. Finnish companies know how to produce safe food, which has been proven and measured over several decades. Another factor is consideration for the environment. Again, it all comes down to adherence with strict environmental regulations and the One Health concept.



Thimjos Ninios
Unit Manager,
Evira, Finnish Food Safety Authority

Pure ingredients. Healthy
organic products. Pure Nordic
tastes. Food from Finland is
the official government-funded
programme to promote Finnish
foods, drinks and the food
industry.

HUNGRY FOR MORE?

Pure tastes from the Arctic North
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