VIKING LINE

Viking Line serves up Christmas pike, the finest flavours of the archipelago and a touch of luxury

Finnish Christmas pike with egg sauce, cream-marinated whitefish and Baltic herring with blackcurrant. The flavours of the archipelago are taking an even more prominent place on Viking Line's Christmas buffet, which once again features more than one hundred dishes. A festive novelty provides the crowning touch to the Christmas meal: a buffet of five different layer cakes.

Christmas begins on board Viking Line's vessels on 19 November, when more than one hundred dishes will be laid out for the first time on the buffet tables at The Buffet restaurants. Nearly 80 per cent of the food on the Christmas buffet is locally sourced, and the Christmas ham comes from Finland.

This year, the Christmas fish selection is more extensive and varied than ever. One of the new additions is Finnish Christmas pike, which Viking Line's chefs have given a new twist by preparing it as a terrine. It is served in small portions with egg sauce and peas. Guests can also enjoy cold-smoked pike with pike roe, caper crème and pickled leek.

"Pike is very much part of the archipelago, particularly the traditional Christmas pike cooked in fish stock. For decades, fishermen in the Turku archipelago have supplied pike for the Christmas table of the President of the Republic of Finland. So, it was high time for pike to make an appearance on board Viking Line as well. I believe that this excellent fish will win many new fans at our buffet," says Viking Line's Restaurant Manager **Janne Lindholm.**

The fish table grows in popularity, while ham retains pride of place

Viking Line's Christmas buffet draws on Finnish and Swedish Christmas traditions, while also introducing something new every year. Familiar favourites on the fish table, such as mustard Baltic herring and gravlax, are joined this year by herring with lingonberry and red onion, Baltic herring with blackcurrant and cream-marinated whitefish. New vegetarian dishes include pickled kohlrabi with truffle mayonnaise and roasted broccoli with macadamia nuts.

"We have created an especially varied and tempting fish table, as fish dishes become more popular every year. Many people want to opt for lighter, healthier food even during the festive season. Fish is also increasingly something people enjoy only occasionally, which makes a generous fish table feel luxurious while offering excellent value for money," Lindholm says.

Christmas ham, traditional Finnish casseroles and the Swedish favourite Jansson's temptation naturally retain their places of honour on the Christmas table.

"The popularity of Christmas ham remains unwavering. People may take only one slice, but for many it is precisely that slice that brings the feeling of Christmas."

Five-cake buffet provides the crowning touch

As a new addition to the dessert table, Viking Line's kitchen team has joined forces with the pH7 patisserie in Tuusula to create a cake buffet. Guests can round off their Christmas meal with treats such as carrot and cream cheese cake, raspberry and white chocolate cake and a vegan sea buckthorn and vanilla cake.

"We have served layer cake for dessert before, and it has always disappeared in no time. This time, we decided to treat our guests to an entire cake buffet. It also looks fantastic and takes the Christmas meal to a whole new level," says Janne Lindholm.

10 facts about Viking Line's Christmas buffet

1. Viking Line has served its Christmas buffet on board since the 1970s. Today, nearly 200,000 guests enjoy the Christmas fare on board the five Viking Line ships every year.
2. The buffet features more than one hundred dishes, including fish and seafood with accompaniments, cold cuts, cheeses, hot meat and vegetarian dishes, and desserts.
3. Nearly 80 per cent of the food on the Christmas buffet is locally sourced. For example, the Christmas ham and the root vegetables used in the traditional casseroles come from Finland, while the fish comes from the Nordic countries.
4. Herring and Baltic herring are served in ten different ways. These include mustard Baltic herring, herring with lingonberry and red onion, prawn herring and gubbröra, a traditional Swedish herring spread.
5. The flavours of the archipelago can also be found in the bread selection, which includes Åland black bread, archipelago loaf and traditional ring-shaped rye bread.
6. There are 25 salads and hot vegetarian accompaniments. The selection includes roasted parsnip, BBQ-glazed tofu and pickled kohlrabi with truffle mayonnaise.
7. Around 5,000 kilos of Christmas ham are purchased for the Viking Line ships. A total of 3,350 kilos of herring and Baltic herring and 2,700 kilos of gravlax are prepared.
8. Alongside traditional potato, swede and carrot casseroles, the buffet features Jansson's temptation, a particular favourite among Swedish guests. Potato and carrot casseroles share the top spot as the most popular casseroles, with around 3,000 kilos of each consumed.
9. A new archipelago-inspired addition to the hot buffet is baked potato with Skagen prawn salad. International flavours are represented by fennel salami and air-dried charcuterie on the cold cuts table.
10. In addition to the cake buffet, desserts include biscuits, Swedish rice pudding, pistachio and cranberry fudge, Christmas sweets, fresh fruit and ice cream.

For more information:

Janne Lindholm, Restaurant Manager
janne.lindholm@vikingline.com, tel. +358 400 744 806

Johanna Boijer-Svahnström, Director, Corporate Communications
johanna.boijer@vikingline.com, tel. +358 18 270 00

Christa Grönlund, Communications Manager
christa.gronlund@vikingline.com, tel. +358 9 123 51