

The Story of Northern Flavors Rises from the Earth and Follows the Rhythm of Nature



From the coastline to the forests, the Ice Age shaped a unique Arctic landscape. In the wilderness hung the strong yet soft scent of tar. Towering pines reached for the clear sky, and at their roots walked the tar burners. The dark, sticky tar, made by slowly burning pinewood, reflected the skill and perseverance of northern people.

Waterways carried the tar from the wilderness of Kainuu to the hills of Koillismaa and finally to the shores of Oulu, from where it was shipped further across the sea. Clear springs gave travelers fresh water to drink. The northern light glimmered on the water's surface as boats glided through the midsummer nightless night. On these journeys, people lived on what nature provided: fish were smoked, meat dried, berries preserved. Mushrooms were picked, and especially the vitamin-rich berries of the north—bilberries, lingonberries, sea buckthorn berries, and cloudberry. Wild herbs and plants with intense flavor were carefully collected from meadows and fields bathed in northern light.

By the fire, people came together to share food and stories in the shelter of forests and along the riverbanks. Bread cheese was served—a traditional Finnish fresh cheese, baked until it formed its golden-brown surface and squeaky texture when eaten warm. Food was a passionate matter, even worth debating. It still is. Food is a source of pride and identity. It is also a way to show affection and respect. When words are not enough, food speaks of care and belonging.

Times of scarcity taught northern people to value every ingredient and use them creatively. A skill was born that still lives on today. Food here is simple, genuine, and fresh: it tastes of joy, playfulness, and the abundance of nature—the colors, nuances, and changing seasons.

On the northern coast, the tar reached the sea. On the shoreline, the spirit of a new era was rising. The journey of tar traced a route—the path of Arctic food. Tar became a narrative bridge from past to present, it became part of our identity that is still alive at the table. Today, tar has been rediscovered in modern gastronomy as a flavor and aroma: in ice cream, marinades, and even cocktails.

In culinary experiences, use of tar highlights the creativity of the northern kitchen: history meets culinary experimentation. Food here is always an experience to be remembered, and tar as an exciting ingredient allows the story to come alive. All seasons - autumn, winter, spring, and summer - can be seen and tasted in northern food. Here, food has roots, and every meal follows the nature's own rhythm.