

NEW NORDIC FOOD II PROJECT: NORDIC FOOD DIPLOMACY

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Project webpage: <http://nynordiskmad.org/tema/nordicfooddiplomacy>

1. SUMMARY

Nordic Food Diplomacy is a tool for communication of Nordic values through food and food design. It is utilized to enhance other cultural expressions and messages; in the planning process of political gatherings, official dinners, export drives, concerts, art exhibitions, lectures and cultural events.

By using this form for communication, dinner guests and audiences at events around the world are given the opportunity to enjoy Nordic food as an additional stimulating dimension when we promote a Nordic region or at official dinners. Nordic Food Diplomacy works through the development of concepts methods, tools and pilot projects which provide inspiration for those who use Nordic gastronomy in their promotion.

In 2013 the project has fulfilled its goals through a number of activities around the globe. The branding tool has been used in diverse circumstances and on different target groups, but always to great acclaim from both the media, organisers and partners. As a direct result of the Nordic Food Diplomacy project, organisers of the world's largest music competition developed a food strategy for the event. And Nordic food strengthened the promotional efforts at cultural festivals in both Shanghai and Washington.

2. OBJECTIVES

The aim of Nordic Food Diplomacy is to promote and conceptualise the use of Nordic food and culinary experiences when presenting the Nordic countries and their values in different branding activities and political gatherings together with the Nordic Diplomatic Corps. The objective is to make the region's renowned cuisine a natural element in all representation, at home and abroad.

3. ACTIVITIES

NORDIC COOL, WASHINGTON DC, FEB 2013

PILOT: FOOD & CULTURE

During the third week of February, the Kennedy Center in Washington organised the Nordic Cool Festival, which entirely focused on Nordic culture. More than 700 Nordic artists were represented in the American capital. The new Nordic kitchen was a central feature of the official programme, and in initiatives by the Nordic embassies. [See separate summary.](#)

EUROVISION SONG CONTEST, MALMÖ, MAY 2013

PILOT: FOOD & MUSIC

The New Nordic Food Programme raised the question of using food as a branding tool during the ESC in Malmö in May 2013 and contributed to the first ever food strategy for the event. A flavour profile was developed containing five different flavours which represented the Nordic countries, Sweden, Skåne, Malmö and the overarching theme of sustainability. The visiting European delegates were introduced to the Nordic cuisine throughout the week, at events and parties and the European press were each afternoon invited to a Swedish fika. [See separate summary.](#)

MASTER CLASS OF THE NORDIC KITCHEN, NDIW, SHANGHAI, NOV 2013

PILOT: FOOD & EXPORT

New Nordic Food strengthened the Nordic brand at Nordic Design & Innovation Week in Shanghai. Nordic TV-chef Tareq Taylor from the BBC show "*Tareq Taylor's Nordic Cookery*" introduced the Chinese media, chefs, students and representatives from the import businesses to Nordic Food by conducting a master class on the Nordic Kitchen. 250 people showed up and Tareq was afterward invited to come and cook on a local TV-show with over a million viewers. [See separate summary.](#)



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NETWORK & SUPPORT

The Nordic Food Diplomacy website is continually updated and under further development according to expressed needs and ideas from the users. Project personnel is continually consulted on how to use the toolkit, recipes, seasonal produce etc:

The project network and the number of collaborators is growing steadily in the Nordic countries as well as abroad. In collaborations with the Nordic Diplomatic Corps, the project has been a valued partner and delivered support to personnel in the kitchens as well as ideas and inspiration for the official events.

4. RESULTS

- **New and extended collaborations with the Nordic Embassies and Consulates.** Cross-creative pilot projects with the culture, export and music industries and the Nordic Diplomatic Corps and thereby strengthening the Nordic brand internationally together with a wide range of partners.
- **New collaborations with the world's largest TV-show, Eurovision Song Contest.** For the first time ever food, drink and storytelling was thought through and an important part of the ESC. A food strategy based on the Nordic Kitchen Manifesto was developed and used.
- **SWEDISH FIKA became epic.** 2000 journalists from all over the world were treated to Swedish fika, storytelling and grand hospitality on a daily basis at the press centre during the ESC.
- **Young chefs in training.** During the ESC we collaborated with the local catering college, training young chefs. They were invited to participate in preparing the menu for the opening ceremony of the ESC and the Swedish Fika.
- **Designing a Nordic Flavour Profile for the ESC.** Successful branding of Nordic food culture and flavours through the development and use of a flavour profile. The flavour profile was also sent out to the region's HORECA members who were urged to implement the flavours in dishes, drinks and on breakfast buffets. This was used on a large scale.
- **Massive media coverage** of the pilot projects. All projects were covered in different types of media. Especially Swedish Fika was followed by bloggers, tweeters and on Facebook and European television companies and radio teams were broadcasting live from the FIKA buffet.

5. COMMUNICATION / DISSEMINATION OF RESULTS

The project has been presented in newspaper articles, invitations and event programmes at all events and collaborations. Project management has used social media as well as press releases, strategic contacts and the media to promote Nordic Food Diplomacy.

The food strategy, flavour profile, Swedish Fika and our focus on sustainability got much coverage in Nordic media. The Danish Agricultural Minister, Mette Gjersgård, also sent out a press release where she expressed her appreciation of the Nordic Food Diplomacy concept during the ESC. Both Nordic Cool and ND&IW was covered by the media. Moreover, Tareq Taylor got invited to a Chinese cooking that has over a million viewers to cook Nordic Food.

6. PARTNERS

Partners: Kennedy Center, the Nordic Embassies in Washington, Malmö Stad, Eurovision Song Contest, Smaka på Skåne, Foodism, the Nordic Consulates in Shanghai, Tareq Taylor's Nordic Cookery.

Chefs: I'm A Kombo / Bo Lindegaard & Lasse Askov (DK), Tareq Taylor's Nordic Cookery/Tareq Taylor & Andrew Eves (SE), MoMuMat/Malin Söderström (SE)

Sponsors: Hvens Distillery, Norwegian Seafood Council, Troika Seafood, VOSS.



7. DISCUSSION

Since the project started two years ago a visible shift has taken place in how the use of food can be an effective branding tool. Even though not all partners greet us with open arms when we first approach them, the results of our different collaborations have been satisfactory for all our partners. Still, there is a long way to go for the Diplomatic community before they really understand the value of using food in their branding efforts.

This has most certainly to do with the lack of policy around food and meals in the diplomatic world. The realisation that food is a bearer of culture and can give the recipient a strong underlying message is yet to happen. Furthermore, interest, skills and competence at the embassies and their kitchens is variable, to say the least. Problems have risen when untrained kitchen staff fails to master the toolkit or to understand the information due to lack of experience and knowledge. Additionally, strong Nordic political concepts such as sustainability do generally not seem to concern the diplomatic forces abroad or their staff.

8. ECONOMY

ECONOMY	PINK CHILI	COMMENTS
Working hours	300 hours	
COST:		
Wages	200 000	
Services/external cost	50 000	
Material	15 000	
Travel	50 000	Cost for project manager and participants/partners
Information & Communication	35 000	
TOTAL DKK	350 000	
FINANCING:		
New Nordic Food	350 000	
TOTAL DKK	350 000	
<i>*Co-financing + sponsoring not included</i>		

