

# The Smorgasbord!

Did you ever wonder what “smorgasbord” really is and why does it come from Sweden? Well, great minds think alike!

Smörgåsbord is a type of Scandinavian meal, originating in Sweden, served buffet-style with multiple hot and cold dishes of various foods on a table.

Smörgåsbord became internationally known at the 1939 New York World's Fair when it was offered at the Swedish Pavilion's "Three Crowns Restaurant". It is typically a celebratory meal and guests can help themselves from a range of dishes laid out for their choice. In a restaurant, the term refers to a buffet-style table laid out with many small dishes from which, for a fixed amount of money, one is allowed to choose as many as one wishes. In Pennsylvania, smorgasbords are popular Pennsylvania Dutch-style buffets that are often associated with Amish-made meals.

The members of the Swedish merchant and upper class in sixteenth-century Sweden and Finland served schnapps table (brännvinsbord), a small buffet presented on a side table offering a variety of hors d'oeuvres served prior to a meal before sitting at the dinner table. The most simple brännvinsbord was bread, butter, cheese, herring and several types of liqueurs; but smoked salmon, sausages and cold cuts were also served. The brännvinsbord was served as an appetizer for a gathering of people and eaten while standing before a dinner or supper, often two to five hours before dinner, sometimes with the men and women in separate rooms.

The smörgåsbord became popular in the mid-seventeenth century, when the food moved from the side

table to the main table and service began containing both warm and cold dishes. Smörgåsbord was also served as an appetizer in hotels and later at railway stations, before the dining cars time for the guests. Restaurants in Stockholm at the 1912 Olympic Games stopped serving smörgåsbord as an appetizer and started serving them instead as a main course.

Buffet-style restaurants in the US are down to 5,922, but profits in 2019 are up to \$8 billion. Most of these restaurants operate on an all-you-can-eat model.

[<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sm%C3%B6rg%C3%A5sbord>]

