

How IKEA helped Swedish meatballs go global

It's hard to dress up a meatball. Be they polpette in Italy, kofta in **Lebanon**, faggots in Britain, kotlety in Russia or thit vien in Vietnam, meatballs are a homely food wherever they are eaten.

Lebanon 黎巴嫩

perch 栖息; 位于

mashed potato 土豆泥

gravy 肉汁; 不法利润

Sweden's köttbullar are no different. They are at the centre of any midsummer smorgasbord or Christmas julbord. **Perched** on top of **mashed potato**, doused in a creamy **gravy** and laced with lingonberry jam, they are a **savoury** reminder of the enduring devotion of Swedish mothers.

But Swedish meatballs are no longer just a domestic dish. They have gone global, thanks to the efforts not of Sweden's mothers but of one giant furniture company: IKEA.

Concerned that customers navigating its endless aisles of flat-pack furniture would grow **faint** with hunger, the company opened restaurants in its stores. Severin Sjöstedt, the chef who spent almost a year developing the original recipe for IKEA, has said that the firm wanted to make something that was easy to serve, tasty and affordable for most people.

savory 可口的; 美味的

faint 昏厥; 模糊的

It succeeded. Today, no trip to IKEA is complete without the purchase of several hundred unnecessary tea lights, a **vicious spat** with your spouse and a **keenly** priced plate of meatballs.

vicious 恶意的; 堕落的

spat 口角; 争吵

And yet, in a shocking **revelation**, in 2018 Sweden admitted that its meatballs are in fact an import. Forget the Swedish mothers — köttbullar are based on a recipe that King Charles XII brought back from Turkey in the early 18th century. The Swedes have adopted the comfort food of another country, made it their own and persuaded the rest of the world to love it too.

keenly 敏锐地

revelation 揭露; 启示