

October 2011

“Born to be Schwein”

is the motto on the menu-card which also serves as a placemat in the recently opened restaurant **Villisika** (The Wild Boar) in Tampere. In a little reference to the German and Austrian cuisine (Schnitzel) it has chosen a wild boar as its symbol. Besides some chicken and fish specialties you will be served a big selection of normal and special pork dishes and delicatessen from Lapland. From an exceptional Rainbow-Trout-Salad to Wild-Boar tenderloins and an absolutely delicious and highly recommendable *Lapponia Schnitzel*, filled like a Cordon Bleu, but with cold smoked reindeer meat and Emmental cheese. As mentioned on their menu card, you may also get a *Finnish-Coffee* here instead of an *Irish-Coffee*, which will warm you up just as well.



The very unique Viking Restaurant (Ravintola) **Harald**, also known far beyond the borders of Tampere, which is held in an absolute old Nordic interior, offers you a variety of uncommon dishes. Besides some whiskey-salmon, wild boar meat, pheasant, Elk meat or moose salami you could have a delicious Finnish white-fish tartar, smoked reindeer sausage and cold smoked salmon. As a dessert you may want to try some “tarred” ice cream. And then,

the city of Tampere is also famous for the *Mustamakkara*, a type of a black blood-sausage which is being eaten together with lingonberries, and its taste and looks even creates very different opinions among the Finns about it. But, just give it a try!

The services in the restaurants are a kind of casual and, in general a tip is not expected. The different beers offered, mostly a lager-type, are also of a high quality, but stronger spirits may only be served in some clubs or restaurants with a special license. And the prices for alcoholic beverages are usually higher than in most other countries. You will also find a good selection of tasty dark bread, mostly made from rye flour. In some selected Pizzerias you could taste a Reindeer Pizza, which is then decorated with some small pieces of valuable reindeer meat. The Finns are also big coffee-drinkers and there are many types of cakes and different sweet pastries. Quite often it is being mentioned that the Finnish table water/tab water is supposed to be better than any bottled mineral water.

Plevna, situated right at the entrance of the *Finlayson* area is a big rustic type and brewery style restaurant with a very big glass collection, and it offers an inexpensive combination of Finnish-Bohemian-German cuisine. Besides some of the home brewed beers you may want to taste a beer-cheese soup, crab-tartar, a tasty creamy salmon soup, sautéed reindeer meat, gravlax or some pork meat with a smoked beer sauce.



A must to try for you, also for your breakfast, are the pierogi (Karjalanpiirakka) originating from Karelia. These are warm or cold, oval rye-dough pastries filled with different ingredients like rice or an egg-butter cream and covered with hot butter. And they are the



best if they are fresh and warm. Even if the prices in some restaurants may appear a little higher to some people than in other countries, you should not forget that, when dining, unlimited table water is almost always included, and sometimes you may also have a free second or third cup of coffee. At the same time you will find many types of homemade salads in many self-service restaurants, in which you will quite often get an inexpensive meal. The small *Grilli-Kiosk* stands in town are

another possibility for you to get a fast snack for a low price, sometimes until very late at night.

Suitable for a possible culinary souvenir, you could take home the original Finnish Vodka *Koskenkorva*, „Tar“ liqueur *Tervola*, original strong peppermint schnapps „Minttu“ or the fine liqueur *Lapponia Lakka*, made from the Nordic fruit, the cloudberry, whose white blossoms can be seen in June. Or, could it perhaps be a glass of *Lakkahillo* (Cloudberry Fruit Jam), *Tyrnierikoishillo* (Sea-Buckthorn Fruit Jam) or *Puolukkahillo* (Lingonberry Jam) for you? Salmiakki (Strong Licorice) in very many different flavors and forms is also very popular in Finland. As you surely have noticed by now, in Tampere and in Finland you will find an over the last years developed, versatile cuisine and restaurant scene. With different fresh berries, mushrooms and game from the huge forests and fine fresh fish from the many lakes. Served in mostly sufficient portions one had successfully combined the former rather heavy type Finnish dishes with Nordic as well as some of the Western (Sweden) and Eastern neighbor's (Russia) specialties and modern international culinary influences.

Hyvää ruokahalua!

Have a good appetite!