

Through the ages Icelanders did not have the option of being picky eaters. They ate what they could get and used more or less every part of the animals that were bred or hunted for food. The sheep is a good example of this. More or less every part of the animal was used for food in one form or another and still is.



Our traditional food is a bit odd because we didn't have any fresh meat during the winter for there were no places to store it in, so we had to salt the meat and fish a lot and the rest was put in to milk acid to keep it eatable.

Now we have refrigerators so we can keep our food fresh and store it for a long time but some of us still like the old traditional food. At an annual festival in Iceland called Þorrablót which is an old festival from the Viking times we eat a lot of the old stuff and drink black death (íslenskt brennivín) or beer with it.

Our traditional food means a lot to us because the Icelandic people didn't have a lot to eat so our ancestor had to eat this food just to survive. Nowadays we just eat them for special occasions and to keep the tradition going, some people eat them with other food just because they are used to it.

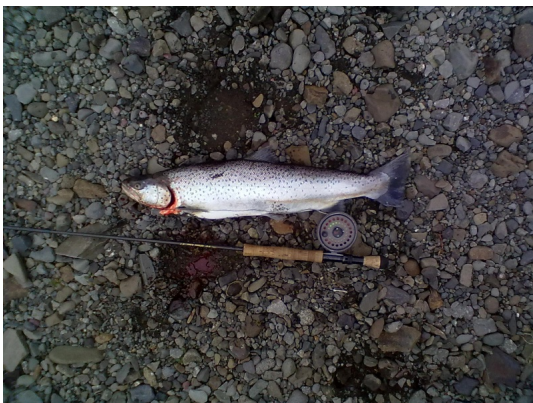
Traditional food:

- Svið are singed sheep heads, they are cut in half and then boiled.
- Sviðasulta or sheep head-jelly is made from the sheep heads who are cut down and made hard in to a kind of jelly.
- Hangikjöt is just smoked lamb, often smoked over horse manure and wood.
- Blóðmör is a kind of blood pudding, it's made from blood and a lot of left over sheep suet.

- Lifrapylsa is a liver pudding, it's made from the sheep's liver.
- Súrmatur or soured-food is the most extreme bad tasting food it includes sour sheep-balls, blood-pudding, liver-pudding, seal flippers, breast of lamb and a lot of other creepy food that does not taste nice.
- Saltkjöt or simply salted meat, its lamb that has been laying in salt for some time and then boiled and eaten in the winter.
- Flatkökur, are thin rye pancakes, they are often served with smoked lamb, or just any food you like.
- Seytt rúgbrauð, is a very dark cooked rye bread, served with all kind of food, it was often cooked in volcanically heated ground.
- Hárkarl, the Greenland shark has to lay in the ground or hang for quite some time to get all the ammonia out of it so it can be eaten, even though the ammonia is out it still tastes like spicy pee.
- Harðfiskur is cod, haddock or pollock that is hung and dried, it tastes better than you might think.
- Skyr is a soured dairy product thicker than yoghurt, it has been eaten a lot in Iceland since the Vikings started making it here.

Fresh fish:

There is a lot of fish around Iceland so we fish quite a lot, we have cod, haddock, pollock, halibut, marcel, lobster/scampi, and a lot of the best fish you can get in the oceans.



In fresh water there are not as many types of fish but we have: Atlantic salmon, brown and sea trout, arctic and sea char and eels.

Fresh meat:

Iceland is known for our good lamb, also we have the main animals domesticated animals like cows and pigs, and also we have chicken and ducks on many of the farms.

Hunting and fishing is a big part of our culture because in the old days we had live of the land so geese and duck are hunted a lot during the winter. We also hunt for reindeers and rock ptarmigan.

Written by Pálmi Geir