

FOOD MEMORIES

A project about living heritage



ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

Integrationshuset Kringlebakken and IMMART present "Food Memories" an exhibition consisting of 12 women's photographic portraits with accompanying descriptions of memories and stories about a particular dish that holds a special place in their heart.



BACKGROUND

Women from more than twenty different nationalities spend time at Integrationshuset Kringlebakken. All of them have migrated to Denmark and have gone through significant upheaval and sacrifice. They have left behind their families and friends, the houses they lived in, the scents, the climate, and everything familiar. However, one thing they carry with them is their food culture and the memories surrounding every dish - dishes that their parents and grandparents served them, and the memories they recall every time they cook the same dish for their children, their husbands, and their new networks.

Through the Food Memories project, women from Integrationshuset Kringlebakken have had the opportunity to weave their everyday life in Denmark together with memories from their home countries. The women were taught life-writing by Sacramento Rosello and were photographed by Mayra Navarrete in collaboration between Integrationshuset Kringlebakken and IMMART.

THE EXHIBITION



PEYES

My mother is tall and a bit overweight, and she always looks happy. She is helpful and does everything with a good heart. The first recipe she gave me - and taught me how to make - was Peyes. When I learned to cook for the first time, I was 20 years old and newly married. My husband loves this dish, and I had to learn to make it to make him happy. In my home country, I use a special kind of rice that smells really wonderful.

TANZINA // Bangladesh

NAMKEEN

When I see Namkeen somewhere, it reminds me of my childhood. Back when I was 11 years old, my father worked in the army. Whenever he came home, we always made different types of sweets, bread, and Namkeen. Because Namkeen was my favorite, my father always made extra Namkeen just for me. When I had Namkeen with milk, I didn't need any other food. So, when I woke up in the morning, I would jump out of bed to see what was for breakfast. If there were other things on the breakfast table, I would cry and go back to bed.

My mother always used to tell me, "Your father is coming tomorrow, and he will make a lot of Namkeen for you." Then, I would become happy again, thinking only about my father coming home and making Namkeen for me. But the next morning, my father didn't come, and I cried so much that my mother said, "Okay, I will bring you Namkeen from the market." As I grew a little older, my mother called me "Oh Namkeen girl" because Namkeen was my special nickname given by my father. It is still my favorite dish.

GITA // Nepal



SOUKIRKINEZ



Soukirkinez tastes really delicious. It consists of dough with dried coriander, tomato paste, and onions on top. My uncles and aunts used to grow coriander themselves in the fields. My father grew grapes and had both red and green ones. Every August was harvest time - the whole family had to help with the grape harvest. I often had the task of bringing lunch to my father. The grapes were transported to the big cities, where my father sold them at the Grønttorvet (green market).

I remember once when I helped my aunt light up the Darneeren (traditional Kurdish oven). I was wearing my finest dress, a gift I had received on Eid and cherished dearly. The dress was pink and full of glitter that sparkled in the sun. It was a bit silly of me to wear it, but I was so happy with it. As I sat there by the Darneeren, I got too close to the fire, and suddenly my beautiful dress caught fire. I didn't even notice, but thankfully, my aunt's mother-in-law was attentive. She rushed over and put out the fire with her bare hands, getting severe burns on her thumb. I was truly embarrassed and upset, and my most beautiful dress was ruined. Fortunately, nobody got angry. Everyone was just happy that nothing had happened to me. Three years later, our entire house and the surrounding landscape were leveled to the ground.

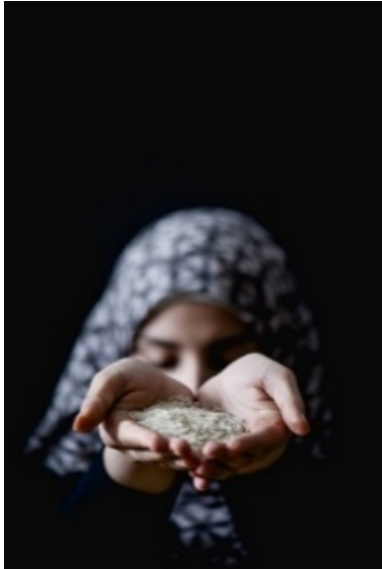
AMIRA // Kurdistan-Iraq

APPLES

Apples remind me of my mother. Every time I eat apples, I remember my family and how we used to enjoy them together, sharing precious moments and bonding while eating apples.

AZRA // Pakistan





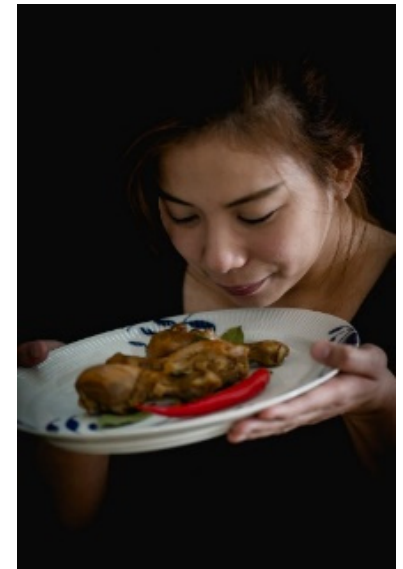
SAMAK AL MASGUF - GRILLED FISH

I have chosen this dish because it is my favorite and it reminds me of my family. We used to live very close to the Tiger River, and we ate a lot of fish. Fish was the staple food in this region. I learned to make this dish from my dear mother, but I have added some spices that my husband and I enjoy. We always made this dish on Fridays or on our days off so that everyone could join in. We grilled the fish in a special way using firewood. My older brother was always in charge of making the salad. As I sit and write about the dish, it makes me really happy because it brings back memories of the most wonderful days and times I spent with my beautiful family.

SHAMS // Iraq

CHICKEN ADOBO

As a young person, I remember my father standing in our small kitchen. We loved it when our father cooked because he made better food than our mother. It has always puzzled me how he could make even the simplest dish taste so good. My father and I weren't close. We never spoke much, and he was a strict and serious man. But when he cooked, his mood would magically change, and he became fun and made jokes. He particularly enjoyed making "Chicken Adobo," which is a very traditional dish in the Philippines. If you ask anyone who has traveled to the Philippines, the likelihood that they know Chicken Adobo is very high. It's a straightforward dish and easy to make, but it's my favorite. Probably because it reminds me of my childhood and the atmosphere in our home when my father cooked. I don't make it as well as my father, but both my son and my husband like it. Every time I do it, I remember how much fun it was to cook.



ROSE // Philippines



BOFLOT

The dish that brings back memories for me is Boflot. It was my mother who used to make this dish for us. She would prepare it in the morning and serve it as breakfast. We would eat it with a little porridge and some soda. You can also enjoy it on its own. This was in Ghana, and we lived in the second-largest city, Kumasi, in a neighborhood called Bantama. We lived in a large house with different families, and there was a small kitchen. Boflot is made with flour, oil, nutmeg, vanilla, baking powder, and yeast. You mix all the ingredients and let it sit in a warm place for 5-10 minutes. Then, you shape the mixture into small balls and fry them in oil until they turn brownish. After that, they are ready to be enjoyed with your oatmeal, tea, powdered corn (koko), tom brown, or soda. It brings back so many memories of the fireplace, the bustling kitchen, and the sweet taste of Boflot. Oh, how I truly miss those gatherings and the joy they brought.

SARA // Ghana

I love omelets for breakfast, and every time I make one, it reminds me of my father. He used to call me from the kitchen when he was making omelets, so I could watch and learn to make a perfect omelet. One day, he told me that the next time, he would let me make an omelet for him. That's why I have a fondness for omelets for breakfast.

ANDLEEB // Pakistan

OMLETTE



KECHRI



When I was a child, we were invited to a Kechri celebration by my grandmother. She was exceptional at cooking, especially Kechri. We would sit in the kitchen while grandma prepared Kechri and shared stories from her childhood and life. I loved listening to those stories. That's why Kechri became my favorite dish, not only because it tastes delicious but also because it reminds me of all the sweet stories my grandmother used to tell us. Kechri is rich in protein and vitamins, which is an added bonus for my favorite dish. It can be prepared in various ways, but the most traditional method is extraordinary and reserved for special occasions like Eid, New Year, and other festive events. I'm not sure where the dish originates from or who the founder of this recipe is. The recipes have been passed down to us from our mothers, who learned them from their mothers, and it has been one of the traditional dishes in our family for generations – probably for over 100 years.

(Note: Kechri is a traditional dish in certain regions, and the specific preparation and ingredients may vary depending on cultural and regional practices.)

NILA // Afghanistan

RYE BREAD

The spring when I met my future husband, Troels, he had to work in Greenland for one month during the summer, and up in Nuuk, he stayed with Fritz and Eva, who also hailed from Denmark and baked their own rye bread using a sourdough starter in the coldest and northernmost part of Denmark. It was a very special sourdough starter, dating back to Holberg's time (1684-1754), and had been kept alive for several hundred years. Troels' love gift to me, when he returned from Greenland as a newly enamored man, was a portion of this unique sourdough starter, a figurine he had carved himself from a soapstone he had found up there, and a sealskin from a Greenlandic seal. We managed to keep the sourdough starter alive for about 10 years, but sadly, it eventually died because we didn't refresh it frequently enough. Now, we have a sourdough starter that our kind next-door neighbor, Poul, brought back from a family visit to Jutland, where his wife's family always keeps an extra sourdough starter in the fridge for those in need. This sourdough starter is now the basis for my homemade rye bread, which we eat every day.



HANNAH // Denmark

MEAT AND PLUMS



I chose this dish because it reminds me of my mother. My mother taught me how to cook, and the first time I made this dish, I felt a really nice and warm feeling in my heart that is hard to describe. I prepared the dish, and my mother gave me tips and guidance along the way. It was a delightful experience. The dish turned out delicious, and I was really happy because it was served for dinner when the whole family was gathered. All my siblings and their spouses were visiting to eat together. I received compliments from everyone. They all said, "It tastes really good, Hasnaa." That evening, I received a lot of recognition. It made me believe in myself more and made me more courageous. I developed a great interest in cooking and still dare to try something new in the kitchen.

HASNAA//Morokko

BRUSSEL SPROUTS

Every time I see Brussels sprouts at the supermarket or when I cook them at home, I think of the dinner table when I was a child. There were some conflicts with my brothers who didn't want to eat their Brussels sprouts, but it also reminded me of the special bond between my mother and me. We both liked Brussels sprouts, and it felt like us against my father and brothers! I grew up on a small farm in Zealand in the 1950s. Our family consisted of my father, mother, and my two younger brothers. My mother managed the household, as was typical for women in the countryside back then. As a girl, I was expected to help out. I have fond memories of our dinners. We had our warm meal at half-past twelve while listening to the radio news. I enjoyed my mother's cooking and wanted to learn to cook just like her. So, when my mother said that Brussels sprouts were healthy and tasty, I started to think the same. I thought those little green cabbages were beautiful back then, and I still do. The memories of those family dinners with Brussels sprouts have a special place in my heart, reminding me of the love and togetherness we shared as a family on our farm.



INGER // Denmark

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