Augustana Winter Traditions: Food Traditions

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Smorgasbord: Remembering Our Swedish Heritage or Marking Our American Evolution?

Andrew Remeselink and Adam Huffstutler

Jul Smorgasbord

Smorgasbord is a Swedish tradition in which many parties come together with traditional Swedish dishes and partake in a grand banquet. Typically celebrated in the winter, smorgasbord initially served as a communal gesture of the wealthy, excluding those who could not contribute an exquisite and typically expensive meal. Today however, smorgasbord is practiced amongst most Swedish, eliminating the necessity of a high-class status, as seen in its display at Augustana College. Founded by the Swedish, Augustana College strives to recognize its Scandinavian roots, historically inviting anyone who is willing to pay a minimal fee. In recent years, however, the tradition of smorgasbord has largely strayed from its Swedish culture, and has adopted a widely more American perspective of the holiday.

Americanization

Essentially, the Americanization of Augusta's Smorgasbord served to please the members of the community, allowing all from differing ethnicities, ages, and customs to come together under a single tradition.

- Introduction of Santa to please the children
- Cuisine served as main meal, not appetizer
- American Christmas songs
- Party for the faculty, students
- Food like Macaroni & Cheese
- And Christmas Ham

What It Means to Those in Our Community

- For the faculty and staff on campus, it is a time for all to gather together with colleagues and family and share in holiday cheer. It is also an event that allows them to celebrate Augusta's rich Swedish heritage & cultures.
- For members outside of the Augusta community, Smorgasbord serves as an opportunity to enjoy our beautiful campus and experience one of the many Swedish-based traditions we hold here at Augie.
- Just this year, the community-wide Smorgasbord was reintroduced on campus, inviting all members of the QC to partake for a capped family-fare. The event is hosted by the Augustana Swedish Immigration Research Center and is held in Denkman.

Timeline ofLocations Around Campus

Through the years, Augustana's Jul Smorgasbord has been hosted in many different locations that we all know and love around campus. The location reflects the purpose of Smorgasbord for that year, utilizing banquet space to impress guests, or community space for all of campus to enjoy.

1930's - former Andrew dining hall. *Andrew dining hall was considered the "fancy" dining area on campus at the time

1973 - former Westerner cafeteria

1982 - Cc dining hall (Wilson Center)

Present - Gavel Rooms / Community Smorgasbord held in Denkman

Americanization of the Smorgasbord Menu

Herring in Wine and Cream
Breads - Limpa and Swedish Rye
Bondad Cheese
Parsley Buttered Potatoes
Scandinavian Vegetables - Peas, Carrots, Zucchini
Still Salad
Outkaka
Uott Bsaller
Birna Boener
Anil potatis
Swedish Muttonballs
Potato-Sausage

Sliced Ham - No cherries
Fresh Fruit Bowl with Caramel Dip
Tossed Salad with assorted dressings
Colelaw
Vegetable Tray with Dip
Baked Salmon
Caraway Cheese

Major Contributors:

Kai Swanson:

Kai Swanson's parents were both students at Augustana College in the 1950's, when Augustana's student body was almost exclusively Swedish. He believes that primary reason for the institution's growth in diversity was the Swedish-American trend of spreading around the United States. Mr. Swanson followed in his parents' footsteps, enrolling in the college, where his father served as the campus Chaplin. Though Swanson attended Augustana in the 1980's, graduating in 1986, he nostalgically recalled his earliest memories of the college, ranging as far back as the late 1960's. After graduation, Swanson found employment in the college's radio station, WYDI, beginning as a morning news anchor and eventually promoted to the editor of Augustana's college magazine. In 2003, however, Mr. Swanson applied to become Assistant to the College's President, Dr. Bahl, and became the assistant in 2005. He continues to assist the president, as well as holding other roles on campus, like President of the Augustana Historical Society, allowing Augustana to employ him for 32 years. He holds a very key role in the planning and execution of Augustana's Smorgasbord.

Austin Albert:

Austin Albert is a 3rd Year Student at Augustana College, majoring in Scandinavian Studies. Aside from his academic expertise, Albert was uniquely beneficial as he was invited to Augustana College's hosting of smorgasbord in 2017 for his role in the institution's choir. Aside from asking to perform, Albert and his peers were able to indulge in the array of dishes and conversation with the other guests. Albert is unique, however, as he has been a participant in a larger smorgasbord celebration that is held annually in Indiana. With such experience, he offered insight to how the differences between Augustana's custom and that of the truly Swedish.

Bibliography


Staff at Smorgasbord. 1968. Augustana College, C-F03981.
