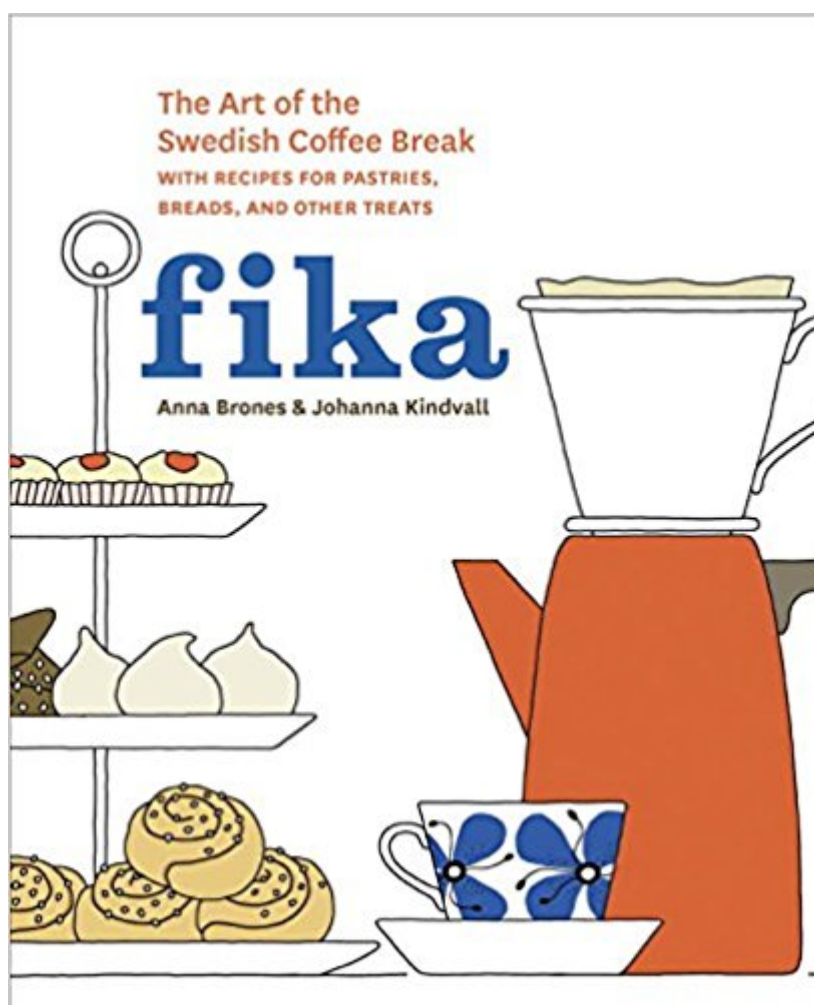


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Fika: The Art Of The Swedish Coffee Break, With Recipes For Pastries, Breads, And Other Treats



Synopsis

An illustrated lifestyle cookbook on the Swedish tradition of fika--a twice-daily coffee break--including recipes for traditional baked goods, information and anecdotes about Swedish coffee culture, and the roots and modern incarnations of this cherished custom. Sweden is one of the world's top coffee consuming nations, and the twice-daily social coffee break known as fika is a cherished custom. Fika can be had alone or in groups, indoors or outdoors, while traveling or at home. A time to take a rest from work and chat with friends or colleagues over a cup and a sweet treat, fika reflects the Swedish ideal of slowing down to appreciate life's small joys. In this adorable illustrated cookbook, Anna Brones and Johanna Kindvall share nearly fifty classic recipes from their motherland--from cinnamon buns and ginger snaps to rhubarb cordial and rye bread--allowing all of us to enjoy this charming tradition regardless of where we live.

Book Information

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Food & Wine > Baking

Customer Reviews

"The book is a delicious compendium of nearly 50 illustrated recipes inspired by Brones and Kindvall's childhoods, equally fueled by Fika. The cookies, cakes and breads (including savory variants) tap right into a growing, universal quest to achieve a more laid-back European lifestyle."--Lindsey Tramuta, New York Times T Magazine "As accessible as it is insightful, Fika is a baking book mixed with etiquette how-to and cultural know-how, iced with a calendar of holidays and expressed as a work of illustrated art."--Anne Bramley, Paste Magazine "Operating as both a noun and a verb, the finer points of the fika are sometimes lost

on outsiders – until now. Writer Anna Brones and illustrator Johanna Kindvall compiled the history and practice of the fika along with a collection of recipes for Swedish baked goods in their release "Fika: The Art of the Swedish Coffee Break. [...] For those looking to bring fika vibes to their lives, the book is a wealth of Swedish recipes and cooking tips. Swedish classics like kanelbullar (cinnamon buns spiced with cardamom) and hasselnötsfläns (simple cookies best dipped in a fresh cup of coffee) are easily explained and aided by Kindvall's upbeat illustrations. The visual component of the recipes especially comes in handy for more elaborate specialties like lussekatter (saffron buns). Beyond the classic sweet-baked goods associated with fika, the book gives recipes for savory smörgåsar, jams, drinks and more contemporary recipes like the ultra-rich chokladbollar (chocolate balls that are, admittedly, mostly butter)."

— Hans Aschim, Cool Hunting

ANNA BRONES is a Swedish-American freelance writer based in Paris. She is the editor of the online food magazine Foodie Underground, and is a contributor to a variety of publications including BBC, Guardian, Sprudge, GOOD, and PUNCH. JOHANNA KINDVALL is a Swedish illustrator who divides her time between Brooklyn and Skåne in the south of Sweden. Her work has been featured in various books and magazines. She also writes an illustrated cooking blog, Kokblog, which was named a Saveur "site we love".

I bought Fika: The Art of The Swedish Coffee Break, with Recipes for Pastries, Breads, and Other Treats in honor of my Swedish grandma. My grandma didn't call it fika to me but she enjoyed coffee break nearly everyday. I'm embracing my inner Swede and want to help re-implement the tradition of fika in my family near and far. Fika is a great resource to get me started with this Swedish tradition. Fika has five chapters: history of Swedish coffee, modern-day fika, the outdoor season, celebrating more than the everyday bread, sandwiches, and fika as a snack. It also has a brief list of resources and a nice index. Each chapter has about 10 recipes. Measurements are given in multiple ways for example 2 cups (10 oz, 284 grams). The design of Fika is very cute with lovely illustrations by Ms. Kindvall. They are elegantly simple and sort of retro. As I have a wheat allergy, I was happy to see some naturally gluten-free recipes. So far I have only made hasselnötskaka med kaffe. Mine was made with King Arthur Gluten Free Multi Purpose Flour, 24 Ounce and with almonds instead of hazelnuts so should probably be called mandelkaka med kaffe. I had almonds on hand, but didn't have hazelnuts. Despite my needed substitutions, it is quite tasty. As mentioned with hazelnuts, I'm finding I don't have some Scandinavian staples in the house.

So I've just purchased *Raw Oregon Hazelnuts / Filberts (2 Pound Bag)* - Oh! Nuts and *Simply Organic Cardamom, 2.82 Ounce* so I will be ready to make my next treat from *Fika: The Art of The Swedish Coffee Break, with Recipes for Pastries, Breads, and Other Treats*! In addition to buying my own copy of *Fika*, I have sent a copy to my mom and bought one for the library. As you can tell, I'm really enjoying my *Fika*.

What I love about *Fika: The Art of The Swedish Coffee Break* is that it's not just a collection of recipes, but also a compilation of stories and cultural insight. I feel like I've learned so much about the Swedish Coffee break and now I have all the recipes I need to host my own! The illustrations are as delightful as the recipes, which I've found to be dependable and easy to follow- and beg to be made over and over again!

I have purchased this book for myself and a friend and both of us LOVE it! We have tried many of the cookies, tortes, and cakes and all have been delicious! Follow the instructions exactly as written and everything will turn out great. I love the simplicity of ingredients and the fact that I didn't have to fully re-stock my kitchen in order to make any of the recipes. A basic background knowledge of baking and the science involved will also help tremendously, though I wouldn't consider most of the recipes 'advanced' by any means. Although, it does not include 'photographs' of the bakes, the whimsical illustrations were sufficient enough in my opinion to demonstrate techniques used to shape/mix/assemble the ingredients. The history of *fika* was also fascinating to read about, making this not only a great collection of recipes, but a good read on its own, as well. I highly recommend this book to anyone looking to branch out beyond traditional American bakes and is looking for a new taste and feel to appreciate. :)

Until I moved to the US, most of my exposure to Swedish food came from IKEA, much like I imagine it does for most people. But our relocation agent that helped us find a place to live and do battle with Social Security and the DMV is Swedish, and invited us round to her house for her annual Swedish Christmas/ St Lucia party. There we tasted *lussekatter*, got offered some *Glögg*, and were taught that seven kinds of cookies minimum should be served up by any self respecting Swedish host(ess) at a party. Yes. Seven. Anyway, the full title of this book is *Fika: The Art of the Swedish Coffee Break*. *Fika* means coffee or kaffe with something to eat, but also refers to the coffee break taken at least once a day, a chance to sit down and unwind. Frankly after the crazy week I have had, I think we could all deal with a little bit of *fika*. The book deals with various traditionally based

Swedish recipes for baked goods, but also some recipes of preserves and cordial, all accompanied by a bit of background information and history. It is a cute book with illustrations throughout by Johanna Kindvall. The illustrations include diagrams of the traditional forms for shaping your lussekatter, variations for vetebullar (Cinnamon and Cardamom Buns) and others giving a pictorial representation of the recipe. While pretty, I can't help but long for a few pictures of the goods themselves though, somehow the pictures don't quite inspire me to bake in the same way. In the interests of completeness, I made havreflarn med choklad (oat crisp chocolate sandwich cookies). They were taste tested and found to be good! The cookies themselves are made in a slightly different method to what I am used to, and result in a cookie with a slight chewy meringue-y texture. Very little flour is used, instead you blitz oats in a food processor. The filling is simply melted chocolate with a bit of ground ginger. The recipe worked perfectly, other than me needing to increase the cooking time, but this is a standard adaptation for any recipe in my poor pathetic oven. Just a little FYI, in order to try and keep the mess minimal, I melted the chocolate and mixed in the ginger, then put it into a zip lock bag, chopped the corner off, then used this like a piping bag to apply the chocolate, then smoothing it out with the back of a spoon, and placing the other half on top. It worked pretty well! Overall there are quite a few recipes I could see myself making, and while they say that some of the ingredients might be difficult to get hold of outside of Sweden, I think for the most part this is not true, especially in this day of internet shopping. It is a cute little book! So friends..... ska vi fika? I received this book from Blogging for Books for this review.

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