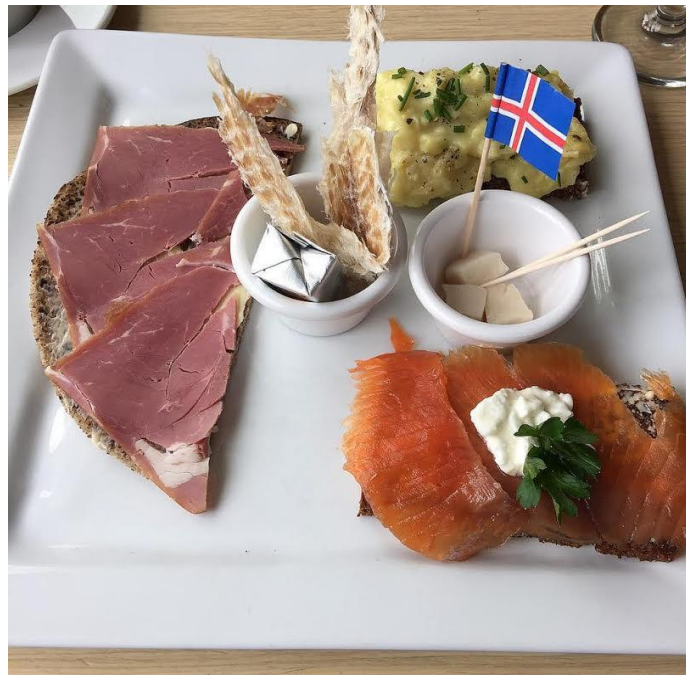




Traditional Icelandic food

The key elements of the Icelandic diet have changed very little since the country's settlement over a thousand years ago, with the most popular dishes still being fish, lamb and the Icelandic skyr.



Instead of eating a piece of bread with a meal, as was the custom in neighbouring countries, Icelanders ate dried stockfish. Although it is not eaten quite as much today, stockfish remains one of the most popular dishes of the old Icelandic tradition.

- ▶ Today, Icelanders eat fish on average twice a week and over half of the population consumes fish oil, or lýsi, at least four times a week.



Today's chefs are masters at creating excellent dishes, infusing the ocean's bounty with herbs and spices found in the Icelandic nature. But aside from a great meal at a restaurant, you should definitely try out these items:



Harðfiskur or stockfish. It can be purchased in any grocery store or at the Kolaportið flea market and is eaten as a snack, either straight out of the bag or with a good amount of butter spread on it.



Plokkfiskur or fish stew. A simple mix of white fish, potatoes, onions, flour, milk and seasoning but recently, some recipes also include ingredients like chives, curry, bearnaise sauce or cheese.



Humar or Icelandic lobster/langoustine. Caught in the waters along the South Coast, langoustines are known for their tasty, tender meat. You can find it grilled, baked, fried or even topped on pizza.





Before Christmas, many families get together to make ‘Laufabrauð’ or leaf-bread, a round, very thin flatbreads decorated with leaf-like geometric patterns. Families spend time, creating beautiful patterns in the bread before quickly frying it in a pan. Laufabrauð is then served with butter during Christmas dinner.

Another traditional bread is 'Flatkaka', a thin, round, rye flatbread with a distinct pattern. The tradition of baking flatkaka is believed to go back to the settlement, when it was baked on hot stones or straight on the fire's embers, creating the bread's signature spotted pattern, but later, small but heavy cast iron frying pans were used instead.



Rúgbrauð is perhaps best paired with fish (and an essential side with the aforementioned ‘plokkfiskur’ fish stew), but it can also be eaten on its own. Both rúgbrauð and flatkaka are delicious topped with mutton paté, butter, cheese, pickled herring, or smoked lamb.





- ▶ The most popular is lamb products.
- ▶ Almost everything on the lamb is a food product. From the Celts that are about 40% of the Icelandic gene pool, Icelanders learned to make their own form of haggish called slátur in Icelandic, which is made of the entrails of the sheep, liver, blood, etc.

Mediterraninas are eaten by sharks



Icelanders eat the sharks



21. Fermented Shark Cubes



Mr. Spangola Photography

If you're looking for something fishy, this Icelandic snack might hit the spot.