

DENMARK'S MEAD CHAMPIONS

KARIN SLOTH LEFT POLITICS BEHIND TO BECOME A DIFFERENT KIND OF REPRESENTATIVE — STANDING UP FOR SCANDINAVIA'S FINEST BREWING TRADITIONS.

By Stephen Grasso



Karin Sloth was once the chief press officer for the Social Democrats when they were the biggest political party in Denmark, but in 2010 she stepped away from the world of politics to become an award-winning mead producer along with her partner Thomas Bredholt.

It began as a hobby. They'd bought some farmland in the village of Tågerup and the original idea had been to make hard cider. The pair planted an apple orchard containing 14 different English cider varieties and one old Danish variety with historical roots in Tågerup. They then spent 10 days in the English cider district of Herefordshire in Great Britain, learning everything they could about the process. However, one day Karin had the idea of trying to create a contemporary interpretation of the traditional Nordic mead that is so central to Danish myths.

"I didn't like traditional meads," said Karin, in an interview with *The Telegraph*. "But I had the idea of using apple juice to get the balance right. And I thought I should keep it simple. The idea was to do something that could have been made 1,000 years ago."

And so began a process of trial and error as the couple experimented with different consistencies and fermentation methods to create the unique taste that Karin had in mind. By 2011 they had won their first award for brewing the best Danish mead, and then in 2015 they received a gold medal at the prestigious Nordic Food Contest.

They called their brewery "Snoremark," after the name of the farm itself — "Snore" derives from the 12th-century Icelandic poet Snorri Sturluson, famous for his retelling of Norse mythology, and "mark" means field or land. Several varieties of Snoremark Æblemjød are available, incorporating flavors and additions such as rosehip, hops and meadowsweet. Their brewing philosophy is to only use fruits and herbs found in Danish nature, using their own organic apples as much as possible. They strive to use the gentlest brewing methods possible in order to preserve the flavor of the honey, fruit and herbs.

Their low-tech methods mean that the weather pattern greatly influences the results of the brew: a cold, wet summer followed by an icy winter will create a very different mead from a dry, hot summer with a warm winter. For this reason, the vintage of their mead is always clearly labeled — like a fine wine.

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