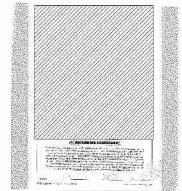
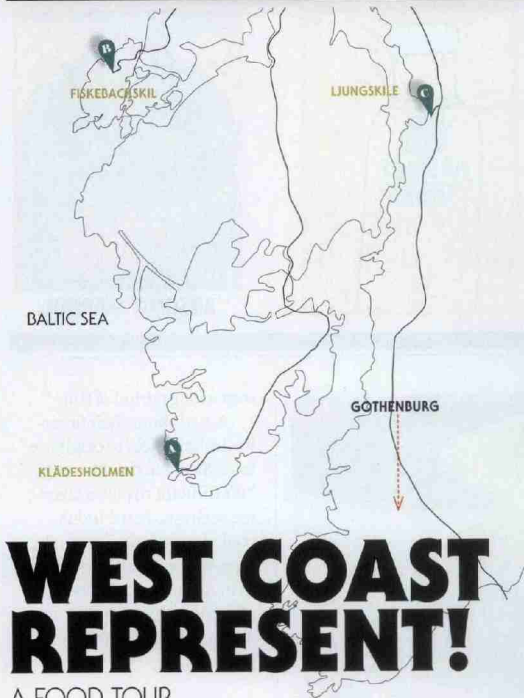

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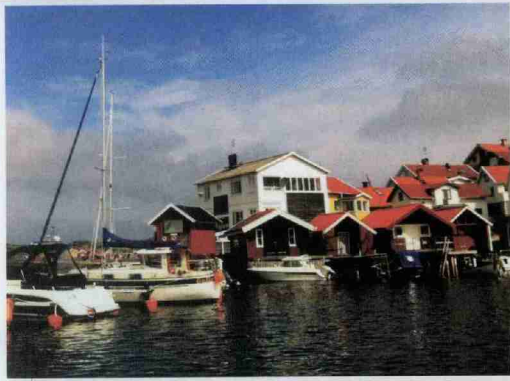
**REASONS
WE LOVE
SWEDEN**





WEST COAST REPRESENT!

A FOOD TOUR
 BY JUSTIN OCEAN



You quickly realize there's more to Sweden's cuisine than herring when you're dining on its

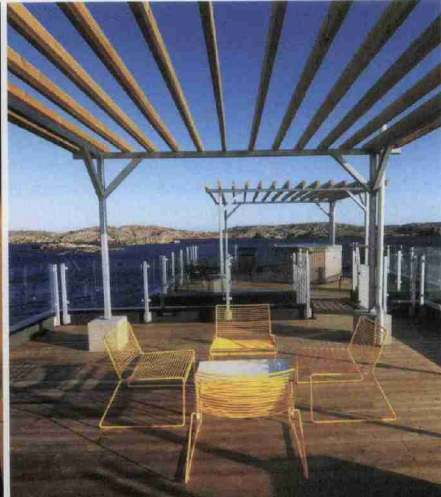
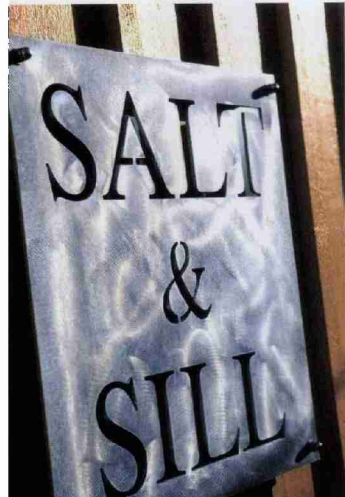
magical west coast, a flooded moonscape of weather-beaten red fishing shacks perched on fog-shrouded islands. We sampled some of the best dishes—OK, we had some herring, too.

POINT A
14. KLÄDESHOLMEN
 With 40% of the country's haul coming from tiny Klädesholmen on the windswept tip of Tjörn Island, roughly an hour's drive north

of Gothenburg, herring is the menu at **Salt & Sill** (471 51 Klädesholmen; SaltOSill.se). *Sill* means herring, and here, they have it in all varieties: sweet and sour, blackcurrant, fennel and schnapps, black pepper, mustard, and herring tartar, to name a few. The Midsummer smorgasbord includes swordfish, three types of lox, cured meats, and lentil salad with boiled new potatoes. It's rounded out with seasonal offerings and a warm berry crumble doused in vanilla sauce.

Salt & Sill was so popular, it expanded to incorporate Sweden's first and only floating hotel next door. Located on the Skagerrak, a strait running between Norway and Sweden and Denmark's Jutland, it also has private moorings for

COURTESY SALT & SILL (SIGN, 1); JUSTIN OCEAN (HARBOR, 4); HENRY WATSON (2, 3, 7); COURTESY VILLA SJÖTORNY (5, 6)





of fishing and freight shipping swells from 1,500 year-round residents to over 7,500, not counting the almost 68,000 tourists. Every turn of a corner unveils a storybook-perfect photo op. The tumble of gingerbread-fringed houses (2)—in pale yellow, bluebell, and barn red (converted boat houses)—stacked on sharp hills to the sea, feels like Maine by way of Nantucket. Tony Stockholmers and local epicures flock to the bustling **Brygghuset** (*Fiskebäckskilsvägen 28; BrygghusetKrog.se*), a harborside restaurant plating up Michelin-worthy modern seafood dishes that belie its kitsch nautical theme. If the changing-daily menu features fresh-caught prawns (3), order them. Steamed in their shells, their briny sweetness is near perfect with lemon and transcendent with a dab of horseradish syrup or bit of creamed Västerbotten cheese. Mussel soup with a creamy saffron stock and a pan-fried redfish with scallops, elderberry jelly, and a potato-parsnip stack are also winners. Whiskey lovers will be well served by the 900 different varieties on display in the back bar. During season, lobster “safaris” can also be organized to plumb the bounties of the area’s crystal-clear depths, followed by a feed that defines freshness.

BETWEEN BITES, ONE HAD TO WONDER IF IT'S POSSIBLE TO GET A BAD MEAL IN SWEDEN.

upscale B&B, there are 14 creaky rooms—all wood, chandeliers, and floral-print personality (5)—individually decorated with assorted antiques, although you needn’t sleep over to take advantage of the award-winning kitchen. Grab lunch or tea on the veranda (6) and soak in glittering views of the Orust Island oyster fields and fjords in the distance while lovebirds leisurely push each other on a swing in a nearby ancient oak. Somewhere between bites of crisp-skinned cod on a drizzle of red wine reduction and a sachet of charred candy-like carrots, turnips, and asparagus—“organic, seasonal, and locally sourced,” buzzwords that are practically redundant in these parts—one had to wonder if it’s possible to get a bad meal in Sweden. We never did figure it out: That particular reverie disappeared as fast as our dessert of cold rhubarb soup with wild strawberries (7). ■

yachts. Its six, two-story black wood-paneled cubes contain 23 rooms and offer ample sundecks (1), a suite with a private rooftop hot-tub, and subtle waves to rock you to sleep. Bathers can also book the SS Silla, a saunacum-catamaran that tours as you schvitz.

POINT D
15. FISKEBÄCKSKIL
 For land-based, but similarly styled Scandinavian décor, head a bit further north to the resort **Gullmarsstrand** (4) (*451 78 Fiskebäckskil; Gullmarsstrand.se*) in über-charming Fiskebäckskil. Pack your binoculars and book a cliffside room; you might spy seals sunning on one of the 18,000 islands in the bay. In the summer, this former hub

POINT C
16. LJUNGSKILE
 Leave the salt and seaweed air for the creature comforts of a bygone era at **Villa Sjötorp** (*Pl 22009, Ljungskile; VillaSjotorp.se*), a copper-roofed, elaborately detailed 110-year-old mansion repurchased and restored by the great-granddaughter of the original owner. A homey,

