

During the Christmas season, we often think back on past years. We think of some of the people we used to be with at Christmas, or we think of some gifts that we received in years past or we try a Christmas baked good and that instantly takes us back to a place in time. Lefse



The pile of fresh made lefse.

comes to mind. Now I've never been a big fan of lefse. As many of you know, my mom was a lefse maker who would start making lefse sometime in November. The best thing I remember about lefse is that we would have lots of mashed potatoes for meals. I would only get one helping of mashed potatoes as mom would want lots of leftovers that would eventually be rolled out into this dry, floury, and weird textured poor man's tortilla. My mom was lucky I didn't care for lefse or she wouldn't have had the number she needed for gifts and Christmas parties.

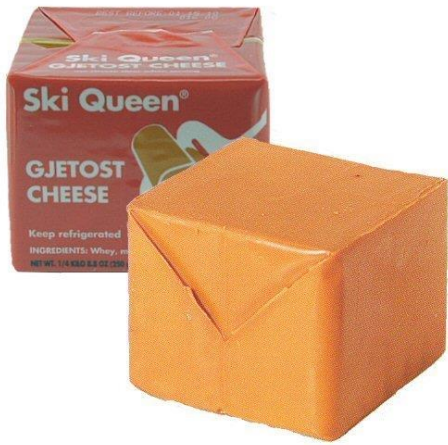
I was never a big fan of lutefisk either, although I have been to a couple of lutefisk suppers in the past few years and I can say it's OK. Now being OK is a far cry from get me out of here, which for many years was my battle cry. I remember watching my dad make a Norwegian burrito where he would lay out the lefse, load it with lutefisk and some melted butter and then roll it up and consume it. That is I think where the 'Get me out of here' mantra first came to be.

My first visit to Norway to meet the future in-laws was Christmas 1977. To answer a question I got often is yes, they have lefse. They have several different variations of lefse, some of which were OK. The answer to the other question that was asked quite often is: no they do not have lutefisk. As was explained to me by my father in law, Knut, Norway now has refrigerators and they can store fish in them so they don't have to take perfectly good codfish and soak them in a barrel of lye for three weeks so they would keep until you had a hankering for a Norwegian burrito.

Also during my first visit to Norway, I was inundated with marzipan pigs as gifts. Now



marzipan is an almond paste with some sugar and egg whites which is then shaped into various forms. In my case, the family didn't want me homesick for the farm, so the marzipan was shaped into pigs. So that Christmas, I received 6 marzipan pigs. I love almonds but the marzipan, well let's just say it a step or two below OK. Suffice to say, a little marzipan goes a long ways.



One food that is a staple in Norwegian households is gjetost. It is pronounced yay' toast. It's a mild, sweet tasting cheese which is usually a combination of goat's milk and cow's milk. There is the kind that is all goats' milk but that is a little stronger tasting. I quickly became a fan of gjetost. In Norway, it's usually sold in blocks of 2.2 pounds, a kilo. You can find it here in Minnesota but in a smaller quantity. I suppose it can be put on lefse but it is much better on flatbread or on a slice of regular bread. Even though it's a food that is year round, I often am taken back to Christmas when I have gjetost. Kind of like sandbakkels and futtigman. I hope you are having a wonderful holiday season with family and all of your favorite foods.

Pictured below is my attempt to roll out a potato ball into a flat round piece of floppy dough and get it on the very hot griddle without ripping a hole in the lefse or burning a hole in my hand.



No potatoes were harmed in the making of this lefse but one finger did get a burn blister and it happened to be on my hand.

