

[TREATS]

à la Lisa-Maj

The Lure of the Sea

By Lisa-Maj Roos



Lisa-Maj Roos is a gallery-represented artist based in Nova Scotia, Canada. Her work can be found here (www.lisar Roosart.com) and at 14 Bells Fine Art Gallery in Halifax (www.14Bells.com).

I was born and raised on the Canadian prairies in Winnipeg, Manitoba, located at the confluence of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers near the longitudinal centre of North America, far from the sea and my Swedish roots. I am the eldest daughter of Swedish immigrants and a family of great artisans, storytellers, and seafarers – Viking traits, I discovered, that are mine by birthright.

My grandmother, Inga, was a master weaver. I recall as a child scrambling up the bench to sit beside her while she worked at her loom, watching her weave cloth from patterns she had designed. My grandfather, Gösta, forged his art out of wrought iron, his legacy living on in the beautiful candleholders and chandeliers he created with his giant hands. My aunts, Margareta, Mary, and Maj-Lis, were talented painters with many of their pieces found in private collections. My mother, Joyce, an artist in her own right, sewed all of our clothes and Swedish costumes by hand. I can still hear the *chuka, chuka* of her sewing machine...

My own journey as an artist (and my longing for the sea) began when my father, Erik, a woodcarver, had me paint his carvings for him, some with traditional rosemaling. While he carved and I painted, he would share memories of his beloved Sweden – his love for the sea and the little village where he was born, his family, culture, language, music, food and, of course, the herring. I could almost smell the briny air and hear the sound of the Nyckelharpa as the chips of wood fell to the floor around his feet.

A mix of northern and southern Sweden, my heritage is richly woven with the colours, food, song and art of my ancestors. I now live on the east coast of Canada where new life began for so many, replacing the Nyckelharpa for the Celtic fiddle, the prairies for the sea, and devoting my life to making art just steps from the Bay of Fundy. I am at home here. The sea is in my blood. My Viking spirit is at peace.

Was it the lure of the sea? I think so. And, of course, the herring.

Solomon Gundy

Ingredients:

- ½ dozen salt herring
- 2 medium red onions
- 2 cups vinegar
- 2 tablespoons pickling spice
- ½ cup sugar

Preparation (Maritime Style Pickled Herring):

Remove heads and tails from herring. Clean and remove the skin and bones. Cut in pieces about 1 inch thick. Soak in cold water for about 24 hours. Squeeze the water from the herring. Place in bottle with slices of onion, in alternate layers. In a saucepan, heat the vinegar and add pickling spice and sugar. Let cool, then pour over the herring in the bottles.



Photo credits:
Wawrzyniec Korona

Swedish Apple Pie

Ingredients:

- 2 ½ cups peeled, cored and sliced Granny Smith apples
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- ¼ tsp cardamon
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1 cup sugar
- ¾ cup butter, melted
- ½ cup chopped pecans
- 1 cup all purpose flour
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- ¼ tsp salt

Preparation:

Preheat oven to 350°F (175°C). Lightly grease a 9 inch pie pan with butter. Fill ⅓ of the pan with sliced apples. Sprinkle with cinnamon, cardamon and 1 teaspoon sugar. In a medium bowl, mix 1 cup sugar with the melted butter. Stir in pecans, flour, egg and salt. Mix well. Spread mixture over the apples. Bake in preheated oven for 60 minutes, or until golden brown. Serve with ice cream!



Lisa-Maj's oil painting. Photo credits:
Maria Longmire