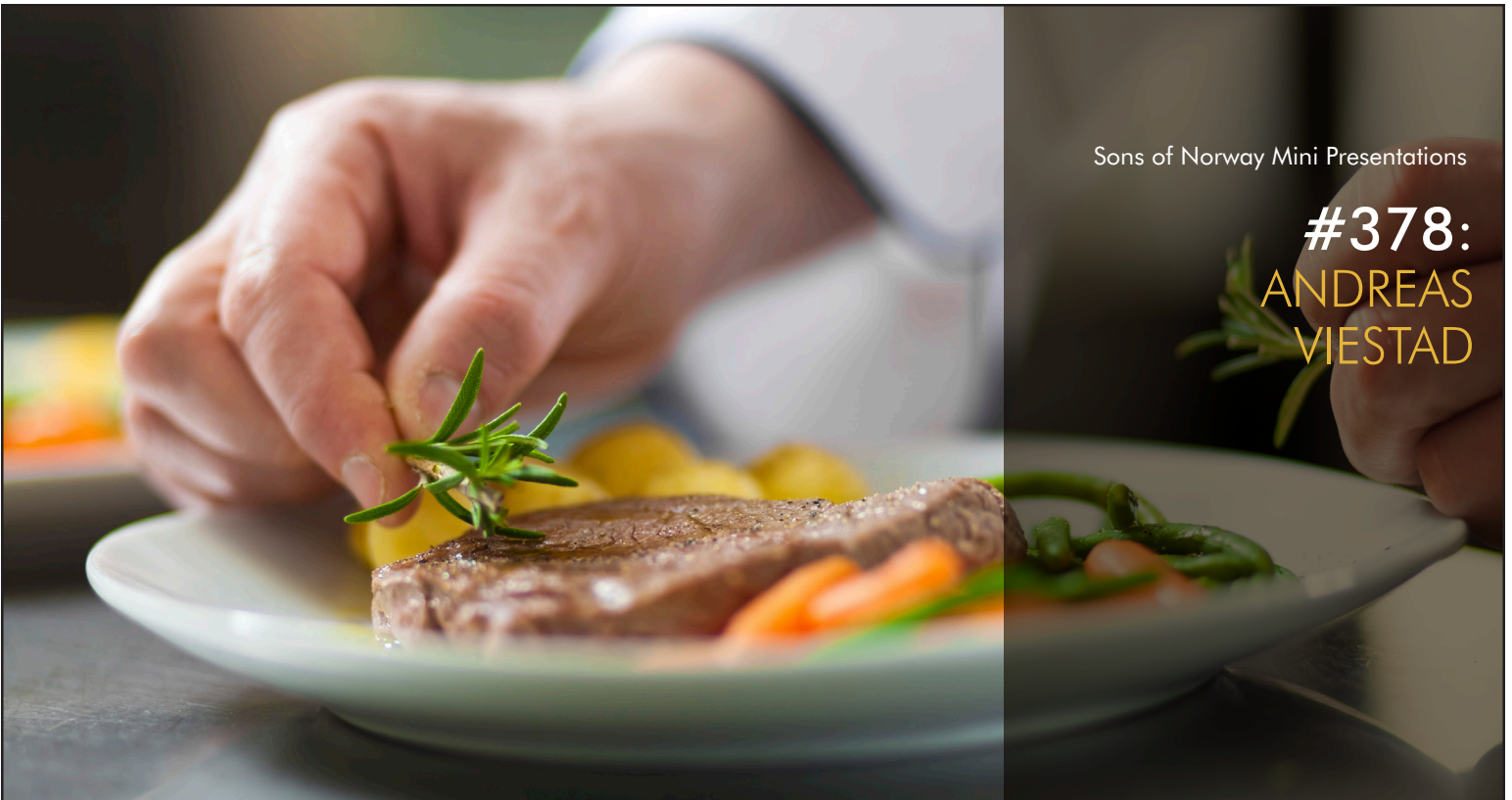


#378:
ANDREAS
VIESTAD



Andreas Viestad is the host of *New Scandinavian Cooking*, a cooking show set in the breathtaking countryside of Norway. Broadcast for ten seasons (as of 2014) in more than 130 countries, Viestad's show weaves stories of culture, history and nature with cooking, as he creates regional Norwegian dishes in his mobile kitchen. He has also co-hosted the sequel show *Perfect Day*, a similar concept which expanded to include chefs from Sweden, Finland, Denmark and Iceland, covering Nordic cuisine and culture, lifestyle and travel. Dubbed "Norway's culinary ambassador," Viestad considers himself a home cook—not a chef—and prefers simple, good food with friends and family over fancy dishes. His style of cooking presentation is not so much a how-to as it is a global picture of the traditions and culture that surround a particular recipe.

Born in Oslo, Viestad has also lived in the U.S., Zimbabwe and Zanzibar. He is known for his skillful writing and straightforward recipes. He has never worked in a restaurant or had any culinary school training, but studied media science and history at the University of Oslo. His passion for food and the science behind it is what brought him to become a food writer. Viestad has written a weekly food column for *Dagbladet* and also wrote for the *Washington Post* as "The Gastronomer" for three years.

Viestad is the author of many popular cookbooks including *Bordet Fanger* (It's On The Table, 1999), *Hvordan Koke Vann* (How to Boil Water, 2005), *Smak Av Krydder* (Taste of Spices, 2007) *Ekte Mat* (Real Food, 2011) and *På Grillen* (On the Grill, 2012). Several of the books are sold internationally and have been released in multiple editions in Norway.

In 2002 Andreas Viestad received *Gullpennen*, the Golden Pen, a *Riksmålsforbundet* (Society for Preservation of Dano-Norwegian) press award. In 2007 he was awarded Best Foreign Cookbook for the book *Taste of Spices*, and in 2009 he received the Special Jury Award for the book *Norwegian Food*, both part of the esteemed *Gourmand World Cookbook Awards*. He has also received several other Norwegian prizes, among them the *Bondevettprisen* in 2011. The *Bondevett* prize is given to people outside or in Norwegian agriculture that have portrayed agriculture in a positive and innovative way that also helps to reinforce the importance of Norwegian food, food culture, history and origin. *Kitchen of Light – The New Scandinavian Cooking*, Viestad's first English language cookbook in 2003, got rave reviews. He then wrote *Where Flavor Was Born*, about the spice trade through the Indian Ocean, garnering him a 2008 *Gourmand World Cookbook Award*.



In January 2011, Viestad co-founded an Oslo restaurant, St. Lars, dedicated to the oldest form of cooking. The entire restaurant is centered around a grill, and the menu focuses on elevating less-used cuts of meat to show that they can also be delicious. The restaurant is an informal space where no reservations are necessary. The name of the establishment is very apt: Lars, or Laurentius, was a deacon in Rome who was martyred in the mid-third century for distributing all of the church's wealth to the poor and suffering. He was placed on a griddle over a fire, and according to legend, he endured the pain for a long spell, then buoyantly declared: "I'm well done. Turn me over and have a bite!" St. Lars was appropriately named the patron saint of rotisserie chefs and comedians.

For a few weeks each winter, Viestad's family lives in South Africa, and in the summer, he likes to "play farmer" on a small run-down farm that once belonged to his eccentric great uncle. Situated on a peninsula in Vest-Agder county, Viestad's farm is a retreat where he fishes, cultivates potatoes and other vegetables, keeps goats and hens and attempts to tame nature enough to keep the place running. He says that every Norwegian has a place like this that is special to them—a cabin, or a farm where their family has roots, where they go to feel close to nature and relax.

Viestad was instrumental in getting the *Geitmyra Matkultursenter for Barn* (Goat Marsh Culinary Center for Children) off the ground in 2011. Situated in the Sagene district in the center of Oslo, the farm serves the goals of educating children on where food comes from, being able to make it themselves, and valuing good food and nutrition.