The Weekly Menu That Changes Everything

On most restaurant menus, the fish changes with the trends. At Marstang Mad & Vin on the Danish island of Ærø, it changes with the tides.

Every week, Ida and Camilla — the two young women who founded and run Marstang — rebuild their three-course menu from scratch, based entirely on what their local producers, farmers, and fishermen are able to deliver that week. There is no fixed dish. There is no signature species that stays on the menu because the customers expect it. There is only what the island offers, in the quantities it can sustainably provide, prepared with the skill and care that has made Marstang one of the most talked-about small restaurants in southern Denmark.

It sounds simple. It is, in practice, one of the most demanding ways to run a kitchen. It requires constant communication with suppliers, a willingness to adapt recipes at short notice, and a deep enough culinary knowledge to make something extraordinary from whatever arrives at the door. On some weeks, that means a beautiful piece of cod from the waters around Ærø. On others, it means smaller, less familiar species — the kind that industrial buyers overlook, that supermarkets never stock, and that most restaurant menus would never consider. Forgotten fish.

'We have always cooked with what the sea gives us,' Camilla explains. 'Some weeks that means a fish that has no name most people would recognise. But once you understand how to work with it — how it behaves in heat, what flavours it carries, what it needs alongside it — it stops being unfamiliar. It just becomes part of the week.'



This philosophy, which Marstang has practised since opening its restaurant in 2022, is precisely what the Forgotten Fish project is trying to scale across Europe. Not every restaurant can or should operate exactly as Marstang does. But the underlying logic — that a kitchen willing to follow its local supply chain rather than dictate to it will encounter forgotten species, and that those species are absolutely worth cooking — is transferable. It is, in fact, one of the most important lessons that professional catering education in Europe still needs to absorb.

At Marstang, the weekly menu is not a limitation. It is a creative discipline, an act of ecological responsibility, and the reason why guests return again and again — never quite sure what they will eat, always sure it will be worth the ferry journey. That combination of uncertainty and trust is, perhaps, the best possible definition of what it means to eat seasonally, locally, and honestly.

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