

## WE TRIED IT

# Butter, Beets, and Bold NEW FLAVORS

WAXIN'S WELCOMES A PROMISING YOUNG SWEDISH CHEF AS IT EYES EXPANSION

BY MARY MURRAY

Despite the slight chill in the air, the dining patio at Waxin's in Palm Beach Gardens feels worlds away from Sweden. But that is where I find Melvin Glimstal, the Swedish-born chef who has recently taken up residence at this Swedish restaurant following a run as sous chef at Michelin-starred Operakällaren in Stockholm. He dons a baseball cap emblazoned with the word "smör," which I will come to learn means "butter," an ingredient so dear to his heart, he got a tattoo of it.

The brainchild of restaurateur and native Swede Patrik Waxin, Waxin's debuted in North County in 2020. At the time, the menu was dotted with approachable Swedish fare and Swedish-inspired takes on



**CHEF MELVIN GLIMSTAL'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE WAXIN'S MENU INCLUDE A BEETROOT TARTARE (ABOVE) AND POACHED SALMON WITH SANDEFJORD SAUCE (BELOW).**

American and global delicacies. Upon his arrival in October, Glimstal was tasked with revamping the restaurant's offerings, working alongside the established team to develop new dishes and refine existing ones. Certain favorites remain—such as the terrific Swedish meatballs with the requisite pickled veg and lingonberries—but Glimstal has wasted no time in flexing his creative muscles.

He comes by his culinary creativity honestly. His father was a chef, and he fondly recalls cooking alongside him starting at a young age. Although his parents discouraged him from pursuing it professionally, Glimstal couldn't resist the call of the kitchen. He made up his mind after an internship at age 14.

"It took me an hour, tops," he says of the decision. "I walked into the kitchen, and I immediately got 10 new older brothers. It's heat, it's cursing. Everything is fast."

Glimstal committed to the restaurant life full steam ahead. He's also cooked competitively, serving as captain of the Swedish Junior Culinary Team and leading them to

victory in the 2024 IKA Culinary Olympics. But despite any implied bravado, Glimstal is more demure in his cooking—preferring instead to let his ingredients do the talking. "I don't want 'me' to overrun the dish," he says.

One dish that exemplifies this ethos is the beetroot tartare. Glimstal first roasts the beets and then feeds them through a meat grinder to achieve a tartare's ultra-fine dice and texture. It's finished with a raspberry dressing, goat cheese, chives, and walnuts. Other new highlights include the poached salmon with a classic Norwegian butter sauce known as Sandefjord, and Cod the Swedish Way presented with an outstanding pea puree laced with just a hint of Tabasco. Dill—another of Glimstal's favorite ingredients—plays a role in the cod and makes a welcome appearance in many other dishes.

Part of the impetus to host a new chef, Patrik Waxin explains, was the restaurant's imminent expansion plans. Waxin recently opened his second location in Naples' Mercato complex and will soon open his third along Clematis Street in downtown West Palm Beach. While both will feature the same menu offered in the Gardens, the West Palm outpost will also house Stockholm Syndrome, a members' club-style lounge serving smaller bites that will change roughly four to six times a year. ([waxins.com](http://waxins.com))



COURTESY OF WAXIN'S

