

## Hotdog; a Danish classic

### The history of the Hotdog

The local hotdog vender is a well-known man and he usually knows the order of his regular customers – a hotdog with all toppings! In Denmark the hotdog has a history, which is closely tied to the street food stands. The hotdog was the first fast food in Denmark and the first street food to find. The first stand opened in 1918 and hotdogs were called “bread with sausage”. The stands has developed through time and were most popular in the 1950’s and 1960’s were 400 stands were filled in the Danish streets. Today the number has decreased to 100.

### The rescue mission of the hotdog street food

The restaurant reviewer and gastronomy editor from Børsen, the Danish financial newspaper, Ole Troelsø was the one who got an idea for rescuing the Danish Hotdog. Being one of the privileged people who can eat at the top restaurants in the country; does not reduce the craving for a hotdog in his everyday life or when going home from work. “The problem was that many hotdog street food stands were disgusting and the quality was so low, that I’d rather starve than eat at these stands”, the food critic, with a deep love for the Danish sausage culture, explains. He started The Danish Hotdog Championship to inspire and create an interest for the specialty a street foot hotdog is. The championship was meant as a way to develop the street food stands that are losing customers to sushi bars and other fast food restaurants. The number of hotdog street food stands used to be 400 against the current 100. “I believe it is a shame that stand after stand closed without anyone trying to develop the product. That was the reason for inviting gourmet chefs to stand side by side with the hotdog vendors, inspire the vendors while the gourmet chefs sprinkle light on the hotdog”, Troelsø explains. The competition was launched in 2008 and many of the top chefs in the country have supported the competition ever since.

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*By Food Organisation of Denmark. For more information, more photos or photos in high-res please contact Sigrid Gjessing at [sigrid@thefoodproject.dk](mailto:sigrid@thefoodproject.dk) or +45 28 58 43 19.*



*Hotdog - the Danish classic. Photo: Claes Bech Poulsen*



*A modern interpretation of the hotdog  
Photo: Claes Bech Poulsen*

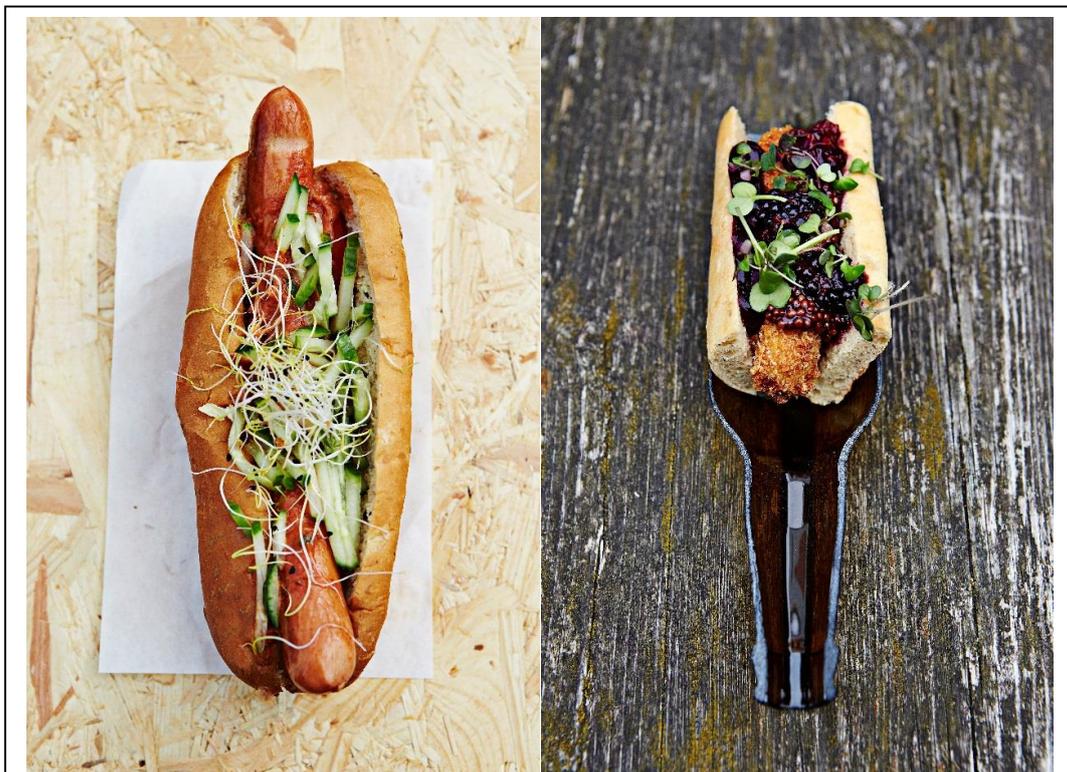
The idea with The Danish Hotdog Championship was for chefs and traditional hotdog vendors to meet in a battle of bread and sausages, put focus on the hotdog tradition and bring the quality back to the Danish hotdog.

The tradition is upheld when the hotdog vendors are challenged in the traditional category, *servicing The Traditional Hotdog of the Year* and top chefs compete in the second category *The Modern Hotdog of the Year*, serving their suggestion of a gourmet hotdog. Other than finding the best hotdogs, *the hotdog kings of the year* will be found in both the modern category and the traditional category. The hotdog of the year title is based on the best tasting hotdogs whereas the hotdog king is the one with the highest turn over. The earnings from The Danish Hotdog Championship is every year donated to charity.

### **Top chefs in a doggedly hotdog fight**

The returning participant, previous Michelin chef, former reigning champion and currently ruling Henne Kirkeby Kro wishes to reach more people and show how a chef's diet does not consist of caviar and foie gras; "I'm interested in everything concerning the better taste. On a gourmet restaurant, you only reach a limited number of people. The street food stand is a medium to make interesting food to other people. Also it is just cool to play with hotdogs and get out of the gourmet kitchen" Paul Cunningham explains.

The courtesy is placed on the shelf, the kitchen is smoking, the street food stands are lined up and some of Denmark's top chefs and best hotdog vendors are ready to fight for the three prestigious titles. Hotdogs are everywhere when The Danish Hotdog Championship takes place every year in September at Food Festival. It is arranged in collaboration with Dagbladet Børsen and has been held since 2008.



*Photos by Claes Bech Poulsen*