



Just the Right Amount —The Swedish Art of *Lagom*



London to Skåne in 2004, Brantmark not only embraced the culture of her new home but also immersed herself in the art of *lagom*, which permeates every area of Swedish life: “*lagom* helps remind us to keep a healthy work-life balance, to slow down and eat a proper lunch, to focus on single-tasking, and, in the home, to try and create a calm oasis that is also warm and inviting.”

A home that epitomizes *lagom*, says Brantmark, will “not be too minimalist or too cluttered, but will be an uncomplicated mix of interesting forms and practical function—objects both old and new—and will include seasonal elements brought in from the outdoors, such as plants, flowers, and pebbles from the sea.” With *lagom* as a guiding principle both in her work and in her home, Brantmark says she has learned “how to go back to basics and enjoy the simple things in life, in a wonderful, uncomplicated way.”

“*Lagom* is a concept deeply ingrained in Swedish society and is all about finding a balance that helps you to best enjoy life.”

— Niki Brantmark

Some of the most important everyday concepts in Nordic life are encapsulated in words and phrases that are difficult to translate into other languages (e.g., the Danish concept of *hygge*). One of these words is *lagom*. Translated literally from the Swedish, *lagom* means “enough,” but can also mean “in moderation.” And yet, these simple translations are not nearly the whole story of *lagom*.

Niki Brantmark, author of the blog *My Scandinavian Home* and the book *Lagom: The Swedish Art of Living a Balanced, Happy Life*, puts it this way: “*Lagom* loosely translates to mean, ‘not too much, not too little, but just the right amount.’ It is a concept deeply ingrained in Swedish society and is all about finding a balance that helps you to best enjoy life.” After emigrating from