



Preface

It isn't easy to say what it is about hunting that makes it so special. Perhaps it's a cliché, but there's something primal and authentic about hunting—seeking out, killing, and cooking a wild animal. But the fact that it feels primal doesn't necessarily mean it's barbaric or uncivilized. Quite the opposite. Hunting requires organization, discipline, self-awareness, and a lot of knowledge—together with an ethical discussion that's constantly ongoing in your head. Hunting is euphoria and a racing heart, stillness and patience, silence and explosions.

It's easy for two hunters to understand each other. You don't need to explain to another hunter why you'll voluntarily get up at stupid o'clock to sit for hours, still as a statue and silent as the grave, in an isolated hunting tower with the rain whipping into your face and icicles for toes. Why, dressed in a white coverall, you can ski for hours over broken snow crust and burst into a huge smile when a capercaillie disappears over the treetops. Why you don't leap back when your hunting buddy slices a hanging buck from belly to neck and lets gravity do the work of removing the innards and organs. Maybe it's a question of how close to nature you want to be. For some, hunting is too extreme. For us, it adds a value that we struggle to find anywhere else.

It's probably the contrast the hunter seeks. Searching for movement at the forest's edge against searching for a free parking space in the chaos outside the mall. Replacing the grinding noises of the subway with the crackling of birch bark on the fire.

If you're already a hunter, my aim with this book is to spark an interest in cooking really good wild game. Maybe nobody ever said, "The better the chef, the better the hunter," but we think it's true all the same. If you do everything to make sure the final dish is as good as possible, you'll also make sure you shoot really well. Learning more about cooking game means less wild-caught meat ends up becoming ground meat for lack of inspiration.

If you feel you can get something enjoyable from every aspect of the hunt—the preparations, the practice, the hunting itself, and preparing and cooking the animal—then hunting is truly something for you, and you have a lifetime of community, fantastic experiences out in nature, and great meals ahead of you.

—Mikael & Hubbe