New Nordic Narratives

Sustainability and Storytelling in the Copenhagen Culinary Scene

Robert Lucian Brinkley

Master's Thesis
Erasmus Mundus Master in Urban Studies | 4CITIES

Supervisor: Kristin Veel, PhD
Second Reader: Henrik Reeh, PhD
1. September 2024

4CITIES
MASTER IN URBAN STUDIES

Abstract

The emergence of the New Nordic Cuisine movement has transformed Copenhagen and the Nordic region into a global culinary destination. However, as global food systems become increasingly precarious and social inequalities widen, concerns around sustainability in the gastronomy sector become more pressing. My study explores how visual and sensory elements in both physical and digital spaces in Copenhagen construct and communicate sustainability narratives of the New Nordic aesthetic. To address this, I investigate how storytelling through media, artefacts, spaces, and discourses contribute to the sustainability image projected by New Nordic restaurants. My research is interdisciplinary, drawing on a theoretical framework that integrates visual culture, sensory ethnography, and the concept of the New Nordic as an 'aesthetic regime.' Using a mixed-methods approach, I conduct a visual content analysis and employ non-participant observation to explore the sensory landscapes and visual cultures of these spaces. The findings reveal that New Nordic restaurants are highly curated environments, where sustainability becomes choreographed, performed, and framed to be viewed a specific way. These spaces are designed to project an image of sustainability that aligns with Copenhagen's broader image of sustainability. This research highlights the role of gastronomy and food movements in shaping perceptions of sustainability. The study offers insights into how the New Nordic movement constructs and communicates its sustainability narratives, while also raising important questions about the authenticity and inclusivity of these spaces.

Keywords: New Nordic Cuisine, gastronomy, visual culture, sustainability, Copenhagen, sensory ethnography, media, aesthetic regime, storytelling

Abstrakt

Das Aufkommen der New Nordic Cuisine-Bewegung hat Kopenhagen und die nordische Region zu einem globalen kulinarischen Reiseziel gemacht. Da die globalen Ernährungssysteme jedoch immer prekärer werden und die sozialen Ungleichheiten zunehmen, werden Bedenken hinsichtlich der Nachhaltigkeit in der Gastronomie immer dringlicher. Meine Studie untersucht, wie visuelle und sensorische Elemente in physischen und digitalen Räumen in Kopenhagen Nachhaltigkeitsnarrative der neuen nordischen Ästhetik konstruieren und kommunizieren. Um dieses Problem anzugehen, untersuche ich, wie das Geschichtenerzählen durch Medien, Artefakte, Räume und Diskurse zum Nachhaltigkeitsimage beiträgt, das von New Nordic-Restaurants projiziert wird. Meine Forschung ist interdisziplinär und stützt sich auf einen theoretischen Rahmen, der visuelle Kultur, sensorische Ethnographie und das Konzept des Neuen Nordischen als „ästhetisches Regime" integriert. Unter Verwendung eines gemischten Methodenansatzes führe ich eine visuelle Inhaltsanalyse durch und beschäftige Nichtteilnehmer Beobachtung, um die Sinneslandschaften und visuellen Kulturen dieser Räume zu erkunden. Die Ergebnisse zeigen, dass New Nordic-Restaurants stark kuratierte Umgebungen sind, in denen Nachhaltigkeit choreografiert, aufgeführt und in einem bestimmten Rahmen dargestellt wird, um sie auf eine bestimmte Art und Weise zu betrachten. Diese Räume sollen ein Bild von Nachhaltigkeit vermitteln, das mit Kopenhagens umfassenderem Bild von Nachhaltigkeit übereinstimmt. Diese Forschung beleuchtet die Rolle der Gastronomie und Lebensmittelbewegungen bei der Gestaltung der Wahrnehmung von Nachhaltigkeit. Die Studie bietet Einblicke in die Art und Weise, wie die New Nordic-Bewegung ihre Nachhaltigkeitsnarrative konstruiert und kommuniziert, und wirft gleichzeitig wichtige Fragen zur Authentizität und Inklusivität dieser Räume auf.

Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

I. Introduction

Over the last twenty years, the city of Copenhagen has experienced a gastronomic renaissance. This can be attributed to the success of both the New Nordic Cuisine movement and the Copenhagen restaurant Noma. The New Nordic Cuisine movement is a culinary philosophy introduced in the early 2000s by the Danish food entrepreneur Claus Meyer (Leer 2016). It calls for the use of seasonal, and local ingredients emphasising purity, freshness, simplicity, and ethical practices in the kitchen as key pillars (New Nordic Cuisine Manifesto 2004). The success of the restaurant Noma drew international media attention and visitors to the city (Leer 2016). Noma, which was opened by Rene Redzepi and Claus Meyer in 2003, strongly embraced the New Nordic Cuisine philosophy (Larsen 2010). It quickly became the flagship of the movement (Ooi and Pedersen 2017) and would be labeled as the best restaurant in the world four times between 2010 and 2014 (Leer 2016). This recognition cemented Noma's status as an innovative gastronomic institution and inspired others to embrace the New Nordic Cuisine philosophy (Ooi and Pedersen 2017). Further, the success of New Nordic Cuisine and Noma elevated Copenhagen's status in the global food scene and played a role in redefining the city's identity and appeal through a narrative of sustainability and ethical consumption that continues to shape the city.

The story of New Nordic Cuisine and the success of the restaurant Noma are so closely intertwined that it is challenging to talk about just one or the other. Noma was opened with the purpose of reflecting the New Nordic Cuisine philosophy (Gora 2017). Both the restaurant and the culinary movement are important in academic approaches as Noma represents the clearest and most intentional embodiment of New Nordic Cuisine. The restaurant becomes a lens to study the New Nordic approach and vice versa. However, it is important to note that Noma is not the only embodiment of the New Nordic. Ideas of the New Nordic are spread out all around the world in tangible form as food, restaurant spaces, and cultural artefacts and in intangible forms as rhetorics, narratives, media, philosophies, and practices. This negotiation and search to define what New Nordic is, is a central theme in much of the academic literature. In my research I use academic discourses around Noma to help explain what the New Nordic is. In addition, much of the academic literature on the New Nordic also includes references to the restaurant or focuses strongly on it.

The New Nordic Cuisine movement was formalised in November 2004 when twelve chefs and food entrepreneurs signed a manifesto at a symposium held at the Noma restaurant (Leer 2016). This gathering brought together chefs, politicians, farmers, entrepreneurs, and food industry representatives from across the region to discuss and share their ideas with the core council of representatives. The manifesto quickly gained the support of the Nordic Council of Ministers, signifying a unified recognition of the potential for marketing and endorsing Nordic products, landscapes, and the broader concept of Nordic identity (Danbolt 2016). The alignment of the New

Nordic Cuisine manifesto with regional strategies for promoting Nordic identity highlighted the movement as part of a broader effort to rebrand and elevate the cultural identity of the Nordic region (Danbolt 2016). In their paper on the creation of New Nordic as a label, Byrkjeflot, Pedersen, and Svejenova (2013) identify politicians and civil servants as the "promoters" who were crucial to its success. Additionally, scientists who advocated for New Nordic as a healthy dietary alternative were identified as "legitimators" (Byrkjeflot et al. 2013:37). This broad support from various groups underscores how the New Nordic label was shaped and used to serve diverse interests and goals, making it a powerful regional narrative. This context sheds a different light on Noma, revealing how the restaurant not only embodied the New Nordic label in a visually appealing and interesting way but also functioned as a powerful political and culinary tool. The New Nordic Cuisine manifesto represents the guiding philosophies of the movement, which Noma used as a framework for its culinary approach. With a strong emphasis on sustainability, the use of clean, local ingredients, and inspiration drawn from seasonal produce, the manifesto's principles are central to the New Nordic culinary philosophy, which emphasises purity, simplicity, and sustainability while drawing on local and seasonal ingredients to create a cuisine that is innovative and draws on tradition.

The Manifesto for the New Nordic Kitchen:

1. To express the purity, freshness, simplicity and ethics that we would like to associate with our region
2. To reflect the different seasons in the meals
3. To base cooking on raw materials which characteristics are especially excellent in our climate, landscape and waters
4. To combine the demand for good taste in food with modern knowledge about health and well-being
5. To promote the Nordic products and the variety of Nordic producers and to disseminate the knowledge of the cultures behind them
6. To promote the welfare of the animals and a sound production in the sea and in the cultivated as well as wild landscapes
7. To develop new possible applications of traditional Nordic food products
8. To combine the best Nordic cooking procedures and culinary traditions with impulses from outside
9. To combine local self-sufficiency with regional exchange of high-quality goods
10. To cooperate with representatives of consumers, other cooking craftsmen, agriculture, fishing industry, food industry, retail and wholesale industry, researchers, teachers, politicians and authorities on this joint project to the benefit and advantage of all in the Nordic countries

(Source: New Nordic Cuisine Manifesto 2004)

Noma's success would help revive tourism and situate Noma as a "destination restaurant" with many international visitors and gastro-tourists traveling to the city for the purpose of dining there (Ooi and Pedersen 2017). News articles, television shows, documentaries, and a series of cookbooks by Redzepi, capturing the story of Noma and New Nordic cooking philosophy, glamourise the

Nordic region and construct fantasies about dining in Copenhagen. This media attention greatly helped build the city's association with high quality cooking and culinary innovation as Noma became a pilgrimage destination for chefs and food enthusiasts seeking to get a taste of this new cuisine and new approach to cooking. Noma's success internationally drew many young, enthusiastic chefs to the city for the chance to work with René Redzepi and work under the umbrella of the New Nordic philosophy. The culture of innovation and food knowledge that developed at Noma would have a spillover effect and other gastro-entrepreneurs and chefs opened restaurants taking inspiration from Noma and the New Nordic approach. A thriving gastronomy culture would also urge more dialogue and discussions about the new culinary philosophy, with some embracing it and others distancing themselves from the approach (Kelting 2023).

This shift has not only situated the city as a leader in global gastronomy but has also contributed to its reputation as a cultural and tourist destination. Copenhagen regularly receives recognition as one of the best cities in the world across different categories, receiving high rankings for quality of life, work-life-balance, and livability (Castelli et al. 2023). It is clear that with Noma as as "destination restaurant" and the new media attention surrounding New Nordic narratives, tourism in Copenhagen thrived (Huang and Hall 2023:2). Tourism doubled in Copenhagen between 2004 and 2016—the peak time period of Noma and the New Nordic's media attention—from 5.5 million visitors to 8.5 million visitors (Ooi and Pedersen 2017). In addition to tourism, the fine dining scene in Copenhagen thrived: Leer writes that the "number of Michelin-starred establishments in Denmark went from eight in 2003 to thirty-four in 2019, most of them close to the capital" (2021:81). According to the Michelin guide, there are twenty-eight Michelin stars in the city in 2024 (Michelin Guide 2024). This reflects the success of New Nordic approaches within the fine dining realm. But the influence of Noma and the New Nordic philosophy has also elevated the quality of gastronomy, beyond fine dining, at mid-level restaurants, coffee shops, and bakeries (Leer 2021).

The attention that New Nordic Cuisine brought to the Scandinavian countries and to capital cities like Copenhagen has been analysed from a number of perspectives. Gastronationalism (DeSoucey 2010) becomes a lens through which to view and explain the gastronomic renaissance of Copenhagen and the Nordic region. The concept is tightly linked to food politics of the Nordic region and can be understood as "a means of linking national identity with food culture, making food a powerful marker of national heritage. It highlights the ways food traditions are institutionalised as cultural symbols of nationhood, particularly in the context of resisting globalisation's homogenising forces" (DeSoucey 2010:199). In a global context, it could be viewed that the New Nordic Cuisine movement reflects a return to the Nordic region and a new appreciation of Nordic ingredients and landscapes. Gastronationalism becomes an important tool to explain the construction of rebranding and negotiation of identity heritage in Copenhagen and elsewhere. However, the culinary nationalism of the New Nordic approach has drawn some heavy criticism from academics who point to nationalistic undertones (Kelting 2022). Regardless, this

cultural shift also helped to transform Denmark's culinary reputation, replacing the image of a heavy, meat-and-potatoes diet with one associated with high-quality ingredients and refined techniques (Byrkjeflot et al. 2013). The collaboration between chefs, the Danish government, and local producers has been essential in establishing this new culinary identity, contributing to Denmark's image as a leading food nation (Germundsson 2016). As Germundsson discusses, despite a historical lack of distinctive culinary heritage, the movement has successfully repositioned Danish food on the global stage by aligning its gastronomic values with contemporary concerns such as sustainability and localism (2016).

The story of New Nordic Cuisine and its influence on Copenhagen and the Nordic region is a starting point for my research. Restaurants, which were once seen primarily as functional spaces for nourishment, have evolved into artistic spaces that become medium for storytelling and multisensory experiences. The rise of modern culinary movements like the New Nordic Cuisine and movements like molecular gastronomy show how food, and restaurant spaces, can transform into a form of media with complex cultural storytelling narratives involved. In particular, I situate New Nordic Cuisine as an aesthetic regime that emphasises sustainability, localism, a return to nature, and social responsibility. By situating the New Nordic as an aesthetic regime, it becomes a sensual space where visual and sensory consumption is just as important, if not more important, as eating. Food in a New Nordic context becomes a way to further communicate identities, values, and philosophies. The restaurant becomes a stage for these narratives to be performed on. Ultimately, through my research, I seek to answer how the visual and sensory elements in both physical and digital spaces in Copenhagen construct and communicate narratives of sustainability within the New Nordic aesthetic regime. To study storytelling through media and artefacts and the sustainability narratives embedded in these spaces, I employed a mixed methods approach to explore the sensory landscapes and visual cultures of both realms. My research is interdisciplinary and situated in a theoretical framework that combines visual culture, sensory ethnography, and the concept of the New Nordic as an aesthetic regime.

II. Literature Review

In this section I provide an overview of the existing academic literature surrounding New Nordic Cuisine, food and restaurant spaces as media, and sustainability in gastronomy. By examining the academic literature across these areas I can offer a better overview of the interdisciplinary nature of my research focus and identity gaps in the research. I examine the New Nordic Cuisine movement as a complex system that also functions as a case study or lens to view related areas of research. I examine the research surrounding food and restaurant spaces as media, focusing on the changes that social media brings and how the field gives me insight into the construction of storytelling narratives through photo, video, and other media representations. I also examine the construction of sustainability narratives in relation to gastronomy to situate my findings within that research focus. Despite the extensive academic contributions in these areas, there remains a research gap at the intersection of media, aesthetics, visual culture, and sustainability narratives within the New Nordic Cuisine. Specifically, the focus on the aesthetic storytelling of food movements and the connections to sustainability is an under-researched area.

New Nordic Cuisine

New Nordic Cuisine is a multifaceted concept that functions as a case study and lens for multiple research areas: identity politics (Byrkjeflot et al., 2013), cultural heritage (Larsen 2010), globalisation (Parasecoli and Halawa 2021), local development and place branding (Ooi and Pedersen 2017), aesthetics (Leer 2016), and gender studies (Leer 2019), among others. In this review of the academic literature surrounding the New Nordic Cuisine concept I focus on contemporary scholars that have examined the concept since it was formally introduced in 2004. Byrkjeflot et al. provide a good starting point: they situate their research in collective identity emergence to examine how the label of New Nordic Cuisine emerged, was adopted, and gained recognition so quickly (2013). Various actors and mechanisms played an important role in the successful legitimation of the food movement. Byrkjeflot et al. articulate that leaders (chefs and entrepreneurs), promoters (politicians and civil servants), legitimators (scientists), and disseminators (specialised and general media) allowed for the label of New Nordic Cuisine to quickly reach a large audience and draw attention from outside the Nordic region. They argue that its legitimation was also "facilitated by three mechanisms: First, the use of an 'empty' label, without a previous meaning in food, yet with positive connotations in other domains, allowed establishing a positive abstract notion open to interpretations and different practices. Second, the invitation for participation and financial support for innovative initiatives allowed for more actors and institutions to develop practices associated with the [New Nordic Cuisine] label. Third, organized dissemination allowed the excitement and engagement with the new label to spread quickly" (Byrkjeflot et al., 2013:36). Situating the New Nordic as an empty label allows it to become a more fluid concept that can be moulded or shaped for multiple contexts or aims.

The emergence of New Nordic Cuisine and its quick dissemination, however, did not happen in a vacuum. The conditions at the time were just right in the Nordic region for the birth of a new food movement and Claus Meyer capitalised on that opportunity. Interest in trying new food and dining out had been increasing in the Nordic region since the 1960s as people were earning more money and as the cost of long-distance travel decreased (Byrkjeflot et al. 2013). In addition, the dominance of French cuisine in Europe was being challenged with the emergence of the slow food movement, the new Spanish cuisine, and experimentations with molecular gastronomy while, at the same time, a wave of culinary globalisation meant that curiosity was increasing in new, more global taste experiences and sensations (Byrkjeflot et al. 2013; Stano 2020). Claus Meyer, however, also links the success of New Nordic Cuisine to a sense of wanting to rediscover ones own identity and the idea that maybe we have been neglecting our heritage in such a globalised society. According to a statement by Claus Meyer on his website, "The Nordic Cuisine movement—informal, open and democratic—is widely considered the strongest and most important culinary revolution ever in the Nordic region. . . . This new kitchen ideology is not a declaration of war against Thai food, Mexican mole or sushi. It is not a crusade against pizza. We don't feel any affinity with nationalistic ideas. We just think that food from our region deserves to have a voice in the choir of the world's other great cuisines" (Meyer). Meyer's view implies that the New Nordic is designed to function in harmony with other global cuisines. While international harmony with other cuisines may have been the intention, the New Nordic also presents itself as isolating and constrained.

What comes across as a sort of "territorial chauvinism" (Leer 2021:82) in the Nordic Cuisine approach, as it limits chefs to the use of Nordic ingredients, introduces further tensions between the global and local (Leer 2020; Andreassen 2014). While the ideas expressed in the New Nordic manifesto encourage localism and a local approach, it also manifests in a global context and a globalised Copenhagen. Nordic restaurants, especially Noma, become objects of marketing and place branding, catering to an international clientele but also exporting their ideas elsewhere (Ooi and Pedersen 2017). Not only are many international visitors, or gastronomy-tourists, coming to dine in Copenhagen, but Noma also took the concept of a Nordic-only cuisine and applied it in others countries: Noma has hosted temporary "pop-ups" in Sydney, London, Tokyo, Kyoto, and Tulum (Gordinier 2019). During one of these "pop-ups," the restaurant in Copenhagen closes and the entire team of chefs, foragers, waiters, and managers move abroad to set up residency and open Noma for a few weeks in a different place. There, the challenge is to take the same culinary philosophy practiced in Copenhagen and apply it to a new part of the world, with new landscapes and new ingredients. Noma's "pop-up" dining experiences challenge the concept of New Nordic while communicating the possibility of working only with locally sourced ingredients. Kelting also comments on the globalisation of New Nordic cooking: "the definition of 'Nordic' is not nearly straightforward; 'Nordicness' stretches far beyond the geopolitical region. In transporting Nordisk Mad (Nordic food: no-ma) to Japan, Mexico, New York, and other markets, local and the global are not at odds but intermingled: creating, paradoxically, a new rhetorical definition of terroir divorced

from specific ecologies. The intentional ambiguity of the label 'New Nordic' in terms of time and place gives its culinary applications staying power on the international scene while performatively and rhetorically obscuring other dynamics at play in terms of race, gender, and class" (Kelting 2022:177).

The phenomenon of Nordic food outside of the Nordic region further complicates the questions about global and local that surround New Nordic Cuisine. The deterritorialisation of New Nordic food is also discussed by Kelting in New Nordic Cuisine: Performing Primitive Origins of Nordic Food. Kelting includes a quote from New York Times food critic Pete Wells that elaborates on the tensions: "What I find hard to run through my critical algorithms, though, is the idea of a meal devoted to local traditions and ingredients that is being prepared and consumed mostly by people from somewhere else… can a restaurant really be of its place if it doesn't bend and sway to the breezes of local tastes and local demands? I'd rather review a restaurant that has its roots in the ground" (Kelting 2022:193; Wells 2017). Tensions between global and local become clear in the academic discourse on New Nordic Cuisine (Leer 2019). However, Kelting argues that Noma grew beyond New Nordic Cuisine into a powerful brand. Part of the brand image included the rhetoric of extreme localism as a challenge in the kitchen. The practice of international "pop-up" kitchens apply the Noma philosophy is a way to export the image and rhetorics more of Noma than it is a way to export ideas about New Nordic Cuisine (Kelting 2022). Kelting also argues that "the rhetorics of New Nordic Food associate 'the Nordic' with 'nature' rather than any specific environment, with 'the past and future' rather than any specific history; New Nordic Food rhetorics deterritorialize terroir itself and rhetorics of New Nordic Food gesture at once the deep past and the utopian future as chefs and writers strive to balance on the knife-edge of the season" (2022:194).

Gastronationalism, gastronomic tourism, place branding, and local development become key concepts when discussing the global-local dynamics of Nordic food. Gyimóthy explores the way New Nordic Cuisine and terroir narratives are exploited to promote tourism and local development in rural areas (2017). The idea of terroir refers to the "taste of place" and it becomes a marketing tool to attract visitors in a place with no previous gastronomic heritage (Gyimóthy 2017). While this study focuses on rural Denmark, the same concept can be used to view Copenhagen: taste of place and terroir narratives that exploit the local, are marketed to, largely, a wealthy and global group of people. This taste of place concept appears in some regions of rural Denmark where restaurants employ two particular terroir narratives to "re-enchant" the Danish landscape: first, they play on the idea of an uncultivated Nordic landscape waiting to be discovered. Second, they exploit a narrative of a "cultivated, artisanal, neo-pastoral" Danish landscape (Gyimóthy 2017:1207). Each of these place-narrative paths play on New Nordic approaches of simplicity and returning to traditional roots. Ideas of an untouched, wild landscape emerges: images of rugged, seaside landscapes in Gyimóthy's work portray a sense of freshness and purity, ready to be cultivated and exploited. While, at the same time, depiction of old traditions and craft, peasant gastronomy, "stories of grandma's kitchen," and neo-pastoral landscapes romanticise a rural Nordic lifestyle (Gyimóthy

2017:1209). Stories of "grandma's kitchen" and "homemade products" communicate a sense of cosiness and community (Gyimóthy 2017:1209). Like Kelting's analysis of Nordic dishes communicating a return to primitive traditions, the place narratives described by Gyimóthy show the way that ideas of terroir attempt to make references to prehistoric, Viking foraging or hunter-gatherer cultures (2017). A performative illusion emerges that uses nostalgia and desires to reject industrialised food systems in an eco-ethical approach: "Paradoxically, the processes by which local culinary heritage is mobilized and reinvented for lifestyle consumption are strikingly similar in rural areas of Europe, and the embraced nostalgic stereotypes are increasingly at odds with industrial farming realities. The gastronomic time pocket offers an illusion of a sheltered enclave from fast food and globally distributed products" (Gyimóthy 2017:1209).

This production of nostalgia appears frequently in the academic work on New Nordic Cuisine. The term playful nostalgia emerges in Larsen's research paper titled *Performing Tasty Heritage: Danish Cuisine and Playful Nostalgia at Restaurant noma* (2010). Larsen simultaneously contributes to the literature on performativity in gastronomy and food as media when he situates food at Noma as a "performative medium": "While renewing the Danish cultural heritage it also adds to it a very trendy life. By both regenerating and updating the Nordic Cuisine, [René Redzepi] gives his unique interpretation of the New Nordic Kitchen. The performative experience is based on the narrative of terroir, ingredients, heritage and authenticity of place" (Larsen 2010:90). While the concept of culinary nostalgia is often used in the academic literature to describe immigrant groups using food and cooking to reconnect with feelings of home, Larsen uses the concept playful nostalgia to signify the more subtle and dispersed performative elements visible in a Noma dining experience (Holtzmann 2006; Larsen 2010). A description of the Noma restaurant space shows how elements of interior design, furniture, the visible colour palette, and even the attire of the staff becomes part of the playful nostalgia scheme: sheep wools draped over Danish-designed chairs, organic colours like browns, greys, and greens, dried bundles of herbs and flowers, and rough dining tables reference Nordic landscapes and culture (Larsen 2010). The space reinforces the refined nature and design of modern Copenhagen while also subtly incorporating elements referencing past traditions and heritage. Large windows with views of the water frame the area as a symbol of the north and serve as a reminder of place while in the restaurant. Larsen also introduces descriptions of two dishes served at Noma that "serve as a prism through which to observe the following tropes and concepts: performance, terroir, ingredients, heritage, and authenticity of place": "Glazed Sheep's Milk Mousse and Sorrel Granité" and "Tartar Wood Sorrel and Tarragon Emulsion" (Larsen 2010:97). Each dish is described and analysed through the lens of playful nostalgia. However, each dish evokes images of Nordic-ness, becomes a short performance, and encourages conversation. The dish is eaten without cutlery, evoking another sense of nostalgia and interaction with the food: "Moreover, there is the romantic vision roused; one realizes and appreciates that this is how our ancestors — and/or how the Vikings — long ago once ate. Raw food with bare hands" (Larsen 2010:98) and it evokes a "dynamic image of the animal itself grazing across the field" (Larsen 2010:98). The two dishes represent how performance and nostalgia are built in to the New Nordic and Noma dining

experience, and how the consumer becomes part of the performance through the physical connection to the food and the emotions it brings up.

Primitive and traditional cooking techniques seen in New Nordic approaches saturate the food with meaning and are used as a storytelling tool. Lily Kelting also explores the performativity and primitive origins of cooking at Rene Redzepi's restaurant Noma. As already referenced, the presentation of food at Noma are saturated with meaning and allow the diner to picture the origin of the ingredients in the wild. Like with the example of "Tartar Wood Sorrel and Tarragon Emulsion," Kelting analyses a Noma dish called "langoustines and sea flavours" which does the same (2022:181). She describes it as a sole langoustine with rye breadcrumbs, dulse dust, and a pale emulsion: "The impression given by such plating is that the lobster has simply been found like this—not manipulated in any way—and that the dish is somehow timeless" (Kelting 2022:181). This impression that the ingredient has not been manipulated communicates the freshness almost like it has just been pulled from the water—a pillar of the New Nordic philosophy. Deciding to present the dish in this minimalistic form seems like an attempt to arouse a sense of adventure, discovery, and connection to nature. Like the wood sorrel dish, it also allows the consumer to create imaginaries and play with the thought of eating how distant ancestors might have eaten. Nordic primitivism is everywhere in Noma storytelling and is replicated in other restaurants too. Kelting's concept of Nordic primitivism ("the rhetorical linkages between masculine Vikings … and New Nordic food") appears in the dishes but also in the media—Noma cookbooks are saturated with this imagery and references to a Nordic past (2022:184). Interestingly, this concept is also highly gendered and masculinised, another aspect of the New Nordic that is explored in other research (Leer 2019; Lapina and Leer 2016). This hyper-masculinity in Nordic cooking can also be used to draw connections to nostalgia for neo-pastoralism and conquering wild landscapes, and even to ideas of national pride and gastronationalism. But beyond this aspect, Nordic primitivism becomes a piece of the New Nordic rhetoric. Ideas of an untamed and yet-to-be-explored Nordic ecosystem are also key in ideas of Nordic cooking. This aspect is closely related to storytelling of authenticity and sustainable approaches to food production. In the preface to a Noma cookbook, *Noma: Time and Place in Nordic Cuisine*, Olafur Eliasson writes that "when we look at the plate, we should really also see the greater ecosystem. Finding out where the food comes from and where it goes to—maybe this knowledge can be made into a kind of flavour enhancer. It matters whether the potatoes come from New Zealand or the Lammefjord area of Denmark, and I can see great potential in not dividing knowledge and flavour (just as in art, you should not separate form and content)" (Redzepi 2010). According to Eliasson, not only is the Nordic ecology a crucial piece of Nordic storytelling, but knowledge of that ecology as well (Kelting 2022).

Smith builds on the concept of terroir and "taste of place" narratives by exploring the multiple layers of storytelling that emerge through the ideas of place and gastronomic tourism in his paper titled *A sense of place: place, culture and tourism* (2015). Expanding on the definition of terroir, which we will see is a prominent expression in New Nordic approaches, Smith writes that the connection

between place and culture can be better examined through the concept: "The linkage can be understood through an analogy to the concept of terroir from viniculture. Terroir is the set of qualities that shape the sensory and intellectual appreciation of a wine, including soil, climate, grape variety and wine-making techniques. In the case of placed-based cultural tourism development and promotion, the terroir of a place includes history, local traditions and cultures, religion, industry, the natural environment, cuisine and arts, as well as attractions and events" (Smith 2015:227). The sense of visiting a new place and consuming local food is a highly cultural and sensory experience. It is intertwined with messaging that communicates quality, value, traditions, local knowledge, and ways of doing. The concept of wine and terroir narratives provide a metaphor to understand similar narratives in New Nordic Cuisine. The visit to a wine region, dialogues and storytelling from the winemaker, sensory experiences with the wine and the vineyards deepen the knowledge and appreciation of that product and experience (Smith 2015). A cultural product like wine, with deep symbolic and aesthetic meaning, can become a much more valuable object when relationships, history, culture, and stories are shared alongside it. This can also be applied to view New Nordic cooking where raw materials are saturated with local meaning and storytelling to give them more value (Kelting 2022).

Building on the idea of terroir narratives, Smith writes that "Place-based cultural tourism involves both the physical and metaphorical process of placing phenomena in a local context – whether in a social, natural, economic or other realm. It involves the act of placing as well as the 'making' of a place. To be successful, place-based cultural tourism requires that the visitor is able to develop a sense of connection with the locale, even if only temporarily" (2015:223). This idea aligns with the New Nordic philosophy emphasising the use of ingredients that communicate time and place—Noma has build their approach around the concept (Kelting 2022; Gora 2017). Each dish at Noma, and to an extend any dish crafted with the New Nordic philosophy in mind, should communicate a specific season and place in the world. Not only does this mean that the culinary approach is challenged and tested as a way to seek the ingredients that are best at a specific moment and in a certain region, but it also means that the diner is left with a strong impression of place with their food experience. This *making* or *construction* of time and place saturates each dish with meaning. The construction of time and place in each dish is what allows it to become a cultural artefact (Kelting 2022). Gastronomy tourism in the Nordic region is then situated as a result of marketing those cultural artifacts as storytelling tools.

The global and regional politics of the New Nordic concept also becomes a lens to explore Copenhagen's restaurant scene. Gastronationalism, in relation to the New Nordic, is a tool used to rebrand a place and its identity through food (DeSoucey 2010) and, through this lens, the Scandinavian countries were able to change their food reputations. With the success of the New Nordic food label, Scandinavian countries overcame the reputation of "heavy, old-fashioned national kitchens" focused on pork and potatoes and, with the success of Nordic restaurants, Scandinavian food became associated with lighter ingredients and a focus on fresh vegetables (Ooi

and Pedersen 2017:217). Ooi and Pedersen assert that the chefs embracing New Nordic approaches performa a certain kind of gastronationalism when they seek out new ingredients and embrace traditional cooking methods like fermentation, smoking, and pickling in their preparation: "The chefs from the region have embarked on rediscovering local produce beyond the characteristic smoked salmon, marinated herring, or rye bread. They are shaping a new 'taste of the North' with new ingredients such as birch sap, bulrushes, puffin eggs, foraged chickweed, Arctic brambles, and livestock breeds from the times of the Vikings and new approaches to traditional techniques, such as salting, marinating, or smoking" (2017:218). These primitive and traditional cooking techniques saturate the food with meaning and are used as a storytelling tool (Kelting 2022). Gastronationalism becomes a response to globalisation through debates on cultural politics and identity creation (DeSoucey 2010). DeSoucey further develops the concept of gastronationalism and argues that gastronomic traditions become powerful identity forming tools. Much like the way that Thanksgiving Day turkey in the United States and foie gras in France become tied to national pride and heritage, even if there are ethical concerns about those food productions, food movements become politicised to center the aims of specific regions (DeSoucey 2010). For example, food traditions like the production of foie gras in France, which received protective legislation in 2005, become highly politicised and protected symbols, contributing further to complex market discourses, ideas of authenticity, and globalisation (DeSoucey 2010). DeSoucey writes that "preserving foie gras is a small but significant way for the French to defend the idea of France" (2010:447). The same idea extends the the Nordic context: the use of Nordic ingredients in New Nordic restaurants can become a way to embed the ideas of Nordic landscapes in space and place.

Class also becomes a lens to view the success of New Nordic ideas. Kelting argues that "class exclusion is the real engine behind New Nordic discourse" as dining at Noma has become increasingly commodified and the rhetorics behind New Nordic have become so commercially successful (2022:194). She asserts that "perhaps so many people talk about Noma precisely because very few can afford to experience it for themselves" (2022:194). This exclusivity is intertwined with a number of themes in the media discourses on food and Noma. Müller and Sørensen discuss the "marketization of society" through an interrogation of Claus Meyer's media narratives (2022:193). They describe Meyer, the founder of New Nordic Cuisine, as a "the gastro-capitalist social entrepreneur" (2022:193). They argue that "uncritical media narratives, that positioned Claus Meyer as the little man who successfully took on the establishment, in fact helped to produce brand value for his company in part by glossing over his close ties to state and corporate interests as well as Meyer's quite conventional business practices. The media's portrayal of Meyer as an entrepreneur on a social mission constitutes an uncritical celebration of the social entrepreneur and the marketization of society" (Müller and Sørensen 2022:1381). They take a highly critical perspective on the New Nordic and on Claus Meyer and communicate that class exclusion becomes a crucial tool of New Nordic's messaging style but also is a result of media glamorisation and fantasising (Müller and Sørensen 2022). The authors also argue that the messaging of New Nordic as a wholesome social movement became a way to influence the market as a whole: the main message

was that Danes lacked—and especially that the lower classes of society lacked—gastronomic sophistication (Müller and Sørensen 2022). The marketing of the New Nordic as an exclusive realm deepens the exclusivity that those spaces project. In particular, this reinforces the way that New Nordic spaces are deeply situated in media discourses and as media themselves.

Food and Restaurant Spaces as Media

The New Nordic Cuisine movement has not only redefined culinary practices but has also transformed the role of restaurants as cultural and ideological spaces. Hahn's analysis of restaurants as medium and media highlights the evolving relationship between chefs, their culinary creations, and their guests. He argues that the restaurant is no longer just a place to consume food but a "culinary œuvre" where all sensory elements—taste, sight, sound, and even the architecture of the space—contribute to a cultural experience (Hahn 2023:56). In the context of the New Nordic, this concept is particularly relevant. Restaurants like Noma have become more than just places to eat. They are cultural institutions that embody the principles of the manifesto and invite guests to engage with the Nordic landscape and its produce in new and profound ways. Hahn's distinction between "temple" and "porous" restaurants is also significant in this discussion. While traditional fine dining establishments are often rigid in their presentation and experience, the New Nordic movement encourages a more porous approach, where the boundaries between the restaurant and the outside world blur, allowing for a deeper connection with the region's natural environment and culinary traditions (Hahn 2023). This shift toward more porous culinary experiences aligns with the New Nordic Cuisine movement's emphasis on foraging, sustainability, and the use of local ingredients. By incorporating elements of the outside world into the dining experience, these restaurants offer guests a more holistic understanding of Nordic food culture. This blurring of boundaries between the interior and exterior spaces also reflects the movement's broader ideological goals of reconnecting people with the natural world and promoting a more sustainable, transparent, and ethical approach to food production and consumption.

Central to research on food and media is the idea that food and eating are not just for nourishment. Food and eating have become complex sensory experiences that are depicted as forms of art through media representations (Bartz et al. 2023). Food and media studies draw on a number of adjacent research fields to make it a highly interdisciplinary focus. This interdisciplinary aspect of the field means that it can encompass many different aspects and concepts around food: for example, street food, nostalgia, fine dining, performative gastronomy, social media chefs, restaurant guides, cooking techniques, and kitchen culture are just some of the possible research directions. In *Food-Media-Senses*, Bartz et al. highlight the way that food becomes a multisensory experience and is often explored through haute cuisine—fine dining—and particularly innovative approaches to gastronomy (2023). The field also recognises the vast information archives around food that can offer cultural insights (Eberle 2018). TV shows, films, social media, cookbooks, documentaries, and news articles become data sources to examine the different representations of food and the cultural

messages that are buried in those representations (Bartz et al. 2023). The media saturated environment becomes particularly relevant here as the New Nordic itself represents a genre of media while, at the same time, I situate food and restaurant spaces as media too. Representations of the New Nordic throughout social media, particularly Instagram, contributed to the decision to understand it as an archive of data surrounding the topic and to use it in my research.

Picturing food through Instagram situates it in the realm of semiotics, with the understanding that they are cultural artefacts that are filled with meaning. Marie Schröer elaborates on the changing meaning of food once it enters a digital space like TikTok or Instagram (Schröer 2023) by building on the concept of semiotics introduced by Roland Barthes. TikTok and Instagram represent the vast information archives that I mentioned but on a scale that is evolving constantly. With every food related post on a social media platform, the available data increases. With thousands of posts per hour, the amount of available information is overwhelming. Schröer argues that through the mass posting of food-related content on social media, food transforms from being presented to being constantly performed (2023). While the performance of food on social media could be understood as a way to display cultural capital, Schröer argues that the sensory experiences of food photography and video on social media is crucial (2023). The presentation of appealing food allows viewers to fantasise about the sensory experiences surrounding it, contributing to an understanding that even street food and simple cuisine can be elevated into a sensory rich experience through the right framing and presentation. The role of the photographer is also particularly important for the understanding of how cuisine can be elevated into sensory rich, fantastical forms. Amateur and professional photographers both alter the meaning of food through different styles: Koerner argues that the role of amateur food photographers are pressuring professional food photographers to innovate and give more complex meanings to food photography (Koerner 2014). As Instagram allows everyone to take on the role of a food photographer, professional representations can be pushed to become more avant-garde. Food photography on social media platforms are, in this sense, changing the way that we depict it and interact with it.

The rise of Instagram as a visual social media platform has transformed how food and restaurant spaces are consumed, represented, and critiqued. The concept of the "Instagram gaze," as proposed in the paper Good food in an Instagram age: Rethinking hierarchies of culture, criticism and taste, is central to understanding this transformation (Feldman 2021:1340). The Instagram gaze refers to a new way of seeing and representing food and dining experiences that centres aesthetic appeal, visual storytelling, and personal perspective over traditional culinary regimes (Feldman 2021). This gaze is heavily influenced by the platform's visual focus, where visuals carry the burden in sharing critiques on food and storytelling about food. Unlike the popular restaurant guide, the Michelin Guide, which represents an authoritative, hierarchical, and highly exclusionary approach evaluating gastronomy, Instagram allows everyday users to engage in the production of food critique, food knowledge, and fantasising. The Michelin Guide focuses on and encourages a high-end, expensive style of gastronomy largely based on the idea of using scarce ingredients (Feldman 2021). Most Michelin-

guide establishments have a connotation of being white-table-cloth establishments that can feel overly formal. While with Instagram, the ability to define what "good food" is, is democratised, giving foodies and amateurs the ability to tell stories and contribute to narratives through visuals that capture moments of the dining experience and gastronomic spaces. However, Feldman writes that "Social media's democratising claims position user-generated platforms as means of correcting various representational omissions and inequalities. Yet, this research makes clear that oversights and inequalities remain. Although culinary representation on Instagram is more inclusive – culturally and economically – than in the Michelin Guide, foodstagrammers are not the anti-elitist, amateur messiahs one might have expected. My analysis shows that just because anyone can now be a restaurant critic does not mean that all culinary voices will be heard, or that all ways of 'speaking' about food will carry equal weight" (2021:1355). While Instagram represents a democratisation of food and gastronomy perspectives in comparison to elitist and classist perspectives like the Michelin Guide, Instagram still frames the way that food messaging is received in an unequal way. However, restaurants as businesses also use Instagram visuals as promotional and marketing tools. Instagram is used to tell stories about the ethics, sustainability (or lack of sustainability), and culinary approaches. The idea of the Instagram gaze confirms the shift towards the sensory as a form of evaluating culinary spaces, where elements like plating, the aesthetic space, and photogenic qualities of food are emphasised over more traditional ideas of taste.

Cookbooks also offer a lens to understand the placement of food and restaurant spaces as media. In her paper titled *Eating the North: An Analysis of the Cookbook 'NOMA: Time & Place in Nordic Cuisine,'* L. Sasha Gora analyses the visuals, texts, and recipes in Noma's first cookbook, situating it as a cultural artefact filled with cultural stories, that constructs the ideas of time and place in a Nordic context (2017). The cookbook becomes a communication and storytelling tool that reinforces the ways food can be used for cultural storytelling. She writes that "In the case of the Noma cookbook, it is autobiographical as it tells the story of Redzepi and how he became a chef. It also tells the biography of the restaurant. Furthermore, the cookbook is also historical as it constructs an idealized image of the Nordic region, both past and present, in which Noma holds an important position" (Gora 2017:5). Her work also contributes to the idea that food as media helps people construct fantasies about dining and food: "The professional cookbook lets amateurs dream about elaborate constructions they'll never have time to make, featuring ingredients they may not be able to find. These books allow readers to cook vicariously to revel in fantasy meals" (Gora 2017:10, Brenner 2000:198). Reflecting on the idea that the recipes in the Noma cookbook are so complex, require days of preparation and professional kitchen equipment, Gora argues that the cookbooks are not meant to allow for recipe recreations but that they are for fantasising about a meal at Noma —or another New Nordic restaurant (2017). The images become the most important parts of the Noma cookbook and contribute to my understanding of visual culture to apply to my analysis. Building on the ideas in an essay from Thomas Mitchell, she introduces an implication that "seeing" and "vision" is constructed—She asks what the photos in the Noma cookbook want in order to answer her research question (Gora 2017). Mitchell's work in the field of visual studies or visual

culture offers insights into the social, cultural, and historical construction of images and seeing. His perspective is crucial to understanding food as media and for understanding the storytelling of images (Mitchell 2002). Visual culture intersects with a number of other academic fields—implying an interdisciplinary approach and Mitchell strongly argues for the idea that the visual is a cultural construction (Mitchell 2002:337). He contributes to the fields of media studies and aesthetics by offering a complex critique of the visual culture as the subject of visual studies. His insights contribute to the ideas of the "gaze" and to the role of images as cultural storytelling devices. In this sense, food and images of food are also elevated to art and become complex cultural storytelling elements.

Gastronomy as an experience of performance art contributes to understandings of food and restaurant spaces as media. Research focusing on performative aspects of gastronomy with aesthetics and storytelling shed light on the way that the boundaries between art and food are blurred. Gastronomic experiences in Copenhagen are often guided by certain principles and aesthetic ideas where the senses are stimulated and high quality gastronomic experiences verge on a theatre experience (Abrams 2020). Nielsen explores formations of meaning within one person and among multiple people in aesthetic experiences (2005). Through the concept of "aestheticization of everyday life" he sheds light on the way that everyday experiences become more intertwined with art and understood as artistic, meaningful experiences. Abrams takes this a step further to investigate the way Nordic dining, and especially fine dining, is seen as an "ecological dramaturgy" — a performance of nature — where season and region is represented on the plate and throughout the menu (2020:490). This links strongly to the ideas of New Nordic Cuisine and to the philosophy of restaurants like Noma where each dish is designed to communicate a sense of time and place. Abrams describes his dining experience at Noma as "theatricalized encounters, where chefs evoke landscape images as a plating technique" (2020:491). Chefs and servers take on the role of performers and the interior of the restaurant, table, plate, and food takes on the role of the stage and the props. Cook and Crang approach this idea differently than Abrams where they see the food as a displaced commodity and explore the local globalisation aspects of culinary culture (1996). This idea is particularly relevant to explaining gastronomy in Copenhagen as the New Nordic philosophy favours ingredients and products from only the Nordic region. This idea becomes contradictory when looking at the scale of the Nordic region as a whole—is this actually more sustainable than alternative practices? Their paper further suggests that cultural flows and constructed representations of geographical knowledges play a significant role in shaping culinary culture and identity practices. This mirrors the ideas discussed by Nielsen with the concept of the "aestheticization of everyday life" (2005). Overall, his paper argues that this expansion of aesthetics has a decisive influence on the current configurations of taste. This suggests that the role of shaping high class styles, which was normally assigned to art, has now become part of everyday practices including design, fashion, tourism, gastronomy, leisure activities, and wellbeing (Nielsen 2005).

Gastronomy and Sustainability

Restaurants can serve as models for sustainable practices and food systems transitions. Higgins-Desbiolles and Wijesinghe argue that restaurants can become powerful change agents (2018). Particularly by adopting sustainable practices and engaging local stakeholders on their practices, restaurants can create social initiative and habits around sustainable practices that can reflect on various scales. By framing the political, social, and environmental implications of personal eating habits, restaurant spaces can act as community meeting points for discussions and dialogue on key sustainability issues (Higgins-Desbiolles and Wijesinghe 2018). While changes on a small scale through locally based practices are at the center of the restaurants-as-change-agents argument, the same ideas can be applied to complex food movements. Food movements like New Nordic Cuisine are particularly powerful change agents that create cultural and social messaging around the adoption of sustainability practices. Food movements like New Nordic Cuisine can change models of consumption and production on broader scales. Sustainability approaches guided by a food movement philosophy can disperse the impacts and points of change in a manner that a local restaurant scene can not (Higgins-Desbiolles and Wijesinghe 2018). In this sense, personal consumption habits become embedded in a social context where others adopt new, more sustainable practices. Networks and social groups around sustainable food engage stakeholders and create knowledge hubs around production and consumption. Through "sustainability pedagogues," restaurants spaces like New Nordic restaurants can spark sustainability transitions for broader food systems (Higgins-Desbiolles and Wijesinghe 2018:1098)

Rinaldi makes important academic contributions at the intersection of "agriculture and rural studies, place branding and place marketing and food tourism" by exploring food as a tool for sustainable local development (2017:2). She also introduces a robust definition of sustainability as "the capacity to create, test and maintain adaptive capability. Development is the process of creating, testing, and maintaining opportunity. The phrase that combines the two, 'sustainable development', therefore refers to the goal of fostering adaptive capabilities while simultaneously creating opportunities. It is therefore not an oxymoron but a term that describes a logical partnership" (Rinaldi 2017:2). Sustainability is dependent on the interconnected nature of people in a place. Rinaldi, argues that the understandings of sustainability in gastronomy and sustainable local development relies on connections between individuals and recognition of the importance of the everyday food practices that people interact with (2017).

Sustainability can also be embedded in gastronomy as an aspect of the experience economy. Leer explores sustainable food tourism in the Faroe Islands as a case in designing sustainable food experiences (Leer 2020). Given the highly curated and designed nature of food experiences, particularly in a New Nordic context, Leer argues that food experiences focused on participation, understanding of the local context, and accessibility can function as more sustainable consumption models (2020). Though tourism is not typically associated with sustainability, given the

environmental costs of airline travel, there is potential in designing more sustainable food experiences that inspire sustainable practices during and beyond the time of the experience. It is important to understand gastronomy tourism as a cultural experience. With a more authentic and sustainable cultural experience, messages of sustainability can be conveyed through culture. Leer writes that "food is not so much a thing in itself for the tourist, but a gateway to experiences of authenticity, interpersonal contact and other cultural aspects which might be found in other kinds of cultural tourism" (Leer 2020:68). Food becomes a multisensory and cultural experience that can function as a transformational experience. Designing sustainable gastronomic experiences, then, rests on sustainability within the experience as well as a profound cultural experience that can initiate more sustainable practices later. In this sense, the highly designed aspect of food experiences around tourism reflects the highly designed aspect of New Nordic spaces as a set of many dispersed, curated food experiences.

The concept of Global Brooklyn becomes a powerful framework that provides background information as well as a theoretical framework to understanding the dynamics of New Nordic food and sustainability storytelling. Emerging from the academic literature at the intersection of food, culture, and aesthetics, the Global Brooklyn concept, as introduced in *Global Brooklyn: Designing Food Experiences in World Cities,* describes a "set of material objects, constructed environments, practices, and discourses" (Parasecoli and Halawa 2021:6) that all construct a similar interpretation of the Global Brooklyn aesthetic. The Global Brooklyn concept is defined as an aesthetic regime—a concept that I borrow—because of these coherent, but dispersed, characteristics. Global Brooklyn is not tangible or unique to Brooklyn, New York, but it can be identified by a number of characteristics globally. Industrial design, vintage furniture, and an aesthetic of reuse are some characteristics that define the Global Brooklyn as a concept (Parasecoli and Halawa 2021). However, it is precisely because of its many dispersed elements that the concept can be used to craft a broader narrative of local consumption, social responsibility, and sustainable practices in gastronomy, similar to the New Nordic.

Identifying the Research Gap

The review of the academic literature provides an overview of the research surrounding New Nordic Cuisine, food and restaurant spaces as media, and research at the intersection of gastronomy and sustainability. It highlights the extensive academic approaches to various aspects of New Nordic Cuisine, including its role in identity politics, cultural heritage creation, globalisation, local development, and gender studies. The existing literature examines the tensions between the global and local, the construction of Nordicness, the role of nostalgia and performance, and issues of class exclusion and capitalism surrounding New Nordic food. Additionally, it examines food and restaurant spaces as media through the analysis of cookbooks (Gora 2017), Instagram (Feldman 2021), and visual culture as a theoretical lens (Mitchell 2002), with these platforms constructing narratives around New Nordic Cuisine. However, evidence from previous studies indicates that a

significant research gap remains: the intersection of aesthetics, food media, visual culture, and sustainability within the context of New Nordic Cuisine is under-researched. While there are studies on sustainability within gastronomy and food movements, they often focus on broader food systems transitions or specific environmental practices. An interdisciplinary, qualitative, mixed-methods approach that focuses on the sensory and visual expressions of sustainability storytelling is missing. Through this literature review, I aim to provide a better understanding of the interdisciplinary nature of the field, positioning New Nordic Cuisine as a complex concept and a lens through which related research areas can be explored.

III. Methodology

My research explores the cultural storytelling artefacts that are embedded in the New Nordic aesthetic regime to understand how they contribute to a broader narrative of sustainability. The understanding of food and restaurant spaces as media is crucial to my research. I use a theory of visual culture to understand food and restaurant media as storytelling tools. I also use Sarah Pink's methodological and analytical framework of Sensory Ethnography as a theoretical lens to understand the multisensory aspects of food and restaurant spaces. Lastly, I situate New Nordic Cuisine in Copenhagen as an aesthetic regime defined by an ideal type framework. In this sense, I can understand food and restaurant spaces in the context of the New Nordic Cuisine as spaces that construct a narrative of sustainability through visual and sensory storytelling. I stress that the use of the word sustainability encompasses social, environmental, and economic sustainability (Huang and Hall 2023). In this section I present my theoretical framework and research approach that guides my study, offer an overview of my research methods, and provide an outline of the analysis that structures my findings.

Theoretical framework

I use visual culture as a theoretical lens to explore the meanings of New Nordic food and restaurant spaces (Davis 2011, Mitchell 2002). Visual culture, grounded in art history and cultural studies, refers to the range of meanings and experiences associated with images and artefacts (Davis 2011). As a theoretical lens, it reflects how images, artefacts, and spaces are embedded in a certain cultural and social context and are viewed through a certain cultural and social lens of understanding. According to Hunter, visual culture "refers to the tangible, or visible, expressions by a people, a state or a civilization, and collectively describes the characteristics of that body as a whole. If aesthetics is what they consider desirable (beautiful or ideal) and cultural studies is their all-encompassing 'way of life,' then the collective expression of the two makes up their visual culture" (Hunter 2014:46). This positions visual culture as an overlapped understanding of aesthetics and culture. Visual culture theory is not just about interpreting images and objects through vision but more about understanding the cultural stories that emerge from viewing and seeing. Applying this theoretical

lens allows me to interpret New Nordic storytelling elements through social media visuals and through observations of space. This interdisciplinary aspect is a key part of visual culture as a theoretical lens (Mitchell 2002). Using this idea to view others' images of the New Nordic with my own seeings and readings of the New Nordic speaks to the interdisciplinary aspect that Mitchell writes about in *Showing seeing: a critique of visual culture* (2002). In addition, this understanding of visual culture allows me to draw connections between the digital and physical representations of the New Nordic and use those understandings in my analysis. This understanding allows to me see pieces of the New Nordic as cultural artefacts and storytelling tools that contribute to the broader narrative of sustainability.

Sensory understandings of New Nordic food and restaurant spaces provide another theoretical lens to my research. I use Sarah Pink's *Sensory Ethnography* framework as a theoretical lens to understand food and restaurant spaces as highly curated and designed multisensory experiences (Pink 2015). While Pink's *Sensory Ethnography* framework is primarily understood as a methodological and analytical framework, I use the concept as a theoretical framework that helps me understand the sensory storytelling of New Nordic food and spaces. Through this angle, *Sensory Ethnography* as a theoretical lens offers an understanding of the multisensory natures of New Nordic storytelling and narrative construction in both the physical and digital realms. The emphasis on the multisensory and the portrayal of the New Nordic as a highly curated and designed food experience means that the non-visual elements become particularly important. The use of the sensory as a theoretical lens allows the textures, sounds, smells, and tastes of the New Nordic to be fully understood as storytelling pieces that contribute to a broader narrative.

To explore the embedded, multisensory storytelling elements and construction of a sustainability narrative in the representations of New Nordic Cuisine, I situate the New Nordic as an aesthetic regime. The concept of the aesthetic regime is borrowed from the book *Global Brooklyn: Designing Food Experiences in World Cities*. The book contributes to an academic discourse at the intersection of media studies, design, gastronomy, aesthetics and aestheticization of everyday life (De Certeau 1984), food politics, urban studies, and globalisation, offering me a valuable theoretical and methodological toolkit to borrow ideas from. Parasecoli and Halawa, the editors of *Global Brooklyn,* borrow a definition of *aesthetic regime* from the anthropologist Krisztina Fehérváry. They define an aesthetic regime as "politically charged assemblages of material qualities that have provoked widely shared affective responses" (Fehérváry 2013:3). With this definition as a starting point, *Global Brooklyn* points to the built environment and materialities—"qualities of interiors and objects" as well—as provoking responses to socio-political and economic ideologies (Parasecoli and Halawa 2021:13). They argue that "Global Brooklyn similarly creates affective responses, not only through the qualities of interiors and objects but also in the way such materialities get entangled in the relations between food providers, consumers, and their ethical positions" and propose a bodily element as well, where the sensing and tasting body performs readings of these materialities in the context of said "sociopolitical and economic ideologies" (Parasecoli and Halawa 2021:193; Fehérváry 2013:3).

The concept of the aesthetic regime allows me to bring the theoretical lenses of visual culture and sensory ethnography together to contribute to another understanding of the sustainability narrative of the New Nordic. In this sense, the role of the visual and the sensory come together and are both crucial to understandings and analyses of New Nordic elements in digital and physical spaces.

In constructing the New Nordic as an aesthetic regime concept and lens, I use an ideal type framework. The ideal type framework is at its core a way to develop typologies for qualitative research (Stapley, O'Keeffe, and Midgley 2022). The ideal type framework is an organisational method to arrange the dispersed sensory and visual elements of New Nordic restaurants in Copenhagen into typologies that become a framework for analysis. I explain the construction of the ideal type framework in more depth later in this section, but I explain its significance for the theoretical framework here: the ideal type framework as a theoretical tool functions to organise the complex visual and multisensory elements of the New Nordic. Through typologies that are developed, the other theoretical lenses can be applied to my understandings of the storytelling aspects that emerge. This theoretical approach allows visual, sensory, and material elements to be understood under the umbrella of the New Nordic as an aesthetic regime.

Research approach

To study the sustainability narratives embedded in both physical and digital New Nordic spaces, I employed a mixed methods approach to explore the sensory landscapes and visual cultures of both realms. Here I introduce the research approach and qualitative research methods I used. I explain how I conducted preliminary or exploratory fieldwork to gain an understanding of the Copenhagen gastronomy scene and how I selected the five Copenhagen restaurants that I focus on in my analysis. The selection of dual research environments for data collection—both restaurant spaces and the digital realm—was done to comprehensively study the New Nordic as both an aesthetic regime of tangible and intangible elements. I decided to include social media in my focus as a way to understand the construction of sustainability narratives in the context of a "media-saturated society" (Ang 1996:70). Other research on the intersection of visual culture and the New Nordic suggests that this is a rich area of study but that it is under researched (Gora 2017). By situating the physical restaurant space as a form of media (Hahn 2023), I am able to apply a theoretical framework that connects the physical and digital space.

My research process began in the fall of 2023 when I began an exploratory research phase. I began visiting New Nordic restaurants and attended talks, lectures, and events on food, sustainability, and local food systems in Copenhagen. In these visits I conducted informal interviews and had conversations with people about food spaces, the restaurant scene, and the concept of New Nordic to gain knowledge and explore an interest I had in learning about the New Nordic movement and the Copenhagen gastronomy scene. In this process my research interest in the New Nordic and the New Nordic as an aesthetic regime developed and I accumulated a base layer understanding of the

Copenhagen restaurant scene in this way. I began to see the connections between chefs and entrepreneurs, and made observations about how the gastronomy scene was interconnected and functioned as a network. I also began to see connections in the aesthetic appearances and designs of gastronomy spaces like coffee shops, bakeries, and restaurants. They could be described as a Copenhagen style or a Scandinavian aesthetic but I realised that the visual and sensory experiences of these spaces in the exploratory phase of my research kept pointing to the ideas of the New Nordic philosophy that I was reading about. My everyday observations of these restaurants through Instagram would reconfirm the ideas I was having about the connections in design and styles I was noticing. This approach in my preliminary field work phase could be considered non-participant online observations. Through these everyday observation of spaces in Copenhagen and visuals of gastronomic spaces on Instagram, I began developing the idea of the New Nordic as an aesthetic regime, based on the ideas discussed in *Global Brooklyn: Designing Food Experiences in World Cities.*

The process of selecting the five restaurants for analysis began with desk research. I searched websites with dining guides to Denmark and Copenhagen, reviewed online news articles, and visited the restaurant websites searching for references to the New Nordic Cuisine manifesto and to other New Nordic narratives. Before conducting visits to the restaurants, I spoke with people familiar with the Copenhagen gastronomy scene who helped to confirm that those places did identify as New Nordic spaces or were highly influenced by New Nordic narratives. I decided not to include the restaurant Noma, although I had visited it in the exploratory phase of my research to attend a panel discussion, as there was already so much academic work and media coverage that analysed at the restaurant. With this in mind I wanted to seek out more practical and everyday examples of the New Nordic that did not represent the category of high end fine dining, as Noma does, but represented quality and reflected the rise in the quality of gastronomy in Copenhagen (Leer 2016). I selected the following restaurant for analysis in my fieldwork: Il Buco, Kadeau, Frank, Bobe, and Barr. Each restaurant is located in the center of Copenhagen and ranges from mid-level to casual fine dining. These five restaurants all embody elements of the New Nordic approach in their culinary style and in the style of their restaurants while also portraying themselves as sustainably-minded establishment. In addition, they each have a robust social media presence, usually with posts everyday, that depict their daily operations, photos of cooks at work, and images showing which dishes are on the menu.

I argue that the many dispersed storytelling elements found in New Nordic spaces, physically and through social media images, make up the aesthetic regime of the New Nordic. These storytelling elements can be described similarly to the storytelling elements of the Global Brooklyn aesthetic: as a set of "recurring, loosely codified set of material objects, constructed environments, practices, and discourses" (Parasecoli and Halawa 2021:6). This can be further understood through an ideal type framework (Parasecoli and Halawa 2021). An ideal type is an analytical tool that can help by "systematizing and ordering the chaos of particularities" (Parasecoli and Halawa 2021:10). The

dispersed sensory and visual elements of New Nordic restaurants in Copenhagen are organised into typologies with this approach. While each typology or theme is made up of elements that represent it, but are not a perfect example of it, the elements and types are open to interpretation. Hence, the concept is called ideal type rather than a related concept: the pure type (O'Keeffe and Midgley 2021). The observed and sensed elements can be clustered into typologies that overlap and can connect to broader narratives. I construct an ideal type of the New Nordic in Copenhagen to organise the thematic identification and analysis of elements that construct the broader sustainability narratives. The ideal type as an organising and analytical framework is borrowed from *Global Brooklyn: Designing Food Experiences in World Cities*. The Global Brooklyn aesthetic regime is presented as an "ideal-typical construct" organised along five axes: designed experiences, a sensory regime, networked communication, expertise and skills, and a revaluation of artisanal labor (Parasecoli and Halawa 2021). I use this concept of the "ideal-typical construct" to create my own ideal type of the New Nordic. I situate the New Nordic as an aesthetic regime here to reinforce the aesthetic nature of the elements that make up the ideal types. For my research, I construct an ideal type of New Nordic restaurants along three axes: connection to nature and place, design and materiality, and craftsmanship and labor. Here, the ideal type construction becomes a methodological framework for qualitative data collection and an analytical framework for analysis. These three ideal type axes become thematic categories for the qualitative coding of images and field notes from my fieldwork.

The aim of my research is to identify and analyse how visual and sensory storytelling elements, in restaurant spaces and through Instagram visuals, construct sustainability narratives in the New Nordic aesthetic regime in Copenhagen. This involves examining the sensory landscapes of restaurants spaces and conducting an analysis of Instagram visuals from New Nordic restaurant spaces and thematically analyse how both sets of data thematically construct sustainability narratives. In this sense, I ask the following research question: **How do visual and sensory storytelling elements in both the physical and digital spaces of Copenhagen restaurants construct and communicate narratives of sustainability within the New Nordic aesthetic regime?**

Methods

Non-participant observation

Non-participant observation as a social research method goes beyond the everyday observations we make. Instead, the observer becomes embedded in a space with a theoretical approach and an intention, observational "gaze" (Wästerfors 2018). I employed non-participant observation as part of my mixed methods approach in the study of New Nordic aesthetics. The observational framework was influenced by a sensory ethnography methodological understanding to position restaurant spaces as sensory rich environments saturated with cultural storytelling elements (Pink

Ideal Type Thematic Framework	**Codes**
Connection to Place and Nature	Terroir; Freshness; Local products; Views into nature; Wine bottles; Raw materials
Design and Materiality	Danish furniture; Plating; Porous spaces; Texture, rough, imperfect; Extension of Danish living room; Open kitchen/visible kitchen design
Craftsmanship and Labor	Handmade ceramics; Cooking or preservation techniques; Foraging; Manual labor; A peek in the kitchen

Table 1. Ideal Type Framework and Codes

2015). During June of 2024 I conducted fieldwork in Copenhagen and visited five New Nordic restaurants for non-participant observation sessions. While I did not dine at each restaurant, I took the visits as opportunities to conduct systematic observations of the restaurant space, the kitchen, the people working and dining there, and anything else that could be absorbed. I asked for a tours of the spaces from members of the staff and, when possible, I sat at the bar or at a table for coffee and used that location as a viewpoint to observe the environment around me and take field notes. My non-participant observation methodological framework was based on the ideal type outline that I had constructed. I grouped observations and interactions I had into the three ideal type categories of New Nordic spaces that I constructed: connection to nature and place, design and materiality, and craftsmanship and labor. My methodological approach for non-participant observation in these spaces drew on Sarah Pink's sensory ethnography methodology (Pink 2015). Based on Pink's methodological approach, the New Nordic restaurants that I visited, to me the researcher and observer, becomes a "multisensory environment" where the researcher absorbs understandings of the space and knowledge becomes "embodied through sight, taste, sound, touch and smell" (Pink 2015:97). Taking this approach, my experience of the New Nordic restaurant spaces extended past a visual understanding. I focused on the textures of the materials around me and the objects that I touched; I focused on ambient sounds around me and the sound of cooks in the kitchen; the scents of dishes and the smell of the room. The way these elements came together also contributed to a broader sensory experience in the space. These elements become part of my field notes for analysis. The codes for the visual content analysis of New Nordic Instagram photos would be based on the field notes made during observational visits to the restaurants.

Visual content analysis

Visual research methods used in sociological and cultural studies function to uncover the cultural significance and embedded messages in the photos and images around us (Rose 2013). I employ visual content analysis in my mixed methods approach to understand the sustainability narratives embedded in the digital spaces of the New Nordic aesthetic. I focus on the Instagram accounts of five New Nordic restaurants. The way these restaurants were selected for analysis is described above. The decision to collect social media visuals, specifically Instagram posts from New Nordic restaurants, was situated in the idea that Instagram is established as a platform for sharing food-related narratives and sharing food experiences (Contois and Kish 2022; Leer and Povlsen 2016). In this sense, Instagram becomes a vast data source or "photo archive" to draw from for social and cultural research purposes (Eberle 2018). Visual content analysis becomes the primary research method that I employ in the collection and analysis of Instagram photos (Eberle 2018). After receiving permission from each restaurant's social media team, I collected a total of 300 images from the Instagram pages of five New Nordic restaurants—60 images per restaurant. The images were imported to MAXQDA24—a data analysis tool for qualitative and mixed methods research—and coded based on the themes in the ideal type construction (connection to nature and place, design and materiality, and craftsmanship and labor). Each ideal type theme would have a set of observational elements that become the coded in each image.

Semi-structured interviews as complementary data

Semi-structured interviews also become a component of the mixed methods approach. Interviews with the staff and owners of the restaurants would allow me to gain insights into the narratives and approaches of the restaurants that could not be gained through observation or through the visual content analysis. I could gain an understanding about the sustainability practices and hear stories about where the ingredients are coming from, who the chefs and cooks are, and what the philosophical approach of the restaurant is. In this way I could also gain access to areas of the restaurants that I would normally not be able to access. I was able to see the kitchen spaces and more hidden prep kitchens, wine cellars and food pantries, and back rooms where the real storytelling of the restaurant happens. In this sense, I got a behind the scenes access to the restaurant. In speaking with the staff at the restaurants I was also able to get less formal insights into how the staff operates and hear stories about the work life there. Through a semi-structured interview format, I was able to let interviewees speak freely and hear their thoughts on the restaurant. In this sense I was also able to hear how that restaurant fits in in the Copenhagen gastronomy scene. This reinforced my understanding of the connections and the idea of the gastronomy scene as a network or subculture. The interviews I conducted were transcribed and coded with the same ideal type framework that the visual content analysis utilised.

Analysis

For my research I conducted a visual content analysis to explore the sustainability narratives and storytelling elements embedded in the Instagram photos of five New Nordic restaurants in Copenhagen. These include Kadeau, Il Buco, Barr, Frank, and Bobe. By using MAXQDA24, a qualitative and mixed methods data analysis software, I systematically coded 300 images to identify patterns and themes in the Instagram photos, along a framework that would help me identify the way storytelling elements are used to construct a broader narrative of social, environmental, and economic sustainability. These patterns and themes that I identified become my main findings and each contribute to the construction of broader sustainability narratives surrounding the New Nordic aesthetic regime. The analysis was based on the ideal type framework that is used to identify and group elements of the New Nordic into types. The ideal types are organised along three main axes: connection to nature and place, design and materiality, and craftsmanship and labor. These axes each received a set of five to six codes that would be applied to the photos in the analysis. All 300 images were sourced directly from the official Instagram pages of each of the five New Nordic restaurants. I used both standard posts and story posts from all restaurants and imported them direction to MAXQDA24 for coding and analysis. MAXQDA24 allowed for a comprehensive coding of the images and analysis along the three axes of the ideal type framework I developed—connection to nature and place, design and materiality, and craftsmanship and labor. Each photo was analysed with this framework and often had multiple codes from the different axes applied to it. I explain the three categories of the ideal type framework in more detail here:

Connection to nature and place

Connection to nature and place as an ideal type theme focuses on elements that communicate a connection to local producers, natural landscapes, urban environments, or local craftspeople. Raw materials and what I label as terroir objects fall under this category because they communicate a sense of place and become storytelling tools either embedded in dishes or in the physical restaurant space. Windows that offer views of waterways or natural areas were also categorised under this theme. In addition, displays of ingredients such as the displaying of vegetables and seafood would also be considered as connection to nature or place as they communicated a sense of directness from a natural source, such as a local farm or a water source. Dishes that encapsulate a natural Nordic landscape or elements that communicate a taste of place are woven into New Nordic dining experiences as storytelling elements. These storytelling elements intersect with the other themes too. For example, the displaying of wine bottles signifies a connection to place or wine region while also intersection with the themes of *design and materiality* and *craftsmanship and labor.*

Design and materiality

Design and materiality as an ideal type category draws attention to the intentionality of the layout of the restaurant space and the selection of objects to be interacted with and displayed. This ranges from the postindustrial building spaces, which many New Nordic restaurants occupy and adapt, to small tableware objects that guests interact with. The elements here become storytelling tools which, through an intentional curation and design, connect to a broader sustainability narrative and appear as patterns in various spaces. The observed ways that people interact with artefacts and the restaurant spaces further connect this category and its elements to other themes. For example, the design of a window overlooking the water also intersects with a *connection to nature and place*. An open kitchen layout and the ability to see cooks at work intersects with *craftsmanship and labor*. Design and materiality also intersects with themes of texture and touch. The textures seen and felt in New Nordic spaces are used to communicate ideas of authenticity and connections to craftspeople. By analysing the way design and materials influence the ways people interact in those spaces and the way materials become part of a design narrative allow me to gain insights into the way those elements are used to construct broader narratives.

Craftsmanship and labor

Craftsmanship and labor as an ideal type category draws attention to physical objects, artefacts, and spaces that communicate a connection to skilled craftspeople or makers. This category also draws attention to the visible labor of cooks in the kitchen, restaurant staff, and the labor of a chef in a chef-led restaurant in guiding the culinary process and weaving a narrative into the menu. However, not all labor surrounding the New Nordic is visible from the restaurant space. Much of the labor being performed is happening in forests, fields, and farms through the work of foragers, farmers, animals, fishermen, purveyors, winemakers, delivery drivers, and even dishwashers. Sometimes their labor is recognised in the restaurant through artefacts or dishes, but it is largely labor that is performed behind the scenes and goes unnoticed. Artefacts like ceramics, furniture pieces, and buildings can become embodiments of labor which I explore further. However, labor can also be sensed or visualised through the sound of kitchen work and curated depictions of cooks at work. Signs of craftsmanship and labor are embedded throughout New Nordic spaces and their presentation or visibility speaks to the way that manual labor can be revalued and elevated in these spaces. In order to illustrate these points I also draw on outside examples. For example, using the labor of a barista in a coffee shop to help illustrate the patterns and similarities that exist between different consumption spaces and gastronomic establishments.

The visual content analysis of 300 instagram photos from five New Nordic restaurants in Copenhagen allowed me to identify several patterns and build key themes. The themes that I identified were integrated with field observations and semi-structured interviews I conducted to construct the thematic essays in my findings section. Each of the themes discusses the storytelling elements in New Nordic spaces and the way they construct a broader narrative of social, economic, and environmental sustainability. A code matrix browser, one of the visual analysis tools on

MAXQDA24, allows some of the emerging patterns to be visualised. Through the visual content analysis and code matrix produced by the qualitative analysis software I am already able to identify themes. Based on the visualisation of coding data I see some patterns emerge already: restaurants Frank, Il Buco, Barr, and Kadeau have a focus on displaying connections to nature and place through raw materials, fresh ingredients, photos of wine bottles, and local products. Restaurant Bobe also displays these but has a much heavier focus on showing the labor in the kitchen space and projects that cooks are working on. Restaurants Kadeau and Barr emphasis materiality through the display of texture and textured objects. This includes a focus on rough, handmade ceramics, thick dining tables, exposed brick walls, and natural cloths. These patterns are examined in depth in my findings section through six thematic essays that analyse the construction and interaction of these storytelling elements. I construct the following thematic essays based on my analysis: the performance of labor, postindustrial spaces and textures, terroir objects and raw materials, foraging and fermentation, the extension of the Danish living room, and performance on the plate. Each of these themes analyses the observed and embedded storytelling elements and explain how they connect and construct broader sustainability narratives within the New Nordic aesthetic regime.

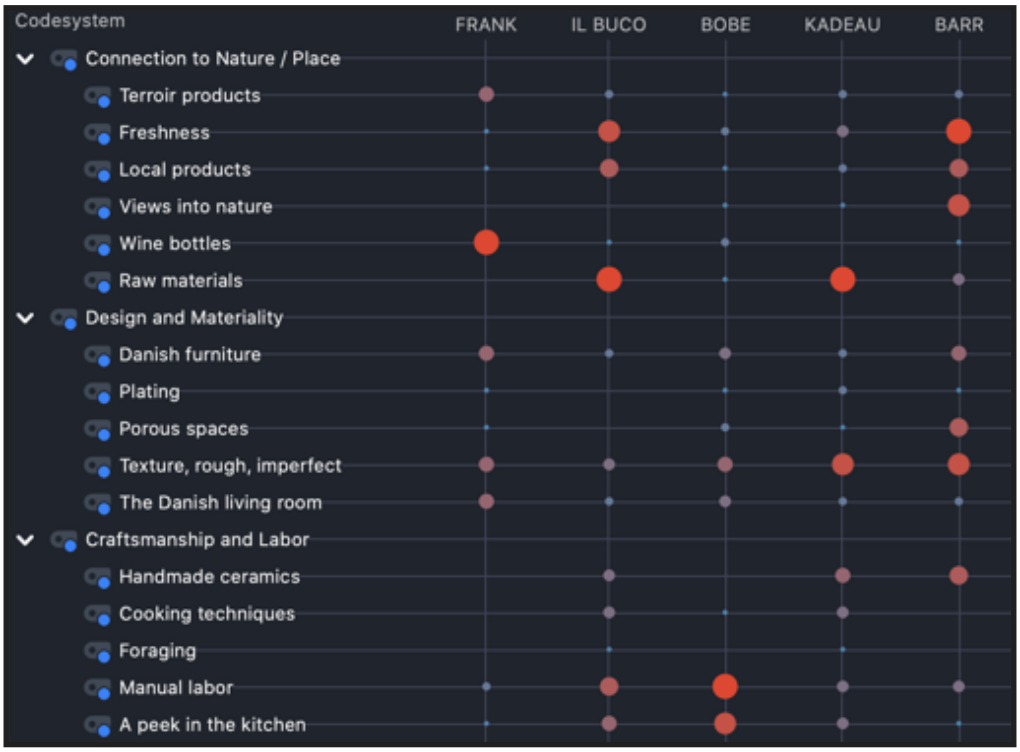

Figure 1. MAXQDA matrix shows the frequency of codes by restaurant. Source: author, 2024.

IV. Findings

In this section I present my findings in the form of six thematic essays which describe and discuss an aspect of the New Nordic sustainability narrative through a focus on smaller storytelling elements. The six themes draw on the ideal type categories that I used to construct coding segments—connection to nature and place, design and materiality, and craftsmanship and labor—but they cross over those categories to analyse how different storytelling elements intersect and interact to construct a narrative of social, economic, and environmental sustainability. Throughout the thematic essays are photos from the visual content analysis that help to give insights into the patterns that emerged in the visual content analysis as well as to visualise the storytelling elements that appear throughout New Nordic spaces. The figures are presented in groups of three or four photos to depict patterns or themes across spaces.

Performance of Labor

In the realm of New Nordic Cuisine, the labor of cooks and chefs is not just a utilitarian function for the production of dishes but it becomes a performance and part of broader sustainability narratives. Manual labor in the New Nordic kitchen reflects the "revaluation of artisanal labor" observed in the Global Brooklyn aesthetic (Parasecoli and Halawa 2021:16). The skill of cooks and chefs, built up through years of experience and repetition is something I observed in my observation visits of restaurant spaces. While watching cooks at work I noted the precise knife work, fluid movements, and a choreography in the kitchen as cooks navigated the space and flowed with each others movements. Seeing the chopping of herbs, plating of dishes, and handling of ingredients as a bodily performance communicated to me the chef's training and skills. In the New Nordic kitchen, the culinary skills and craftsmanship of cooks are revealed and designed to be viewed and sensed.

Each of the five restaurants that I observed incorporated a design of the open kitchen where the kitchen space was visible or at least partially visible to guests. Almost like the presence of a stage in the dining room, the open kitchens drew the attention of diners to that space as the sound of kitchen work created an atmosphere where the chef and cooks play a central role. The design of the open kitchen is a key element of New Nordic architecture and influences the way that the cooks' labor becomes a performance. The architecture invites the guest to view the work being done and integrates the kitchen culture into part of the overall ambiance and sensory landscape. The sounds of chefs calling out orders in the kitchen and calls for "service" or "hands"—calls to signal to staff that dishes are ready to be served—become part of the background sounds in the restaurant space. This blurring of boundaries between the kitchen and dining space mirrors architectural and urban design concepts that describe the blurring of boundaries between inside and outside spaces (Holm 2010; Hahn 2023). Holm applies the idea of "soft urbanity" to describe the blurring of social and physical boundaries in coffee shops (2010). His work reflects the blurring of boundaries between the

kitchen and dining areas in New Nordic spaces too. The sensory landscape of the kitchen space and the dining space come together with the intent of communicating a certain transparency and openness. This reflects notions of openness about ingredients, the origin of ingredients, the workplace treatment of staff, and the restaurant culture. There is nothing to be hidden.

Blurring of boundaries between kitchen and dining space reflects a trend of food design outside of the New Nordic aesthetic too. Traditional French and Mediterranean fine dining establishments are treated as what Hahn describes as "culinary temples" in *The Restaurant as a Medium (Connect/ Disconnect): On Culinary Temples and Porous Spaces* (Hahn 2023:55). "Culinary temples" force an inauthentic appreciation of the cuisine by turning the restaurant into a metaphorical temple or art gallery (Hahn 2023:55). The outside world is sealed off with heavy doors and the kitchen is isolated physically and symbolically so that no disturbances from the urban spaces or the labor spaces—the kitchen—can disturb the guests. Hahn writes that in "the classic fine dining restaurant, there is a solid partition between the 'art space' of the restaurant and the rest of the world: Beyond the dining room's limits there may be or surely is disordered noise" (Hahn 2023:57). Purposeful boundaries between inside and outside, the kitchen and the dining room, further signify a separation between "luxury from the common, order from noise, cultish dining from the rather simple action of eating" (Hahn 2023:58). Standing in complete contrast to the New Nordic aesthetic, the cuisine in these classical fine dining spaces becomes "simulated," artificial, and emotionless (Hahn 2023:57). There is no connection to the human element, the outside world, or to the natural origins of products being consumed. The metaphor of the classic fine dining space as an art gallery separates the labor of the cooks from the dishes that are served, just as an art gallery present artists' work in a vacuum, where the artist's labor is typically not observed.

New Nordic aesthetics reflect Hahn's concept of "porous" or "permeable" spaces where the connections between the organs of the restaurant and the connections to the disorder and wildness of the urban and natural realms can be viewed (Hahn 2023). The New Nordic aesthetic seems to celebrate just the opposite of classical fine dining restaurants: the imperfection and disorder of the outside world, the sounds and ambience of the kitchen, the invitation to think about the origin of the ingredients. Inviting those aspects inside and to be interacted with saturates the New Nordic with sensory storytelling and becomes part of a narrative of authenticity and openness. Porous gastronomy spaces not only reflect the openness between interior and exterior but also encourage a visibility of the restaurant's "infrastructure" and mechanisms that let it function (Parasecoli and Halawa 2021:21). Kitchen spaces and kitchen labor become part of the restaurant infrastructure visible in porous environments. Observations of the Global Brooklyn aesthetic recognise the visibility of infrastructure in consumption spaces as an element of authenticity and the postindustrial design of spaces: they are seen as "urban authenticity stripped to the core" (Parasecoli and Halawa 2021:11). Exposed pipes, repurposed wine barrels, and rough brick walls are elements of the Global Brooklyn and New Nordic aesthetics of postindustrial spaces and visible infrastructures (Gvion 2021:133). This observed style celebrates the human touch and manual labor

that goes into the things we consume. It also provides a contrast to the unsustainable "anonymity and mechanisation of mass-produced food" (Parasecoli and Halawa 2021). The visibility of kitchen infrastructure thus invites guests to think about the labor involved in the dish, from the fishermen or farmer to the cooks and even the labor of the animals or plants.

Manual labor as a performance can be further viewed through Perullo's observation about the evolution of the modern restaurant. Perullo asserts that "the modern restaurant has been based on the assembly-line model and on the fragmentation and compartmentalization of labor" but that has since evolved to break out of this model (Perullo 2023:261). An "assembly-line model" of gastronomy in parallel with global capitalism and industrial food systems stands in direct contrast to the New Nordic aesthetic (Perullo 2023:261). An approach to food design that separates areas of labor from the dining space is a characteristic of the classic, and outdated, fine dining restaurants that Hahn discusses as well (Hahn 2023). Through the positioning of the cooks and design of the restaurant spaces, New Nordic approaches seek to break out of this industrial model of food production. By conveying a connection to human touch, with passions and learned skills in the kitchen, and integrating the environment of the restaurant space, New Nordic aesthetics communicate a critique of large, industrialised food systems. The kitchen invites the diner's gaze to observe the human-scaled approach and the people involved that the New Nordic embraces rather than a homogenised, anonymous, industrialised approach to cooking and consumption.

Observing the valuing of manual labor is not isolated to the kitchen. *Global Brooklyn* illustrates manual labor as an example of knowledge and training in the description of a Warsaw coffee shop called Relaks. They write that "Relaks celebrates manual labor and allows the guests, largely employed in postindustrial, creative, and service economy sectors, to fantasize about the life of manufacture. The figure of the barista is exemplary here: her decidedly manual labor does not remain unseen and unexamined like it would some years ago. On the contrary, through training, self-teaching, competitions, and storytelling, it becomes publicly visible as a valuable and fashionable practice. Her craft is also celebrated and sought after as a form of knowledge and expertise, a spectacle to be watched and worth the wait." (Parasecoli and Halawa 2021:4). The barista's position as a performer is particularly clear in this example as they describe her as a "spectacle to be watched" (Parasecoli and Halawa 2021:4). Her bodily movements and interactions with the machinery around her imply the skill level, knowledge, and time that has gone into her training. It becomes a value and a sign of quality—a non-verbal guarantee of a good end product. Coffee knowledge and an understanding of coffee culture would also be implied through observing her at work. The manual labor performed by the barista, like the manual labor performed by the New Nordic cook, positions the body as a storytelling element in consumption spaces. As with the choreography in kitchen spaces, gastronomy work in other realms like coffee shops, bakeries, and bars positions the body and its movement through space as a dance. The choreography of the barista operating an espresso machine, a baker scoring a loaf of bread, and a cook chopping

Figure 2. Portrayal of hands at work. Source: screenshots from Instagram @barrcph (used with permission)

vegetables translates into edible artefacts that embody the culture, skill, labor, and personality of those involved.

The framing of manual labor in the New Nordic kitchen becomes clear throughout the visual content analysis. It becomes a tool to convey value to an image, edible artefact, or depiction of the restaurant, while also allowing a peek into the kitchen. The depiction of hands in Instagram photos emerged in all five of the restaurants whose photos I analysed. These images showing chefs carefully plating dishes, handling fresh ingredients, or ladling a sauce show the embodied nature of culinary work in the New Nordic kitchen. It communicates a certain labor of care, skill, craftsmanship, and attention to detail that in turn becomes a part of each dish. The human labor involved conveys a culinary knowledge and a sense of respect for the ingredients, implying that each ingredient, no matter how small, receives the care and attention it needs to become part of a beautiful dish. Implied also is the idea that no ingredient goes to waste. The act of ladling a sauce over a dish, an act that is often done table side right before consumption, is also depicted frequently in Instagram photos and was often observed in restaurant spaces. Ladling of the sauce becomes part of the culinary performance, communicating care for the final plating of the dish and creating a connection between the kitchen and the dining room. Taking the extra step to bring a sauce, or another ingredient, to the table to finish a dish in front of the guest shows the commitment to quality and is always accompanied by a short explanation, I observed. As depicted in figure 2, my analysis identified the hands of cooks at work as a way to signal quality and attention to detail. In addition, observations and interviews gave me insight into the style of service and approach of New Nordic restaurants. A server that I spoke with explained that while they are responsible for

delivering the food to the table, cooks are encouraged to deliver dishes when they can. The cooks can often explain the technical details of a dish better than the servers because they were the ones making it. The server also confirms that the service style of having the cooks interact with guests allows for connections to be formed between them. Sometimes guests who are interested in a recipe or more specific details will chat longer with a cook or chef for an explanation.

Though the open kitchen design of the New Nordic aesthetic offers views of cooks at work and allows kitchen sounds and smells to become part of the overall ambience, my visual content analysis shows that depictions offering a further "peek into the kitchen" were common in the Instagram pages of restaurants. Photos depicting cooks at work—stirring a pot or preparing ingredients, for example—show a more labor-intensive side of kitchen work than the photos of hands delicately plating ingredients or ladling a sauce. A behind the scenes looks in New Nordic spaces humanise kitchen work and break down the barrier between guests and the labor that goes into the meal. Just as the extra step to ladle a sauce over a dish right before eating shows attention to detail and respect for the ingredients. Depicting cooking as a careful skill and as a labor-intensive process through these photos constructs a narrative where effort and attention to detail are both crucial parts of the performance in New Nordic spaces. Both kinds of work become part of the story of the restaurants: the final dishes that are consumed and the labor behind those dishes. This story challenges the design of classic fine dining restaurants which hide the people, labor, and kitchen behind the scenes. Parasecoli and Halawa confirm these ideas in their analysis of the Global Brooklyn aesthetic too: "Through visual references and carefully staged performances, manual labor is elevated into craftsmanship whose value is enriched by new meaning, higher social status, and cultural capital" (2021:11). In this sense, visuals of labor become storytelling tools that links the New Nordic aesthetic to broader social, economic, and environmental sustainability narratives

Postindustrial Spaces and Textures

New Nordic restaurants often occupy postindustrial spaces and adopt postindustrial aesthetics into their design. Postindustrial elements, and an emphasis on texture in those spaces, become storytelling tools that contribute to broader sustainability narratives of the aesthetic. Based on the work of Daniel Bell, I define postindustrial spaces as areas or physical infrastructures formerly used to support or house industrial activity (1973). Spaces like abandoned warehouses, former factory areas, or old docklands can all be considered postindustrial spaces. In this section I look at both the postindustrial spaces, their characteristics, and textural elements visible in the New Nordic aesthetic side by side, as they overlap significantly, to understand the sustainability narratives that emerge. I use the word texture to refer to the qualities of materials and design elements that contribute to the overall sensory experience. This can include the roughness of brick walls, old hardwood floors, thick wooden dining tables, visible infrastructure like exposed pipes or ceiling rafters, and the imperfections of handmade ceramics. These elements construct a sense of authenticity, imperfection, and connection to craftsmanship in New Nordic spaces—"Textures and shapes of

Figure 3. Postindustrial elements in New Nordic spaces. Source: screenshots from Instagram (left to right) @ilbuco @restaurantbobe @barrcph (used with permission)

things are rugged and reveal the process of their making" (Parasecoli and Mateusz Halawa 2021:13). It is also an aesthetic choice that reinforces a preference for repurposing existing spaces and materials. In this section I talk about how the postindustrial and textural patterns in New Nordic spaces, which I observed and which shows up in my visual content analysis, can be seen as a critique of sterile, industrialised, mass produced environments and food systems. I also discuss how the postindustrial design is connected to ideas of nostalgia, authenticity, and craftsmanship.

During my fieldwork visits and the visual content analysis I conducted, postindustrial references popped up everywhere. Particularly at the restaurant Barr did I notice these postindustrial elements integrated into the design of the space. Barr is located on the Copenhagen waterfront in "an ancient and beautiful port warehouse from the 18th century" (Frigolé 2023:144). Some sources say that it was used to store salted fish and whale oil from the Baltic Sea and North Sea while others say that it functioned as a wine cellar (Frigolé 2023). It may have been used for many different purposes over the course of its roughly 250 years of existence. Today the former warehouse is occupied by a cultural center called the North Atlantic House, some offices, and the restaurant Barr. Two of the first things I noticed about Barr the first time I visited were the one meter thick walls and massive support beams lining the ceiling. The original 250 year old oak ceiling support beams, which are full of texture and colour, create an incredible atmosphere in the space. It felt like stepping back in time. Massive windows in wall cut-outs create a cross section depicting the thickness and sturdiness of the walls—it feels like a fortress. More subtle details include rough and natural looking wooden counters, bundles of herbs hanging on the walls, and stone-coloured brick walls. A look out of the windows offers views of the water.

Not only are the postindustrial design elements relevant to the New Nordic aesthetic, but its recent history is as well. Before the restaurant Barr occupied the former warehouse, it housed the flagship

of the New Nordic movement: Noma. Restaurant Noma occupied the space from when it opened in 2003 to 2016 (Frigolé 2023). This fact is particularly relevant in the discussion of the design as stepping inside restaurant Barr is also stepping inside the (former) restaurant Noma. Based on images of the Noma space, the design is very similar to its current state. Different furniture and interior elements exist, but Barr has largely adopted the style of Noma. This transition from Noma to Barr, and the similarities in design, reflects a continuation of the Noma, and New Nordic, philosophy in that space. The space also embodies the first impressions of Noma's interpretation of the New Nordic and vice versa, which becomes embedded in media visuals and images.

The sense of being transported to the past that I experienced in restaurant Barr, points to themes of nostalgia and authenticity being woven into New Nordic storytelling. This "nostalgia for postindustrial and 'authentic' working-class spaces" in the New Nordic aesthetic (Leer 2021:92) not only intersects with approaches to cuisine and cooking techniques, but also becomes a spatial critique of sterile, commercialised, and industrialised architectures and food systems. References to primitivism, the ancient, the prehistoric, and a romanticised view of the past through the architectures of that space become part of the New Nordic storytelling and reflect the primitive style sometimes visible in New Nordic cooking techniques (Kelting 2017). The decision of restaurant Barr to occupy this specific space, and to keep those postindustrial and prehistoric elements in the design, also speaks to tensions between past, present, and future in the New Nordic. It shows the way that the New Nordic aesthetic creates a performance or dialogue between past and present while also projecting an image of sustainability through repurposing and reusing. While there exists a dialogue between the past and present, New Nordic approaches can be viewed as a "utopian project" that seeks to spark food system transitions through a cultural aesthetic of sustainability (Kelting 2017:186). Kelting suggests that this orientation is a driving force of the New Nordic idea: "Paradoxically, while both New Nordic culinary aesthetics and the movement's media coverage refer to the past, it is also a utopian project. This future orientation likely gives the movement its thrust and sticking power as a cultural force…Certain directions of the New Nordic movement might not only be a punchline but also provide more sustainable and ethical foodways across the world—for example, by questioning the limits of the edible in a food-insecure and overpopulated world. By changing aesthetics around foraging, bug eating, and the deliciousness of wild things, Noma may in fact be actively participating in a better future—and not just rhetorically. The multiplicity of temporal perspectives is striking here, combining an exoticized past, microseasonality, and the far future" (Kelting 2017:186). Through the integration of design, practices, and cuisine that points to the past, the New Nordic constructs an aesthetic that encourages and glamourises more sustainable food systems and ethical consumption. Through the appreciation and embedding of pre-historic elements in the restaurant Barr space we see an element of the past in a gastronomic context that is defined by innovation.

The textures and imperfections visible in postindustrial New Nordic spaces become storytelling elements that contribute to the narrative of social and economic sustainability. Roughness of

Figure 4. Handmade ceramics. Source: screenshots from Instagram @barrcph (left) @restaurantkadeau (two on right) (used with permission)

surfaces, raw materials, and exposed bricks not only connect gastronomic spaces to ideas of the past but they celebrate the human touch, local products, and imperfections as signs of quality, craftsmanship, authenticity, and working with real people and real materials. Again, these intentionally designed elements function as a critique of the anonymity and sterility of unsustainable mass production in a capitalistic society. The 250 year old ceiling beams in restaurant Barr stand as a symbol of quality and sturdiness which can be applied to the cuisine too. Quality is, in fact, written in to the New Nordic Cuisine manifesto in the ninth point where it calls for restaurants to "combine local self-sufficiency with regional sharing of high-quality products" (New Nordic Cuisine Manifesto 2004).

The celebration of imperfections and texture in the restaurant space and in the materials—ceramics plates and bowls, wooden spoons, hand-finished tables—that guests interact with convey a connection to sustainable, small-scale economies and an appreciation of the local. Handmade ceramics displaying a human element with human imperfections become a key symbol of the New Nordic aesthetic. While plates and bowls in the New Nordic restaurant function as vessels for holding the food that is consumed, they become a frame to display the food as an art piece too. The framing of the food as art positions ceramics as an important element of the presentation and performance of dining. In addition, if the food is served warm, the plate or bowl should also be warm to retain heat. This is a small function of the dish and serves as a sign of attention to detail that can be sensed through touch. The symbol of handmade ceramic dishes—filled with visible imperfections, unevenness, splotches of colour, and a range of different textures—are everywhere in the New Nordic aesthetic. Often in earthy tones: shades of brown, beige, or sand colours, reflecting a connection to nature or natural origins, each dish is as a result completely unique. In this sense, each piece of ceramic tells a story about the person who made it and where the clay came from. Reflecting the storytelling of the food served in or on the ceramic, the two together show how storytelling elements are embedded in the New Nordic. The textured and imperfect ceramics in

New Nordic spaces contrast the polished, white, machined plates and bowls that are often found in classic fine dining restaurants. These bright white dishes point to the anonymous, unsustainable, and aesthetic homogeneity of large scale manufacturing rather than small scale handmade products, produced using local raw ingredients. Produced with the intention of uniformity, the tableware of the traditional fine dining aesthetic reflect the sterility and repetitiveness found in capitalistic societies. In this sense, the use of imperfect, handmade ceramics reflects the revaluing of "artisanal labor" as discussed in relation to the Global Brooklyn aesthetic (Parasecoli and Halawa 2021:16) and a rejection of unsustainable, industrialised productions.

Visible textures and postindustrial elements in the New Nordic aesthetic also reflect the concept of porous spaces (Hahn 2023). The infrastructure of a restaurant space—like the ceiling beams and exposed bricks in Barr—are left exposed to show the support elements at work. This contributes to a feeling of openness. As with the open kitchen concept as an element of porous spaces to reveal the manual labor of kitchen work, postindustrial design elements in the New Nordic aesthetic intentionally function to reveal the infrastructural elements. The infrastructural elements become signs of the daily operations and the daily labor being performed in that space. The postindustrial space comes with a more relaxed, working class feel—also reflecting the revaluing of "artisanal labor" (Parasecoli and Halawa 2021:16). The blurring of boundaries that describes porous spaces, is also reflected in the temporal aspect of the New Nordic aesthetic. In New Nordic spaces, the barrier between worn, postindustrial elements and the refined, future-thinking approach to cooking becomes blurred and blend together. What Kelting describes as a "paradox" of the New Nordic is in another sense a blurring of boundaries, observed in physical spaces and across time.

The blurring of boundaries can be seen throughout the New Nordic aesthetic. Postindustrial design with a working class feel situates the New Nordic restaurant also as a sort of culinary workshop or test kitchen where cooks can experiment and test out ideas. This boundary between the Nordic kitchen as a space for production also becomes a learning space for testing, experiments, and innovation. The postindustrial element becomes a metaphor and a storytelling tool to illustrate this. In addition, the industrial spirit of the space seeps into the kitchen. Viewing the New Nordic kitchen as a workshop or space for innovation is even written in to the New New Cuisine manifesto in the seventh point: "To develop potentially new applications of traditional Nordic food products" (New Nordic Cuisine Manifesto 2004). A spirit of development and experimentation is a pillar of the food philosophy and can be seen in the aesthetic too. While the points in the manifesto are open to interpretation, the seventh point can clearly draw a connection to innovation for sustainability. The New Nordic kitchen can thus become spaces for innovation where ideas are born that can have widespread sustainability impacts and trigger significant food systems transitions for the better.

Terroir Objects and Raw Materials

A number of artefacts and styles of presentation referencing nature and the origins of products appear throughout physical and digital New Nordic spaces. These intentional references to place and to Nordic natural resources become storytelling tools that communicate closeness with nature, connections to local producers, respect for natural landscapes, and allow viewers to question the origin of ingredients. Food and artefacts placed throughout restaurant spaces become thought-provoking references to time and place. Visual and tactile storytelling through terroir objects and raw materials add to the broader narrative of sustainability. I categorise these as raw materials and terroir objects. Raw materials refer to the representations of ingredients that display its freshness and wildness. They are visuals of produce, dishes, and ingredients that are as fresh and pure as possible. They make us question the origins of those ingredients. Terroir objects are artefacts placed

Figure 5. Shells incorporated into dishes. Source: screenshots from Instagram @restaurantkadeau (used with permission)

throughout a restaurant space, integrated into dishes, and sometimes more hidden in the kitchen, that make reference to a place. The term terroir is borrowed from wine and refers to "the set of qualities that shape the sensory and intellectual appreciation of a wine, including soil, climate, grape variety and wine-making techniques. In the case of placed-based cultural tourism development and promotion, the terroir of a place includes history, local traditions and cultures, religion, industry, the natural environment, cuisine and arts, as well as attractions and events" (Smith 2015:220). While this definition focuses on terroir related to wine, it can be applied to food too. Terroir objects become decorative references to producers and place, signalling an ethical and conscious approach to production and consumption. These objects often seem cosmetic at first but become storytelling tools at closer examination.

Shells are a key artefact, both a raw ingredient and terroir object, visible throughout the New Nordic aesthetic. They offer a rich reference to the natural water resources and abundance of seafood in the Nordic region. Many New Nordic restaurants utilise shells from scallops, razor clams, mussels, and sea urchins as serving vessels. Shells as serving vessels can be seen throughout Instagram posts of New Nordic restaurants (I show a few examples posted by Kadeau in figure 5). The use of shells transforms them from waste—something that would normally be discarded—into a storytelling object and vessel to hold food that becomes part of the performative nature of the New Nordic meal. The reuse of shells implies broader resourcefulness and responsible consumption in the kitchen. Just as in the way that cooks in the New Nordic kitchen work to use every part of an ingredient, producing as little waste as possible, the use of shells reinforces the idea that natural products, extracted from the landscape and waters, should be respected and every piece should be used. They serve as a textural and visual reference to the Nordic waters that allow the diner to question the origin of the ingredients inside. The organic imperfections and textures of the shell also contrast with the delicate dishes inside. In addition, the shell becomes an interactive element in the dining experience. Dishes served with the shell on top, something commonly observed in the New Nordic dishes, invite the diner to interact with the dish and offers a sense of discovery. Interacting with the shell engages the senses and invites the diner to question the origins of the product. In this sense, the shell becomes a sensory storytelling element that draws attention to the natural landscapes where the food came from, the care and resourcefulness in its presentation, and the broader message of environmental responsibility.

The presentation of fish and seafood in New Nordic dishes also allows the guest to interact with the thought of the origins of the product and implies a narrative of respect for Nordic landscapes, highlighting the freshness of the raw ingredients. The fish as a symbol is presented in a way to show its raw, unprocessed form. Images of fish depicted in the New Nordic restaurant Noma's cookbook allow the viewer to interact with narratives of origin and Nordic natural resources. L. Sasha Gora writes that "a picture of a raw fish may not be traditionally appetizing, but in the context of NOMA, it encourages the reader to think about the waters from which the fish comes, and—because of the photograph's abstract composition—to visually take in the fish's texture" (Gora

Figure 6. Depictions of fish and seafood as raw materials. Source: screenshot from Instagram (left to right) @restaurantbarr @restaurantkadeau @restaurantbarr (used with permission)

2017:13). Gora's analysis of the Noma cookbook and commentary on photos of raw materials asserts that the "raw materials" are not just ingredients, but that they are storytelling elements (Gora 2017:13). She also makes a distinction between the amateur photographer and the professional food photographer. "That amateur deluge has put pressure on elite food photographers to do more with their shots. Now that it's so easy to make a humble sandwich look like manna from heaven, the best food photographers are taking a turn for the avant-garde, producing pictures that inspire their viewers to meditate as well as salivate" (Gora 2017:13). The application to the construction of the New Nordic aesthetic takes both the professional and amateur photographer's work into consideration. Both become storytelling visuals but sometimes with different formats. In addition, parts of the fish that normally would be discarded become entire dishes in the New Nordic kitchen embodying the ethos of responsible consumption in the kitchen. Dishes like glazed cod tail at restaurant Barr, cod collar schnitzel, and cod head with seaweed flatbread at Noma highlight the use of the entire fish—both the head and tail of the fish are repurposed into fascinating new dishes (Redzepi 2010). This resourcefulness in the kitchen and the presentation of the fish as a raw, pure ingredient works as a visual invitation to reflect on the Nordic landscape and the waters where the seafood was caught. This becomes a storytelling tool that aligns with the idea of more conscious and responsible consumption practices, contributing to the broader narrative of sustainable approaches to cooking and eating within the New Nordic aesthetic regime.

Wine bottles displayed in New Nordic restaurants are not just remnants of finished meals or decorative objects. They are what I label as terroir objects—objects displayed in the physical restaurant space that make reference to a time and place while communicating a narrative of shared experiences. Empty wine bottles appear throughout New Nordic spaces in various forms: sometimes they are repurposed into candleholders or become part of a translucent room partition. During observations and through my visual content analysis, I found that the restaurants Bobe and Frank, in particular, like displaying their wines. While speaking with staff at both restaurants, they alluded to the idea that the bottles were largely decorative but they do give insight into which wines have

Figure 7. Wine on display. Source: screenshot from Instagram @restaurantbobe (left) author's photo (right) (used with permission)

recently been opened and which regions are strongly represented, with the note that most often the wines that were particularly good are presented. Oftentimes, natural wine which are farmed organically and produced with less intervention than conventional wines make it on the display. Either way, whether natural or conventionally produced, the wines are meant to be viewed and their labels are meant to be examined, giving guests insight into wines that have been enjoyed in that space but also to symbolise good moments and happy gatherings. Wine references to ideas of the "good life" and the pleasure that comes with good food. At the same time, they are artefacts that connect to time—a specific vintage or year of harvest—and place—a specific wine region in the world like Burgundy, Rioja, Tuscany, or the Alsace, for example. Although wine production in the Nordic region is very limited[1], these bottles become reference points to time and place, and the knowledge that comes with the understandings of wine. The storytelling function of wine bottles on display emphasises the connection to small-scale, sustainable, artisanal winemakers, and winemaking regions around the world. This reflects New Nordic ideas that communicate a commitment to quality and celebrate the value of place in the gastronomic experience.

[1] Denmark is starting to produce more wine as climate change warms the region making viticulture possible

Figure 8. Dishes incorporating natural elements. Source: screenshots from Instagram @restaurantkadeau (used with permission)

In addition to wine bottles, seafood, and shells, other representations of raw materials and terroir objects appeared as a pattern through my visual content analysis. I observed the artistic display of fresh ingredients as physical representations of a seasonal New Nordic menu, as well as the use of objects like stones, wood, grasses, grains, and other natural materials that, together, contribute to sense of place storytelling. These natural objects were integrated into the design of restaurant spaces as decoration but also as storytelling elements. Just like wine bottles as both decorative objects and storytelling devices, observations of woods, stones, and bundles of herbs and grasses in physical and digital representations of the New Nordic contributed to the sense of place narrative. These objects were also integrated into the plating of dishes and functioned as more direct visual and tactile references to the Nordic landscape. At restaurant Kadeau, I observed drift woods and stones on display that would evoke ideas about a beach landscape. In this case, these objects originated from the Danish island Bornholm where Kadeau's head chef is from and a location which inspires the menu. These embodiments of place become inspirational elements and become storytelling elements about the people involved at the restaurant. At restaurant Il Buco, I observed bundles of herbs, dried grains, and grasses that made reference to the seaside environments and the forests of Denmark. In addition, through my conversations with the owner and staff I was told that one wall in the restaurant is completely constructed of seaweed. While this would have gone unnoticed to me, the wall of dried seaweed pulp represents the resourcefulness and use of natural materials, while also drawing connections to Nordic waters. Instead of relying on highly manufactured materials, the restaurant's use of natural products in the architecture of the space further communicates the spirit of innovation embedded in the New Nordic aesthetic. Through the visual content analysis, I observed a pattern of displaying ingredients that presented them as natural pieces of art. Primarily through Instagram photos, but sometimes observed in physical form, vegetables and other seasonal ingredients are presented in a collage form. This collage of ingredients functions as way to visualise the ingredients being used in dishes and draw a closer connection to time and place, and they work

Figure 9. Raw materials. Source: screenshots from Instagram @restaurantkadeau (used with permission)

to replace a written menu and, instead, allow ingredients to be depicted and framed. This framing of ingredients presents them as art and allows for guests to engage with each piece. They contribute to an understanding that each dish is made of many ingredients that start as simple, natural objects.

Foraging and Fermentation

Foraging is engrained in the DNA of New Nordic cuisine. The depiction of foraging in progress and the use of foraged ingredients become a symbolic representation of the culinary approach in many New Nordic kitchens. Responsible consumption, knowledge of ecosystems, and thoughtful labor are all tied in with depictions of foraging and foraged ingredients. Unlike harvesting ingredients that have been farmed, foraging implies the collection of ingredients found in the wild. Water sources, beaches, forests, fields, and even parks in urban areas can become areas where ingredients are collected. Mushrooms, seaweeds, herbs, berries, and seeds are commonly foraged and become integrated into New Nordic menus. The attention to detail and knowledge involved in the process situates foraging as a thoughtful and careful form of manual labor. Knowledge of the environment is crucial for the collection of things that are safe to eat and that taste good. Foraging is closely entangled with cooking and food preservation techniques that situate those elements as storytelling elements: "Smoking, fermenting, pickling, and storing the summer's bounty for the winter may indeed have originated as uniquely Northern strategies for coping with seasonal extremes, but for the last fifteen years, they have been packaged as rhetorics" (Kelting 2017:187).

Noma is particularly well-known for popularising the use of foraged ingredients in New Nordic kitchens (Kelting 2017). Foraging became central to the Noma approach and became a way for Noma, and other New Nordic restaurants, to challenge conventional food sourcing traditions. However, foraging is not a new practice at all and it points to the "primitiveness" that is embedded throughout the aesthetic (Kelting 2017:193). Noma's head chef, Rene Redzepi, embodied the

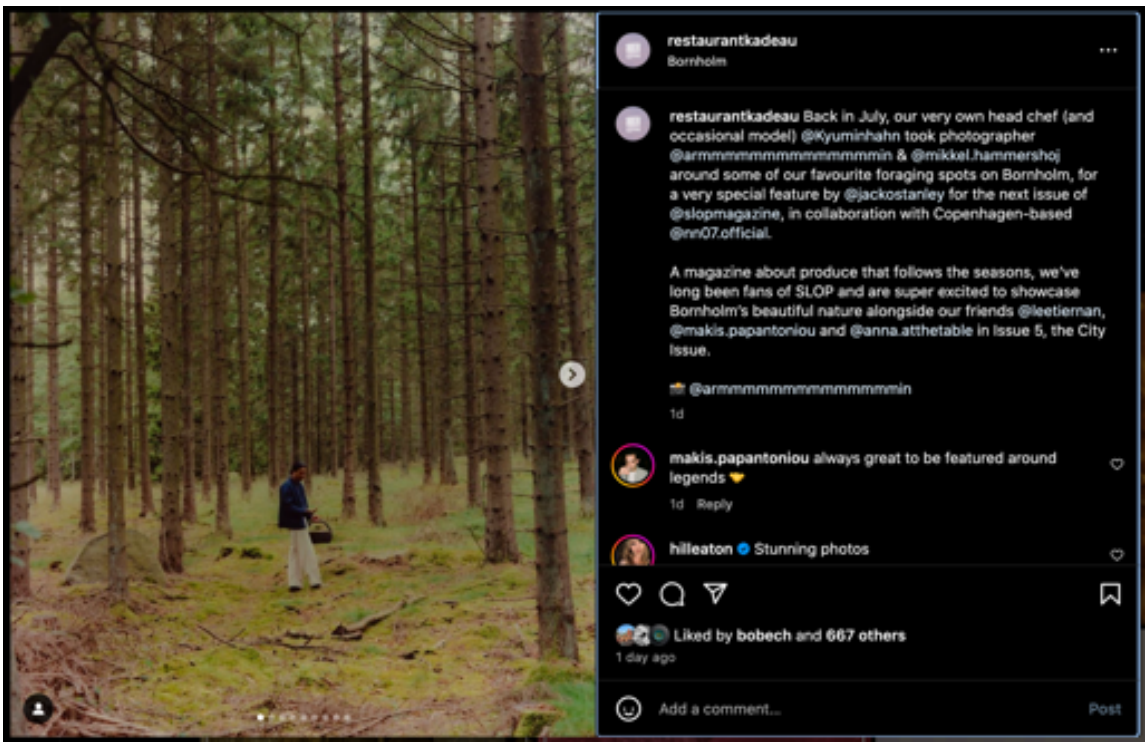

Figure 10. Foraging as adventure, meditation. Source: screenshot from Instagram @restaurantkadeau (used with permission)

practice of foraging and challenged the idea of what could be served in a fine dining restaurant. Pushing the limits of what could be considered haute cuisine or good food, foraging became part of the narrative of his kitchen and added value and storytelling to New Nordic dishes. Around the time that Noma's popularity was increasing, an entire "genre" of food criticism media emerged that focused on Rene Redzepi's foraging narratives: "Eating wild foods became so entangled with the New Nordic brand that one writer wrote an article for online food magazine Eater titled *The Era of the 'I Foraged With René Redzepi' Piece*. The article rounds up media contributions to the 'I foraged with Rene Redzepi' genre of food criticism. There are many. What started as pragmatics soon became the chefs' aesthetics. Aesthetics so remarkable that the media all over the world reported about the ants, the lichen, the leaf broth, and how good it all somehow tasted" (Kelting 2017:191). The media fascination with foraging and its integration into New Nordic cuisine has romanticised the practice. With foraging, Redzepi is portrayed as an explorer or viking who is adventuring into the wild Nordic landscape and discovering its resources. This image of the forager as an adventurer in a wild, unexplored landscape connects to narratives of culinary nostalgia, heritage, and connection to place (Gyimóthy 2017).

This representation of the forager and the revaluing of foraged ingredients is something that appeared in the visual content analysis too. The restaurant Kadeau represents foraging throughout their Instagram page and frames foraging as a contemplative, meditative, and wholesome practice. Through one post in particular (Figure 9), Kadeau frames their head chef as if he is on a meditative and thoughtful journey through the forest, not as if they are undertaking a laborious task to collect

ingredients for the evening's menu. This depiction situates the practice of foraging slightly differently than the way others might see it as an intense adventure in an unknown and unmapped wilderness. The photo from Kadeau suggests that forcing can be calming and a chance to reconnect with nature or an escape from the city. It evokes the idea of forest bathing. The concept of forest bathing is based on a Japanese practice—*shinrin yoku*—where the forest can be treated as a therapeutic or medicinal tool for healing (Hansen, Jones, and Tocchini 2017). While the idea of spending time in nature to relax is nothing new, the concept of forest bathing emerged as a response to dealing with work stress, stress stemming from a lack of green space in urban areas, and an increase in stress-related health issues in the 1980s (Hansen et al. 2017). Forest bathing supposedly reduces high blood pressure and can improve mental health and mindfulness. The depiction of foraging or forest bathing contrasts with a stressful or high-paced kitchen environment in a Nordic restaurant. While a meditative and healthful foraging walk would contrast with a stressful kitchen workplace, the depiction certainly aligns with values of wellbeing, thoughtfulness, and a reconnection with nature that the New Nordic emphasises.

However, the revaluing of foraging is a storytelling element in the New Nordic aesthetic regime that goes beyond the kitchen. Noma's sustainability and foraging narratives were expanded with the creation of *Mad* and *Vild Mad*—two programs designed to address issues of sustainability within hospitality and with broader food systems through education and advocacy (Kelting 2022). The *Mad* initiative hosts educational lectures and an academy for cooks, farmers, and other hospitality workers. The idea is that sustainable practices and approaches can be taught through a comprehensive approach to education and knowledge throughout gastronomy. *Vild Mad* is an offshoot of *Mad* that focuses on foraging. *Vild Mad* includes an app that functions as a foraging encyclopaedia and a collective mapping project where people can share foraging locations and insights into their foraging experiences. The platform and app can be used to identify plants, give insights into foraging environments, and provides cooking recipes based on foraged ingredients. In a sense, it offers a toolkit for any person to become a forager and cook with foraged ingredients. The app is described on their website as a tool "that will help you explore and eat the Danish landscape" (Vild Mad 2024). One particularly interesting initiative of the *Vild Mad* program is the creation of a network of expert foragers who they label as "rangers" who function as guides and knowledge sources for people to learn about the landscape and foraged ingredients (Vild Mad 2024). The title of "ranger" suggests a militarised approach to exploring the landscape, situating Nordic landscapes as untamed or uncontrolled spaces to be infiltrated, conquered, and exploited. A certain culinary nostalgia is at play here where the landscape is viewed as something particularly wild and untamed. While on one hand, Rene Redzepi and Noma communicate a militarised and exploitative vision of foraging a wild, unexplored Nordic landscape, with nods to Viking culture and hunter-gatherer societies, the reality is that foraging practices can be a sustainable alternative to industrialised food systems. The initiatives of *Mad* and *Vild Mad* are educational and designed to democratise access to natural resources and foraging knowledges. In this sense, foraging becomes embedded in the New Nordic aesthetic regime as a solution or sustainable response to unstable,

"precarious food systems" (Kelting 2022:191). While the foraging practices of the New Nordic Cuisine frame Nordic landscapes wild, untamed places, they also present a critique of industrialised food systems and offer a path to more sustainable food futures.

In New Nordic cuisine, foraging and fermentation are deeply connected. Fermentation embodies the narrative of a return to ancient cooking and preservation techniques, with applications in innovative, future-thinking kitchen spaces. Foraging and fermentation together become a storytelling element that can be framed as ancient solutions to seasonal scarcity and harsh climates, evoking images of hunter-gatherer societies as Kelting explains: "Smoking, fermenting, pickling, and storing the summer's bounty for the winter may indeed have originated as uniquely Northern strategies for coping with seasonal extremes" (Kelting 2017:187). New Nordic has embraced the narrative of fermentation, not just as a return to tradition, but also as an imperfect and natural process that represents an alternative to the industrialised food systems around us.

Do-it-yourself fermentation projects like baking sourdough bread and brewing kombucha show how some New Nordic narratives come into the domestic sphere. Home cooks can play the role of a chef or experimenter by testing out fermentation outside of a professional kitchen. The restaurant Noma even introduced a book titled *The Noma Guide to Fermentation*. The Noma fermentation guide, like the Noma cookbook analysed by Gora (2017), presents recipes that are complex and time consuming, but allow the reader to fantasise about the possibilities of fermentation and the taste of the final dishes. But fermentation is a natural process that does not yield the same results every time. The unpredictability and imperfection of fermentation is a central part of the New Nordic process. In an interview with Emergence Magazine, David Zilber, Noma's former head of fermentation and author of the *Noma Guide to Fermentation*, says that fermentation is "not an exact science, and that's part of its beauty" (Zilber 2019). It invites a spirit of making mistakes and embracing imperfection as part of a learning process. The imperfections and unpredictability of fermentation projects stand in contrast to the control, precision, and artificiality of industrial food systems and processed foods. In restaurant spaces that I observed, this natural and imperfect process is not hidden away. It is often displayed prominently and becomes part of a tapestry of colours and textures. Large glass jars filled with ferments, pickled vegetables, and preserves often line shelves and become storytelling objects. Each glass jar of food, even if the process follows a strict recipe, will turn out slightly different given the natural processes that are at play. This display of fermentation, embracing the imperfections and natural aspects, symbolise the New Nordic rebellion against mass-production, artificial foods, and unsustainable food systems.

Foraging and fermentation are deeply embedded in the identity of the New Nordic aesthetic regime. Both practices are storytelling elements that deepen the connection between cuisine and place. In their own ways, the entanglement of foraging and fermentation offer alternatives and a critique of the culture of mass production and industrialised, unsustainable food systems as we see throughout the New Nordic aesthetic. Sustainable, human-scaled approaches, approaches which are

Figure 11. Ingredients on display. Source: screenshots from Instagram @restaurantbobe (left) and @restaurantkadeau (right) (used with permission)

not on an industrial scale, to food production become a template for ethical consumption and production. Foraging, depicted as an act of exploration and discovery of the Nordic landscape, offers alternative food sources that are deeply connected to sense of place and time. The depictions of the forager as someone taming and rediscovering a wild landscape but also as a meditative and wholesome exploration of natural landscapes, offers insights into the narratives that construct the New Nordic aesthetic, as observed in the literature review. References to neo-pastoralism and romanticising rural imaginaries are elements in New Nordic storytelling. Fermentation and other food preservation techniques hint at rural and pastoral imaginaries but still offer innovative insights as observed in the narratives of *The Noma Guide to Fermentation*. In summary, foraging and fermentation are deeply entangled approaches to New Nordic cuisine that each offer critiques and alternatives to precarious food systems based on mass production and industrialisation.

Craft and Care

New Nordic restaurants are highly curated spaces that use design elements as multi-sensory storytelling tools. The furniture, lighting, textures, and overall ambience of New Nordic spaces emphasise comfort and warmth through their design. Quality Scandinavian furniture, warm lighting, and soft, natural elements like sheep wools and wool seat cushions are a few elements that

contribute to a feeling of warmth, comfort, and a home-like atmosphere in these spaces. Through my visual content analysis and observations, I noticed the combination of these design elements in slightly different forms in all the spaces I observed and analysed. I label the use of Scandinavian furniture and the particularly cosy, home-like atmosphere that New Nordic spaces curate as an *extension of the Danish living room*. This label implies the transition of those elements of Danish design and architecture from the private sphere into a public or semi-public space like a restaurant or cafe.[2] The craftsmanship and curation involved in these spaces contrast with modern consumption spaces based on neoliberal capitalism. These design influences replicate the feelings of home through a multi-sensory experience in a restaurant space and extend a feeling of comfort and care to people dining there. New Nordic spaces seek to communicate a healthy and socially aware form of hospitality through this idea of the *extension of the Danish living room.* This feeling of being welcomed into a cosy and home-like space suggests an ethical stance and a model of hospitality built around care rather than hospitality based on "commodity exchange" (Lewis and Vodeb 2021:64). I draw on Lewis and Vodeb's analysis of cafe culture in Melbourne, Australia, at the intersection of "care, ethics, and social enterprise" to better understand the narratives of New Nordic spaces (Lewis and Vodeb 2021:58). In addition, I examine how the *Danish living room* design narrative of New Nordic spaces overlaps with quality of life narratives of Copenhagen.

Symbols of quality and craftsmanship are embedded throughout New Nordic spaces. From wine bottles, to postindustrial elements, and fermentation projects, these symbols communicate connections to place and connections to the local economies. While the furniture and design of New Nordic spaces is meant to be welcoming and cosy, those elements also become storytelling components that position the restaurant in the local context and within the identity of Copenhagen. Like the wine bottles on display in Nordic spaces as a symbol of happy gatherings and sharing food with friends, the ambience of an environment with soft textures and references to craftsmanship convey a feeling of refinement and comfort that invites people to spend time enjoying a good meal. This intentional design also reflects trends in Nordic architecture that emphasise human centred design and livability. In the way that public spaces in Copenhagen often reflect the same emphasis on human centred design and livability, these semi-public New Nordic restaurant spaces are designed to be inhabitable and foster a sense of community. In this way, the idea of the *Danish living room* is extended into the New Nordic aesthetic regime and becomes entangled in the ethics and approach to hospitality. The focus on local craftsmanship and materials suggests an ethical approach to hospitality, that can extend to more sustainable practices throughout the restaurant and to a "do good" model of business (Lewis and Vodeb 2021:61).

With this lens, New Nordic spaces can be understood as spaces that do not just prioritise the transactional nature of dining or making as much money as possible. They integrate care and a

[2] Semi-public refers to a space that is not fully public but also not fully private. It can be accessed with the condition of purchasing something, with membership, or by invitation. Some examples include universities, restaurants, cafes, and libraries.

Figure 12. Extension of the Danish living room. Source: screenshots from Instagram (left to right) @restaurantfrankcph @restaurantbobe @restaurantkadeau (used with permission)

care-based approach to hospitality in the philosophy of restaurants. I refer to Lewis and Vodeb's analysis of care and ethics in cafe culture in Melbourne, Australia, as a way to elaborate on the care-based approaches in New Nordic hospitality. In *Care, Ethics, and Social Enterprise Meet Global Café Culture,* Lewis and Vodeb explore how a number of cafes integrate the concept of care into business and hospitality practices. This integration of ethics and social sustainability applies to employees, and their labor, as well as customers. They analyse the way Melbourne cafes create alternative forms of commerce and business by challenging standard practices through the integration of community building and creativity. Similar to New Nordic spaces, the Melbourne cafes that Lewis and Vodeb examine bring care into their practices to create spaces more focused on wellbeing, local economies, and community. They describe the emergence of cafes prioritising care ethics over profits as belonging to a "postcapitalist cafe culture" (Lewis and Vodeb 2021:63) where postcapitalism is broadly used to describe more sustainable alternatives to traditional business models and modes of capital accumulation. This concept relates to cafe culture and to the New Nordic aesthetic as the hospitality, ethics, and emphasis on craft are central to the concept of postcapitalism. Lewis and Vodeb argue that the integration of care and craft into gastronomy spaces represents a shift away from neoliberal models and, instead, promotes social wellbeing as a part of their philosophy. The analysis of Melbourne cafes also reflects a similar idea of the *extension of the Danish living room* in Nordic spaces: "Certainly, with global pressure on space in urban areas, and with the rise of vestigial kitchens in apartment dwellings, cafés become quite literally an extended home space away from home, as reflected in cozy, domesticated spaces like Grub" (Lewis and Vodeb 2021:69). New Nordic spaces are not cafes but the same central idea is clear: the New Nordic aesthetic, like Melbourne's "postcapitalist cafe culture," can embed and convey a message of social responsibility through their designs (Lewis and Vodeb 2021:63).

The description that I have used here—craft and care—is meant to represent the intersection of design, care, and hospitality that extends the warmth and familiarity associated with the Danish living room into a semi-public space like a restaurant. The pattern among New Nordic spaces—the use of Scandinavian furniture, warm lighting, natural materials, and anything else that contributes to the feeling of a domestic space—that I have identified through observations and through the visual content analysis creates a space where comfort and wellbeing are prioritised before monetary transactions. Of course, the restaurant functions as a business, but the atmosphere and style of hospitality convey an extra level of comfort for guests that stands in contrast to other consumption spaces. The examples from Lewis and Vodeb's analysis of Melbourne coffee shops highlight the way that other spaces prioritise care, ethics, and social sustainability over profit-making. Through an emphasis on warmth, comfort, care, and familiarity, another form of profit-making, more focused on people and community, happens in those spaces.

Performance on the Plate

In the New Nordic realm, dishes become multisensory performances that offer an exploration of natural landscapes (Abrams 2020). The plate becomes a stage for chefs to incorporate elements of surprise, interaction, and playfulness to allow diners to interact with various aspects and highlight deeper ecological relationships. Similar to the way that I previously discussed the inclusion of raw materials and terroir objects into plating and in the restaurant spaces, the theatrical nature of New Nordic dishes also bring natural elements to the center stage. Through my visual content analysis and observations I identified a theatrical aspect to many dishes. During meals at Barr and Il Buco in particular, this could be an invitation to eat something with the hands, a moment where a taste or texture was completely surprising, or when I was unsure about consuming something due to its texture or appearance. These interactions that I had with the food allowed for boundaries around the food to be pushed and a connection to start asking questions about it—how was this made? Where did this come from? Why does it taste like that? Is it safe to eat? These questions that I asked would reflect the sense that I was participating more deeply in the meal: wondering about the techniques used to make something, where certain ingredients came from, anticipating texture and temperature differences in meals, and, overall, just invited to be curious. This can be observed through the photos being posted on Instagram by the New Nordic restaurants where dishes, visually, look unusual or surprising. This aspect of an unusual look or texture can be a starting point for questioning the dish and the ingredients. It represents a starting point for interacting with a dish.

This theatrical aspect can be captured through photography and appears throughout the Instagram pages of New Nordic spaces in a particular form. The image of the plating becomes a central symbol that aligns with the New Nordic's sustainability emphasis by stressing the philosophy that less is more, connecting the dish to the natural landscape, and by using playful elements to create dialogue and discussion. Each of these elements construct a deeper understanding of *the plate*—the dish in its final presentation form, presented on the table—as a theatrical piece and a storytelling

tool. Photos showing the dishes served in New Nordic restaurants typically present a tightly framed, top down view of dishes. The dish sits symmetrically in the center of the image, framed to be viewed and analysed as an art piece. A minimalist approach in the photography aligns with the minimalist approach of the cuisine, where the ingredients are respected and occupy the centre of the stage. The photo is tightly cropped and focuses closely on the food, not allowing other elements outside of the frame to become distracting from the central subject. The background which often features a wooden surface or natural looking cloth, further reinforcing the food's connection to nature. While the restaurant space and surrounding elements are so important in the New Nordic aesthetic regime, and my research focuses greatly on these aspects, the plating of a dish, isolated and framed to be viewed by itself is a practice in minimalism that reflects the values of the Nordic culinary approach.

I pull from another analysis of a Noma dining experience to illustrate the role and meanings of theatrics in the New Nordic and to elaborate on the idea of the plating, and the symbol of the plate, as a theatrical element. Joshua Abrams describes the dining experience as an "ecological dramaturgy" and approaches the topic from the perspective of theatre and drama studies, using concepts like "scenography," "staging," and "dramaturgy" throughout his descriptions (Abrams 2020:508). This offers insights into the *plate as a performance* that reads more like the analysis of a play or piece of literature than the analysis of a food experience. The phrase that Abrams uses —"ecological dramaturgy"—with ecological referring to the natural world and living organisms and dramaturgy referring to dramatic composition, suggests that there are deeper consequences at play in the dining experience (Abrams 2020:490). Rather than just a dinner at a restaurant, the phrase implies that real-world problems involving the natural world are being communicated. This is exactly what is happening in Abrams' description of his Noma dining experience, writing that through experiencing a dish as a landscape device, he is challenged to reflect on larger issues: "These moments of iconicity and affective encounter produce a dramaturgical effect, a performative challenge for the diner, who is perhaps encouraged to recognize the issues at stake around climate and sustainability" (Abrams 2020:491). In this sense, the dining experience at Noma becomes a high-stakes drama that is meant to be reflective, and maybe even emotional, leaving guests to question their decisions surrounding sustainable eating habits, food waste, and climate change action. With this understanding, the restaurant becomes a theatre and the table or plate becomes a stage.

Dishes in the Noma experience are presented as artefacts of nature. Abrams describes the presentation of a first dish in the form of a vase with several "twigs, leafy greens, and some weed-like flowers" sitting in it (Abrams 2020:491). While at first, it was unclear what they were supposed to do with it, a server tells them that everything is edible. The dish of twigs and flowers was not decorative, it was designed to break the ice with the guests by surprising them and functioning as an interactive element (Abrams 2020). It was also designed to represent a connection to natural landscapes, and its illusion as inedible twigs and weeds succeeds at that (Abrams 2020). Abrams

continues to describe a number of dishes that evoke natural landscapes and become miniature scenes of northern lands: "A plateful of milk skin with grass, flowers and herbs" (2020:496); "Blueberries surrounded by their natural environment" (2020:497); "Radishes in a Pot" (2020:507). Each dish paints a picture of a specific landscape, what Abrams describes as a "small closed ecosystem" or "miniaturized archive," and invites the guest to interact with different elements in the landscape (2020:496). "A plateful of milk skin with grass, flowers and herbs" becomes an encapsulation of a Danish field ecosystem where cows graze (2020:496). Each element becomes intertwined in the real landscape, with the milk skin coming from cows, and the grass, flowers, and herbs originating from the field. Through the transformation of milk into milk skin, a surprising textural element is introduced. In this interaction and with the labor of eating the dish, the diner gets to experience the life cycle and ecosystem of that place. And is able to question that context and interconnection of the cow's labor, the farmer's labor, and the cook's labor as those ingredients have traveled from field and farm to plate. The dish puts on a short, interactive performance that leaves the guest questioning and reflecting on that ecosystem. "Radishes in a Pot" is even more interactive (2020:507). The dish is presented in a pot with radishes that have been buried in an edible soil made of malt flour, hazelnuts, beer, and sugar (Abrams 2020), designed to be eaten with the hands, and representing a close up framing of a Nordic landscape. Each radish is pulled out of the edible soil in a process that reflects the labor and care of the farmer or gardener. Through the design of the dish, and the intention that the guest interacts with it, each person gets their hands dirty and is able to replicate the labor involved in the production of the dish.

Each dish becomes a snapshot of a specific time and place in the Nordic landscape that the guest is able to interact with, analyse, and think about. The labor involved in the production, the conditions of the landscape, and stories of the ecosystems become part of the "ecological dramaturgy" that Abrams describes (2020:490). The dramatic and multisensory depictions of place invite the diner to further think about the implications of their own actions in an increasingly fragile food landscape. Sustainability, climate change, and ethical consumption are, in this sense, all intertwined into the storytelling of the dish, that the guest is invited and encouraged to interact with. By situating food as an art form and dishes as pieces of a theatrical experience, the role of a high-end, chef-led restaurant turns more into a theatre company or performance art hall. This combination of craft, art, nature, and cuisine come together to start a dialogue about the future of food.

V. Discussion

The aim of my research was to explore how visual and sensory storytelling elements, in both physical spaces and on social media, of the New Nordic can be viewed and interpreted to construct a broader narrative of social, environmental and economic sustainability. Additionally, my research frames the New Nordic as a broader cultural narrative that can act as change agents for more sustainable and responsible practices within hospitality and gastronomy. By examining the various visual and sensory storytelling elements of the New Nordic, I was able to construct a series of thematic essays or vignettes that situate the New Nordic as a powerful storytelling tool. Restaurant spaces associated with the New Nordic Cuisine movement, or spaces that have been heavily influenced by the New Nordic style, are saturated with storytelling artefacts that connect to the sustainability initiatives in the New Nordic Cuisine manifesto. I draw connections between and organise these element along an ideal type framework to situate the New Nordic as an aesthetic regime. These three axes include: design and materiality, labor and craftsmanship, and connection to place and nature. This ideal type framework allowed me to analyse many different elements and allowed me to bring together different research methods into a coherent mixed-methods approach. By organising along the ideal type framework with three axes I could organise raw data in the form of field notes from observations, a visual content analysis where I coded and analysed over 300 images, and some interviews, which were primarily used as complementary data. This framework was broad enough to allow enough information to be gathered and grouped, while being narrow enough to allow articulate and clear coding. The findings that emerged from the data appear in six thematic vignettes or essays where I analyse the data along a theme and discuss what stories are being told. These six thematic sections are: Performance of Labor, Postindustrial Spaces and Textures, Terroir Objects and Raw Materials, Foraging and Fermentation, Craft and Care, and Performance on the Plate. These thematic sections take elements from each of the empirical data sections—the ideal type framework—and connect it through discussions relating to themes and outside examples. The thematic sections also incorporate a number of figures—images from the visual content analysis of Instagram photos—that further illustrate patterns and themes discussed throughout the findings section.

The findings reveal that New Nordic spaces, and those spaces inspired by the New Nordic approach, are saturated with storytelling elements that give deep cultural and social insights. Referring back to the theory of visual culture which provides a theoretical lens for viewing physical and digital artefacts as embedded cultural storytelling tools, I am able to offer peeks into kitchen culture, the culture of the Copenhagen gastronomy scene, and the approaches that chefs take to have their food become storytelling devices. These artefacts and the broader themes they speak to contribute to the construction of a sustainability narrative that defines the New Nordic aesthetic regime—by this I mean that all or many of the elements that make up the conception or imaginaries of New Nordic are related to the construction of a narrative of wholesome

consumption, ethical practices, social responsibility, and, overall, a sense of social, economic, and environmental sustainability. The New Nordic as an idea, and as restaurants, present as classy and refined spaces. There is a sense of sturdiness, calm, and peacefulness associated with this aesthetic. There is also a very tangible sense of wellbeing, comfort, and something very human about New Nordic spaces—they are meant to feel home-like. In addition, the New Nordic is meant to be a conversation starter where ingredients, objects, and spaces push one to ask questions and be surprised by the sensory experiences of the space. In other words, there are many references to other places and people embedded in the New Nordic: through handmade ceramics, artisanal wine, accessories and decorative objects, ingredients that are displayed, and even through the table that one eats at.

The curated and highly designed nature of restaurants, especially in high-end fine dining, means that every aspect of someone's experience is rigorously planned for and choreographed. This is particularly why much of the academic literature surrounding the New Nordic focuses on the high-end fine dining aspect of the cuisine, like Noma. Particularly because the experience defines the sense that the restaurant is not a functional space for nourishment, but that it is a space to be enlightened by a theatrical performance or for fantasies to come to life. These spaces are visited to experience cooking as an art form and in a way that cannot be replicated at home. With a highly curated setting and curated menu, each dish becomes a chapter in a story which is designed to create a larger narrative and leave the guest wondering about broader food systems and their own actions. That is the nature of a highly designed restaurant experience. However, it is with no doubt that these highly designed and curated aspects emerge in lower end, more casual restaurants too. There are elements of surprise, stories of innovation, and references to local producers and places. This is in the nature of the New Nordic as an aesthetic regime—each space sits on a spectrum with varying elements and aspects that become part of its individual narrative.

Issues with the New Nordic

Despite the image of innovation, progressiveness, and aesthetic appeal of New Nordic restaurants in Copenhagen, there are also deep underlying issues regarding accessibility, inclusivity, and gentrification. These issues raise questions about the true sustainability of the New Nordic aesthetic. Firstly, the New Nordic Cuisine movement suffers from a clear lack of diversity. The movement was founded by a group of twelve white male chefs and entrepreneurs in 2004. A food philosophy constructed around the needs and visions of twelve people who are strikingly similar, will, by nature, leave out others who were not involved in the construction of the philosophy. In this sense, the New Nordic Manifesto can be seen as outdated and simply not inclusive in today's context. This issue also relates to broader issues in the culinary world. Gastronomy in the global north is dominated by a paradigm of white male chefs and has been plagued by issues of abuse: stories of mistreatment of cooks and staff, toxic and aggressive workplace environments, and intimidation are not uncommon in gastronomy. In fact, workplace issues like harassment, exploitative labor practices, abuse, and

assault in a number of fine dining restaurants around the world have been brought to light—this even includes Noma who was accused of failing to pay interns for many hours of work, over-relying on their unpaid labor, and forced them to work excessively long hours without rest (Anderson 2023) Patterns of abuse and mistreatment in gastronomy workplaces and fine dining establishment go against the image of social sustainability and responsibility that New Nordic spaces present.

The New Nordic is also economically exclusive and can be extremely expensive. Many New Nordic restaurants follow in the patterns of Noma and position themselves within a fine-dining sphere, catering to wealthy, and often international, visitors. The high cost of dining reinforces class barriers and makes New Nordic cuisine on a high level largely inaccessible to lower-income people like students and even others working in gastronomy. For example, the restaurant Kadeau was the one restaurant I analysed that could be categorised as true high-end fine dining with a two star rating in the Michelin guide. This is reflected in their menu with the cost of a multi-course set menu, according to the listed costs on their website, being 469 euros or 3500 Danish Kroner per person.[3] That same set menu with wine pairings costs 764 euros or 5700 Danish Kroner per person. This issue of exclusivity within the New Nordic realm lead me back to a quote from Lily Kelting's analysis of Noma: "perhaps so many people talk about Noma precisely because very few can afford to experience it for themselves" (Kelting 2022:194). "Noma" can be substituted with any other New Nordic fine dining concept in this example, as it leads to the same conclusion: that perhaps Kelting is right, and the inaccessibility of New Nordic fine dining is a reason why it is examined so closely. But one thing is clear: the high cost of fine dining further reinforces class barriers and excludes many from participating in their narrative. The inherent exclusivity of high end fine dining like Noma and other Michelin star establishments also means that dining and the multisensory experience of that space is further commodified. Thus, we see an innate fascination with the rhetorics of fine dining through documentaries, shows, and objects like coffee table books. The image and exclusivity of the space becomes visually commodified where, at a certain point, the experience is so inaccessible that the next best option is to delve into shows, movies, or documentaries that allow us to fantasise about an meal that is too unattainable. This exclusivity is inherent in the New Nordic media sphere as images of New Nordic food add to cultural capital and are used to confirm or elevate status. The status confirming symbol of cuisine goes against New Nordic philosophies of responsible consumption, however, despite the intention to situate Nordic spaces outside of capitalism and away from the transactional nature of gastronomy, the commodification of the cuisine makes it highly valuable as a status communication tool. Cultural capital and Nordic cuisine are deeply intertwined and often disguise each other.

The New Nordic aesthetic can also be viewed as perpetuating cycles of food-driven gentrification. Jonatan Leer gives insights into the complexities of local development and food-driven gentrification in Copenhagen, examining Jægersborggade in Nørrebro and the Reffen food market (2021). Leer

[3] https://www.kadeau.dk/copenhagen/food/

describes the extensive changes that these areas underwent in the last twenty years and the role that gastronomy played in transforming the working class and industrial areas of the city into trendy, marketable spaces. Craft beer bars, high end restaurants, and what Leer describes as "The World's First Porridge Bar" are some examples that embrace many of the elements of the New Nordic aesthetic—occupying postindustrial spaces, using Danish furniture to create modern-feeling Scandinavian spaces, and rooted in global ideas (Leer 2021:87). Trendy establishments, with particularly photogenic environments, become media saturated spaces where their aesthetic is shared on Instagram. The gentrification cycle in these Copenhagen neighbourhoods is not just about urban renewal but also about how food culture and new taste paradigms are leveraged to attract an audience like younger, wealthy families. This new, trend-driven and media-driven food culture displaces long-term residences in those working class spaces. The New Nordic movement, while it promotes sustainability and ideas of the local, is tightly linked to emerging food trends on a global and local scale, like "The World's First Porridge Bar," that reshape the urban landscape and increase property values (Leer 2021:87). The success of new establishments like Relæ and Grød ("The World's First Porridge Bar") on Jægersborggade and Refshaleøen with it's food market, craft beers bars, and fine dining concepts (Amass, Alchemist) are symbols of Copenhagen's culinary success and reflect food-driven gentrification(Leer 2021). The complex relationship between food culture in Copenhagen and urban development means that the revitalisation of an urban space for one group comes at the expense of others. The gentrification fueled by Copenhagen's emergence as a global culinary destination goes beyond the impact of housing affordability. Culture and cultural spaces of immigrants and low income residents can be replaced by the aestheticised look or New Nordic, or Nordic-influenced spaces, which are shared and posted on Instagram. These images contribute to the trendiness associated with the Nordic and New Nordic food and overshadow the cultural narratives of other cultural spaces. The refined, minimalistic, and sustainable aesthetic of the New Nordic becomes a cosmetically more attractive version of urban culture but it marginalises other cultural narratives. In addition, the focus on time and place, while it is a selling point of the New Nordic philosophy, can put strain on plants and ingredients that are seasonal specific. The popularity of foraging and the sharing of foraging knowledge through the foraging app VildMad also represent a food trend that can have harmful effects. Through a hyper-popularisation of specific plants or natural products, the intended small-scale production and sustainability, is replaced by an unnecessary, commercialised strain. Those people who may have traditionally relied on specific ingredients, or on foraging lands, can be displaced in a form of landscape or natural resource gentrification.

What is clear is that despite the refined image and emphasis on sustainability within New Nordic spaces, the issues of the movement and culture of New Nordic gastronomy is also deeply flawed. The cost of dining drives social inequality, the workplace culture and restaurant scene has tendencies to be homogenous and exclusive, and the effects of food-driven gentrification drive low-income residents out of their neighbourhoods. These challenges distort the image of the New Nordic and the reputation that the movement has built. They also underscore the need for

structural changes in the broader gastronomy and hospitality industries to have the image of social, economic, and environmental sustainability line up with the reality, instead of acting as a facade to cover up deep-seated issues.

Potential for Sustainability Transitions

Building on the work of Higgins-Desbiolles and Wijesinghe, who examined Australian restaurants as "facilitators for transformations to sustainability," I situate New Nordic spaces in the same realm (2018:1080). With the New Nordic Cuisine movement as a philosophical foundation to the culinary approaches of New Nordic restaurants, these spaces are already designed to implement innovative practices and create dialogue around sustainability transitions. The New Nordic manifesto also offers a framework for sustainable food practices through the emphasis on sustainable production and consumption, social responsibility, and a culture of knowledge sharing and storytelling. The culinary manifesto, the New Nordic aesthetic regime, and the traction that these spaces generate in various forms of media, point to the potential they have to drive significant changes in food systems and sustainability practices. Higgins-Desbiolles and Wijesinghe assert that "restaurants are moving past standard business boundaries and are playing an influential role in fostering more sustainable futures; as sites of conviviality, [consumption spaces] can foster engagement that may expand the influence of sustainability advocacy beyond the usual channels" (2018:1081). This idea reflects aspects of my analysis and of the empirical data. I observed that the standard business practices of restaurants as consumption spaces were completely upended in the context of the New Nordic cuisine. Through the design of restaurant spaces revaluing the labor of cooks, through an emphasis on conviviality and wellbeing, and through connections to the local, New Nordic spaces are able to leverage these differences and transform into models for others to replicate. Through the enjoyment of food and the overall sensory experience of dining, New Nordic spaces open up dialogue and questions about around the sustainability of pleasurable food experiences. Higgins-Desbiolles and Wijesinghe relate to this through their comments on the dialogues around sustainable consumption in the cafes they analysed: "The capacity of food, food cultures and food tourism to open up dialogue and connect people is increasingly clear. There is no greater conversation to hold today than how we are to create a sustainable future, where everyone eats, enjoys a good life and lives a little more lightly on the planet" (2018:1080).

My analysis of the empirical data positions New Nordic food as a potential "tool for critical pedagogy" (Higgins-Desbiolles and Wijesinghe 2018:1098). The storytelling aspects of New Nordic cuisine, embedded in the menu and artefacts in the space, invite discussion, questions, reflection, and dialogue about the food and the restaurant space. The origins of the ingredients, the local producers and craftsmen involved, and new tastes become part of these discussions and reflections. Higgins-Desbiolles et al. introduced the concept of food as a "tool for critical pedagogy" in their analysis of sustainable cafes and coffee shops, where the origins of coffee beans, the techniques in brewing, and tasting notes in the cup become part of a broader dialogue (2014). Broader discussions

about sustainability in relation to coffee are particularly relevant as coffee production relies primarily on the global south for labor and coffee growing land (Higgins-Desbiolles et al. 2014). In this sense, cafes and coffee bars reflect the notion of food as a tool for pedagogy along with the New Nordic. In a context of more precarious food systems and increasing social inequality, the New Nordic's storytelling, and the dialogue that emerges from it, is also increasingly relevant. By embedding critiques to mass production, industrial agriculture and, instead, advocating for local, small-scale forms of production, the New Nordic is introducing those dialogues and discussion into the sensory experience of food.

With my emphasis on Instagram as a platform that captures the patterns and contributes to the aesthetic narrative of the New Nordic, I also situate it as a "tool for critical pedagogy" (Higgins-Desbiolles and Wijesinghe 2018:1098). Photos and videos on cooking techniques, recipes, and new dishes can inspire new interpretations as amateur cooks and food enthusiasts absorb that information. But each photo and video posted on Instagram can become a pedagogical short-story that can give concise but insightful looks into various aspects of the New Nordic and into the gastronomy realm in general. While recipes are more guarded pieces of information, insights into innovative cooking techniques and the use of uncommon ingredients are more accessible. These ideas can inspire new recipes, new dishes, and new approaches to cooking. Insights from the New Nordic restaurants I examined are embedded with many storytelling devices that are transformed into pedagogical tools too. These visuals, just like in coffee and other areas of gastronomy, encourages the viewer to ask questions and opens up discussions on topics that relate to broader food systems. Potential for others in the gastronomy scene to adopt the "critical pedagogy" of sustainable cuisine is promising (Higgins-Desbiolles and Wijesinghe 2018:1098). Noma's Mad Academy already embodies this mindset and takes on the active role as facilitators for more sustainable food systems. Through academies, panel discussions, talks, and workshops, the *Mad* program is already turning Nordic spaces and Copenhagen more broadly into a space for sustainability discourse. Through the engaging of stakeholders within the Copenhagen gastronomy scene and with connections abroad, Mad's gastronomy and hospitality industry education framework can be particularly effective.

What becomes clear is that the New Nordic restaurant scene is saturated with symbols of sustainability and elements of sustainability storytelling. Others see New Nordic spaces as examples for the correct way to approach gastronomy—through an emphasis on local ingredients and a rejection of industrialised processes and foods. Nordic food spaces, through the aesthetic regime that I have described, are heavily associated with sustainability and ethical consumption. However, while these spaces and the culture of New Nordic food is framed as a wholesome, ethical, and responsible form of consumption, often an alternative to unsustainable consumption, there is a culminating question that still needs to be answered: how much of the narrative of sustainability is just an illusion? Are New Nordic restaurants truly more sustainable than others or is the storytelling and narrative of sustainability just a performative tool to enhance a brand?

Questioning the Sustainability Potential of the New Nordic

Restaurants, especially in the sustainability context, are highly curated and designed spaces. Especially as the cost and exclusivity of the dining experience climbs, the attention to detail, food design, theatrical or performative aspects, and thoughtfulness of service also climbs. While there are, as I analysed, clear patterns and similarities between medium and high end New Nordic spaces, the level of curation and attention becomes more focused in restaurants with Michelin stars, multiple courses, and costs in the thousands of euros for a pair of guests. In this setting, dining experiences can last hours long with, sometimes, over twenty servings. The emphasis on delivering a curated experience, through all available elements, suggests that the experience of the guests, and the impressions they are left with, might be prioritised over actual sustainability practices. The exclusivity and extremely high cost of some New Nordic dining experiences offers another barrier to sustainability and the transparency of sustainability. This suggests that the model of a sustainable New Nordic experience can only be accessible to the people who are able to afford it. This exclusivity and class barriers that this concept reinforces means that only a privileged few people can have access to the highly curated version of sustainability narratives in high end restaurant spaces. The broader social impact is severely limited in this sense. The focus on creating an eye-opening and luxurious dining experience can work instead to overshadow sustainable food practices as something that is only sustainable if all are able to participate.

In addition to highly curated gastronomy settings, the labor of the New Nordic Cuisine brings up questions of social sustainability and workplace ethics. With many young cooks and chefs taking internship positions in high-end restaurants around the world, there are often chances for exploitation of labor and mistreatment. Mejia and Wilson highlight the instability of fine dining in their paper titled *Coming to terms with a socially unsustainable fine dining business model* (2024). What becomes clear is that the success of high end fine dining restaurants and even New Nordic gastronomy, is built on unpaid labor. Interns seeking experience and to build their resumé often agree to terms of unpaid labor for the experience in return. This is something the design of a restaurant space does not always reveal, though it is an important aspect of the social and economic sustainability of fine dining. Perhaps the design of New Nordic spaces, conveying openness and transparency, are actually hiding the unsustainable realities of unpaid kitchen labor behind the scenes. Mejia and Wilson describe this as the paradox or facade of fine dining (2024:3412)—precisely the idea that much of gastronomy puts great efforts forward to focus on design and curating a refined feeling, while in reality, most of the labor hours that went into preparing food went unpaid. The idea of using scarce or high demand ingredients, expensive, handmade furniture, and presenting an image of refinement and class contradicts the efforts and labor that goes unnoticed and unpaid.

As I have examined in my findings, the elements embedded in restaurant spaces and framed to be viewed on Instagram tell stories that contribute to a broader narrative of sustainability and the

critique of unsustainable practices based on mass production and industrialised food systems. The true sustainability or the true impact of changing broader food systems is not always transparent or able to be verified. The highly curated images and intentional framing of spaces on social media present a view of sustainability that could be more about branding and image than about significant food systems transitions or implementation of sustainable practices. This reflects another contradiction: while New Nordic spaces are presented as being grounded in localism and Nordic producers, they are often inaccessible to those people who farm the produce or forage for ingredients that are used. The exclusivity of some restaurants creates a deep disconnect between the stories that are told through the elements I analysed and the reality of who can actually participate in the narrative of sustainability. While the restaurants I analysed may take significant sustainability steps like reducing their food waste, relying on sustainable food sources, contributing to dialogue about food knowledge, and practicing social responsibility, the design of exclusivity as a built in component in many New Nordic spaces limits broader positive impact. Effective social, economic, and environmental sustainability requires practices and narratives that are more accessible by many people.

VI. Conclusion

The New Nordic Cuisine movement, since it was formalised in 2004, was incredibly successful in revitalising the cultural landscape of Copenhagen and the broader Nordic region. Gastronomy in particular became a valuable place branding tool that attracted investment and visitors. Despite the widespread impact of the New Nordic Cuisine movement and the success of Nordic fine dining restaurants, evidence from previous research indicates that the intersection of New Nordic Cuisine studies, sustainability, and aesthetics is an under explored academic area. Through my research on New Nordic restaurants in Copenhagen, I seek to fill that research gap by conducting a visual content analysis of New Nordic social media and observational research of restaurant spaces. I examine how the storytelling elements embedded in physical restaurant spaces, practices, dialogues, and in social media construct a broader narrative of sustainability. By situating food and restaurant spaces as a form of media, this research reveals how those storytelling elements emerge as a pattern between restaurant spaces that share similar ideologies. The findings indicate that both social media spaces and physical restaurant spaces are highly curated spaces that frame New Nordic Cuisine restaurants as socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable. The extent to which they are implementing sustainable practices is still a question, which suggests an avenue for further research. My research was limited to the city of Copenhagen, the center of the New Nordic Cuisine movement, but this concept could be further examined with a more thorough regional analysis of Nordic restaurant spaces, providing insights into the aesthetics and sustainability practices beyond Denmark. Importantly, the interdisciplinary nature of my research highlights the importance of examining the New Nordic not just as a food movement, but as a narrative tool that shapes culture

and identity. By bridging the gap between food studies, visual culture, and sustainability, this study offers a new lens through which to examine the significance of the New Nordic movement. Future academic research could build on these findings, exploring how New Nordic Cuisine continues to evolve and shape sustainability narratives elsewhere.

References

Abrams, Joshua. 2020. "Towards an Ecological Dramaturgy of Dining: Plate as Landscape Device." *Contemporary Theatre Review* 30(4):490-508.

Anderson, Rob. 2023. "How Noma Made Fine Dining Far Worse." *The Atlantic*, January 16. (https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2023/01/noma-copenhagen-fine-dining-unsustainable/672738/).

Andreassen, Rikke. 2014. "The search for the white Nordic: Analysis of the contemporary New Nordic Kitchen and former race science," *Social Identities* 20(6):438–451.

Ang, Ien. 1996. *Living Room Wars.* London: Routledge.

Bell, Daniel. 1973. *The coming of post-industrial society: a venture in social forecasting.* New York, NY: Basic Books.

Brenner, Leslie. 2000. *American Appetite: The Coming of Age of a National Cuisine.* New York, NY: Harper Collins.

Byrkjeflot, Haldor, Jesper Pedersen, and Silviya Svejenova. 2013. "From Label to Practice: The Process of Creating New Nordic Cuisine." *Journal of Culinary Science & Technology* 11.

Castelli, Chiara, Beatrice d'Hombres, Laura de Dominicis, Lewis Dijkstra, Valentina Montalto, and Nicola Pontarollo. 2023. "What makes cities happy? Factors contributing to life satisfaction in European cities." *European Urban and Regional Studies* 30(4):319-342.

Cook, Ian, and Philip Crang. 1996. "The World On a Plate: Culinary Culture, Displacement and Geographical Knowledges." *Journal of Material Culture* 1(2):131-153.

Contois, Emily, and Zenia Kish. 2022. *Food Instagram. Identity, Influence and Negotiation*. Urbana: University of Illinois.

Danbolt, Mathias. 2016. "New Nordic Exceptionalism: Jeuno JE Kim and Ewa Einhorn's 'The United Nations of Norden' and other realist utopias." *Journal of Aesthetics & Culture* 8(1).

Davis, Whitney. 2011. *A General Theory of Visual Culture.* Princeton University Press.

De Certeau, Michel. 1984. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

DeSoucey, Michaela. 2010. "Gastronationalism: Food traditions and authenticity politics in the European Union." *American Sociological Review* 75(3):432–455.

Eberle, Thomas. 2018. "Collecting images as data." Pp. 392-411 in *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Data Collection*, edited by U. Flick. DOI: 10.4135/9781526416070.

Feldman, Zeena. 2021. "'Good food' in an Instagram age: Rethinking hierarchies of culture, criticism and taste." *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 24(6):1340-1359.

Fehérváry, Krisztina. 2013. *Politics in Color and Concrete: Socialist Materialities and the Middle Class in Hungary*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Frigolé, Joan. 2023. "The cuisine of the new spirit of capitalism: Noma considerations regarding the value of the authentic and other orders of worth." Pp. 133-150 in *Food, Gastronomy, Sustainability, and Social and Cultural Development* edited by X. Medina, D. Conde-Caballero and L. Mariano-Juárez. DOI: 10.1016/C2021-0-02386-5.

Gordinier, Jeff. 2020. *Hungry: Eating, Road-Tripping, and Risking It All with Rene Redzepi, the Greatest Chef in the World*. Basingstoke, England: Icon Books.

Gora, L. Sasha. 2017. "Eating the North: An Analysis of the Cookbook 'NOMA: Time & Place in Nordic Cuisine.'" *Graduate Journal of Food Studies* 4(2). DOI: 10.21428/92775833.6c60dbc4.d

Gyimóthy, Szilvia. 2017. "The reinvention of terroir in Danish food place promotion" *European Planning Studies* 25(7):1200-1216.

Gyimóthy, Szilvia, and Reidar Johan Mykletun. 2009. "Scary Food: Commodifying Culinary Heritage as Meal Adventures in Tourism." *Journal of Vacation Marketing* 15(3):259–273.

Hahn, Torsten. 2023. "The Restaurant as a Medium (Connect/Disconnect): On Culinary Temples and Porous Spaces." Pp. 55-66 in *Food – Media – Senses*, edited by C. Bartz, J. Ruchatz, and E. Wattolik. DOI: 10.14361/9783839464793.

Hansen, Margaret, Reo Jones, and Kirsten Tocchini. 2017. "Shinrin-Yoku (Forest Bathing) and Nature Therapy: A State-of-the-Art Review." *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 14(8):851.

Holm, Erling Dokk. 2010. "Coffee and the City: Towards a soft urbanity." PhD dissertation, Oslo School of Architecture and Design.

Holtzman, Jon. 2006. "Food and Memory." *The Annual Review of Anthropology* 35:361–378.

Huang, Yuying, and C. Michael Hall. 2023. "Locality in the Promoted Sustainability Practices of Michelin-Starred Restaurants." *Sustainability* 15.

Hunter, Ian. 2014. "Cultural Studies." Pp. 45-62 in Encyclopedia of Aesthetics, edited by M. Kelly. DOI: 10.1093/acref/9780199747108.001.0001.

Kelting, Lily. 2022. "New Nordic Cuisine: Performing Primitive Origins of Nordic Food." Pp. 175-195 in *Contesting Nordicness: From Scandinavianism to the Nordic Brand*, edited by J. Marjanen, J. Strang, and M. Hilson. DOI: 10.1515/9783110730104.

Koerner, Brendan. 2014. "How the Weird Art of Food Photography Went Mainstream." *Wired Magazine*.(https://www.wired.com/2014/07/food-photography-2/).

Larsen, Hanne Pico. 2010. "Performing Tasty Heritage: Danish Cuisine and Playful Nostalgia at Restaurant noma." *Ethnologia Europaea* 40(2):90-102.

Leer, Jonatan. 2016. "The rise and fall of the New Nordic Cuisine." *Journal of Aesthetics & Culture* 8(1).

Leer, Jonatan. 2019. "New Nordic men: cooking, masculinity and nordicness in René Redzepi's Noma and Claus Meyer's Almanak." *Food, Culture & Society* 22(3):316-333.

Leer, Jonatan. 2020. "Designing sustainable food experiences: Rethinking sustainable food tourism." *International Journal of Food Design* 5(1-2):65-82.

Leer, Jonatan. 2021. "Porridge Bars, Nordic Craft Beer, and Hipster Families in the Welfare State." Pp. 81-95 in *Global Brooklyn: Designing Food Experiences in World Cities*, edited by F. Parasecoli and M. Halawa. DOI: 10.5040/9781350144507.

Leer, Jonatan, and Karen Povlsen. 2016. *Food and Media: Practices, Distinctions and Heterotopias*. London: Routledge.

Lewis, Tania, and Oliver Vodeb. 2021. "Care, Ethics, and Social Enterprise Meet Global Café Culture." Pp. 58-73 in *Global Brooklyn: Designing Food Experiences in World Cities*, edited by F. Parasecoli and M. Halawa. DOI: 10.5040/9781350144507.

Mejia, Cynthia, and Katherine Wilson. 2024. "Coming to terms with a socially unsustainable fine dining business model." *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management* 36(10):3403-3428.

Meyer, Claus. 2004. "New Nordic Kitchen Manifesto." https://meyers.dk/en/the-new-nordic-cuisine-movement/.

Mitchell, William. 2002. "Showing Seeing: A Critique of Visual Culture." *Journal of Visual Culture* 1(2):165–181.

Ooi, Can-Seng, and Jesper Strandgaard Pedersen. 2017. "In Search of Nordicity: How New Nordic Cuisine Shaped Destination Branding." *Journal of Gastronomy and Tourism* 2:217-231.

Parasecoli, Fabio, and Mateusz Halawa. 2021. "Global Brooklyn: How Instagram and Postindustrial Design Are Shaping How We Eat." Pp.3-36 in *Global Brooklyn: Designing Food Experiences in World Cities,* edited by F. Parasecoli and M. Halawa. DOI: 10.5040/9781350144507.

Parasecoli, Fabio, and Mateusz Halawa. 2021. *Global Brooklyn: Designing Food Experiences in World Cities.* London: Bloomsbury Publishing.

Perullo, Nicola. 2023. “Toward a Gastronomic Criticism: From Good Taste to Haptic Taste.” Pp. 247-266 in *Food – Media – Senses*, edited by C. Bartz, J. Ruchatz, and E. Wattolik. DOI: 10.14361/9783839464793.

Pink, Sarah. 2015. *Doing Sensory Ethnography*. London: SAGE Publications

Redzepi, Rene, and David Zilber. 2018. *The Noma guide to fermentation*. New York, NY: Artisan.

Redzepi, Rene, and Mette Soberg. 2022. *Noma 2.0*. New York, NY: Artisan.

Redzepi, Rene. 2010. *Noma: Time and Place in Nordic Cuisine*. New York, NY: Artisan.

Schröer, Marie. 2023. “Picturing Food: Sense and Sensuality of Culinary Content on Social Media.” Pp. 209-228 in *Food – Media – Senses*, edited by C. Bartz, J. Ruchatz, and E. Wattolik. DOI: 10.14361/9783839464793.

Smith, Stephen. 2015. “A sense of place: place, culture and tourism.” *Tourism Recreation Research* 40(2):220–233.

Stano, Simona. 2020. “Glocalised Foodscapes: The Self, The Other and the Frontier.” *Glocalism: Journal of Culture, Politics and Innovation* 3.

Stapley, Emily, Sally O'Keeffe, and Nick Midgley. 2022. “Developing Typologies in Qualitative Research: The Use of Ideal-type Analysis.” *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 21.

Vild Mad. 2024. “Landscapes.” https://vildmad.dk/en/landscapes.

Wästerfors, David. 2018. “Observations.” Pp. 314-326 in *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Data Collection*, edited by U. Flick. DOI: 10.4135/9781526416070.

Wells, Pete. 2017. “Why I’m Not Reviewing Noma Mexico.” *The New York Times*.

Zilber, David. 2019. “Fermenting Culture: An Interview with David Zilber.” https://emergencemagazine.org/interview/fermenting-culture/.