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**"A WINNING¹ COMPLETELY CHARMING²
HEARTFELT LITTLE MASTERPIECE!³"**

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Kitchen Stores



A Film by
BENT HAMER



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This wonderfully droll absurdist comedy is set in early '50s Norway. The Home Research Institute of Sweden sends 18 observers to the rural district of Landstad, Norway, with its surplus of bachelors, to study the kitchen routines of single men. The story focuses on one particular relationship between a lonely observer and his lonely host – and it's the small, silent moments that resonate.

NORWAY/SWEDEN • 2003 • 92 mins • Color • In Norwegian/Swedish with English subtitles

Comic 'Kitchen' Import is a Delightful Dish

LOU LUMENICK



"KITCHEN Stories" is a deadpan, thoroughly delightful Norwegian comedy that cooks up tasty laughs from real-life experiments in kitchen efficiency that took place in Scandinavia in the early 1950s.

Writer-director Bent Hamer imagines that having re-trained housewives to walk the equivalent of Sweden to Southern Italy in the kitchen during a year of cooking - instead of the longer distance to the Belgian Congo - scientists at Sweden's Home Research Institute turned their research to Norwegian bachelors.

Folke (Tomas Norstrom) a fussy bachelor, is one of several researchers assigned to a rural area of Norway, where he's perched for hours at a time on an observation tower in the kitchen of Isak (Joachim Calmeyer), a cranky old farmer who signed up in the experiment in the mistaken belief he would be given a replacement for his ailing horse.

The horse that Isak receives is wooden, and he evades Folke's observations by cooking and eating in his upstairs bedroom - and even drills a hole in the floor so he can observe the hapless observer Folke down below in the kitchen.

Like the other observers from the institute, Folke is strictly prohibited from fraternizing with his subject - but that becomes impossible, considering his loneliness during the long Scandinavian winter, especially when one of them grows ill.

When Folke's nervous supervisor (Rene Brynolfsson) learns another observer is drinking with his subject and goes into a panic, Folke and Isak go to comical lengths to hide their growing friendship.

While some of the humor in "Kitchen Stories" pokes gentle fun at the cultural differences between Swedes and Norwegians, it's mostly a well-acted, expertly directed comedy with characters and situations of truly universal appeal.

KITCHEN STORIES

Produced, written (in Swedish and Norwegian, with English subtitles) and directed by Bent Hamer; director of photography, Philip Ogaard; edited by Pal Gengenbach; music by Hans Mathisen; production designer, Billy Johansson. Running time: 92 minutes. This film is not rated.

WITH: Joachim Calmeyer (Isak), Tomas Norstrom (Folke), Bjorn Floberg (Grant) and Reine Brynolfsson (Malmberg).

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