



Company Presentation: Santa Maria Group

Santa Maria's success story started almost a hundred years ago. The course was established long ago: to be the best at spices and creative flavouring in all regards. Today, the Santa Maria Group is one of Europe's leading groups within spices and flavouring, and one of Sweden's most important companies within food exports.

Today

Today, the one time family-owned company, Santa Maria, is a European flavouring group with its headquarters in Mölndal, Sweden and with approximately 1300 employees. In 2007, Santa Maria had a turnover of around 390 million euros.

Santa Maria is owned (80%) by the Finnish food conglomerate, Paulig, which has a strong focus on coffee, ethnic foods and flavouring. Santa Maria AB has long been a market leader in the Nordic region and is active in more than 35 markets around Europe, including France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Poland, the Baltic Countries, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland and Russia. And the strategy for the future is crystal clear: Santa Maria will become the leader in Mexican food for all of Europe. In Northern Europe, Santa Maria will continue to expand its position in spices and Thai and Indian food.

Back then

It all started in Gothenburg in 1911 when Frans Leon Berg opened up a small tea and spice shop. He ran the shop until his death, at which time the families Nordlund and Falk took over and renamed the spice shop "Nordfalks". In 1946, Armin Mattsson and his colleague, Hugo Lundgren, purchased a share in the company and laid the foundation for what Santa Maria is today. They invested in modern machinery and Mattsson initiated cooperation with ICA. Nordfalks grew, and over time, became the largest spice company in Sweden.

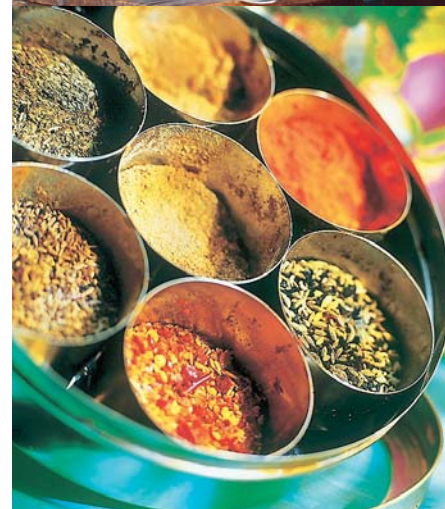
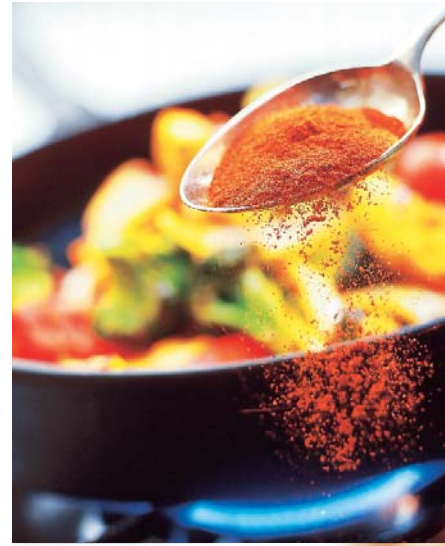
In 1968, Armin's son, Lars Olof Mattsson, took over and the company had a turnover of 854000 euro with its sale of spices. When he resigned as Managing Director 36 years later, Santa Maria had a turnover of more than 214 million euros. There were many high points during that period, the introduction of Santa Maria Tex Mex during the 90's being the most important of all. When Santa Maria introduced the Tex Mex concept, the market for Mexican food in Sweden was rather small. At the time, Swedes ate roughly 7,5 million euros worth of Tex Mex food per year. Today, the market is worth 9,7million euros and Santa Maria is the largest player representing 60 percent of the market.

Fields of Business

One of Santa Maria's goals is to get as many people as possible to get a taste of all the world's exciting food. That is why the company has concentrated on two areas of business: Retail and Food Service.

The retail field is the dominant business area and all of the company's product concepts are found here.

With regard to the other business area, Food Service, Santa Maria is turning to restaurants and catering kitchens specially adapted for spice-blending and the concept in order to meet their requirements. In this regard, Santa Maria is the leading brand in the Nordic market.





Products

Spices have always played a pivotal role in Santa Maria's enterprise and have also been the basis for the company's other seasoning concepts. At the very centre of Santa Maria's enterprise is the unending search for new, exciting flavours, dishes and eating customs which serve to improve food preparation and the market. With curiosity and a broad knowledge of spices and ethnic food trends, Santa Maria develop inspiring and smart concepts involving flavours from the four corners of the world. Today, Santa Maria has many strong product concepts gathered together under the Santa Maria trademark.

Santa Maria Spices is one of the main concepts and is the leading brand on the Nordic market. The assortment consists of nearly 100 various spices and is the basis of all seasoning products found in other concepts.

Santa Maria BBQ is the leading assortment of barbeque products on the Nordic market with its products such as marinates and glazes made for all your barbequed favourites. Our selection is the key to success for anyone wanting to be a hit at the barbeque.

Santa Maria Tex Mex is the leading Mexican spice assortment in the Nordic countries as well as in other parts of Europe with its wide selection of taco shells, tortillas, spice blends, salsas, taco chips and much more. The Tex Mex concept was launched in 1991 and it quickly became a great success. Each year, some 200 million tortillas are manufactured at the factory in Vadensjö, Scania and some 85 million taco shells are made in Mölndal. In the autumn of 2006, a further development in the well-established Tex Mex concept was introduced: the trendy assortment known as Red Fusion, an assortment within the Mexican food category consisting of tortillas, salsas, spice blends and drink mixes, among other things.

Santa Maria Thai is an assortment of exotic flavours unique to Thailand. The concept was launched in 2001 and it quickly became a success. Here you will find quick and easy ways to make those Thai dishes which have become favourites ever since Thailand became a popular travel destination.

Santa Maria India is the latest addition to the ethnic concepts and here you will find just about everything you need to prepare genuine Indian cuisine quickly and easily.

Quality and value

Quality for us

Quality is a keyword for our entire organisation. It encompasses everything our customer experience including element that can't be seen or felt. Everything from product safety, to having an exciting range of attractive products and in-depth knowledge of tastes, to dealing with customers complaints and ensuring high delivery reliability and excellent service. All our own production facilities are certified in accordance with BRC (British Retail Consortium)

High quality and great taste

Our objective is to only launch products that are better than competitors on the market. Sensory tests are carried out on trained internal test panels as well as on independent external consumer panels. These blind tests secure the product's consumer acceptance before it is launched into the market. We don't just satisfy ourselves about the taste. We are just as exact about the product's appearance and packaging and our ability to meet our customer's requirements.

Product development – a taste of the future

We work with creative taste development. It is therefore a matter of course for our purchasers and product developers to have to seek out new sources, authentic flavours, traditions and the best raw ingredients from around the world.

CSR: Corporate Social Responsibility

Having started out as a Swedish spice company, we are now an international company that focuses on exciting flavours and ethnic food. We have always been interested in and curious about our surroundings, which is one of the reasons why we have found new paths to travel.





Santa Maria wants to play an active role in society, which is why we have taken an interest in a number of CSR projects. CSR stands for "Corporate Social Responsibility", which essentially means having an ethical attitude that permeates the company and its relationships with the surrounding world. We have long-term partnership with three organisations which support the areas that particularly concern us:

Save the Children Sweden: because they unconditionally help children around the world, regardless of nationality, gender or age.

The Swedish Cancer Society: because of their tireless work involving healthcare and the desire to solve the mystery of cancer and support cancer sufferers.

The Palm Oil Project (RSPO): because of their tireless promotion of more sustainable palm oil production.

Health

According to Santa Maria, the joy of eating should also mean that you feel good when you have eaten. The staple in the majority of Santa Maria's flavour concepts is always fresh meat or fresh vegetables thus flying in the face of the myth that quick and easy food cannot be nutritious.

No trans-fatty acids

All of our products are free from trans-fatty acids. In 2004 we began reviewing our recipes and manufacturing processes in order to be able to remove the trans-fatty acids present in some products. Since 2005, all our products have been free from trans-fatty acids.

What are trans-fatty acids?

Trans-fatty acids are unsaturated fatty acids that take a specific form. Trans-fatty acids occur naturally in milk and meat from ruminants, but are also formed by the solidification of fats by industrial means. Trans-fatty acids, like saturated fat, increase bad cholesterol in the blood while reducing the amount of good cholesterol. This increases the risk of coronary heart disease. That is why we should reduce our intake of saturated fat and trans-fatty acids.

Naturally free from gluten

In order to be able to label products as "Naturally free from gluten" an approved production facility is required, which does not handle any raw materials containing gluten. For example in Sweden, The Swedish National Food Administration, grants approval. In addition, permission must be sought from the Swedish Coeliac Society to be able to use their symbol "Naturally free from gluten".

Trivia

In the 15th century, the explorer Christopher Columbus set out to find a sea-passage to India in order to find a faster and shorter spice shipping route aboard the very ship named Santa Maria. In the very beginning, that ship had been part of the company logo, but it has been removed over time. The famous designer duo, Sigvard Bernadotte and Acton Björn, were the masterminds behind the original logo as well as the classic spice bottles.

The first signs of the human use of spices to flavour food can be traced to 6000 years ago. In Egypt, papyrus scrolls have been found mentioning spices such as marjoram, mint and cinnamon.

There was once a time when spices served as hard currency. At the end of the 14th century in Germany, it cost seven oxen for a half kilogram of nutmeg and it cost a sheep for 500 grams of ginger.

For more information, please contact:

Henrik Billger, Global Marketing Director, Santa Maria Group
Tel: +46- (0)31-674200, henrik.billger@santamaria.se
www.santamariaworld.com