

HOUSE

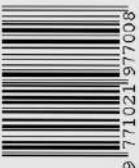
AND LEISURE

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kåseholm

Osterlen, Skåne province



An interiors scout visits a 17th-century castle that has undergone a restoration to create a haven of creativity

Words by Kerry Fischer Photography by Elsa Young a Frank Features Production



It's safe to say,

that at Kåseholm,

there's a charm offensive

in full sway.

Previous spread The entrance to Kåseholm is flanked by a welcoming double staircase, where the family pets wait to greet visitors. **Above** The sensitive refurbishment of the property retained the castle's original details, including the wooden floors and mouldings on the doors. **Right** The owners' keen eyes for antiques and collectibles is evident in the decor, with multicultural artefacts comfortably co-existing in the European setting.



The 17th-century estate of Kåseholm in Sweden's Skåne province specialises in the art of the slow reveal. As we turn into the driveway and I catch sight of the neo-classical building, I'm enthralled. And more so as the long driveway takes us past pastures where woolly Gotland sheep come running, and as meticulously renovated buildings and barns come into view.

When we arrive at the home's entrance, the charm offensive is in full sway. A sweeping staircase ascends to the front door and elegant windows are alight with traditional candelabra. As Kåseholm's current owners, Joakim Silvanderson and Jamie White, descend the stairs to greet us, I stand in awe of an ancient chestnut tree whose heavy boughs hang to the ground in a deep curtsy. 'It's the oldest and largest chestnut in the Nordic countries,' says Joakim with pride. 'It was planted in 1632, the same year that that Kåseholm was built.' The tree is huge and I understand why it is said that divinity clings to the branches of the chestnut tree.

Divine intervention certainly had a hand in leading Joakim and Jamie to this historic estate in 2017. 'We were helping a friend look for a house in the area and came across Kåseholm,' recalls Jamie. Just an hour by train from Copenhagen, the estate – comprising a 28-room main house and a plethora of outbuildings, barns and cottages – was an irresistible prospect for the dynamic duo who had just sold Solliden, a 60-acre eco-resort in northern California. For Joakim, who grew up in Sweden but lived in the US for decades, Kåseholm offered the opportunity to fulfil a childhood dream of becoming a farmer – and living in a castle. Jamie, who hails from Texas and is a lawyer and a landscape architect with a serious gift for interiors, saw the possibility of restoring this magnificent property.

Dating back to 1650, when much of the southern area of Sweden belonged to Denmark, the house has lived through some turbulent times. 'There were 11 Dano-Swedish wars between 1521 and 1814 with the borders moving regularly,' explains Joakim. 'Kåseholm's owner during part of this period was a nobleman, judge and admiral who is believed to have buried his wealth somewhere on the property before fleeing to Småland to wait out the war. He died before divulging the location of his hidden treasure.'

Old world charm and intrigue oozes from every corner of the U-shaped house, which lives on as a series of interleading, garden-facing public rooms. Bar a new roof and the addition of six simple bathrooms to create a hotel, there had been little in the way of major improvements to the house for a couple of centuries, which allowed Joakim and Jamie to futureproof it.

'Although historic buildings go through changes over the years, at Kåseholm there seems to have been an ever-present respect for proportion, volumes and detailing,' explains Jamie. 'We feel honour bound to respect the overall integrity of the house, too.'

With ten bedrooms, ten bathrooms, two kitchens, a pantry, four parlours, two dining rooms, two offices, an apartment and a wine cellar, the house was a considerable undertaking. 'The first thing we did was to open the west kitchen wall to a private dining room to let in afternoon light and improve air circulation,' says Jamie, 'and created a private, contemporary kitchen in what historically was a connecting corridor.'

With most of the original herringbone oak floorboards still intact, as well as exquisite harlequin carved doors, door frames and internal window shutters (not to mention the most Baroque ornamental door hinges I've ever seen), the house stands as a reminder of a time when human needs trumped business needs. It's something Jamie and Joakim clearly hold dear too, judging by their carefully curated collection of European, Asian and African antiques. Mixed with their eye for contemporary objets, all have found an elegant home and attest to the creative journeys that have brought them thus far.

It's no wonder Kåseholm has evolved as a place that inspires creativity. Their decision to open their home to travellers and create a farm stay, an artist-in-residency programme, and an international multidisciplinary design studio focused on food, art and design; was borne out of a passion for the environment and the generosity and power of community.

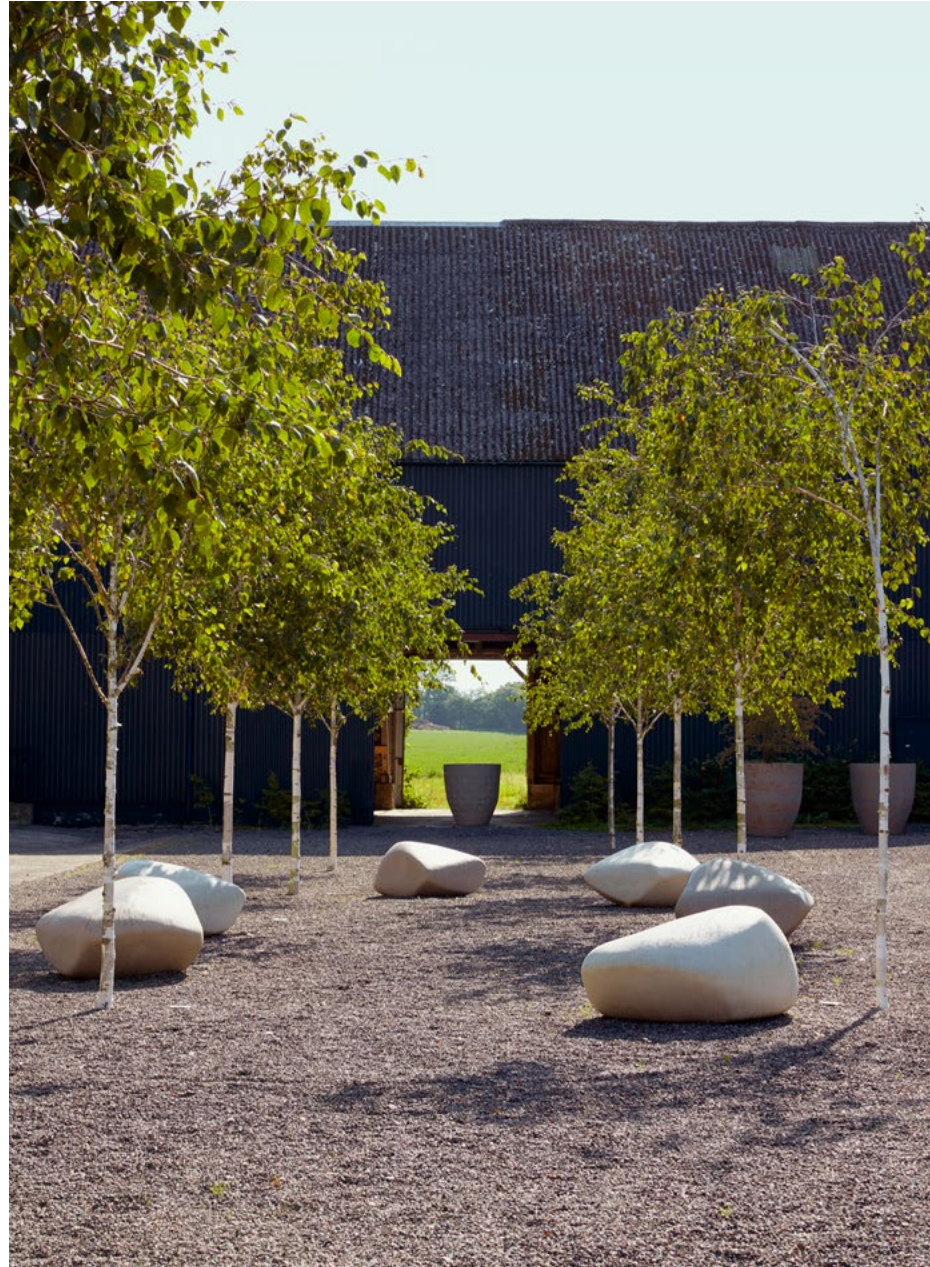
Their decision to collaborate with Michelin chef Daniel Berlin and focus on local traditions and telling stories that can affect cultural influence and change in consumer food choices harks back to when they lived in California and helped launch the first Slow Food Nation event in San Francisco with Carlo Petrini and Alice Waters, joining hundreds of other pioneering growers and thought leaders within the food system.

Today the estate offers an intimate yet immersive environment in which guests can stay relax, explore, learn, discuss and debate climate change, regional migration, soil health and biodiversity. With a focus on an exchange between north and south in the form of Kåseholm's Northern Exposure Design Centre, allows them to share some pieces of their life in South Africa too, where they also have a home. As such, South African artists Cathy Abraham and Juanita Oosthuizen have exhibited their works here, while sculptor Rodane Kane Hart was based at Kåseholm last year and will exhibit next year. ● @kaseholm

Left The owners went to great lengths to restore the character of the house in form, materials and methods. The plaster had to be completely restored and repainted with calcium paint to allow the walls to breathe. **Next spread** Eclectic elegance in every corner, Jamie White's own painting anchors a home where diverse styles blend seamlessly, proving that even the most unique elements can harmonise beautifully.







Previous spread The bedrooms are decorated in a traditional style that promotes rest. Views onto the garden complete the picture.
Above The outbuildings are set in a contemporary landscape of box hedge borders, ornamental plantings and large stone sculptures.
Right Events such as weddings and festivals often take place in one of the barns, complete with giant teepee.

