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## SÖREN ANDERS:

### THE YOUNGEST GERMAN CHEF AWARDED A MICHELIN STAR

Interview ©2014 by Lucy Gordan

*Born in Siegen on December 8, 1985, from the age of three Sören Anders dreamed of becoming a chef. His dream not only came true, but in 2010, at age 24, while he was the chef at Oberländer Weinstube in Karlsruhe, he became the youngest chef ever in Germany to be awarded a Michelin star. Finding the rather traditional Weinstube too stifling for his innovative style, in July 2012 he moved to Klenerts auf dem Turmberg, a quite popular touristic restaurant on the Karlsruhe "Tower Mountain," where he also received a Michelin star. In January 2013 he took over "Klenerts" and changed its name to Anders auf dem Turmberg ([www.anders-turmberg.de](http://www.anders-turmberg.de)). When he's not in his kitchen he appears on television and radio shows to talk about cooking and child nutrition, and volunteers as a clown in hospitals. In May 2013 he was elected one of the 12 most promising young talents in German-speaking countries. His first cookbook, Anders Kochen, was published in December 2013.*



**Our tastes in food are closely connected to our childhood; what are your first memories of food?**

**SA:** My Aunt Anni's apple pancakes.

**Why and when did you decide to become a chef?**

**SA:** From the time I was three years old I'd always wanted to be a chef. Cooking has always been my passion. I also wanted to be self-employed and to present my dishes in my own style.

**Can you tell me a little about your career? Where did you study? Where were you an apprentice? Where did you work?**

**SA:** I started learning in a very small family business, Hotel Sackmann, under Jörg Sackmann, in Baiersbronn. It had one Michelin star. Then I trained at *La Vie* in Osnabrück with Thomas Bühner who had two stars and now has three, and after that at the Waldhotel Sonnora in Wittlich-Dreis with Helmut Thielges who had and still has three stars. I also went to the hotel management school in Heidelberg, where I graduated with the highest grades.

**Who were your mentors and what did you learn from them?**

**SA:** I didn't have one or two mentors. I've learned classic craftsmanship as well as modern techniques from too many people to list as mentors.

**What are the essential qualities of a top chef?**

**SA:** Ambition, passion, and a pinch of madness.

**What do you like best about your job?**

**SA:** The ingredients of my dishes. They are the stars. Of course my motivation is that I want my guests to be happy and satisfied because of my food.

**The least?**

**SA:** Badly prepared food and when it gets too warm in the kitchen.

**What's your culinary philosophy?**

**SA:** Being Anders. It has a double meaning: Anders means different in German so Being Anders means both being different from other chefs and being myself. My style is a reinterpretation of classical German cuisine with the highest quality of regional products. It could also be described as regional cuisine with additional and unusual flavors for a new taste experience.

**What are your signature dish and specialties?**

**SA:** I don't have specific specialties. Everything I cook is a specialty. I opt for dishes with intense aromas. I'm unconventional when it comes to the combination of flavors. People say that I "deconstruct" or reinterpret German iconic dishes.

**Other chefs you admire?**

**SA:** Helmut Thielges.

**What do you think are the reasons for your success?**

**SA:** That's a difficult question. I think the answer is: Just because I'm here and I'm myself.

My kitchen brigade is young like me. I think it's important to motivate not command.

**How do you feel about guides and food critics? Have they helped you?**

**SA:** Everybody needs a job.

**What was your reaction when you received your Michelin star? Were you surprised?**

**SA:** No, not at all. It had always been my ambition. Of course, I'm happy to have it.

**As a young star chef, what advice would you give to another young person who's considering a career in your same field?**

**SA:** You need to have a passion for cooking. You must have fun, but also be self-disciplined and ambitious with clear goals.

**Up to now you've told me about Sören Anders the chef; I'd like to know more about Sören Anders the person. For example, what are your favorite foods?**

**SA:** Apple pancakes. If it's me doing the cooking I like lobster with cauliflower and tomato-cinnamon flower.

**If you were in jail, on Death Row, what would you order as your last meal?**

**SA:** I will never go to jail.

**A dish you dislike?**

**SA:** There aren't any.

**Your favorite wines?**

**SA:** Red wine and plenty of it, please!

**Your favorite beers?**

**SA:** All draught beers.

**A favorite dessert?**

**SA:** "*Heisse Liebe*" which means "*Hot Love*." It's vanilla ice cream with hot raspberries.

**Your favorite color, flower?**

**SA:** Blue. Orchids.

**What zodiac sign are you?**

**SA:** Sagittarius.

**What is never missing in your home refrigerator?**

**SA:** The light inside the fridge.

**Chefs are well known for having collections, often of motorcycles, fast cars, or watches; what about you**

**SA:** Cookbooks. I'm about to publish my first.

**Where do you like to go on vacation?**

**SA:** Wherever it's quiet.

**If you hadn't become a chef, what other profession would you have chosen and why?**

**SA:** Forest ranger or cemetery gardener because they are both honorable yet socially



commendable and useful professions.

**Do you have a pipedream? That means a dream for your future?**

**SA:** Staying Anders. In other words, staying myself and staying different.

