GOTHENBURG
the spy

COLUMN BY: TERESA GRUNWALD

Dancing in the spring

The room is spinning around. Or is the room in its place and I'm just thinking that everything is spinning around me? Probably the second case is correct. And: no. The reason for this is not too much alcohol. It's better than that. It is the feeling you get after you danced three hours of national Swedish dances like waltz and polka which spin you around a lot. You might think that the purpose of these dances is to confuse poor newbies, who were curious about traditional dances.

But back to the beginning of the story: it is a warm, almost sunny day in Slottskogen. It seems as if all of Gothenburg decided to spend this day in nature. And what is better than to dance into the spring and by doing this get to know some Swedes? Correct: nothing. And so I went to the "Thédans". When I arrived there, I thought, for an instant, that it might haven't been such a great idea – most of the people were far older than me and – Swedish. What a surprise. But instead of the stereotypic Swedish behavior (no one talks to a stranger!) I was warmly welcomed and was quickly included in the dances. Most of the men I danced with spoke very good German or at least perfect English, so communication was very easy.

And as you actually don't need speaking for dancing (actually I had to focus on my feet and how do make them do the right moves) I danced and danced and danced. Additionally, I saw behind the curtains of Swedish traditions not just be reading or observing, but by being an active part. A very active part. I danced till my winter boots caught fire. But who cares?

And luckily there were some breakes in which you could make your head stop thinking that you are still sitting in a carousel and have a try on typical Swedish waffles. To my surprise, Swedes eat them with marmalade and whipped cream ... very strange. In my opinion the single possible way to eat waffles is with cinnamon and sugar. But this is another story and might be mentioned in another column.

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