

Sweden

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Stockholm** Touring the waterways, exploring top-notch museums and wandering the cobblestoned backstreets of Gamla Stan (p1094)
- **Ice Hotel** Enjoying a frosty beverage and a frozen bed at this ultracool jewel in the far north (p1116)
- **Malmö** Getting as close to the continent as possible without leaving the country in the multiculti Möllévångstorget area (p1108)
- **Best Journey** Visiting an island, any island, by ferry in the Stockholm archipelago (p1106)
- **Off-the-beaten track** Doing a bicycle loop around the island of Gotland, the best budget destination in Sweden (p1107)

FAST FACTS

- **Area** 449,964 sq km
- **ATMs** Widespread
- **Budget** Skr600 to Skr800 per day
- **Capital** Stockholm
- **Famous for** Vikings, Volvos, blondes, ABBA, meatballs, IKEA
- **Head of State** King Carl XVI Gustav, Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt
- **Languages** Swedish plus five official minority languages; English widely spoken
- **Money** Swedish krona (Skr); €1 = Skr9.29; A\$1 = Skr5.49; CA\$1 = Skr6.57; ¥100 = Skr6.24; NZ\$1 = Skr4.82; UK£1 = Skr13.85; US\$1 = Skr7.32
- **Phrases** *hej* (hello), *hej då* (goodbye), *ja* (yes), *nej* (no), *tack* (thanks)
- **Population** 9,016,596
- **Telephone Code** ☎ 46
- **Time** GMT/UTC + 1 hour
- **Visas** not needed for most visitors for stays of up to three months.



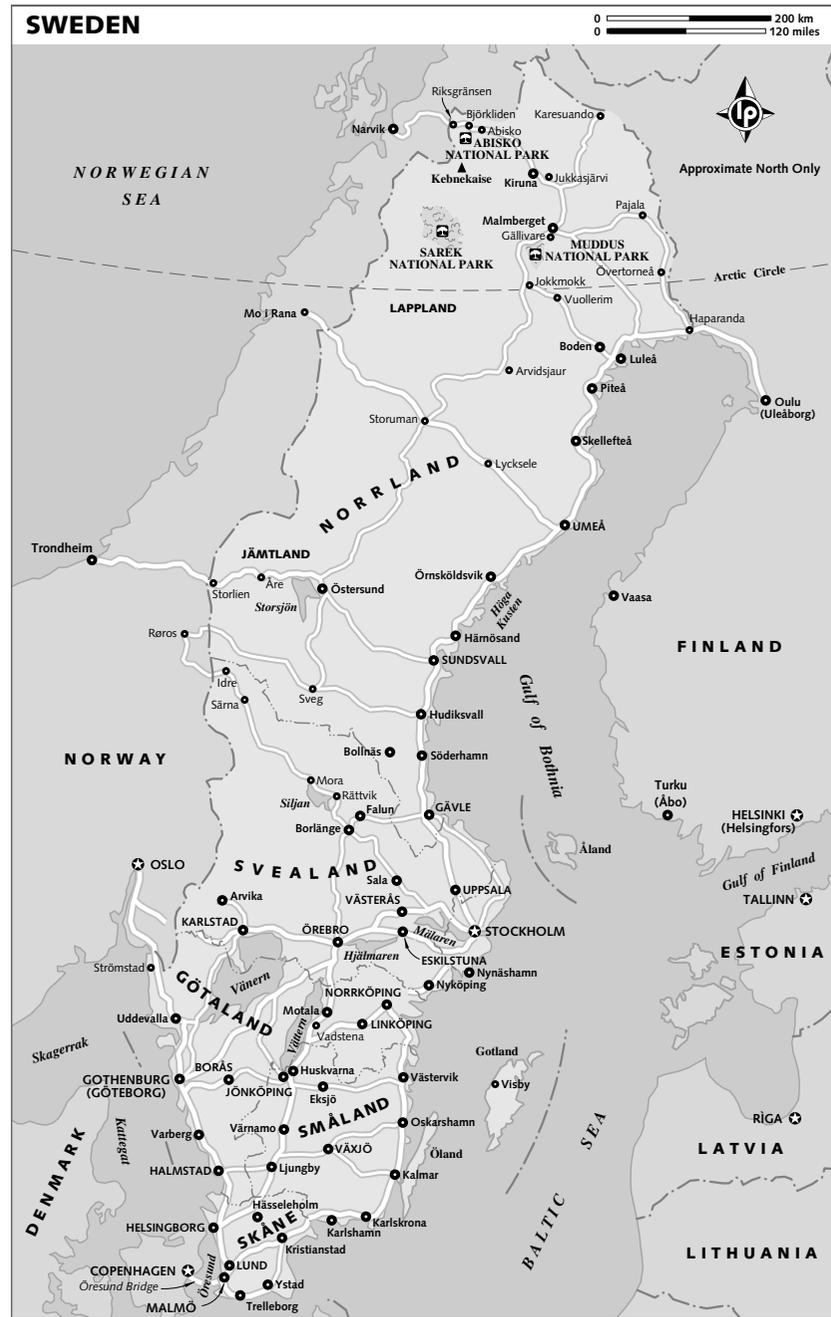
TRAVEL HINTS

Eat out at lunch time, buy your alcohol duty-free, and take advantage of Sweden's excellent hostels and friendliness towards free camping.

ROAMING SWEDEN

Soak up Stockholm style, dig into Uppsala, Gothenburg and Malmö, and explore some islands – big (Gotland) or small (Stockholm archipelago).

Ask 10 people what they know about Sweden and nine of them will mention ABBA. The tenth will probably have it confused with Switzerland. True, this narrow slice of Scandinavia lies a bit beyond the mainstream, in just about every way: geographically, politically, culturally. But the budget traveller who makes it up here will be richly rewarded with amazing cities and stunning natural beauty – even if, as its reputation holds, Sweden's delights don't come cheap.



Travelling in Sweden tends to be easy, whatever your budget. The national devotion to *'ordning och reda'* – essentially, organisation and order – ensures that most systems, from Parliament to public transport, usually run smoothly. A generally high standard of living means that even penny-pinchers can enjoy good-quality accommodation and food – hostels are excellent and street snacks plentiful. And the best things, like camping in thick forests, hiking a wilderness trail, snapping national art collections or sunning on a sandy beach, really are free.

HISTORY

The Viking Age was getting under way by the 9th century; Vikings made their mark in Russia, as well as trading with (and pillaging) Byzantine territories. Along with pagan gods, the aristocrats and their chosen kings (many from Denmark) reigned. A century of Swedish nationalist grumblings erupted in rebellion under the young nobleman Gustaf Vasa, who was crowned Gustaf I in 1523. In 1809 a constitutional amendment divided legislative powers between king and parliament.

By 1900 almost one in four Swedes lived in cities and the level of industry was increasing. In this environment the working class was radicalised. Sweden declared itself neutral at the outbreak of WWI. The Social Democrats, in power since 1932, introduced a welfare state after the war.

The 1950s and '60s saw the rapid rise in the standard of living for ordinary Swedes. But the world recession of the early 1990s led to massive devaluation of the Swedish krona. Their economy and national confidence shaken, Swedes voted to join the EU.

Since 1995 Sweden's welfare state has undergone tough reforms and the economy has improved. A 2003 referendum on whether Sweden should adopt the euro resulted in a 'no' vote. The referendum was overshadowed by the murder just days before of Sweden's popular foreign minister, Anna Lindh.

In recent years Sweden has grown away from its homogeneous past, both culturally and economically. Immigration and a new reliance on the IT industry have corresponded with factionalisation of the sociopolitical landscape. Whether because of this new diversity or dissatisfaction with the status quo, in the general election of September 2006, control of Sweden's government shifted from the Social Democrats to the centre-right Alliance for Sweden.

THE CULTURE

Around nine million people call Sweden home, making it Scandinavia's most populous country. Most of those folks live in the urban centres of Stockholm, Gothenburg and

Malmö – only 12% of the population lives in Norrland, which takes up two-thirds of the country's geographical area.

There are about 17,000 Sami in Sweden, largely concentrated in the north. More than 20% of Sweden's population are foreign-born or have at least one non-Swedish parent. Most immigrants have come from other European countries. Of non-European immigrants, the largest groups have come from Iraq, Turkey and Iran. There are an estimated 40,000 Roma in Sweden. Other well-represented countries include Poland, Chile and Somalia.

Sweden's overall approach to family life is in line with its socially progressive tendencies. The extensive state-mandated maternity/paternity leave is shared equally between parents – it's as common to see fathers pushing strollers as it is to see mothers. Gay and lesbian couples have the same rights as heterosexual married couples under Swedish law, and have been able to adopt children since 2003.

Some 87% of the Swedish population is Lutheran, although only about 10% regularly attend church services.

SPORT

More than a million Swedes play football, the country's most popular sport. The most high-profile name in Swedish football is probably England's national team coach, Sven-Göran Eriksson, famed for his allegedly scandalous love life. Eriksson left the job after the 2006 FIFA World Cup in Germany.

Ice hockey is another big sport in Sweden. There are amateur teams in most communities and 12 professional teams in the premier league. The handsome visage of Swedish hockey star Peter 'Foppa' Forsberg graces advertisements all over the country.

Tennis star Björn Borg has moved on to designing underpants, but the sport he dominated is still a popular one in Sweden. Golf, sailing and *bandy* (similar to ice hockey) are also common.

Alpine skiing competitions are held annually and the huge Nordic race called Vasaloppet takes place each year in March.

READING UP

The History of Sweden (2002) is an easily digested history of the country by Byron J Nordstrom. *The Wonderful Adventures of Nils* (1906) by Selma Lagerlöf is a children's book that takes readers of all ages on an illuminating journey across Sweden.

ARTS

Sweden today is probably better known for design and pop music than fine arts. Thanks to IKEA, words like 'spartan' and 'clean-lined' are mandatory in any discussion of Swedish aesthetics. The self-assembled bookshelves and affordable bold-print curtains didn't come out of nowhere, of course – artists such as Josef Frank, Carl Malmsten and Bruno Mathsson are among the early progenitors of Swedish interior design. Also influential is the trifecta of glassworks, Kosta, Boda and Orrefors, the products of which can be spotted in most Swedish households.

By some counts the third-largest exporter of music in the world (after the US and UK), Sweden hosts about 120 music festivals yearly, from medieval and baroque to folk, jazz and rock. Everyone knows about ABBA, but more recent exports include Sahara Hotnights, Hellacopters, The (International) Noise Conspiracy, The Hives, Timbuktu and The Soundtrack of Our Lives. Domestic sensations like Amy Diamond and Elena Papparizou dominate Swedish radio.

In the literary world, stormy dramatist August Strindberg (*Miss Julie*) is probably the biggest name. But the best-loved Swedish writer is Astrid Lindgren, creator of the pigtailed *Pippi Longstocking*. Contemporary authors to look for include Henning Mankell, author of a crime series featuring morose detective Kurt Wallander (*Dogs of Riga*), and spy novelist Jan Guillou.

Ingmar Bergman remains one of the most important film directors of all time, with landmark films such as *The Seventh Seal* and *Wild Strawberries* defining Swedish film throughout the world. Newer Swedish directors of note include Lukas Moodysson, Roy Andersson and Josef Fares.

Carl Larsson, Anders Zorn and Bruno Liljefors are among the best-known Swedish painters – visitors to nearly any art museum in the country will see examples of their work.

The two most important Swedes in science are Carl von Linné, the 18th-century botanist who pioneered modern plant taxonomy under Latin classifications; and Alfred Nobel, the inventor of dynamite and other explosives, whose will founded the Nobel Institute and the international prizes in 1901.

ENVIRONMENT

Sweden covers an area of 449,964 sq km, and its maximum north-south extent is 1574km. Flat and open Skåne in the south is similar to Denmark, but further north the landscape is hillier and heavily forested. The coastline is notable for its small fjords and skerries.

Nature-loving Swedes led Europe in setting up national parks in the early 20th century; there are now 28 in Sweden (the biggest and best are in Lapland).

Ecological consciousness in Sweden is very high. Swedes are fervent believers in sorting and recycling household waste (paper, glass, plastic etc) – you'll be expected to do the same in hostels and camping grounds.

TRANSPORT

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Air

The major international airport is Stockholm's **Arlanda airport** (code ARN; ☎ 08-797 6000; www.lfv.se), with direct flights linking the country to major Scandinavian towns, and European and North American cities. Gothenburg's **Landvetter airport** (code GOT; ☎ 031-941000) and Malmö's **Sturup airport** (code MMX; ☎ 040-613 1000), as well as a few other minor airports, also have direct international flights.

The national carrier is **SAS** (code SK; ☎ 0770-727272; www.scandinavian.net).

Sea

All fares listed are one way unless specified. Try to book in advance, especially from Finland.

BALTIC COUNTRIES

Tallink (☎ 08-666 6001; www.tallink.ee) sails daily between Sweden and Estonia on two routes: Stockholm–Tallinn (from €45, 15 hours) and Kapellskär–Paldiski (from €28, 10 to 11 hours). Tallink also sails daily between Stockholm and Riga in Latvia (from €29, 17½ hours).

Lisco Line (☎ 0454-33680; www.lisco.se) sails between Klaipėda in Lithuania and Karlshamn, near Karlskrona in southern Sweden (from Skr625, 14 hours, three to six weekly).

DENMARK

The quickest services are between Helsingør and Helsingborg (Skr20 to Skr22, 20 minutes). Three companies operate on this route: **HH-Ferries** (☎ 042-198000; www.hhferries.se), **Scandlines** (☎ 042-186300; www.scandlines.se) and **Sundsbusarna** (☎ 042-385880; www.sundsbusarna.se).

Stena Line (☎ 031-704 0000; www.stenaline.se) has five to 10 sailings daily between Gothenburg and Frederikshavn (from Skr130, 3¼ hours). Stena Line also sails three or four times daily between Grenå and Varberg (from Skr115, four hours). It's cheaper to travel between 10pm and 6am, or from Monday to Thursday. Prices also increase in summer.

BornholmsTrafikken (☎ 0411-558700; www.bornholmstrafikken.dk) sails from Ystad to Rønne (Bornholm) from €22. There are conventional (2½ hours) and fast (70 minutes) services, two to nine times daily.

FINLAND

Daily services go year-round on Stockholm–Turku and Stockholm–Helsinki routes (all via Åland). Note that Helsinki is called Helsingfors in Swedish, and Turku called Åbo. Travel in summer and from Thursday to Saturday year-round costs more. Both Silja Line and Viking Line offer bus services to and from ports.

Silja Line (☎ 08-222140; www.silja.com) sails daily (overnight) from Stockholm to Helsinki (from €92, around 15 hours) and to Turku (from €18/36 day/night crossing, 11 hours).

Viking Line (☎ 08-452 4000; www.vikingline.fi) operates daily on the same routes. Overnight from Stockholm to Helsinki costs from €33. Stockholm to Turku sailings cost from €14/19 for a day/night crossing.

Further north, **RG Line** (☎ 090-185200; www.rgline.com) operates a daily connection from Umeå to Vaasa (Skr450, four hours).

GERMANY

Scandlines (☎ 0410-65000; www.scandlines.se) sails between Trelleborg and Rostock (from Skr185, 5¼ hours, three daily) and Trelleborg and Sassnitz (from Skr120, 3¼ hours, three daily).

Stena Line (☎ 031-704 0000; www.stenaline.se) has daily (overnight) cruises between Gothenburg and Kiel (from Skr390, 13½ hours).

NORWAY

Color Line (☎ 0526-62000; www.colorline.com) operates ferries between Strömstad and Sandefjord (from €16, 2½ hours, two to six daily).

DFDS Seaways (www.dfdsseaways.com) Gothenburg (☎ 031-650650); Helsingborg (☎ 042-266000) runs overnight ferries between Copenhagen and Oslo, via Helsingborg. Fares between Helsingborg and Oslo (14 hours) vary according to the season and day of the week, starting at €44.

POLAND

Polferries (☎ 040-121700; www.polferries.se) operates between Świnoujście and Ystad (from Skr490, seven to nine hours, daily) and also between Gdańsk and Nynäshamn (from Skr560, 18 hours, three weekly). Children under seven ride free. **Unity Line** (☎ 0411-556900; www.unityline.pl) also operates on the Świnoujście–Ystad route (from Skr550, nine hours, daily).

UK

DFDS Seaways (☎ 031-650650; www.dfdsseaways.com) sails from Gothenburg to Newcastle (from €29, 25 hours, twice weekly) via Kristiansand (Norway).

Land

Direct access to Sweden by land is possible from Norway, Finland and Denmark (from Denmark via the Öresund toll bridge). Train and bus journeys are also possible between Sweden and the Continent – these vehicles go directly to ferries.

Eurolines (☎ 031-100240; www.eurolines.com), the long-distance bus operator, has an office located inside the bus terminals in Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö. It also offers 15-/30-day passes from €199/299.

All fares listed are one way unless specified.

CONTINENTAL EUROPE

Eurolines services run between Sweden and several European cities. The Stockholm to London service (from Skr1299, approximately 30 hours, two to five weekly) goes via Malmö, Copenhagen, Hamburg and Amsterdam or Brussels. There are also services from Gothenburg to Berlin (Skr610, approximately 12 hours, two daily).

DENMARK

Eurolines runs buses between Stockholm and Copenhagen (Skr538, nine hours, two to four daily), and between Gothenburg and Copen-

hagen (Skr280, 4½ hours, three to five daily). **Swebus Express** (☎ 0200-218218; www.swebusexpress.se) and **Sjöföbussen** (☎ 0771-151515; www.sjofobussen.se) both run regular buses on the same routes, and have discount fares for travel from Monday to Thursday. All companies offer student, youth (under 26) and senior discounts.

Trains are the quickest option, especially from southern Sweden, and run between Copenhagen and Malmö (from Skr85, 35 minutes, every 20 minutes) via the Öresund bridge.

The Swedish national rail company, **Sveriges Järnväg (SJ)** (☎ 0771-757575; www.sj.se), runs X2000 trains between Copenhagen and Stockholm (from Skr447, five hours, up to 14 daily) via Norrköping, Linköping, Lund and Malmö. Three high-speed services operate between Copenhagen and Gothenburg (3½ hours) via Helsingborg, Lund and Malmö (slower InterCity trains take 4½ hours, seven daily). Prices vary dramatically depending on when you buy your ticket – for best prices, purchase at least one day before departure.

FINLAND

There are seven crossing points along the river border. Bus services on the Swedish side are run by **Länstrafiken Norrbotten** (☎ 020-470047), which also runs the 'Bothnian Arc X-press', a daily bus service along the northern coast into Finland, from Skellefteå or Luleå on to Haparanda, Tornio and Kemi, finishing in Oulu.

Tapanis Buss (☎ 0922-12955, 08-153300; www.tapanis.se) runs overnight coaches between Stockholm and Tornio via Haparanda (Skr515, 15 hours, twice weekly).

NORWAY

The major bus companies operate on routes connecting Stockholm and Oslo, and Gothenburg and Oslo (many of the services from Oslo to Gothenburg continue on to Malmö and Copenhagen).

Eurolines (☎ 031-100240; www.eurolines.com) has regular daily services between Oslo and Copenhagen via Gothenburg, Helsingborg and Malmö. Gothenburg to Oslo costs from Skr220 (four hours).

Swebus Express (☎ 0200-218218; www.swebusexpress.se) runs services between Stockholm and Oslo (from Skr392, 7½ hours, three daily) and between Gothenburg and Oslo (from Skr230, four hours, up to six daily). **Sjöföbussen**

(☎ 0771-151515; www.sjofobussen.se) runs the Stockholm–Oslo route (from Skr305, five daily) and Gothenburg to Oslo (from Skr180, 10 daily).

Many regional transport networks (*länstrafiken*) run buses to within a few kilometres of Norway's border. **Länstrafiken Norrbotten** (☎ 020-470047) operates services between Kiruna and Narvik in summer (Skr241, 2½ hours, one or two daily).

GETTING AROUND

Public transport is well organised using 24 different *länstrafik* (regional networks). The confusion of so many operators is partly alleviated by the **Resplus system** (☎ 0771-878787; www.resplus.se), where one ticket is valid on trains and on *länstrafik* buses. The website has timetables for all trains, boats and buses in Sweden.

Air

The national carrier **SAS** (code SK; www.scandinavian.net) offers a variety of discount air-travel passes, including the Visit Scandinavia Air Pass for residents of European countries other than Scandinavia/Finland.

Bicycle

Skåne and Gotland are ideal for cycling. The best season is May to September in the south, and July and August in the north. You'll find bike-hire outlets and dedicated paths in most major towns.

Boat

An extensive boat network serves the Stockholm archipelago, and boat services on Lake Mälaren, west of Stockholm, are busy in summer. Regular ferries from Nynäshamn and Oskarshamn serve Gotland and, in summer, many small islands off the coast.

Bus

Sweden has a safe, reliable and extensive bus network. Travellers to the north of the country, in particular, will rely heavily on buses. If you're under 26, a student or senior, ask for a discount. Advance bookings are required for all but Swebus Express.

Sjöföbussen (☎ 0771-151515; www.sjofobussen.se) Smaller network, running daily on major routes (eg Stockholm–Malmö, Stockholm–Gothenburg, Gothenburg–Malmö). Also serves Oslo, Copenhagen & Berlin. Fares are 30% cheaper from Monday to Thursday.

Svenska Buss (☎ 0771-676767; www.svenskabuss.se) Network connects many southern towns with Stockholm.

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

- Ambulance, fire, police ☎ 112 (free call)

Swebus Express (☎ 0200-218218; www.swebus.express.se) Has the largest 'national network' of buses, but only serves the southern half of the country (as far north as Mora in Dalarna). Fares for journeys over 100km are 30% cheaper between Monday and Thursday most weeks (not public or school holidays).

Ybuss (☎ 0771-334444; www.ybuss.se) Daily journeys from Stockholm north along the coast as far as Umeå (via Uppsala, Gävle, Sundsvall), and to Östersund.

Car & Motorcycle

Sweden has good roads and there are no public toll roads or bridges. You usually only need a recognised full driving licence, even for car hire. If bringing your own car, you'll need vehicle registration documents.

The Swedish national motoring association is **Motormännens Riksförbund** (☎ 020-211111, 08-690 3800; www.motormannen.se; Sveavägen 159, SE-10435 Stockholm).

International car-hire chains start at around Skr600 per day for smaller models, but shop around, as weekend or summer packages may be offered at discount rates. All the major firms (eg Avis, Hertz, Europcar) have offices in major cities.

Mabi Hyrbilar (☎ 020-110 1000; www.mabirent.se) is a national company with competitive rates and branches in major cities. Cars can also be hired from many large petrol stations (look for 'hyrbilar' or 'biluthyrning' signs) at reasonable rates.

Local Transport

In Sweden, local transport is linked with the regional *länstrafik* – rules and prices for city buses may differ slightly from long-distance transport, but a regional pass is valid both in the city and on the rural routes. There's usually a flat fare of around Skr15 to Skr20 in towns.

Train

Trains are the fastest way to get around, although many destinations in the northern half of the country can't be reached by train alone.

The national network **Sveriges Järnväg** (SJ; ☎ 0771-757575; www.sj.se) covers most main

lines, especially in the country's southern half. Its flag carriers are the X2000 trains going at speeds of up to 200km/h, with services from Stockholm to major destinations. InterCity trains also run on many of these routes; InterCity fares are cheaper and journey times longer. **Connex** (☎ 0771-260000; www.connex.se) runs in the far north, and offers services from Stockholm and Gothenburg north as far as Kiruna and across to Narvik in Norway. Several counties run small regional train networks as part of their *länstrafik* service.

There are huge variations on fares depending on time of travel, type of service and how far in advance you book. All SJ ticket prices are reduced in summer, from late June to mid-August, and during off-peak travel times.

TRAIN PASSES

The Sweden Rail Pass, Eurodomino tickets, and InterRail, Eurail and ScanRail passes are accepted on SJ services and most other operators, such as regional trains. Not so for the local Storstockholms Lokaltrafik (SL) *pendeltåg* (commuter) trains around Stockholm.

X2000 and overnight trains require all passengers to pay a supplement, usually Skr50 (including obligatory seat reservation). The reservation supplements for non-X2000 trains aren't obligatory and there are no supplements for regional *länstrafik* trains.

STOCKHOLM

☎ 08 / pop 758,148

It's hard to imagine a city that makes better use of its natural assets than Stockholm. The capital city's famously clean, blue water sparkles under the midsummer sun, practically begging locals and visitors alike to take a dip. Winter is equally beautiful, as snowfall makes the big, square buildings look like frosted cakes and the cold air brightens the eyes of people wandering its streets. The view of majestic waterfront buildings and Old Town's warren of narrow streets as seen from the heights of Södermalm is hard to beat.

But the city is far from a museum piece. Just the opposite, in fact – its design and fashion industries race to be cutting edge, and the populace can be determinedly fast-paced to such a degree that non-Stockholmers often mock them for it.

There's a good mix of budget accommodation and food options, and the city is compact enough that a visitor can easily appreciate all of these elements at once.

ORIENTATION

Stockholm is built on 14 islands. The modern centre (Norrmalm) is focused on the square known as Sergels Torg. This business and shopping hub is linked by a network of subways to Centralstationen (Central Train Station); these subways also link with the *tunnelbana* (metro; or T) stations. The large, busy tourist office, Sweden House, is in the eastern part of Norrmalm; the popular public square Kungsträdgården is almost next door.

Smack in the middle of Stockholm is Gamla Stan, the historic Old Town. To the east of Gamla Stan is the island of Djurgården, home to many of Stockholm's better-known museums. The small island of Skeppsholmen sits between Djurgården and Gamla Stan. Södermalm, the city's funky, bohemian area, inhabits the large island to the south of Gamla Stan. It's linked by the car-and-pedestrian bridge Centralbron.

INFORMATION**Discount Cards**

SL Public Transport Pass (www.sl.se; per 24/72hr Skr60/180) Covers transport only.

Stockholm Card (www.stockholmtown.com; per 24/48/72hr adult Skr270/420/540, child Skr120/160/190) Free entry to over 75 attractions, free sightseeing by boat and free travel on public transport. Available from tourist offices, many camping grounds, hostels, hotels, and SL centres.

Emergency

Police stations Kungsholmen (Map pp1096-7; ☎ 401 1300; Kungsholmsgatan 37; ☎ 24hr); Södermalm (Map p1100; ☎ 401 0100; Torkel Knutssonsgatan 20; ☎ 24hr)

Internet Access

Nine (Map p1100; Odengatan 44; per min Skr0.75; ☎ 10am-1am) Computer area is downstairs through the café.

Sidewalk Express (www.sidewalkexpress.se, Swedish only; per hr Skr19) A chain of roving internet kiosks at numerous central locations (Centralstationen, Cityterminalen, Arlanda and Bromma airports, inside some convenience stores and coffee shops). Vouchers are purchased from vending machines next to monitors (coins only). See the website for locations in Stockholm and elsewhere in Sweden.

Left Luggage

In the lower level at Centralstationen, different-sized lockers cost Skr25 to Skr70 per 24 hours. There are similar facilities at the neighbouring Cityterminalen and major ferry terminals.

Medical Services

CW Scheele Apotek (Map p1100; ☎ 454 8130; Klarabergsgatan 64; ☎ 24hr) Central pharmacy near Centralstationen.

Sankt Eriks Sjukhus (Map pp1096-7; ☎ 654 1117; Flemminggatan 22; ☎ 8am-8.30pm) Emergency dental treatment is available here.

Södersjukhuset (Map pp1096-7; ☎ 616 1000; Ringvägen 52; ☎ 24hr) Large hospital in Södermalm handling casualties from central city area.

Money

Forex (www.forex.se) Centralstationen (Map p1100; ☎ 7am-9pm); Cityterminalen (Map p1100; ☎ 7am-8pm Mon-Fri, 8am-5pm Sat & Sun); Vasagatan 14 (Map p1100; ☎ 10am-7pm Mon-Fri, 9am-3pm Sat) Exchanges travellers cheques for a Skr15 fee.

Post

Post office (Map p1100; Centralstationen; ☎ 7am-10pm Mon-Fri, 10am-7pm Sat & Sun) By Hotellcentralen.

Tourist Information

Hotellcentralen (Map p1100; ☎ 789 2456; hotels@svb.stockholm.se; Centralstationen; ☎ 9am-6pm Mon-Fri, 9am-4pm Sat, 10am-4pm Sun) Convenient for arriving travellers as it's inside the train station. Can book accommodation and sightseeing tours, plus sells the Stockholm Card, SL Public Transport Pass, maps and souvenirs.

Sweden House (Sverigehuset; Map p1100; ☎ 789 2490; www.stockholmtown.com; Hamngatan 27; ☎ 9am-7pm Mon-Fri, 10am-5pm Sat, 10am-4pm Sun) Main tourist office, near Kungsträdgården. Lots of good brochures. Staff can book accommodation and packages, such as trips to the Stockholm archipelago.

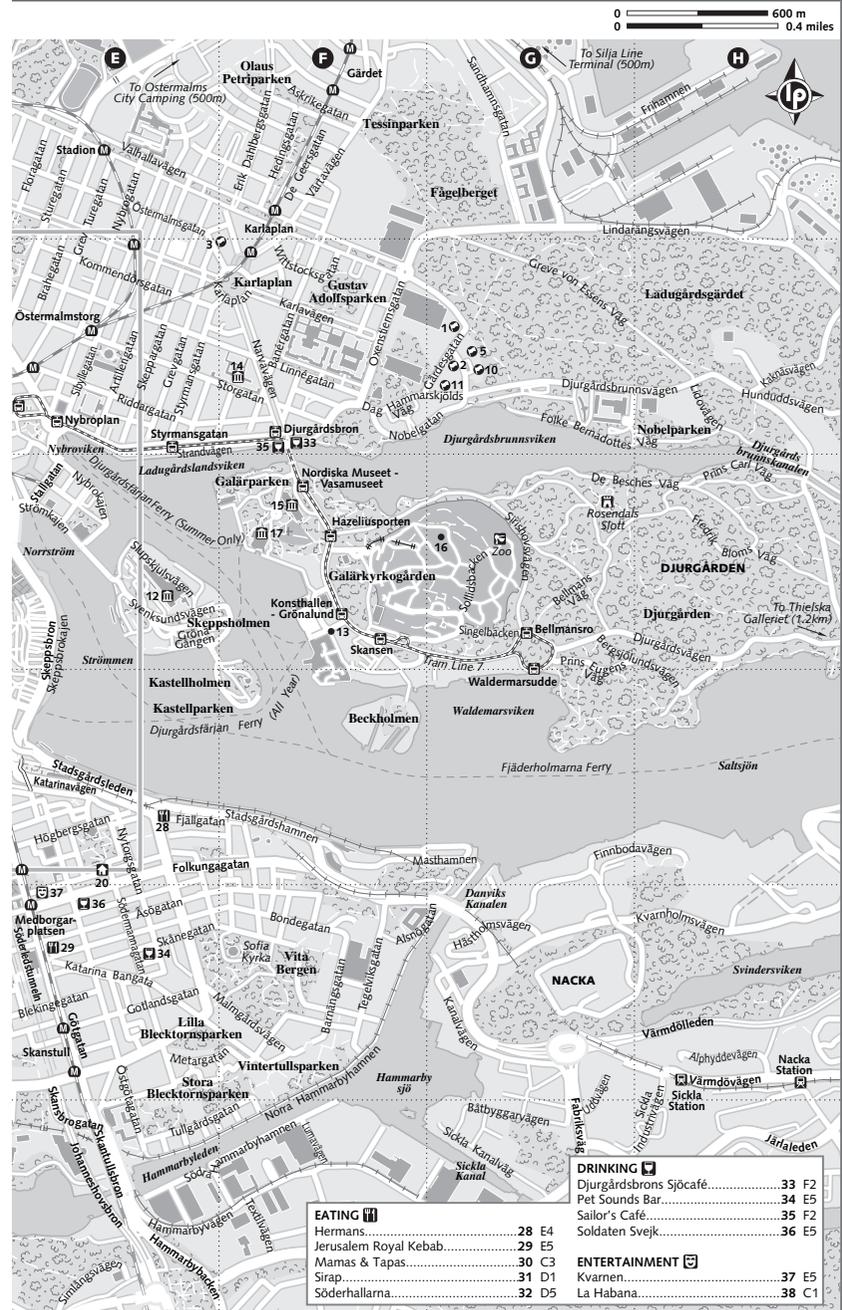
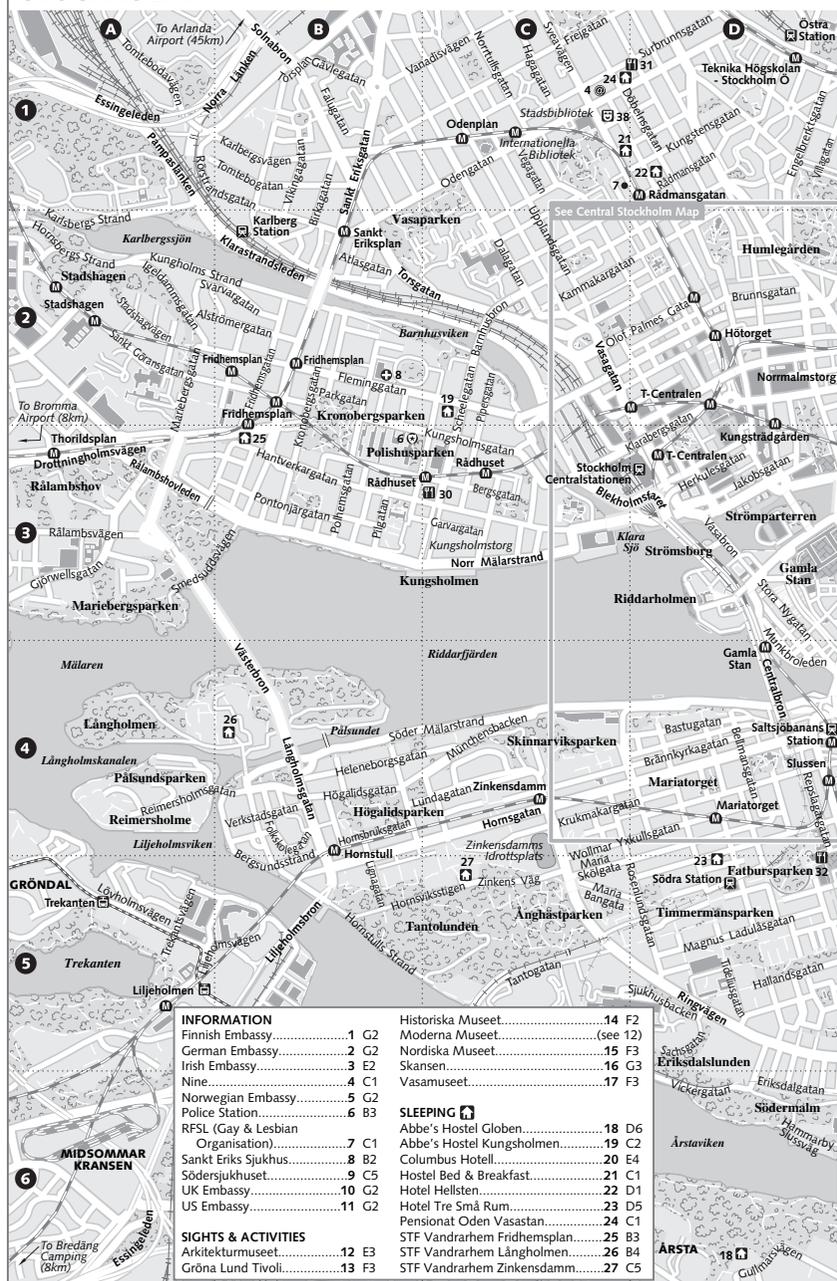
SIGHTS

Many of Stockholm's best sights and museums have recently switched to free admission. Those with an entrance charge are often included on the Stockholm Card (left). Most sights are open daily in summer but are closed Monday the rest of the year. Students and seniors usually pay a discounted entrance fee.

Gamla Stan

Once you get over the armies of tourists wielding ice-cream cones and shopping bags, you'll discover that the oldest part of Stockholm is

STOCKHOLM



GETTING INTO TOWN

If you arrive by train (into Centralstationen, the main train station) or bus (into Cityterminalen, the main bus terminal, neighbouring Centralstationen), you're walking distance to the modern shopping and business district of Stockholm, and well placed to get anywhere in the capital by *tunnelbana* (the local metro system), local bus or on foot.

If you arrive by ferry to any of the major harbours, jump on one of the shuttle buses provided by the ferry operators to get into Cityterminalen.

Stockholm's principal airport, Arlanda, is 45km north of the city centre. The **Arlanda Express** (☎ 020-222224) train travels between Arlanda and Centralstationen (Skr200, 22 minutes) at regular intervals from around 5am to midnight. A cheaper option is the **Flygbussarna** (☎ 600 1000; www.flygbussarna.se) bus service to/from Cityterminalen (Skr95, 40 minutes). From the airport, Flygbus drivers can arrange to have a Flygtaxi meet you at one of several drop-off points and take you directly to your door (from Skr140); call ☎ 686 1010 for a lift back towards Arlanda.

There are also Flygbussarna services from Cityterminalen to Bromma airport (Skr69, 15 to 20 minutes), Skavsta airport (Skr130, 80 minutes) and Västerås airport (Skr130, 75 minutes).

also its most beautiful. The city emerged here in the 13th century and grew with Sweden's power until the 17th century, when the castle of Tre Kronor, symbol of that power, burned to the ground.

The 'new' royal palace, **Kungliga Slottet** (Map p1100; ☎ 402 6130; www.royalcourt.se; Slottsbacken; adult per attraction Skr90, combined ticket Skr130; ☎ 10am-4pm mid-May-Aug, noon-3pm Tue-Sun Sep-mid-May, closed Jan), is constructed on the ruins of Tre Kronor and is one of Stockholm's highlights. Its 608 rooms make it the largest royal palace in the world. The **Changing of the Guard** (12.15pm Monday to Saturday, 1.15pm Sunday and public holidays) takes place in the outer courtyard.

Near the palace, **Storkyrkan** (Map p1100; ☎ 723 3021; admission free; ☎ 9am-7pm daily year-round, except to 5.30pm Sun Sep-mid-May) is the Royal Cathedral of Sweden, consecrated in 1306. On the main square Stortorget is **Nobelmuseet** (Map p1100; ☎ 232506; Stortorget; adult Skr60; ☎ 10am-5pm daily mid-May-mid-Sep, from 11am Wed-Sun rest of year, open to 8pm Tue year-round), presenting the history of the Nobel Prize and its recipients.

The site of **Medeltidsmuseet** (Map p1100; ☎ 5083 1790; Strömparterren; admission free; ☎ 11am-8pm Tue-Wed, 11am-4pm Thu & Fri, noon-5pm Sat & Sun), the museum of medieval Stockholm, had been allocated as parking space for members of the nearby **Riksdagshuset** (Parliament House; Map p1100; ☎ 786 4872; Riksgatan 3A), but excavations in the late 1970s revealed foundations of the medieval town. It's now one of the city's most evocative museums and well worth a visit. Free guided tours are available from June to August.

Djurgården

Leafy, attraction-rich Djurgården is a must-see. Take bus 47 from Centralstationen or the regular Djurgården ferry services from Nybroplan or Slussen. By the bridge you can hire bikes – the best way to explore the area. Beyond Djurgården's large tourist haunts are plenty of small gems, including some excellent art collections.

You could easily spend all day at **Skansen** (Map pp1096-7; ☎ 442 8000; www.skansen.se; adult/child Skr80/30; ☎ 10am-8pm May, 10am-10pm Jun-Aug, 10am-5pm Sep, 10am-4pm Oct-Apr). This 'Sweden in miniature' was the world's first open-air museum (it opened in 1891); today over 150 traditional houses and exhibits from all over Sweden occupy the attractive hill top.

The flagship *Vasa* sank within minutes of being launched in 1628 and was resurrected from the mud some 300 years later. The acclaimed **Vasamuseet** (Map pp1096-7; ☎ 5195 4800; adult Skr80, 5-8pm Wed Skr20 discount; ☎ 10am-5pm Sep-May, 8.30am-6pm Jun-Aug) allows you to look into the lives of 17th-century sailors, plus appreciate a brilliant achievement in marine archaeology.

Nordiska Museet (National Museum of Cultural History; Map pp1096-7; ☎ 5195 6000; Djurgårdsvägen 6-16; admission free; ☎ 10am-5pm Jun-Aug, 10am-4pm Mon-Fri, 10am-5pm Sat & Sun Sep-May) is housed in an enormous Renaissance-style castle, with notable temporary exhibitions and vast Swedish collections.

Gröna Lund Tivoli (Map pp1096-7; www.gronaland.com; ☎ 5875 0100; adult Skr60; ☎ noon-11pm most days May-mid-Sep, hr vary rest of year) is a fun park with dozens of rides and amusements – the Åkban-

det day pass (Skr240, after 7pm Skr180) gives unlimited rides.

Skeppsholmen

Anything put into a Swedish museum after 1960 probably resides on the island of Skeppsholmen. Housed in an award-winning and recently renovated building, **Moderna Museet** (Map pp1096-7; ☎ 519 55200; www.modernamuseet.se; admission free; ☎ 10am-8pm Tue-Wed, 10am-6pm Thu-Sun) contains a stellar collection of 20th-century art that ranges from the sublime to the ridiculous, but is mostly the former. The adjoining **Arkitekturmuseet** (Map pp1096-7; ☎ 587 27000; admission free; ☎ 10am-8pm Tue-Wed, 10am-6pm Thu-Sun) offers a fascinating look at Swedish architecture both public and private.

Central Stockholm

Near Centralstationen is the vibrant but distinctly unbeautiful **Sergels Torg** (Map p1100), a public square that's actually round. **Kulturhuset** (Map p1100; ☎ 5083 1508; Sergels Torg; ☎ 11am-7pm Mon-Fri, 11am-5pm Sat & Sun, some sections closed Mon) is a huge, controversial modern building containing galleries, a theatre, bookshop, design store, reading room, clubs, cafés, a comics library and a teenage craft room.

Not far away is the beloved public park **Kungsträdgården** (Map p1100), where locals gather in all weather. There's an outdoor stage, winter ice-skating rink, cafés and kiosks.

One of recent history's most famous art thefts was pulled off at the **Nationalmuseum** (Map p1100; ☎ 5195 4300; Södra Blasieholmshamnen; admission free; ☎ 11am-5pm Wed-Sun, 11am-8pm Tue), which holds the national painting and sculpture collection. (The last of the stolen pieces, a Rembrandt, was recovered in 2005.)

The main national historical collection is at the **Historiska Museet** (Museum of National Antiquities; Map pp1096-7; ☎ 5195 5600; Narvavägen 13; admission free; ☎ 10am-5pm daily mid-May-mid-Sep, 11am-5pm plus to 8pm Thu Oct-Apr). Exceptionally well-presented displays cover prehistoric, Viking and medieval archaeology and culture.

Kungsholmen

Stadshuset (City Hall; Map p1100; ☎ 5082 9058; Hantverkargatan; admission Skr60 by tour only) resembles a large church, with two internal courtyards. You can walk down the steps of the Blue Hall just like the Nobel Prize winners do, only without putting in all that hard work. Tours are held at 10am, 11am, noon, 2pm and 3pm

from June to August, and 10am and noon from September to May.

To feel even more important, climb Stadshuset's 106m-high **Stadshustorn** (Tower; Map p1100; ☎ 5082 9058; adult Skr20; ☎ daily May-Sep, Sat & Sun Apr), with 365 steps, for a great view of the city.

Other Areas

Södermalm (Map p1100) is Stockholm's most striking neighbourhood, where artistic and alternative types hang out – if you're looking for, say, a straight-edge vegan all-ages punk club, this is the place. The street scene is scarcely less exciting than the gorgeous views over Stockholm from the island's northern cliffs (called the Söder Heights). Start at the top of **Katarinahissen** (Slussen; Map p1100), an old lift (Skr5) that goes up from Slussen. Or sneak onto the elevator at McDonald's next door instead; it's free. Wooden staircases also wind steeply up the hillside, though these can be treacherous in winter.

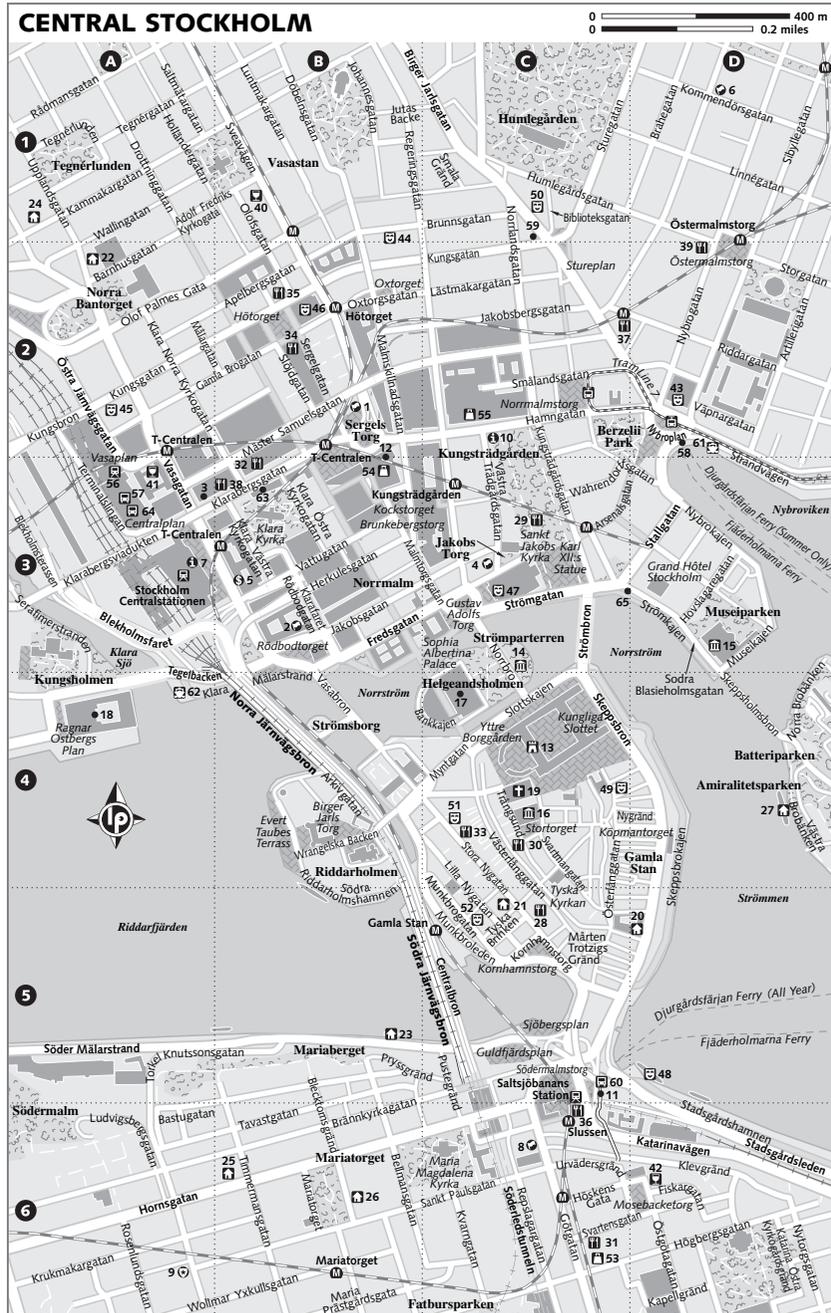
The tiny islands of **Fjäderholmarna** make a nice escape from the city. They're 25 minutes away by boat (off the east coast of Djurgården) and are popular for swimming. Take one of the boats (Skr80 return, buy tickets on board) departing from Nybroplan (half-hourly) or Slussen (hourly) from May to September. There are eateries here and the last boats leave at about midnight, making the islands a perfect spot to enjoy the long daylight hours.

ACTIVITIES

In summer locals and visitors flock to the coast and the archipelago islands or have picnics in the parks. From either end of **Djurgårdsbron** (Map pp1096-7; ☎ May-Sep), the bridge reaching Djurgården, you can hire bikes, inline skates, kayaks, canoes and boats (from Skr60/200 per hour/day for inline skates, Skr65/250 per hour/day for bikes).

SLEEPING

Budget options are spread out all over the city, and all are accessible by transport and close to a neighbourhood of bars and cafés. Hotellcentralen (p1095) can find you a bed in a hostel for a Skr25 fee or a hotel for Skr60. Most Stockholm hotels give steep discounts on weekends and in summer (Midsummer's Day to mid-August), sometimes up to 50% off. Most prices include breakfast, and there are always nonsmoking rooms available.



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Bredäng Camping (☎ 977071; bredangcamping@telia.com; Stora Sällskapet väg; camp sites Skr180-210, 4-bed cabin Skr650-850, hostel dm/d Skr1600/450; 🚗 T-Bredäng) Cabins and hostel beds are also available at this pleasant lakeside location 10km southwest of the city centre. The camping ground is open from April to late October, while the hostel is open year-round.

Östermalms Citycamping (☎ 102903; Östermalms Idrottsplats, Fiskartorpsvägen; camp sites Skr210; 🚗 T-Stadion) Stockholm's most central camping ground (1.5km from the city centre) is open only in summer (mid-June to mid-August). Take the metro or bus 55.

Hostel Bed & Breakfast (Map pp1096-7; ☎ 152838; www.hostelbedandbreakfast.com; Rehnsgatan 21; dm/s/d Skr200/425/590; 🚗; 🚗 T-Rådmanngatan) Cosy basement hostel. It has good facilities, including kitchen and laundry, as well as a large, cheap summer annexe with 40 beds (June to August, Skr145).

City Backpackers (Map p1100; ☎ 206920; www.citybackpackers.se; Upplandsgatan 2A; dm from Skr210, d Skr560, prices double Fri & Sat; 🚗) About 500m from Centralstationen and deservedly popular with backpackers. City Backpackers has clean rooms, friendly staff and facilities, including a kitchen, sauna, laundry, lockers and courtyard, plus free internet access. No breakfast offered.

Mälaren den Röda Båten (Map p1100; ☎ 644 4385; www.theredboat.com; Söder Malärstrand, Kajplats 6; dm/s/d Skr210/430/530) This red-painted boat in northern Stockholm is probably the cosiest of Stockholm's handful of floating hostels. It features a rustic interior and a good summer restaurant (but no self-catering kitchen).

Abbe's Hostels (☎ 300350; www.abbes.se; dm Skr220-260, d Skr500-640) Gamla Stan (Map p1100; Stora Nygatan 38); Gamla Stan (Map p1100; Skeppsbron 40); Kungsholmen (Map pp1096-7; Fleminggatan 19); Globen (Map pp1096-7; Gullmarsvägen 92) Abbe offers new, small, basic hostels scattered around the city centre (including two in prime spots in Gamla Stan and another on Kungsholmen). There are no kitchen facilities or breakfast served, and reception is only available from 3pm to 6pm.

STF Vandrarhem Zinkensdamm (Map pp1096-7; ☎ 616 8100; www.zinkensdamm.com; Zinkens väg 20; dm/s/d Skr240/485/560; 🚗; 🚗 T-Zinkensdamm) A large, well-equipped and warm STF (Svenska Turistföreningen; part of HI) hostel complex (with hotel) in a quiet locale at Södermalms green western end. It has a café, sauna and bike hire.

STF Vandrarhem Fridhemsplan (Map pp1096-7; ☎ 653 8800; info@fridhemsplan.se; Sankt Eriksgatan 20; dm/s/d Skr240/435/585; 🚗; 🚗 T-Fridhemsplan) One of the few hostels you'll see with egg chairs in the lobby and modern art on the walls, this

1500-room STF on Kungsholmen makes it cool to be cheap. Breakfast is Skr60 extra.

STF Vandrarhem af Chapman & Skeppsholmen (Map p1100; ☎ 463 2266; www.stfchapman.com; Skeppsholmen; dm/d Skr245/550; 📍; 🚗 65) Anchored off Skeppsholmen, this boat is a popular hostel, with bunks below and great views from on deck. On dry land beside the boat, with the same reception and prices, is Skeppsholmen Hostel, with kitchen and laundry facilities. Breakfast is Skr70 extra. The floating part of the hostel has undergone massive repairs recently and will again be closed for renovations from summer 2006 until at least mid-2007. The dry-land section will be open throughout.

STF Vandrarhem Långholmen (Map pp1096-7; ☎ 720 8500; www.langholmen.com; Långholmsmuren; dm/d Skr250/480; 📍 Hornstull) Off the northwestern corner of Södermalm is the small island of Långholmen, home to large parklands and this former prison complex – hostel beds are in jail cells. Hotel-standard rooms are also available, plus there's an on-site café and restaurant and a prison museum. Take the metro to Hornstull, walk north along Långholmsgatan and turn left onto Högalidsgatan, then north across the footbridge. Breakfast is Skr80 extra.

Pensionat Oden (☎ 796 9600; www.pensionat.nu; s Skr630-995, d Skr700-1295) City (Map p1100; Kammakargatan 62; Södermalm (Map p1100; Hornsgatan 66); Vasastan (Map pp1096-7; Odengatan 38) A chain of affordable pensions in character-rich old buildings with attractive rooms. Prices vary according to season, room size and facilities.

Hotel Tre Små Rum (Map pp1096-7; ☎ 641 2371; www.tresmarum.se; Högbergsgatan 81; r Skr695; 📍 T-Mariatorget) In a quiet part of Södermalm, this charming place has small but comfortable rooms, shared bathroom facilities and bike hire. Hard to beat for value and location.

Columbus Hotell (Map pp1096-7; ☎ 5031 1200; www.columbus.se; Tjärhovsgatan 11; s/d Mon-Fri Skr1250/1550, Sat & Sun Skr950/1250, annex s/d Skr695/895; 📍 T-Medborgarplatsen) A Södermalm option set around a cobblestone courtyard and by a park, close to nightlife. The excellent budget rooms are in the 3rd-floor 'annexe' (no lift), with phone, TV and shared bathroom.

Rival Hotel (Map p1100; ☎ 5457 8900; www.rival.se; Mariatorget 3; s/d Mon-Fri from Skr1990/2190, Sat & Sun Skr1240/1390, summer Skr650/1300) ABBA's Benny Andersson is a co-owner of this hopping place. All rooms have plasma TVs and DVD play-

ers, plus gleaming hardwood floors and huge pictures of Swedish film stars on the walls. The complex includes a vintage 1940s movie theatre, café, swank cocktail bar and well-preserved retro architecture throughout.

EATING

The sheer number of dining choices in Stockholm means it's usually possible to fill your belly without emptying your wallet. Don't miss coffee and cakes in an old-fashioned *konditori* (bakery café) or a visit to one of the dizzying market halls.

Most cafés and restaurants serve a daily lunch special called *dagens rätt* or *dagens lunch* at a fixed price (usually Skr60 to Skr70) between 11.30am and 2pm. The price usually includes main course, salad, bread, cold drink and coffee, and it's one of the most economical ways to sample Swedish cooking. For a quick, inexpensive snack, it's hard to beat a *grillad korv med bröd* – a basic grilled hot-dog on a bun (Skr12 to Skr25, available from countless stands and carts).

Gamla Stan

Chokladkoppen (Map p1100; ☎ 203170; Stortorget 18; snacks from Skr35, mains Skr40-85) In a pair of gorgeous Renaissance buildings from the 1650s you'll find the gay-friendly café Chokladkopen and its next-door sibling, Kaffekoppen. Servers run from one to the other, candelabras drip wax onto thick wooden tables inside and the outdoor patio is always buzzing.

Café Art (Map p1100; ☎ 411 7661; Västerlånggatan 60; sandwiches Skr35-75) Once hip, but now comfortable, this brick vault makes a nice hideout

from busy Västerlånggatan and serves filling, inexpensive lunches and pastries.

Hermitage (Map p1100; ☎ 411 9500; Stora Nygatan 11; meals Skr65-85) Hermitage rustles up fine vegetarian fare from around the world. The lunch deal is great value.

Central Stockholm

Hötorgshallen (Map p1100; Hötorget) This chaotic (for Sweden) basement food hall hides one of the best places in Stockholm to eat seafood, tucked away amid stalls selling the day's fresh catch. There's also a tantalising collection of speciality food shops, baked goods, produce stalls and Mediterranean fast-food counters.

Kungshallen (Map p1100; Hötorget) Opposite Hötorgshallen is this enormous fast-food court, best for those days when you need a meal that's quick, cheap and not necessarily an adventure.

Café Piccolino (Map p1100; Kungsträdgården; snacks Skr35-55) Among the stalls along the edge of Kungsträdgården is this long and lean café with large windows to capture the sun (and the passing parade).

Sirap (Map pp1096-7; ☎ 612 9419; Surbrunnsgatan 31A; meals Skr35-95) One of the few places in Stockholm that serves full, cooked breakfasts – the pancakes are recommended.

Östermalm

Östermalms Saluhall (Map p1100; Östermalmstorg; ☎ Mon-Sat) A classed-up counterpart to Hötorgshallen, this covered market hall contains gourmet food stalls and some excellent dining nooks. It's the perfect place to fill a picnic basket.

Sturekatten (Map p1100; ☎ 611 1612; Riddargatan 4; lunch Skr35-85) Pleasantly haunted by the tea parties of a million little old Swedish ladies, this traditional café consists of room after room of antiques – and we're not just talking about the clientele.

Södermalm

Söderhallarna (Map pp1096-7; Medborgarplatsen; ☎ Mon-Sat) This functional, modern food hall is a good place to grab a cheap lunch to eat outdoors on Medborgarplatsen.

Jerusalem Royal Kebab (Map pp1096-7; Götgatan 61; kebabs & felafels Skr28-50; ☎ 24hr) Kindly lining the stomachs of Söder's intrepid bargoers is this no-nonsense kebab outlet, often cited as the best in town.

Nystekt Strömning (Map p1100; Södermalmstorg; plates from Skr35) Line up at this van outside metro T-

Slussen for a platter of genuinely Scandinavian fast food: fried herring and potatoes.

Crêperie Fyra Knop (Map p1100; ☎ 640 7727; Svarstengsgatan 4; crepes sweet/savoury from Skr40/50; ☎ dinner) Snuggle into this intimate hideaway just off Söder's main drag for inexpensive and delicious crepes.

Hermans (Map pp1096-7; ☎ 643 9480; Fjällgatan 23A; lunch Skr68-98) Best in summer for its garden-like veranda, Hermans loads you up on vegetarian food while you sit perched atop the hillside feeling like the king or queen of all you survey.

Kungsholmen

Mamas & Tapas (Map pp1096-7; ☎ 653 5390; Scheelegatan 3; tapas from Skr40, mains Skr98-158) Delirious with kitsch, this energetic place is a little overpriced for dinner but an excellent stop for snacks and drinks.

Self-Catering

Hemköp (Map p1100; Klarabergsgatan 50; ☎ 8am-9pm Mon-Fri, 10am-9pm Sat & Sun) The handiest central supermarket, this large food emporium is in the basement of the Åhlens department store.

Systembolaget (Map p1100; Klarabergsgatan 62; ☎ 10am-8pm Mon-Fri, 10am-3pm Sat) Near Hemköp; you can buy alcohol here.

DRINKING

Nightlife is the most varied in Södermalm, along Götgatan, Östgötagatan and Skånegatan and near Medborgarplatsen. For fashionable late-night bars and clubs brimful of the beautiful people, go to Stureplan. Beers are cheapest during after-work happy hours, usually 4pm to 6pm Monday to Friday.

Foggy Dew (Map p1100; ☎ 207641; www.foggydew.se; Sveavägen 39; pub snacks from Skr62) Named for the song that got gentle folkie Burl Ives thrown in jail, this lively Irish pub is big on character and full of characters. About 50-50 Swedes and expats, it's a welcoming place to catch up on the local chatter and sink a few.

Soldaten Svejk (Map pp1096-7; ☎ 641 3366; www.svejk.se; Östgötagatan 35) Your best bet for seeing accordions and really cool moustaches is at this comfortable Czech pub in Södermalm, with huge beer mugs and hearty food.

Pet Sounds Bar (Map pp1096-7; ☎ 643 8225; www.petsoundsbar.se; Skånegatan 80; mains from Skr119) A strong contender for coolest new hangout in Stockholm, this place, opened by the folks

SPURUGE

Hotel Hellsten (Map pp1096-7; ☎ 661 8600; www.hellsten.se; Luntmakargatan 68; s/d Mon-Fri from Skr1490/1890, Sat & Sun Skr990/1190) The minute you walk in, you know this new boutique hotel is something special. The long black hallway leading to reception feels more like a posh nightclub than a crash pad. The lobby, bar and rooms are equally spectacular, each with individually chosen décor to give you the impression you're staying at the manor house of an artistic friend. All the rooms are gorgeous, but the exposed roof beams and skylights give the superior rooms the most atmosphere.

who run the nearby Pet Sounds record shop, has a sleek black-tiled bar, B&W rock photos on the walls and good DJ nights.

Mosebacke Etablissement (Map p1100; ☎ 5560 9890; www.mosebacke.se; Mosebacketorg 3) Even if you're not partaking in Mosebacke's many cool club nights, its terrace bar in summer is a fantastic place to relax.

Ice Bar (Map p1100; ☎ 5056 3000; Vasaplan; ☎ 4.30pm-midnight Mon-Fri, 3pm-midnight Sat) It's worth feeling like a tourist for a visit to the Ice Bar; whether it's worth the Skr125 entry charge is another question, but you do get to see a mini version of the famed Ice Hotel, filled with sculptures and shivering cuties in puffy coats. The temperature is a constant -5°C and the vodka comes in glasses made of ice. Refills are Skr85.

Two outdoor restaurant-bars on the bridge leading across to Djurgården, the **Sailor's Cafe** (Map pp1096-7; Strandvägskajen 27) and its neighbour, **Djurgårdsbrons Sjöcafé** (Map pp1096-7; ☎ 660 5757; Djurgårdsbron), are made for long leisurely drinks and summertime people-watching.

CLUBBING

Most of Stockholm's best clubs charge an entrance fee, at least on the weekend, of around Skr100. At many of them, you're also required to check your coat at the door (Skr10 to Skr35).

La Habana (Map pp1096-7; ☎ 166465; Sveavägen 108) Salsa is big in Stockholm, and this is one of the least pretentious places to sample it; the small basement bar features cigars, rum and dangerously attractive barkeeps.

Kvarnen (Map pp1096-7; ☎ 643 0380; Tjörhovsgatan 4) If this bar were a hairstyle, it would be a mullet: business up front, party in the back. DJ nights range from reggae to house. Queues are constant and the doormen are not to be trifled with – just hand over your coat and don't fuss.

Spy Bar (Map p1100; ☎ 5450 3704; Birger Jarlsgatan 20; admission Skr125; ☎ Wed-Sat) Once Stureplan's crown jewel, 'the Puke' (so nicknamed because *spy* is Swedish for 'vomit') may have lost some of its gleam, but its prime location on Stureplan is still pretty cool, and these days you might actually stand a chance of getting in.

Gay & Lesbian Venues

The gay scene is well established in Stockholm, although Sweden's famous open-mindedness means that nonheteros are welcome in almost

all bars and clubs, and there is no real 'gay district'. The best source of sass and information is the free monthly mag **QX** (www.qx.se).

Lady Patricia (Map p1100; ☎ 743 0570; www.ladypatricia.se; Stadsgårdskajen 152) *Patricia* is a ship that's been moored near Slussen and converted into a nightclub; it's known for gay nights (complete with drag shows) that draw partiers of all persuasions every Sunday.

Popular gay restaurant-bars in the Gamla Stan area include **Mandus** (Map p1100; ☎ 206055; Österlånggatan 7) and **Torget** (Map p1100; ☎ 205560; Mälartorget 13).

ENTERTAINMENT

Free local publications like *What's On Stockholm* and *Nöjesguiden* provide thorough, up-to-date entertainment coverage, from sport to theatre to rock shows.

Concerts & Theatre

Stockholm has outstanding dance, opera and music performances; for an overview, pick up the free *Teater Guide* from tourist offices. For tickets, contact the tourist office, theatre box offices or **Biljett Direkt** (☎ 0771-707070; www.tinet.se). Operas are usually performed in their original language; theatre performances are invariably in Swedish.

Major theatres:

Konserthuset (Map p1100; ☎ 5066 7788; www.konserthuset.se; Hötorget) Features classical concerts and other musical events, including the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

Dramatiska Teatern (Map p1100; ☎ 667 0680; www.dramaten.se; Nybroplan) The Royal Theatre (aka Dramaten) stages a range of plays in a fantastic Art Nouveau environment.

Kungliga Operan (Map p1100; ☎ 248240; www.operan.se; Gustav Adolfs Torg) The place to go for opera and classical ballet.

Live Music

Live jazz is enjoying a slow resurgence in the capital; for a sampler, check out the **Stockholm Jazz Festival** (www.stockholmjazz.com), held annually in mid-July.

Good venues to seek out:

Glenn Miller Café (Map p1100; ☎ 100322; Brunns-gatan 21) This intimate place is the most likely venue for live shows that even local jazz snobs won't sneer at.

Jazzclub Fasching (Map p1100; ☎ 5348 2960; www.fasching.se; Kungsgatan 63) Well-known and reliable, Fasching attracts fairly big-name acts from around the world.

Stampen (Map p1100; ☎ 205793; Stora Nygatan 5) More for good-time boogiers than strict jazz aficionados, this Gamla Stan standby is a fun place to watch Nordic types get their groove on.

SHOPPING

There's no shortage of places to spend your money in Stockholm; whole streets are lined with top designer boutiques. For funky second-hand shops, head to Södermalm along Gotgatan and its side streets. To poke around in the highbrow, designer showplaces, try Stureplan and Biblioteksgatan. For an affordable sampling of the goods, try the following:

DesignTorget (www.designtorget.se) City Centre (Map p1100; ☎ 5083 1520; Basement, Kulturhuset, Sergels Torg); Södermalm (Map p1100; ☎ 462 3520; Götgatan 31) A great place to pick up bargain gifts, this Stockholm chain is a showcase for the work of up-and-coming young designers.

NK (Map p1100; ☎ 762 8000; Hamngatan) The best selection of souvenirs can be found in the basement of NK department store. There's also a gourmet grocery here.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Air

Stockholm's main airport, **Arlanda** (code ARN; ☎ 797 6000), is 45km north of the city centre.

Bromma airport (code BMA; ☎ 797 6874), 8km west of Stockholm, is a minor airport used for some domestic flights. Two airports are used by some low-cost carriers and sometimes labelled as 'Stockholm', despite being a fair distance from the capital: **Skavsta airport** (code NYO; ☎ 0155-280400) is 100km south of Stockholm, near Nyköping; and **Västerås airport** (code VST; ☎ 021-805600) is near the town of Västerås, about 105km northwest of Stockholm. Transport connects all airports to Stockholm (see the boxed text, p1098).

Boat

See p1091 for details of ferry connections from Stockholm to Finland (Helsinki and Turku), Estonia (Tallinn) and Latvia (Riga).

Bus

Cityterminalen (☎ 3.30am-midnight) is above and next door to Centralstationen (follow the signs inside the main station hall, or use the street entrance on Klarabergsviadukten). From Cityterminalen there are long-distance buses to most major towns in Sweden as well as international destinations, airport buses

and buses to ferry ports. Cityterminalen has good facilities, including ATMs, foreign exchange, cafés, lockers and internet access.

Train

Stockholm is the centre for SJ's national services (see p1093). Direct trains to/from Copenhagen, Oslo, Storlien (for Trondheim) and Narvik arrive and depart from Centralstationen (Stockholm C), as do the *SL pendeltåg* (commuter) services that operate within Stockholm county.

The central hall at **Centralstationen** (☎ 5am-12.30am) has restaurants, shops, lockers, ATMs, internet access, public toilets and showers.

GETTING AROUND

Bicycle

Stockholm has an extensive network of bicycle paths and top day trips include Djurgården; a loop going from Gamla Stan to Södermalm, Långholmen and Kungsholmen (on lakeside paths); and Drottningholm. See Activities (p1099) for bike-hire information.

Boat

Djurgårdsfärjan city ferries link Djurgården with Nybroplan and Slussen; ferries cost from Skr25 and run every 20 minutes in summer (less often in the low season).

Public Transport

Storstockholms Lokaltrafik (SL; ☎ 600 1000; www.sl.se) runs all *tunnelbana* (T or T-bana) metro trains, local trains and buses within Stockholm county. At T-Centralen (Map p1100) there are SL information offices in the lower level of the **station hall** (☎ 6.30am-11.15pm Mon-Sat, 7am-11.15pm Sun) and at the **Sergels Torg entrance** (☎ 7am-6.30pm Mon-Fri, 10am-5pm Sat & Sun). Both offices issue timetables, plus sell SL transport passes and the Stockholm Card.

The Stockholm Card (p1095) covers travel in greater Stockholm, as well as entry to many attractions. A cheaper alternative is the SL Public Transport Pass (per 24/72 hours Skr60/180), covering transport on any of the city's buses, trains and SL-run ferries.

A new ticketing system on Stockholm's public transport system means an individual coupon (Skr20, or Skr180 for 10) is good for two hours of travel, no matter how far you go. Coupons may be purchased at Pressbyrå shops and *tunnelbana* entrances. International rail passes aren't valid on SL trains.

AROUND STOCKHOLM

Most locals will tell you that the one thing not to miss about Stockholm is leaving it – whether for a day trip or overnight excursion into the surrounding archipelago or the countryside.

STOCKHOLM ARCHIPELAGO

08
The Stockholm archipelago and its 24,000 islands is the favourite time-off destination for locals. The website **Stockholmtown** (www.stockholmtown.com) has a large section devoted to the archipelago and **Skårgårdstiftelsen** (www.skargardstiftelsen.se) is another great resource.

The main boat operator to the archipelago is **Waxholmsbolaget** (**0679 5830**; www.waxholmsbolaget.se); timetables are located at offices outside the Grand Hôtel on Strömkajen in Stockholm, and at the harbour in Vaxholm.

Each island has its own character, and while many can be visited on a day trip, staying overnight is recommended. **Finnhamn** has excellent swimming spots; book in advance to stay at the **STF hostel** (**05424 6212**; www.finnhamn.se; dm Skr275; year-round), the largest hostel in the archipelago with 80 beds.

Utö, far out in the southern archipelago, is popular among cyclists. Reception for the **STF hostel** (**05042 0315**; www.uto-varldshus.se; dm Skr325; May-Sep) is at the nearby Utö Vårdshus, ranked among the best restaurants in the archipelago.

Chi-chi **Sandhamn** on Sandön is popular with sailors and day-trippers; accommodation here is expensive, so this island is best as a day trip.

UPPSALA

018 / pop 191,100

Uppsala's huge pink castle and prominent *domkyrka* (cathedral) give it an instantly recognisable silhouette. The fourth-largest city in Sweden, it's a university town where young people and old buildings meet over coffee. About 70km from Stockholm, it makes a good excursion and has decent budget accommodation. You can soak up history and beer in equal measure.

Gamla (Old) Uppsala flourished as early as the 6th century. The cathedral was consecrated in 1435 after 175 years of construction and the castle was first built in the 1540s,

although today's edifice belongs to the 18th century. The city's university was founded in 1477 and is Scandinavia's oldest.

The **tourist office** (**0274800**; www.upsalaturism.se; Fyrstorg 8; 10am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-3pm Sat year-round, also noon-4pm Sun late Jun-mid-Aug) is close to the cathedral.

Sights & Activities

Uppsala began at the three great grave mounds at **Gamla Uppsala** (admission free; 24hr), 4km north of the modern city and well signposted (bus 2 from Stora Torget). The mounds are said to be the graves of pre-Viking kings and lie in a cemetery with about 300 smaller mounds and a great heathen temple. The modern **Gamla Uppsala Historical Centre** (**0239300**; www.raa.se/old uppsala; adult Skr50; 11am-5pm May-Aug, noon-3pm Sun Sep-Apr) has museum-style exhibits of ancient artefacts excavated from Gamla Uppsala and the nearby archaeological sites, and has guided tours of Gamla Uppsala from May to August (included in the entry fee).

Originally constructed by Gustav Vasa in the mid-16th century, **Uppsala Slott** (Castle; **0727 2485**; adult Skr60) features the state hall where kings were enthroned and a queen abdicated. It's open by guided tour only (1pm and 3pm June to August). The **Botanic Gardens** (admission free; 7am-9pm May-Aug, 7am-7pm Sep-Apr) below the castle hill were originally laid out by Carl von Linné (Linnaeus) and used as a living textbook.

Carolina Rediviva (**0471 3900**; Dag Hammarskjöldsväg 1; adult Skr20; 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, 10am-5pm Sat, 11am-4pm Sun mid-Jun-mid-Aug, 9am-8pm Mon-Fri, 10am-5pm Sat rest of year) is the old university library, and has a display hall with maps and historical and scientific literature, the pride of which is the surviving half of the 6th-century *Codex Argenteus* (Silver Bible).

Sleeping & Eating

Hotel Uppsala (**0480 5000**; www.profilhotels.se; Kungsgatan 27; hostel dm/s/d Skr250/435/600, hotel s/d from Skr1050/1275) It looks dull from the outside, but this hotel has some excellent-value rooms with all the trappings you'd normally find in a more expensive place, and rooms are discounted to Skr 700. There are also hostel rooms, a laundry, wheelchair access, a good restaurant and lounge, and free internet access.

Saffet's (**0124125**; Stora Torget 1; meals Skr59) When it comes to quick sustenance and cheap food, Saffet's has the works – burgers, enchiladas,

baked potatoes, fish and chips, and kebabs. There's a pub upstairs.

Saluhallen (Sankt Eriks Torg; Mon-Sat) A great indoor market with some excellent options for bargain meals, this self-caterer's delight is between the cathedral and the river.

Getting There & Away

The bus station is outside the train station on Kungsgatan. Bus 801 departs at least twice an hour for nearby Arlanda airport. Swebus Express runs regularly to Stockholm, as does SJ trains.

To reach Gamla Uppsala, take a city bus from Stora Torget or on Dragarbrunnsgatan.

GOTLAND

0498 / pop 57,400

Historically rich and economically right on the money, Gotland is a budget traveller's dream. Cycling around the mostly flat island and camping free in forests is a wonderful way to see the island's hundreds of medieval churches and prehistoric sites. There's also a great network of hostels scattered around the island – that's if you can be persuaded to leave its stunning port city of Visby, a walled beauty that's on Unesco's World Heritage list. Book ahead in summer, though, because it's also on the list of practically every holidaying Swede.

Getting There & Away

Destination Gotland (**0771-223300**; www.destinationgotland.se) operates car ferries year-round between Visby and both Nynäshamn and Oskarshamn. Departures from Nynäshamn are from two to six times daily (five hours, or three hours by high-speed catamaran). From Oskarshamn there are one or two daily departures (three hours).

Regular one-way adult tickets start around Skr220/300 for the ferry/catamaran, but prices vary – check the website for details.

Getting Around

Gotlands Cykeluthyrning (**0214133**; info@gotlandscykeluthyrning.com; mid-May-Aug), behind Saluhall not far from Visby harbour, hires bikes (per day/week from Skr65/325) and tents (Skr100/400).

Kollektiv Trafiken (**0214112**) runs buses to all corners of the island; tickets start at Skr12.

VISBY

0498 / pop 21,400

Like a living museum, albeit a museum taken over by throngs of partying Swedes each summer, Visby is a labyrinth of cobblestone streets surrounded by medieval town walls. From mid-May to mid-August cars are banned in the Old Town, making it safer and more pleasant to stroll this gorgeous Hanseatic port city to your heart's content.

The **tourist office** (**0201700**; www.gotland.info; Hamngatan 4; 9am-5pm daily Jun-Aug, 10am-4pm Mon-Fri Sep-May) can help with maps and information, but doesn't book accommodation.

Set aside enough time to stroll the perimeter (3.5km) along the **13th-century wall** with its 40 towers. The ruins of 10 medieval churches are all within the town walls and contrast with the old but sound **cathedral**, north of Stortorget. **Gotlands Fornsal** (**0292700**; Strandgatan 14; adult Skr60; 10am-5pm mid-May-mid-Sep, noon-4pm Tue-Sun rest of year) is one of the largest and best regional museums in Sweden, with a notable collection of runestones and early grave findings. Don't miss the display of a skull found with a hatchet stuck through it.

Sleeping

Moderately priced accommodation in and around Visby is in demand; book well in advance.

Norderstrands Camping (**0212157**; www.norderstrandscamping.se; camp sites Skr100-175, 4-bed cabins Skr450-650; mid-Apr-mid-Sep) By the sea, 800m north of the ring wall (connected by a walking/cycling path), this camping ground is just at the edge of Visby and has killer views of the water.

Fängelse Vandrhem (**0206050**; Skeppsbron 1; dm Skr200-300; May-Sep) A really popular hostel near the harbour, this former prison has beds in converted cells. Facilities include kitchen, TV room and sauna, and an outdoor bar in summer.

Gotlands Resor (**0201260**; www.gotlandresor.se; s Skr300-350, d Skr440-480) This travel agency books private rooms in Visby; you'll pay more for a room inside the city walls.

Eating & Drinking

Sitting in cafés and bars facing the harbour or town square seems to be the chief pastime in Visby, and the choices are legion.

Saluhall 1 (Skeppsbron) Do as the locals do and stop at this market hall for ice cream.

ICA (Stora Torget; ☎ 8am-8pm Mon-Sat, 10am-8pm Sun) This small supermarket is right on the main square; there are larger options outside Österport gate.

Rosas (☎ 213514; St Hansgatan 22; light meals Skr30-70) In a pretty half-timbered house with a sunny courtyard, Rosas makes a wonderful lunchy spot.

Effes Bar (☎ 215111; Adelsgatan 2; mains Skr60-130; ☎ Wed-Mon) A unique pub-bar that's built into the town wall, this is a great place for a laid-back meal or drink; there's a bar menu, outdoor courtyard, pool tables and regular live music.

SOUTHERN SWEDEN

The closer you get to Denmark, the more Danish the country starts to look – all gently rolling fields dotted with picturesque farmsteads and tiny red cottages. Vibrant cities like Lund and Malmö keep things exciting.

MALMÖ

☎ 040 / pop 265,000

Malmö is as pretty as it is dynamic, with a well-preserved Old Town circled by a canal, plus a castle complex, numerous parks and wide, walkable avenues. It's connected to the rest of Europe by the impressive, 7.8km-long Öresund bridge to Copenhagen. South of the city centre is the lively square Möllevångstorget, the focus of a working-class neighbourhood that played a strong role in the early labour movement. It's now lined with multi-ethnic shops, restaurants and pubs.

Malmö airport is 30 miles from the city centre. Airport coaches depart every 30 to 45 minutes to Malmö centre. **Frahundbus No 737** (☎ 44 68 44 00) goes once or twice daily from the airport to Copenhagen (50 minutes, Skr120), and No 999 runs daily to Copenhagen from Malmö centre (Skr70).

Information

Dot.Spot (Kalendegatan 13; per hr Skr10-18; ☎ noon-6am) Cool, industrial-designy internet café.

Forex (Centralstationen; ☎ 7am-9pm) One of a handful of Forex branches in Malmö; all offer currency exchange.

Malmö Card (per one/two/three days Skr130/160/190)

Allows free bus transport, free entry to several museums and discounts at other attractions; available from the tourist office.

Post office (Skeppsbron 1; ☎ 7am-7pm Mon-Fri) Near Centralstationen.

Tourist office (☎ 341200; www.malmo.se; Centralstationen; ☎ 9am-7pm Mon-Fri, 10am-5pm Sat & Sun Jun-Aug, 9am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat & Sun May & Sep, 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat & Sun Oct-Apr) Inside Centralstationen. Pick up the useful, free booklet *Malmö This Month*.

Zeze (Engelbrektsgratan 13; per hr Skr30-44; ☎ to 11pm or midnight) Internet café open until late; cheaper rates after 6pm.

Sights & Activities

The cobblestone streets and appealing buildings around **Lilla Torg** are restored parts of the late-medieval town. The houses are now galleries, boutiques and restaurants.

The main museums of Malmö are based in and around **Malmöhus** (☎ 344437; www.malmo.se/museer; Malmöhusvägen; adult Skr40; ☎ 10am-4pm Jun-Aug, noon-4pm Sep-May). You can walk through the royal apartments, see the **Stadsmuseum** with its Malmö collection, and see works by important Swedish artists like John Bauer and Sigrid Hjerten at the **Konstmuseum** (admission Skr40). There's also an **aquarium** and **Naturmuseum**.

Ribersborg is a long sandy beach backed by parkland about 2km west of the city centre. Out in Öresund, reached by a 200m-long pier, is the naturalist **Ribersborgs Kallbadhus** (☎ 260366; www.ribbon.se; admission Skr50; ☎ daily; ☎ 32), dating from 1898. There's a cold, open-air saltwater pool and wood-fired sauna, and separate sections for men and women.

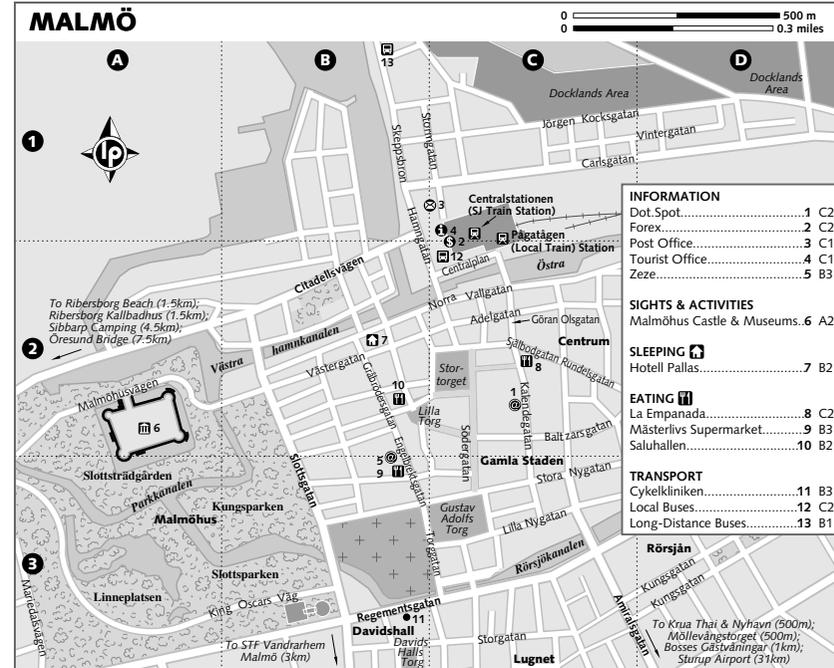
Sleeping

Sibbarp Camping (☎ 155165; Strandgatan 101; camp sites Skr150-190, cabins from Skr280; ☎ 12B or 12G) By the beach about 5km southwest of the city centre, with a great view of the Öresund bridge. It's a large, well-equipped camping ground with cabins.

STF Vandrarhem Malmö (☎ 82220; www.malmo.hostel.com; Backavägen 18; dm/s/d from Skr175/325/460; ☎ 21) Well hidden, about 3.5km south of the city centre (get a map before setting off), this big, bright, clean and well-equipped place is worth seeking out. Catch the bus from in front of Centralstationen.

Bosses Gästväningar (☎ 326250; www.bosses.se; Södra Förstadsgatan 110B; s/d/tr Skr315/450/550) A pleasant guesthouse in a regular apartment block, close to the cheap eateries on Möllevångstorget. It has shared bathrooms and guest kitchens.

Hotel Pallas (☎ 611 5077; home.swipnet.se/Hotell_Pallas; Norra Vallgatan 74; s Skr450, d Skr550-695) An af-



fordable budget hotel close to Centralstationen. It has shared bathrooms and the 'large' double rooms are huge. Breakfast costs Skr30.

Eating & Drinking

Lilla Torg is a picturesque cobblestone square lined by restaurant-bars and often teeming with people. The area around Möllevångstorget reflects the city's interesting ethnic mix, and there's cheap food from a mix of stalls, grocers, restaurants and bars.

Saluhallen (Lilla Torg; ☎ Mon-Sat) One of the best lunchtime pit stops, with an excellent range of food stalls offering something to appeal to every taste, including pasta, sushi, kebabs and Vietnamese.

La Empanada (☎ 120262; Själbodgatan 10; dishes Skr35-50; ☎ 11am-9pm Mon-Sat) Recommended cheap and cheerful cafeteria, with a huge menu of mainly Mexican dishes, plus pasta and even Swedish meatballs.

Krua Thai (☎ 122287; Möllevångstorget 14; lunch Skr65, mains Skr60-85) This is a long-standing eatery with a nice terrace and ornate wood-carved interior, serving cheap and plentiful Thai dishes.

Nyhavn (☎ 128830; Möllevångstorget; mains Skr55-109)

One of several bars with enormous outdoor patios on a corner facing Möllevångstorget, this is a good place for people-watching, even if it's pretty indistinguishable from its neighbours.

Buy groceries at central **Mästerlivs supermarket** (Engelbrektsgratan; ☎ 7am-9pm). The best produce market is found in Möllevångstorget.

For drinking, get along to Lilla Torget and take your pick; alternatively, for capital-city diversions, head across the Öresund to the Danish capital of Copenhagen (trains run every 20 minutes until midnight, then hourly until around 5am).

Getting There & Away

Sturup airport (code MMX; ☎ 613 1100) is 31km southeast of the city. The low-cost carrier Ryanair flies between London and Sturup, from where there are frequent trains and buses to Copenhagen, making Malmö a cheap gateway to the Danish capital.

SJ services (including X2000) run regularly to/from Gothenburg and Stockholm, all via Lund.

Skånetrafiken (☎ 0771-777777; www.skånetrafiken.se) operates the local buses and trains in the southern region, and sells a variety of value cards and passes. Local (purple) trains run to Helsingborg, Lund, Ystad and other nearby destinations. International train passes are accepted.

Long-distance buses depart from a terminal at the end of Skeppsbron, about 500m north of Centralstationen. Swebus Express travels daily to Stockholm, Gothenburg and Oslo. Trains are best for trips across the Öresund bridge.

Getting Around

Malmö Lokaltrafik information kiosks are at main bus hubs, including Centralplan and Gustav Adolfs Torg. Local buses are green (regional buses are yellow); tickets cost Skr15 for one hour's travel. Bicycles can be hired from **Cykelkliniken** (☎ 611 6666; Regementsgatan 12; per day/week Skr120/600).

LUND

☎ 046 / pop 99,600

This comfortable, pretty place feels as friendly as a university town should. You can take a highbrow or a lowbrow approach to Lund, focusing on history and academics or lounging in student cafés – a little of both is best.

Lund is Sweden's second-oldest town, founded by the Danes around 1000. Much of the medieval town can still be seen. The university was founded in 1666 and today has 35,000 students. In summer it's a fairly quiet place, with the students on holiday and the tourist buses visiting.

The **tourist office** (☎ 355040; www.lund.se; Kyrkogatan 11; ☎ 10am–6pm Mon–Fri, 10am–2pm Sat & Sun Jun–Aug, shorter hr rest of year, closed Sat & Sun Oct–Apr) is opposite the cathedral.

Construction on Lund's Romanesque **Domkyrka** (cathedral) began about 1100, when Lund became Europe's largest archbishopric. The cathedral is magnificent – for a surprise, visit at noon or 3pm (1pm and 3pm weekends and holidays) when the astronomical clock strikes up *In Dulci Jubilo* and the figures of the three kings begin their journey to the child Jesus.

The spectacular **Kulturen** (☎ 350400; www.kulturen.com; Tegnerplatsen; adult Skr50; ☎ 11am–5pm mid–Apr–Sep, to 9pm Jul–mid–Aug, noon–4pm Tue–Sun Oct–mid–Apr) claims to be the world's second-oldest open-air museum (it opened in 1892). Its impressive collection of about 40 buildings fills two blocks.

Sleeping & Eating

Private rooms can be booked at the tourist office from around Skr250 per person plus a Skr50 fee.

STF Vandrarhem Tåget (☎ 142820; www.trainhotel.com; dm from Skr175) Take the overpass from the bus station to reach this unusual hostel. Guests sleep in railway carriages set in parkland, with three bunks to a room.

Saluhallen (Märtenstorget; ☎ Mon–Sat) A good place for reasonably priced food, from pasta to Thai dishes and kebabs.

Ebbas Kafferi (☎ 134156; Bytaregatan 5; lunch special Skr64) This courtyard café, with a great lunchtime selection, is one of the most appealing places in town. A breakfast buffet is also available (Skr55).

Getting There & Away

There are frequent SJ services and local train departures from Lund to Malmö (15 minutes); some trains continue to Copenhagen. All long-distance trains between Stockholm and Malmö stop in Lund. Buses leave from outside the train station.

HELSINGBORG

☎ 042 / pop 84,500

The busy port of Helsingborg is perched on the Öresund coastline, with Denmark only 20 minutes away by ferry. Many travellers leave town without seeing any more than the train station, but it's an appealing place with seaside character, quality budget accommodation and great parkland.

The **tourist office** (☎ 104350; Rådhuset; ☎ 9am–8pm Mon–Fri, to 5pm Sat & Sun mid–Jun–Aug, shorter hr & closed Sun Sep–mid–Jun) can help with inquiries. **First Stop Sweden** (☎ 104130; Bredgatan 2; ☎ 9am–6pm Mon–Fri, to 2pm Sat & Sun May–Aug, extended hr mid–Jun–Aug, closed Sat & Sun Sep–Apr), near the car-ferry ticket booths, gives advice for new arrivals from Denmark.

The eye-catching modern **Dunkers Kulturhus** (☎ 107400; www.dunkerskulturhus.com; Kungsgatan 11; admission free; ☎ 10am–5pm Tue–Sun), just north of the transport terminals, houses the **town museum** and **art museum** (combined entry adult Skr70), plus a concert hall, restaurant and café. Take a stroll along the northern waterfront from here to admire the sleek apartment buildings and restaurants, all part of a successful harbour redevelopment project.

You can access the square medieval tower **Kärnan** (☎ 105991; adult/child Skr20/10; ☎ daily Jun–

Aug, Tue–Sun Sep–May) from steps near the tourist office. The tower is all that remains of a 14th-century castle; the view from the top (34m) overlooks Öresund to the Danish heartland.

Sleeping & Eating

Helsingborgs Vandrarhem (☎ 145850; www.hbgturist.com; Järnvägsgatan 39; dm/s/d Skr165/245/370) This central hostel, inside a nondescript building about 200m from Knutpunkten, has high-quality rooms and good facilities.

Villa Thalassa (☎ 380660; www.villathalassa.com; Dag Hammarskjöldsväg; dm Skr190, d from Skr440) This recommended hostel, 3km north of the city centre, is 500m from the bus stop at Pål-sjöbaden. The villa and gardens are a delight; there are three sleeping options in modern annexes and wooden huts. Take bus 219 from Knutpunkten.

Ebbas Fik (☎ 281440; Bruksgatan 20; ☎ Mon–Sat) All done up in shocking turquoise rockabilly, Ebbas is a 1950s-style joint with a killer jukebox.

Self-caterers should head to the **ICA supermarket** (Drottninggatan 48).

Getting There & Away

The main transport centre is Knutpunkten; the underground platforms serve SJ trains bound for Stockholm, Gothenburg, Copenhagen and Oslo, plus regional trains. At ground level and a little south, but still inside the same complex, is the bus terminal. Daily long-distance services run to destinations including Gothenburg and Oslo.

Knutpunkten is the terminal for frequent ferries to Denmark and Oslo; for details on sea travel from Helsingborg, see p1092.

GOTHENBURG (GÖTEBORG)

☎ 031 / pop 475,000

Gothenburg (the Swedish name, Göteborg, sounds like yoo-te-bor), Sweden's second-largest city, has a hip, cosmopolitan feel, an eminently strollable central boulevard and Scandinavia's biggest amusement park. If that's not enough fun for you, it's also surrounded by some of the prettiest stretches of coastline in Sweden. The city's heavy architecture gives it a wonderfully moody atmosphere, especially in grey weather. Best of all, it offers plenty of options for the budget traveller.

Information

Apoteket Vasan (☎ 802 0532; Nordstan complex; ☎ 8am–10pm) Pharmacy.

Göteborg Pass (per 24/48hr Skr210/295) Gives free entry to Liseberg and some city attractions, city tours and public transport. Collect it at tourist offices, hotels and hostels.

IT-Grottan (Chalmersgatan 27; per hr Skr29–43; ☎ 11am until midnight) Cheaper hourly rate before 6pm.

Östra Sjukhuset (☎ 343 4000) Large hospital near tram terminus 1, northeast of town.

Police station (☎ 739 2000; Ernst Fontells Plats) Off Skåneberg, near Nya Ullevi stadium.

Sidewalk Express (www.sidewalkexpress.se; per hr Skr19) A chain of internet kiosks at central locations (Centralstationen, Landvetter airport, inside the 7-Eleven store at Vasaplatsten); vouchers are purchased from vending machines.

Tourist offices (☎ 612500; www.goteborg.com) Kungssportsplatsen 2 (Main tourist office; ☎ 9am–6pm Jun–Aug, 9am–5pm Mon–Fri, 10am–2pm Sat Sep–May); Nordstan (☎ 10am–6pm Mon–Fri, 10am–4pm Sat, noon–3pm Sun)

Sights

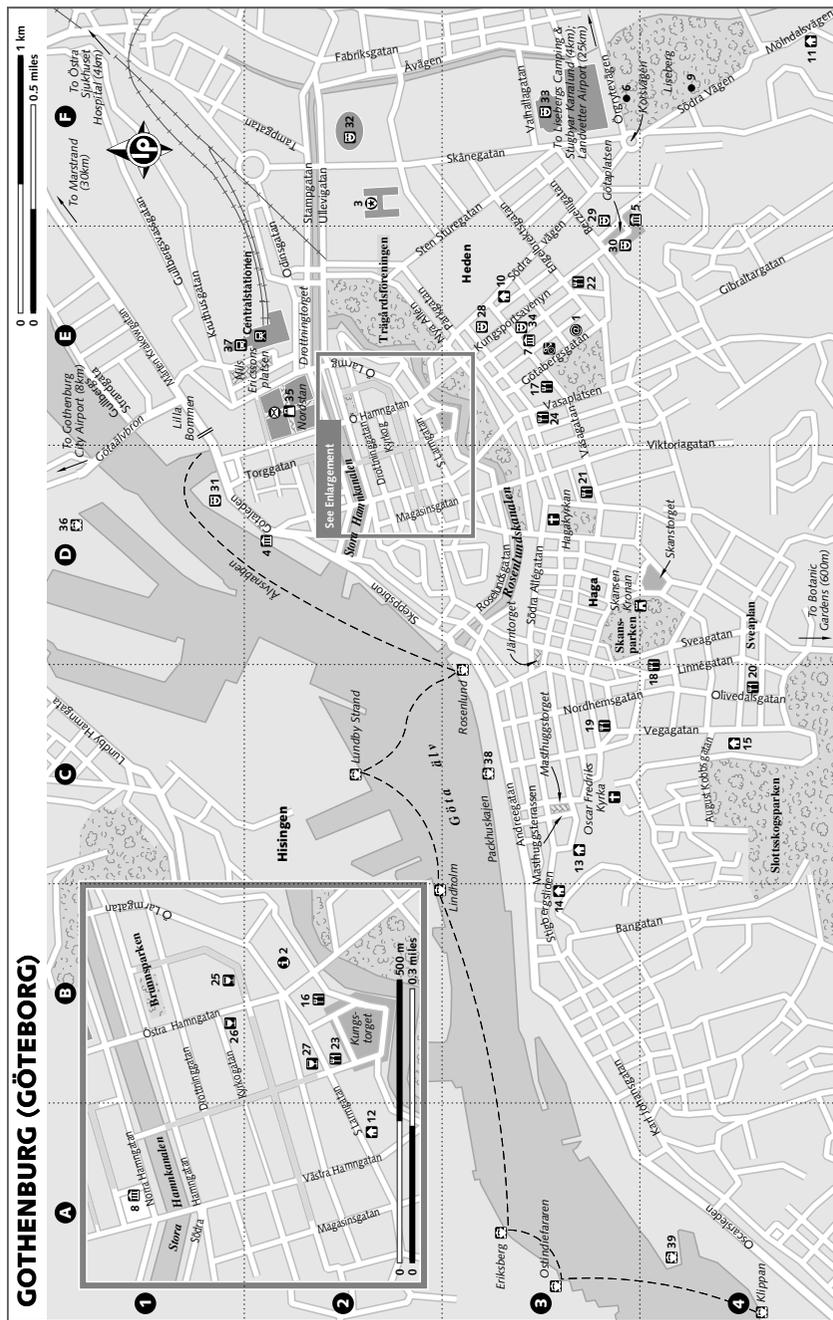
Liseberg (☎ 400100; www.liseberg.se; admission Skr60; ☎ late Apr–early Oct; ☎ 5) fun park is dominated by its spaceport-like tower. The ride to the top, some 83m above the ground, climaxes in a spinning dance and a breathtaking view of the city. Leave your stomach at the gate. You can buy a pass for Skr270 that allows you to ride the attractions all day. Opening hours are complex – call ahead or check the website.

By Liseberg is the striking **Universeum** (☎ 335 6450; www.universeum.se; Södra Vägen; admission Skr135–145; ☎ variable hr daily May–mid–Aug, Tue–Sun mid–Aug–Apr), a huge and impressive 'science discovery centre' featuring everything from rainforests to a shark tank. It has great displays and hands-on experiments, but it's not cheap to visit (use the Göteborg Pass).

The **Stadsmuseum** (☎ 612770; Norra Hamngatan 12; adult Skr40, under 20yr free; ☎ 10am–5pm daily May–Aug, Tue–Sun Sep–Apr) has archaeological, local and historical collections, including Sweden's only original Viking ship.

GETTING INTO TOWN

Göteborg-Landvetter Airport is about 25 miles from the city centre. Flygbuss (www.flygbussarna.se) runs several times a day from the airport to Nils Ericsson terminal (Skr50). Local **Tidpunkten Västtrafik buses** (☎ 0771-414300) buses run daily from the airport to Göteborg central (Skr20).



GOTHENBURG (GÖTEBORG)

The main art collections are at **Konstmuseet** (☎ 611000; Götaplatsen; adult Skr40; 🕒 11am-5pm or 6pm Tue-Sun), with impressive collections of Nordic and European masters (notable for works by Rubens, Van Gogh, Rembrandt and Picasso) and touring exhibitions.

The excellent **Röhsska Museet** (☎ 613850; Vasagatan 37; adult Skr40; 🕒 noon-5pm Tue-Sun) covers modern Scandinavian design and decorative arts.

Göteborgs Maritima Centrum (☎ 105950; Packhuskajen; adult Skr70; 🕒 10am-6pm May-Aug, to 4pm rest of year, closed Sun Nov), by the opera house north of the city centre, says it's the largest floating ship museum in the world and usually displays 13 historical ships, including the submarine *Nordkaparen*.

There are some great green oases, including **Trädgårdsföreningen** (entry on Nya Allén; adult Skr15 May-Aug, otherwise free), laid out in 1842 and home to pretty cafés, a rosarium and palm house. In Gothenburg's southwest is **Slottsskogsparken**, the 'lungs' of the city, and the largest **botanic gardens** in Sweden.

Sleeping

Gothenburg offers several exceptional hostels; most are clustered in the central southwest area, in apartment buildings that inspire little confidence from the outside. All are open year-round.

Lisebergs Camping & Stugbyar Kärralund (☎ 840200; www.liseberg.se; Ölbergsgatan; camp sites Skr100-325) The closest camping ground to town, this one is geared for families and has a wide range of cabins, cottages and hostel beds. Prices for all options have a ridiculously

complex schedule of rates. Take tram 5 to Welandergatan.

STF Vandrarhem Slottsskogen (☎ 426520; www.sov.nu; Vegagatan 21; dm/s from Skr165/305; 🕒) Slottsskogen is regarded as one of Sweden's best hostels, so book early. It's a friendly, social place, with 24-hour reception, breakfast buffet, bike hire, laundry, sauna and lounge. Take tram 1 or 2 to Olivedalsgatan.

Masthuggsterrassens Vandrarhem (☎ 424820; www.mastenvandrarhem.com; Masthuggsterrassen 10H; dm/s/d Skr170/290/440) A clean, well-run spot near the ferries to/from Denmark. Take tram 3, 9 or 11 to Masthuggstorget and check the signs (upstairs, behind the supermarket).

STF Vandrarhem Stigbergsliden (☎ 241620; www.hostel-gothenburg.com; Stigbergsliden 10; dm/s/d Skr180/310/420) Another welcoming, well-run STF hostel, this time in a renovated 19th-century seaman's house. It has a good kitchen, laundry, TV room and garden, plus bike hire. Take tram 3, 9 or 11 to Stigbergstorget.

Göteborgs Vandrarhem (☎ 401050; www.goteborgsvandrarhem.se; Mölndalsvägen 23; dm/s/d from Skr200/500/500) A well-equipped, well-run place, just south of Liseberg, which is convenient for the big attractions. Take tram 4 to Getebergsgång.

Hotel Flora (☎ 138616; www.hotelflora.se; Grönsaktorget 2; s/d Skr990/1195) This comfortable, affordable hotel has just doubled its size and modernised many of its rooms. There's also a stylish ground-level restaurant-café. Rooms can be discounted to Skr650 and Skr850.

City Hotel (☎ 708 4000; www.cityhotelgbg.se; Lorensbergsgatan 6; s/d with bathroom from Skr795/995, with shared bathroom from Skr495/595) If you want to taste the

INFORMATION	STF Vandrarhem	ENTERTAINMENT 🕒
Apoteket Vasan.....(see 35)	Stigbergsliden.....14 B3	Avenyn 10.....(see 28)
IT-Grottan.....1 E3	STF Vandrarhem Slottsskogen...15 C4	Bubbles.....28 E3
Main Tourist Office.....2 B2		Göteborgs Konserthus.....29 F3
Police Station.....3 F2		Göteborgs Stadsteatern.....30 E3
Tourist Office Branch.....(see 35)		GöteborgsOperan.....31 D1
SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES	EATING 🍴	Nya Ullevi.....32 F2
Göteborgs Maritima Centrum....4 D2	Aldardo.....16 B2	Scandinavium.....33 F3
Konstmuseet.....5 F3	Cyran.....19 C3	Valand.....34 E3
Liseberg.....6 F3	Den Lilla Taverna.....20 C4	
Röhsska Museet.....7 E3	Espresso House.....21 D3	
Stadsmuseum.....8 A1	Eva's Paley.....22 E3	
Universeum.....9 F4	Hemköp Supermarket.....(see 35)	
SLEEPING 🛏	Saluhallen.....23 B2	SHOPPING 🛍
City Hotel.....10 E3	Smaka.....24 E3	Nordstan.....35 E2
Göteborgs Vandrarhem.....11 F4		TRANSPORT
Hotel Flora.....12 A2	DRINKING 🍷	DFDS Seaways.....36 D1
Masthuggsterrassens	Dubliner.....25 B1	Nils Ericsson Terminal.....37 E1
Vandrarhem.....13 C3	O'Leary's.....26 B1	Stena Line Denmark Terminal.....38 C3
	Öhallen 7:an.....27 B2	Stena Line Germany Terminal.....39 A4
		Tidpunkten Office.....(see 37)

nightlife, this is for you – it's within stumbling distance of Kungssportsavenyn. Weekend and summer discounts see rates reduced by Skr50 to Skr100.

Eating

Kungssportsavenyn is lined with restaurants, cafés and bars (although prices here can be higher than in other parts of town). Vasagatan is close to the student heartland and has excellent cafés. Linnégatan (close to most of the hostels) has more good options.

Crepes Van (Linnégatan; crepes Skr25-45; ☎ 4-10pm Mon-Thu, 4pm-3.30am Fri & Sat) This takeaway van near McDonald's offers sweet and savoury crepes from afternoon until the wee hours.

Aldardo (☎ 132300; Kungstorget 12; snacks Skr25-55; ☎ Mon-Sat) Right by the tourist office, this busy deli sells authentic Italian fast food – pizza *al taglio* (by the slice) and pasta dishes.

Saluhallen (Kungstorget; ☎ Mon-Sat) You can buy a huge range of deli foods at this classic old market hall. There are also great budget eateries where a full meal costs less than Skr50 – Alexandras is renowned for its Greek soups and stews.

Den Lilla Taverna (☎ 128805; Olivedalsgatan 17; meze Skr30-65, mains Skr69-99) A welcoming place with authentic Greek dishes, plus a great array of meze (hors d'oeuvres) perfect for sharing.

Eva's Paley (☎ 163070; Kungssportsavenyn 39; meals Skr40-65; ☎ until 11pm) A huge corner place open until late and serving good-value dishes, including *panini*, baked potatoes, pasta dishes, salads and seriously good muffins – an institution on Avenyn.

Cyrano (☎ 143010; Pringsgatan 7; mains Skr75-200) A highly regarded French bistro-style restaurant, where three-course set menus cost from Skr155. There's also a selection of good French à la carte dishes and simpler pizzas (Skr75 to Skr95).

Smaka (☎ 132247; Vasaplatsen 3; mains Skr89-195) Smaka (meaning 'taste') serves traditional Swedish *husmanskost* (home cooking), including classics such as herring, meatballs or *gravad lax* (cured salmon).

For a quick snack while you stroll, **Café Garbo** (☎ 774 1925; Vasagatan 40; specials from Skr45) and **Espresso House** (☎ 39750; Vasagatan 22) are two of several comfortable hang-outs facing the leafy Vasagatan boulevard.

Self-caterers should head to the **Hemköp supermarket** (☎ 8am-10pm) in the Nordstan complex.

Drinking

For more choices, stroll down Kungssportsavenyn and take your pick.

Ölhallen 7:an (☎ 136079; Kungstorget 7) Portraits of long-gone barflies haunt the walls of this well-worn Swedish beerhall, which hasn't changed in about 100 years and hopefully never will.

Dubliner (☎ 139020; Östra Hamngatan 50B) This is as authentic an Irish pub as you'll find on the Continent, with live music nightly in summer.

O'Leary's (☎ 711 5519; Östra Hamngatan 36) Opposite the Dubliner, this is an American-style sports bar with TV screens and bar snacks.

Clubbing

Kungssportsavenyn is the place to go for nightlife. Some highlights:

Avenyn 10 (Kungssportsavenyn 10-12) One of the biggest clubs in town.

Bubbles (Kungssportsavenyn 8) As descriptive a name as any nightclub ever had.

Valand (nr Kungssportsavenyn & Vasagatan) Vintage music hall blending silly and sophisticated with its imposing architecture and hilarious pair of Greek statues guarding the door.

Entertainment

Göteborgs Stadsteatern (City Theatre; ☎ 615050; Götaplatsen) Culture vultures should head to the end of Avenyn for dramatic performances (usually in Swedish) at the Stadsteatern.

Göteborgs Konserthus (Concert Hall; ☎ 726 5300; Götaplatsen) Home to the local symphony orchestra, this is at the other end of Avenyn.

GöteborgsOperan (☎ 131300; Christina Nilssons gata) It's worth investigating what's on at this striking opera house at Lilla Bommen harbour, which stages ballet, opera and assorted musical performances.

Gothenburgers are avid sports fans. Outdoor stadiums include **Nya Ullevi** (www.ullevi.se) for football matches and **Scandinavium** (www.scan.dinaviu.se) for ice hockey. For details on both stadiums, contact **Skaneagatan** (☎ 811020).

Getting There & Away

AIR

Twenty-five kilometres east of the city, **Landvetter airport** (code GOT; ☎ 941000) has services to many European cities. **Gothenburg City Airport** (code GSE; ☎ 926060; www.goteborgcityairport.se) is a minor airport 10km northwest of the city centre, used by Ryanair.

BOAT

Gothenburg is a major entry point for ferries, with several terminals. For more details of ferry services and fares to Denmark, Germany and the UK, see p1092.

BUS

The modern bus station, Nils Ericson Terminalen, is next to Centralstationen. Eurolines and Swebus Express share an office here.

Swebus Express (☎ 0200-218218; www.swebusexpress.se) operates frequent buses to/from most major towns. There are services to/from Stockholm (Skr250/360 concession/full price, six hours, up to 10 daily) and Oslo (Skr160/225 concession/full price, 3½ hours, up to six daily).

Svenska Buss (☎ 0771-676767; www.svenskabuss.se) and **Säfflebusen** (☎ 0771-151515; www.safflebusen.se) also run on the major routes.

There's a **Tidpunkten office** (☎ 0771-414300; Nils Ericson Terminalen), which gives advice and sells tickets for city and regional public transport.

TRAIN

Centralstationen serves SJ and regional trains, with direct trains to Malmö, Copenhagen, Oslo and Stockholm, plus other destinations in the southern half of Sweden. Connex night trains travel to the far north. Direct train services to Stockholm depart approximately hourly.

Getting Around

Buses, trams and ferries make up the city public transport system; there are Tidpunkten information booths inside Nils Ericson Terminalen, on Drottningtorget and at Brunnsparkeken. The easiest way to cover lengthy distances in Gothenburg is by tram. There are 11 lines, all converging near Brunnsparkeken, one block from Centralstationen. An individual transport ticket costs Skr20. 'Value cards' (Skr50 to Skr100) reduce the cost considerably. Holders of the Göteborg Pass travel free.

NORTHERN SWEDEN

Norrland is remote enough that travellers here aren't likely to see the tour-bus crowd – or, for that matter, much of anyone else. Reindeer outnumber cars on the roads, and much of the landscape consists of deep green forest. It's a paradise for nature lovers who enjoy hiking,

skiing and other outdoor activities. Accommodation tends to be budget-friendly, too, leaning more towards camping and hostels than proper hotels.

ÖSTERSUND

☎ 063 / pop 58,400

This pleasant town by Lake Storsjön, in whose chilly waters is said to lurk a rarely sighted monster, has good budget accommodation and is a relaxed and scenic place, and an excellent gateway town for further explorations of Norrland. The **tourist office** (☎ 144001; www.turist.ostersund.se; Rådhusgatan 44; ☎ 9am-5pm daily Jun-Aug, Mon-Fri Sep-May) is opposite the town hall, one block from the bus station. Ask about monster-spotting **lake cruises** (Skr65 to Skr95) from June to September.

Don't miss **Jamtli** (☎ 150100; www.jamtli.com; admission Skr60-90; ☎ 11am-5pm daily Jun-Aug, closed Mon Sep-May), 1km north of the town centre. It combines the lively exhibitions of the regional museum and a large museum village.

Some attractions lie on the adjacent island of Frösön, reached by road or footbridge from the middle of Östersund (the footbridge is from Badhusparken – nearby you can hire bikes, inline skates and canoes).

Sleeping & Eating

STF Vandrarhem Jamtli (☎ 122060; vandrarhemmet@jamtli.com; dm/s/d Skr185/280/380; ☎ 2) Take the chance to live among Östersund's major attraction: this small, quaint hostel is inside the Jamtli museum precinct.

Brunkullans Krog & Bar (☎ 101454; Postgränd 5; lunch Skr70, dinner mains Skr140-200; ☎ lunch Mon-Fri, dinner Tue-Sat) A classy eatery with friendly staff and an outdoor patio, this gourmet place serves an excellent-value lunch buffet.

Getting There & Away

The train station is a short walk south of the centre, the main regional bus station is central on Gustav III Torg. Bus 156 runs to Åre and bus 63 runs northeast to Umeå. Direct trains run from Stockholm via Uppsala and Gävle.

UMEÅ

☎ 090 / pop 105,000

Umeå is a big, bustling town that sticks out amid the quiet expanses of Norrland. A large university means there's a sizable young population and the busy port has ferry connections to Finland.

The **tourist office** (☎ 161616; www.umea.se/turism; Renmarkstorget 15; ☎ 8am-7pm Mon-Fri, to 4pm Sat & Sun mid-Jun-mid-Aug, Mon-Fri rest of year) has free internet access. The **Gammlia** (☎ 171800; admission free; ☎ daily Jun-Aug, Tue-Sun rest of year) complex, 2km east of the town centre, is home to several good museums.

STF Vandrarhem Umeå (☎ 771650; info@vandrarhemmet.se; Västra Esplanaden 10; dm/d Skr210/420) is run with militaristic precision and has a great central location.

Getting There & Away

The long-distance bus station is opposite the train station on Järnvägsallén, just north of the town centre. Umeå is the main centre for **Länstrafiken Västerbotten** (☎ 020-910019), the regional bus network. Direct buses run to Mo i Rana in Norway; other daily destinations include Östersund and Luleå. Connex trains leave daily from Umeå to connect with the north-south trains between Stockholm and Luleå.

KIRUNA

☎ 0980 / pop 23,900

The region around Kiruna includes Sweden's highest peak (Kebnekaise, 2111m), a hotel made from ice, and several fine national parks and trekking routes. This far north, the mid-night sun lasts from 27 May to 14 July and there's a bluish darkness throughout December and the New Year.

The helpful **tourist office** (☎ 18880; www.lappland.se; Lars Janssonsgatan 17; ☎ 8.30am-9pm Mon-Fri, to 6pm Sat & Sun, Mon-Sat rest of year) has loads of detailed brochures and internet access. Staff can arrange various activities, including Sami cultural tours year-round; rafting, hiking, horse riding, rock-climbing and fishing in warmer weather; and dogsledding and snowmobile safaris in winter.

One highlight of a trip this far north is a visit to the **Ice Hotel** (☎ 66800; www.icehotel.com; Marknadsvägen, Jukkasjärvi; day visit adult Skr130; r from Skr2800; ☎ 501). Every winter at Jukkasjärvi, 18km east of Kiruna, a structure is built from tonnes of ice taken from the frozen local river. This huge, custom-built 'igloo' has a chapel, a bar and exhibitions of ice sculpture. It also has more than 60 'hotel rooms', where guests sleep on beds covered with reindeer skins and inside sleeping bags guaranteed to keep them warm despite the -5°C to -8°C temperatures (and in winter that's nothing – outside the

hotel it can be as low as -30°C!). The hotel is normally open mid-December to late April (weather permitting).

In summer, after the Ice Hotel has melted away, day visitors can still experience a little of the magic. Inside a giant freezer warehouse called the **Ice Hotel Art Center** (adult Skr120; ☎ 10am-5pm Jun-mid-Aug), at a temperature of -5°C, some features of the Ice Hotel remain, including a bar and ice sculptures; entry fee includes warm clothing.

Sleeping & Eating

STF Vandrarhem Kiruna (☎ 17195; Bergmästaregatan 7; dm/s/d Skr205/345/470) This central hostel has good facilities (including sauna) and an adjacent Chinese restaurant.

Yellow House (☎ 13750; www.yellowhouse.nu; Hantverkaregatan 25; dm/s/d Skr150/300/400) A good budget option, with facilities including sauna, kitchen, laundry and TV in each room, this comfy hostel has a nice garden area.

3rd Baren (☎ 66380; Föreningsgatan 11; lunch Skr65, mains Skr69-189) At this moderately priced restaurant and lively drinking spot, you can try local specialities like reindeer, or play it safe with steak or pasta. There's a good outdoor patio to catch the late sunshine.

Getting There & Away

The small **airport** (code KRN; ☎ 68000), 9km east of town, has flights to/from Stockholm.

Regional buses in this vast region are operated by **Länstrafiken Norrbotten** (☎ 020-470047) from the bus station on Hjalmar Lundbohm-svägen, opposite the town hall. Buses serve all major settlements. Bus 91 runs daily to Riksgränsen on the Norwegian border.

SWEDEN DIRECTORY

ACCOMMODATION Cabins & Chalets

Daily rates for *stugor* (cabins and chalets, often found at camping grounds or in the countryside) offer good value for small groups and families, and range in both facilities and price (Skr200 to Skr800). Check **Stuga** (www.stuga.nu) for information.

Camping

Sweden has hundreds of camping grounds; the best time for camping is from May to August. Prices vary, from Skr80 for a basic

camp site to Skr200 for the highest standards. Most camping grounds have kitchens and laundry facilities, and many are popular family holiday spots with the works – swimming pool, minigolf, bike and/or canoe hire, restaurant etc. Visit **Camping.SE** (www.camping.se) for information.

Hostels

Sweden has nearly 500 hostels (*vandrarhem*); most are excellent. Some 320 hostels are affiliated with **Svenska Turistföreningen** (STF; ☎ 08-463 2100; www.svenskaturistforeningen.se), part of Hostelling International (HI). Nonmembers pay Skr45 extra per night or can join up at hostels (membership costs Skr285/110 per adult/child). In this chapter we list prices for nonmembers.

Around 160 hostels belong to the 'rival' **Sveriges Vandrarhem i Förening** (SVIF; ☎ 0413-553450). No membership is required; rates and facilities are similar to those of the STF.

Hostels in Sweden are difficult to get into outside reception opening times. The secret is to phone and make a reservation during the (usually short) reception hours; they'll provide you with an entry code.

Hotels

There are few budget hotels in Sweden, but even upscale hotels provide good-value weekend and summer (mid-June to mid-August) rates, often below Skr800 for a luxurious double (up to 50% cheaper than regular prices).

ACTIVITIES

Swedes are huge nature lovers and are active year-round, on bike paths, forest jogging tracks, rivers and lakes, mountain trails, and the snow and ice. The right of public access to the countryside (called *allemansrätten*) means that in Sweden, by law, you're allowed to walk, boat, ski or swim on private land as long as you stay at least 70m from houses and keep out of gardens, fenced areas and cultivated land. You can camp for more than one night in the same place, and fires may be set where safe (not on bare rocks) with fallen wood. Cars may not be driven across open land or on private roads. Close all gates. Do not disturb farm animals or reindeer.

Hiking

Hiking is popular everywhere in Sweden and the mountain challenge of the northern national parks is compelling. However, these

parks are rarely snow-free and the jewel, Sarek, is only for experienced hikers. Good equipment is vital.

For information on organised group walks and STF mountain huts, which are placed at intervals averaging about 20km along popular trails like Kungsleden, contact STF (see left).

Skiing

Cross-country (nordic) skiing opportunities vary depending on snow and temperatures, but the northwest usually has plenty of snow from December to April (but not a lot of daylight in December and January). Practically all town areas (except the far south) have marked skiing tracks, often illuminated. The websites **Go Ski** (www.goski.com) and **The Alps** (www.thealps.com) have useful reviews of the Swedish ski fields.

BUSINESS HOURS

Bars ☎ 5pm-1am

Restaurants ☎ Lunch 11.30am-2pm, dinner 6-10pm; many restaurants are closed Sunday or Monday.

Shops ☎ 9am-6pm Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm Sat

Tourist offices ☎ 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, plus 10am-2pm Sat & Sun Jun-Aug

DISCOUNT CARDS

There are discount cards available in the major cities of Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö, which cover all local transport and most sightseeing needs. See the Information sections under each city for details.

EMBASSIES & CONSULATES

Embassies & Consulates in Sweden

The following diplomatic missions are in Stockholm.

Australia (Map p1100; ☎ 08-613 2900; 11th fl, Sergels Torg 12)

Canada (Map p1100; ☎ 08-453 3000; 7th fl, Tegelbacken 4)

Denmark (Map p1100; ☎ 08-406 7500; Jakobs Torg 1)

Finland (Map pp1096-7; ☎ 08-676 6700; Gärdesgatan 9-11)

France (Map p1100; ☎ 08-459 5300; Kommendörsgatan 13)

Germany (Map pp1096-7; ☎ 08-670 7500; Skarpögatan 9)

Ireland (Map pp1096-7; ☎ 08-661 8005; Östermalmsgatan 97)

Netherlands (Map p1100; ☎ 08-5569 3300; Götgatan 16A)

Norway (Map pp1096-7; ☎ 08-665 6340; Skarpögatan 4)

UK (Map pp1096-7; ☎ 08-671 3000; Skarpögatan 6-8)

USA (Map pp1096-7; ☎ 08-783 5300; Dag Hammarskjöldsväg 31)

Swedish Embassies & Consulates Abroad

Australia (☎ 02-6270 2700; www.embassyofsweden.org.au; 5 Turrana St, Yarralumla ACT 2600)

Canada (☎ 613-241 8553; www.swedishembassy.ca; 377 Dalhousie St, Ottawa ON K1N 9N8)

Denmark (☎ 33 36 03 70; www.swedenabroad.com/copenhagen; Sankt Annæ Plads 15A, DK-1250 Copenhagen K)

Finland (☎ 09-6877 660; www.swedenabroad.com/helsinki; Pohjoisesplanadi 7B, 00170 Helsinki)

France (☎ 01 44 18 88 00; www.swedenabroad.com/paris; 17 rue Barbet-de-Jouy, F-75007 Paris)

Germany (☎ 030-505060; www.swedenabroad.com/berlin; Rauchstrasse 1, 10787 Berlin)

Ireland (☎ 01-474 4400; www.swedenabroad.com/dublin; 13-17 Dawson St, Dublin 2)

Netherlands (☎ 070-412 0200; www.swedenabroad.com/thehague; Jan Willem Frisolaan 3, 2517 JS Den Haag)

New Zealand (☎ 04-499 9895; sweden@xtra.co.nz; 13th fl, Vogel Bldg, Aitken St, Wellington)

Norway (☎ 24 11 42 00; www.swedenabroad.com/oslo; Nobels gate 16, NO-0244 Oslo)

UK (☎ 020-7917 6400; www.swedish-embassy.org.uk; 11 Montagu Pl, London W1H 2AL)

USA (☎ 202-467 2600; www.swedenabroad.com/washington; Ste 900, 1501 M St NW, Washington DC 20005)

FESTIVALS & EVENTS

Vasaloppet In Mora on the first Sunday in March.

Smaken på Stockholm Held in Stockholm late May to early June.

Midsummer's Day First Saturday after 21 June. The biggest party of the year, Midsummer's Day is when Swedes gather to celebrate the all-too-brief season by eating, drinking, singing and dancing around maypoles.

Stockholm Jazz Festival Held in Stockholm mid-July.

Medeltidsveckan (Medieval Week) In Visby, Gotland, early August.

GAY & LESBIAN TRAVELLERS

Sweden is famous for its liberal attitudes and laws allow same-sex 'registered partnerships', which grant most marriage rights. **Riksförbundet för Sexuellt Likaberättigande** (RFSL; Map pp1096-7; ☎ 08-457 1300; Sveavägen 57-59, Stockholm) works for equality for lesbians and gays.

HOLIDAYS

New Year's Day 1 January

Epiphany 6 January

Good Friday to Easter Monday March/April

Labour Day 1 May

Ascension Day May/June (39th day after Easter)

Whit Sunday & Monday Late May or early June.

Midsummer's Day First Saturday after 21 June.

All Saints' Day Saturday, late October or early November.

Christmas Day 25 December

Boxing Day 26 December

INTERNET RESOURCES

Stockholmtown (www.stockholmtown.com) A good trip-planning guide.

The Local (www.thelocal.se) Swedish news in English.

MONEY

The Swedish krona, usually called 'crown' by Swedes speaking English, is divided into 100 öre (prices are rounded to the nearest 50 öre). Coins are 50 öre and one, five and 10 kronor, and notes are 20, 50, 100, 500 and 1000 kronor.

Service charges are usually included in restaurant bills and taxi fares, but it's common to tip about 10% in a restaurant or round up the taxi fare (particularly if there's luggage).

TELEPHONE

About 70% of Swedes own a mobile phone, so the number of public phones has dwindled. There are almost no coin phones; public telephones take Telia phonecards (readily available in Stockholm but scarce out in the country, so plan ahead). Using your credit card at a public phone is expensive and not recommended.

For international calls dial ☎ 00 followed by the country code and the local area code. For international directory assistance dial ☎ 118119 (not a freecall). To place a collect call, dial ☎ 020-0018.

VISAS

EU, Norwegian and Icelandic citizens can enter Sweden with a passport or a national identification card. Nordic nationals can stay and work indefinitely, but others require residence permits for stays of three months to five years.

Passport-holders from Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the US can enter and stay in Sweden without a visa for up to three months. Young Australian and New Zealand passport-holders can also qualify for a one-year working holiday visa. Citizens of South Africa and other African, Asian and some Eastern European countries require tourist visas for entry; these are only available in advance from Swedish embassies (allow at least two months). Sweden is part of the Schengen zone (see p1200).

Migrationsverket (☎ 011-156000; www.migrationverket.se; SE-60170 Norrköping) handles all applications for visas and work or residency permits. Its website is full of useful information.

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