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The Authors

BECKY OHLSEN
Stockholm, Northern Sweden & Lappland, Gotland (Southeast Sweden)

Becky has enjoyed travelling in Sweden since she was a little girl visiting her grandparents, when a desperate craving for Swedish chocolate motivated her to learn a few words in her mother’s native language. Since then her tastes (and to some extent her vocabulary) have expanded and now include pickled herring in mustard sauce (senapsill), reindeer (ren) in tubes and cloudberry (hjortron) liqueur. She has an unhealthy fondness for long dark days but also an appreciation for the midnight sun. She’s made a meal for dozens of insects while hiking in Norrland and spent enough time exploring the nooks and crannies of Stockholm to know the locations of several free public toilets.

Becky also updated the Destination, Getting Started, Itineraries, Snapshot, The Culture and Food & Drink chapters.

My Favourite Trip
It’s about 6 o’clock on a sunny afternoon, and I’m trying, as an adult, to relearn how to ride a bike. (‘It’s like riding a bike,’ they say. Hal) I’ve rented a three-gear cruiser that weighs at least 50kg and I’m off to ride the Gotlandsleden (see p24), a bicycle trail that winds through the fields and coastlines of Sweden’s favourite holiday island. I decide to head north first, so as not to risk missing Fårö – home of Ingmar Bergman, whom I’m convinced I’ll run into by chance. I don’t see Ingmar, but I do see some amazing countryside, including dozens of medieval churches and a few spectacular, impossibly quiet beaches. Not a bad way for an old dog to learn a new trick.

FRAN PARNELL
Central Sweden, Southern Sweden, Southwest Sweden, Southeast Sweden

Fran’s love of Scandinavia developed while studying for a masters degree in Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic, and she has since been on pilgrimages to as many Viking sites as possible. She gets particularly blown away by Sweden’s stone ship settings, and is particularly envious of the folk at the Foteviken Viking Reserve!

Fran also updated the Environment, History, Outdoor Activities, Transport and Directory chapters.

LONELY PLANET AUTHORS
Why is our travel information the best in the world? It’s simple: our authors are independent, dedicated travellers. They don’t research using just the Internet or phone, and they don’t take freebies in exchange for positive coverage. They travel widely, to all the popular spots and off the beaten track. They personally visit thousands of hotels, restaurants, cafés, bars, galleries, palaces, museums and more – and they take pride in getting all the details right, and telling it how it is. For more, see the authors section on www.lonelyplanet.com.
My Favourite Trip

Sweden is filled with so many wonderful places that it’s difficult to choose a favourite, but there are some truly idyllic places along the southwestern coast. I would start in Strömstad with a visit to the atmospheric stone ship setting and prehistoric graves, frozen in time and utterly free from crowds. Other ancient mysteries lie a short zip south down the E6: you can’t go to this part of the country and not visit the stunning World Heritage rock carvings at Tanumshede. After these silent enigmas, a trip to Ingrid Bergman’s favourite holiday village, Fjällbacka, gives you a rousing blast of seaside mayhem: watch the sun setting from the balcony of one of Sweden’s most distinctive hotels.
Getting Started

Travel in Sweden is extremely easy, and a bit of advance planning can help preserve your hip pocket. Booking ahead for accommodation and transport within the country will cut costs a lot; and in the major cities, look into discount travel cards before you leave (see p314). Once you arrive, you will find the cities easy to get around and well serviced by public transport, with almost everywhere accessible to wheelchairs.

WHEN TO GO
Despite its northern location in Europe, Sweden isn’t as cold as you might expect. The south has a year-round temperate climate and summer can be quite warm in the north. Sweden is at its best during summer and autumn (late May to September), but hikers and campers may wish to avoid the peak of the mosquito season (June and July).

Due to the country’s high latitude, daylight hours are long in summer. Malmö gets 17½ hours of daylight at midsummer, and Sundsvall has constant light during the second half of June, but you have to travel north of the Arctic Circle to experience the true ‘midnight sun’ – in Kiruna, the sun remains above the horizon for 45 days, from 31 May to 14 July.

Swedes are big on holidays, and even Stockholm shuts down for two or three days around Christmas and midsummer, so plan accordingly. Most Swedes take their vacations from late June to mid-August, so hostels are crowded, but this is also when most hotels offer discounts of up to 50%.

Travel in winter is somewhat restricted and requires some planning as well as serious winter clothing, but there are good opportunities for activities like skiing, dogsledding and snowmobiling. The big cities are in full swing all year, but the smaller towns almost go into hibernation when the temperatures begin to drop (the notable exceptions being popular ski resort towns like Åre, and Jukkasjärvi, home to the Ice Hotel).

COSTS & MONEY
Sweden has a very good standard of living, which means the travel experience is generally high quality but it does tend to be expensive. Careful planning in advance can help reduce costs.

During the low-price summer period (June through until August), if you stay in a midrange hotel (which usually includes a huge buffet breakfast), eat a daily special for lunch and have an evening meal at a moderately

DON’T LEAVE HOME WITHOUT...
- Your ID, passport and visa (if applicable)
- Industrial-strength mosquito repellent in summer
- Good walking shoes
- Layers of warm clothing, just in case
- A swimsuit – again, just in case
- A map of Stockholm’s tunnelbana (metro)
- A taste for pickled fish
- A fast-acting liver for snaps
priced restaurant, you can expect to spend Skr800 per person per day if you’re doubling up and Skr1200 if you’re travelling alone. Staying in hostels, making your own breakfast, eating the food prepared there and using the laundry facilities are cheaper, though many won’t accept foreign credit cards. Many petrol stations offer small cars for as little as Skr200 per day. Self-service pumps that take banknotes or credit cards are slightly cheaper, though many won’t accept foreign credit cards.

**TRAVEL LITERATURE**

Good books on travelling or living in Sweden are few and far between. Mary Wollstonecraft’s *A Short Residence in Sweden, Norway and Denmark* records the pioneering feminist author’s journey to Scandinavia in 1795 in search of happiness. It’s a classic of early English Romanticism and well worth a read. The reliably hilarious Bill Bryson predictably had an entertainingly difficult time of it in Sweden, as described in two chapters of his European travel book *Neither Here Nor There*.

There are also a couple of good views of Sweden from within, including Selma Lagerlöf’s *The Wonderful Adventures of Nils*. This creative account of the country’s history and geography is still taught in Swedish classrooms.

Get a taste of a thematic journey in the remotest parts of northern Sweden in Torgny Lindgren’s wonderful novel *Hash*. Two odd characters set off on a motorcycle in search of the perfect, life-altering pot of hash (*pöl-san*), a sort of potted-meat dish traditionally prepared in the rural north.

**INTERNET RESOURCES**

Many Swedish towns and organisations have websites in both Swedish and English (although the English pages are often less detailed). Hotels, restaurants and museums throughout the country can also frequently be found online. The following websites are useful for preplanning:

- *[An introduction to the Sami people](http://www.itv.se/boreale/samieng.htm)* (A good place to start learning about the indigenous people of northern Sweden and the issues they face, which include racism and habitat destruction).
- *[Smorgasbord](http://www.sverigeturism.se/smorgasbord/index.html)* (A comprehensive website devoted to Swedish culture, industry, history, sports, tourism, environment and more, produced by the nonprofit FÖRST Föreningen Sverigeturism (Swedish Tourism Trade Association)).
- *[Sweden.se](http://www.sweden.se)* (All kinds of useful information about the country, in a variety of languages).
- *[Swedish Film Institute](http://www.sfi.se)* (Loads of information on Swedish films and their significance within and outside the country).
- *[Swedish Institute](http://www.si.se)* (The Swedish Institute publishes the best academic information on Sweden in English).
- *[Visit Sweden](http://www.visit-sweden.com)* (The official website for tourism in Sweden).

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**TOP TENS**

**Must-Read Books by Swedish Authors**

One of the best ways to get inside the collective mind of a country is to read its top authors. Below is a selection of some of the greatest and most popular works by Swedish authors.

- *The Wonderful Adventures of Nils*, Selma Lagerlöf (1906–07)
- *Pippi Longstocking*, Astrid Lindgren (1945)
- *The Emigrants* series, Wilhelm Moberg (1949–59)
- *Markings*, Dag Hammarskjöld (1963–64)
- *Röda Rummet*, August Strindberg (1879)

**Favourite Swedish Films**

Sweden has long been an important force in the film industry. Listed here are some defining works by Swedish filmmakers.

- *The Seventh Seal*, Ingmar Bergman (1956)
- *All Things Fair*, Bo Widerberg (1995)
- *The Emigrants*, Jan Troell (1971)
- *My Life as a Dog*, Lasse Hallström (1985)

**Ten Swedish Festivals**

If your trip coincides with one of these important annual festivals, don’t miss it — the following list is a good sampling of traditional celebrations throughout Sweden (for more events, see p315).

- *Kiruna Snow Festival*, late January (p315)
- *Vasaloppet*, first Sunday in March (p266)
- *Valborgsmässoafton* (Walpurgis Night), 30 April (p315)
- *Swedish National Day*, 6 June (p315)
- *Midsummer*, first Saturday after 21 June (p316)
- *Stockholm Jazz Festival*, 19–23 July (p86)
- *Medieval Week* (Visby), early August (p154)
- *Stockholm Pride*, first week in August (p86)
- *Stockholm International Film Festival*, mid- to late-November (p86)
- *Jokkmokk Winter Market*, first Thursday, Friday and Saturday in February (p304)
Itineraries

CLASSIC ROUTES

These three suggestions are popular travel routes that take in some of the classic highlights of Sweden. They can be adjusted or mixed-and-matched depending on how much time you have.

AROUND THE CAPITAL & BEYOND  One Week/Start & End in Stockholm
Start in Stockholm (p65), where mandatory attractions include the Royal Palace, Gamla Stan and Skansen. You can cover those in a couple of days if need be, which leaves an evening for enjoying some of the capital city’s nightlife – try the clubs around Medborgarplatsen in Södermalm (p79). On day three, take a boat tour to the ancient settlement on Birka (p107); it’s an all-day affair. The next day, check out the spectacular cathedral and palace at Uppsala (p236), and, if your schedule allows, peek into the illuminated-manuscripts display at the old university library, Carolina Rediviva (p239). Wander around the burial mounds at Gamla Uppsala (p238), allowing plenty of time to explore the museum. Spend the rest of the day exploring the adorable village of Sigtuna (p111), with its old-fashioned buildings, cute cafés and atmospheric church ruins. If you fancy a drive, head over to Göteborg (p200) and explore the Bohuslän Coast (p217) for the last couple of days. Alternatively, you could stay put and sample further from the cultural smörgåsbord that is Stockholm.

THE MIDDLE WAY  Two Weeks/Stockholm to Göteborg
Spend the first week as outlined above, checking out Stockholm (p65), Birka (p107), Uppsala (p236) and Sigtuna (p111). Then head north towards Lake Siljan (p262) to explore the surrounding villages, which are famous for being postcard-pretty and steeped in history. Don’t miss the family home of noted Swedish painter Anders Zorn in Mora (p266), the town where the world’s biggest cross-country ski race, Vasaloppet, ends. Tour a copper mine in Falun (p259) such as the World Heritage–listed, Falu Kopparbergsgruva. Stop at Örebro (p251) to see the fine castle and to wander through one of Sweden’s most beautiful parks before continuing down through the heart of Sweden to Göteborg (p200). Spend a day or two in this engaging city, making sure to visit its theme park and taking time to relax and enjoy the atmosphere on the Avenyn. Spend the rest of your trip exploring the craggy coastline and picturesque fishing villages of the Bohuslän Coast (p217).
TIP TO TAIL

One Month/Kiruna to Malmö

This trip is a through-line from the northernmost city in Sweden to just shy of Denmark in the south. Fly in to Kiruna (p298), stopping to check out the Ice Hotel if the season is right. Take the train toward Narvik and stop at Abisko (p301), a hiker’s paradise. Spend a day or two exploring the wilderness, either along the Kungsleden or via any of the shorter nearby trails in the area. Expert hikers may opt instead to spend their mountaineering time in the more challenging Sarek National Park (p305). From here, head to Gällivare (p303) and catch the historic Inlandsbanan railway to Jokkmokk (p304), home of probably the best museum to Sami culture anywhere, the Äjtte (p304). Continue on the railway through some of the most spectacular scenery in the country, stopping if your schedule allows at Sorsele (p306) and Storuman (p307) and Östersund (p292). From here, rent a car and cruise over to explore the breathtaking scenery of the High Coast, or Höga Kusten (p282). Continue southward, aiming towards Lake Siljan (p262) and the surrounding villages. Stop to see Uppsala and Gamla Uppsala (p238) with a detour into Sigtuna (p111) on your way to Stockholm (p65). The wonderful capital city will hold your attention for as many days as you can devote to it. When it’s time to move on, angle southwest toward Göteborg (p200), then Kalmar (p124) with its enormous and fantastic Renaissance-era castle. Stop at the island town of Karlskrona (p133), which is on the Unesco World Heritage List. Wrap things up by exploring the vibrant southern towns of Lund (p171) and Malmö (p162).

ROADS LESS TRAVELLED

REINDEER GAMES

Five to Seven Days/Start and End in Luleå

From Luleå (p288), cruise up to the historic military outpost of Boden (p291). Continue heading northwards and cross the Arctic Circle around Jokkmokk (p304), which is a Sami cultural centre and home to the excellent Äjtte museum (p304). If the weather’s in your favour, branch off to Kvikkjokk (p305), next-door neighbour to the rugged Sarek National Park (p305). Then push on towards Gällivare (p303) and up to Kiruna (p298). Sweden’s northernmost city is worth some exploring on its own, but it also has a charming neighbour in Jukkasjärvi (p301), home to the famous Ice Hotel. From here, you could dash over to Abisko (p301) for some hiking, or go straight north to the remote village of Karesuando (p297), on the Finnish border. Creep along the Sweden–Finland border toward Pajala (p292), keeping an eye out for stray Rudolphs – for entertainment, keep a log of the number of reindeer you have to follow at casual trotting speed along major highways. Stop in Haparanda (p291) for a picnic or drink with a view over the Gulf of Bothnia, then follow the curve of the coastline back to Luleå.

There’s a lot of territory to cover in Sweden, but in a full month you can see most of its highlights by following this top-to-bottom route.
VICIOUS CYCLING

One to Two Weeks/Start and End in Visby
This journey starts directly behind the ferry station in Visby, where you can rent a bicycle and camping equipment at any number of outlets. Once you’ve got your equipment sorted, head north along the waterfront to catch the Gotlandsleden, the bicycle trail that circumnavigates the island. Follow it to the grotto at Lummelunda (p158), then continue northward past Stenkýrka and around to the inlet at Kappelshamn. From here it’s an easy morning’s ride to Fårösund, where you can stock up on picnic items and catch the free ferry to the islet of Fårö (p158). There’s a tourist information centre in Fårö town, near another grocery store and café. Take your time circling the islet, stopping at the gravesite of British troops who fought in the Crimean war at Ryssnäs (p159) and at any of the beaches or harbours that strike your fancy. Your goal is to reach Langhammarshammaren (p158) in time to watch the sunset over the eerie rock formations. Head back to Fårösund, and follow the Gotlandsleden signs southward, stopping first at the Bungeneset (p158). At Slite you can choose to stick to the coastline or head inland through the Kallgateturgs nature reserve; the coastal route is lined with nice beaches, while the inland option passes through some lovely, pastoral countryside. The less ambitious can easily loop back to Visby at this point. The paths converge further south to follow along the coast – don’t miss the detour to the Bronze Age cairns at Uggarderojr (p159) – and go through Öja (p159), where there’s a fine church. Then loop around to return through Burgsvik (p159). Around Sandhamn you’ll have fine views of Lilla Karlsö and Stora Karlsö (p157). Continue along the bike path northward until you’re back in Visby (p152). Make sure you leave time at the end of your trip to enjoy the beautiful medieval city itself.

TAILORED TRIPS

WORLD HERITAGE SITES
Culture hounds might enjoy a quest to see the best of Sweden as defined by Unesco. To start with there’s the vast Laponia area (p304) in the north, an entire journey’s worth of territory on its own. Then, working your way down, there’s the Gammlastad Church Village (p289) in Luleå. The High Coast, or Höga Kusten (p282), decorates the coastline from Härnösand up to Örnsköldsvik. In Falun there’s the Falu Copperbergsvilla (p260), and nearby are the Engels Bruk (p250). In the suburbs of Stockholm you’ll find the royal palace and grounds of Drottningholm (p104), as well as the unlikely beauty of the architect-designed Skogslyktorvägen (p83). Also near the capital is the ancient Viking settlement of Birka (p107). Moving south, there’s the Tanumshede Rock Carvings (p222) and the well-preserved naval port of Karlskrona (p133). Off the coast are the Hanseatic town of Visby (p152) on Gotland, the agricultural landscape of Southern Öland (p141). There’s also the historic Varberg Radio Station (p232) in Grimeton.

ACTIVITIES
Outdoorsy types will be spoilt for choice in Sweden. There’s excellent hiking and camping in any number of the country’s national parks, especially Abisko (p301), as well as the more challenging territory of Sarek (p305) and the intermediate Padjelanta (p303) and Skuleskogen (p302). Closer to Stockholm is the very accessible wilderness of Tyresta (p110).

Cycling is another popular activity, and Sweden is well set up for it. The best areas are found in Skåne (p160) and Gotland (p152); see the cycle tour of Gotlandsleden above for one suggestion.

Wintertime brings another batch of activities to the sporting crowd, most notably alpine skiing in resorts such as Åre (p295), Sälen (p268), Hemavan (p307) and Riksgränsen (p302). Cross-country skiing is popular along the hiking trail Kungsleden (p49) and other long-distance tracks.

Ice skating is a popular activity for kids and adults alike, and is easy to do on the frozen winter surfaces of Kungsträdgården (p84) and other public areas in Stockholm.

Golf is huge in Sweden and there are more than 400 courses to choose from. The most popular options are in the south, but the quirkier choices are up north, including Björkliden (p302), near Abisko – home to the country’s northernmost course, 240km above the Arctic Circle – and the Green Line course (p291) at Haparanda, where playing a round means crossing the Sweden–Finland border four times.

Canoeing and kayaking are popular in a number of rivers and the canals that honeycomb Stockholm (p83).
Snapshot

Though it’s far from being what anyone would call a country in crisis, Sweden seems to have had its confidence shaken in recent years. After a long and steady history as what most would agree was something of a utopian society, the country famous for its ‘middle way’ has suddenly faced a number of changes, not just economic but also political and social. The changes have come about because of several modern-day realities such as European Union membership, globalisation and increased immigration. In June 2005 the Swedish government banned smoking in all public places. It’s no wonder so many people are looking forward to the day when the EU forces Sweden to relax its strict alcohol policies!

The roots of change are fairly easy to trace. Without generalising too much, it’s fair to say that Sweden spent decades as an essentially closed system, with a small population who more or less had similar backgrounds and equal financial standing. The famed Swedish welfare state took care of its citizens ‘from cradle to cradle’, as the saying goes. Since opening its borders in 1995, Sweden has taken in more immigrants than any other country in Western Europe relative to its population. Over half a million immigrants have come to Sweden from the Middle East, Africa and the Balkans alone. The benefits of this are obvious, but so is the economic impact.

One area in which the impact of immigration is easiest to see is the scarcity of housing, currently a hot-button issue in Sweden. The situation is particularly acute in the capital. According to statistics published by the property-owners organisation Fastighetsägarna, the average income of people living in central Stockholm is 25% higher than that of those who live in the suburbs. The corresponding difference in rent, however, is minimal – at the time of research, rents averaged Skr968 per square metre in the middle of town, against Skr888 over the city as a whole. But even so the immigrant population is overwhelmingly moving to the suburbs rather than the city centre. The problem, housing experts say, is not so much that newcomers to Stockholm cannot afford central-city housing, but that they don’t have the connections required to find the scarce properties available. Whatever the reason, the majority of the immigrant population is relegated to block housing in the suburbs. One unforeseen effect of this is that small centres of vibrant multicultural community life have consequently sprung up in places like Rinkeby and Botkyrka and themselves become destinations for central-city dwellers intent on exploring new cultures and artwork. Cultural centres in the suburbs, are, in fact, where visitors can find some of the most interesting cultural events in the city.

Sweden joined the EU in 1995 with a majority vote, but since then public opinion for the EU has cooled, and in September 2003 voters decided not to trade the krona for the euro.

At the time of writing, 85% of workers in Sweden belonged to a trade union. The unemployment rate was 6.5% of the workforce in August 2005, up from 5.9% a year earlier. The welfare state is the largest employer in the country. The majority party – the Social Democrats, led by Prime Minister Göran Persson, now in his ninth year of office – is already preparing for the September 2006 general election. The Social Democrats are the most successful political party in the world, having been in power for most of the past 73 years. The next election promises to be contentious; heavy campaigning, including televised debates, had already started a full year in advance.

The contest is essentially between four conservative parties on the right, who emphasise job creation through tax cuts (campaign slogans include ‘It should be profitable to work’), and the majority left – made up of the Social Democrats, the Greens and the Left Party – who advocate defending Sweden’s traditionally high levels of unemployment benefits.

There are, of course, still plenty of utopian aspects to Swedish society. A study by the World Economic Forum found it to be the world’s most gender-equal country. In the same study, Sweden came out on top for education, health and wellbeing. Another recent poll showed that nearly 90% of adults in the country read at least one newspaper a day. This would indicate that whatever direction their country goes, it will be the Swedish people, involved and empowered, who take it there.
History

EARLY HISTORY
Sweden’s human history began around 10,000 years ago at the end of the last ice age, once the Scandinavian ice sheet had melted. Tribes from central Europe migrated into the south of Sweden, and ancestors of the Sami people hunted reindeer from Siberia into the northern regions. These nomadic Stone Age hunter-gatherers gradually made more permanent settlements, keeping animals, catching fish and growing crops. A typical relic of this period (3000 BC to 1800 BC) is the gångrift, a dolmen or rectangular passage-tomb covered with capstones, then a mound of earth. Pottery, amber beads and valuable flint tools were buried with the dead. The island of Öland, in southeast Sweden, is a good place to see clusters of Stone Age barrows.

As the climate improved between 1800 BC and 500 BC, Bronze Age cultures blossomed. Their hällristningar (rock carvings) are found in many parts of Sweden – Dalälnd and Bohuslän are particularly rich areas (see p222). The carvings provide tantalising glimpses of forgotten beliefs, with the sun, hunting scenes and ships being favourite themes. Huge Bronze Age burial mounds, such as Kivikgraven (p182) in Österlen, suggest that powerful chieftains had control over spiritual and temporal matters. Relatively few bronze artefacts are found in Sweden: the metals had to be imported from central Europe in exchange for furs, amber and other northern treasures.

After 500 BC, the Iron Age brought about technological advances, demonstrated by archaeological finds of agricultural tools, graves and primitive furnaces. During this period, the runic alphabet arrived, probably from the Germanic region. It was used to carve inscriptions onto monumental stone staves (there are around 20,000 in Sweden) well into medieval times.

By the 7th century AD, the Svea people of the Mälaren valley (just west of Stockholm) had gained supremacy, and their kingdom (’Svea Rike’, or Sverige) gave the country of Sweden its name. Birka, founded around 760 on Björkö (an island in Mälaren lake), was a powerful Svea centre for around 200 years. Large numbers of Byzantine and Arab coins have been found there, and stones with runic inscriptions are scattered across the area; see p107 for more details.

VIKINGS & THE ARRIVAL OF CHRISTIANITY
Scandinavia’s greatest impact on world history probably occurred during the Viking Age (around 800 to 1100), when hardy pagan Norsemen set sail for other shores. In Sweden, it’s generally thought that population pressures were to blame for the sudden exodus: a polygamous society led to an excess of male heirs and ever-smaller plots of land. Combined with the prospects of military adventure and foreign trade abroad, the result was the Viking phenomenon (the word is derived from vik, meaning ‘bay’ or ‘cove’, and is probably a reference to their anchorages during raids).

The Vikings sailed a new type of boat that was fast and highly manoeuvrable but sturdy enough for ocean crossings, with a heavy keel, up to 16 pairs of oars and a large square sail (the Åskekär Ship, Sweden’s only original Viking vessel, is in Göteborg’s Stadsmuseum (p204). Initial hit-and-run raids along the European coast – often on monasteries and their terrified monks – were followed by major military expeditions, settlement and trade. The well-travelled Vikings penetrated the Russian heartland and beyond, venturing as far as America, Constantinople (modern-day Istanbul) and Baghdad.

In Sweden, the Vikings generally cremated their dead and their possessions, then buried the remains under a mound. There are also several impressive stone ship settings, made from upright stones arranged in the shape of a ship. If you’re interested in Viking culture, Foteviken (p175) on the southwestern Falsterbo Peninsula is a ‘living’ reconstruction of a Viking village.

Early in the 9th century, the missionary St Ansgar established a church at Birka. Sweden’s first Christian king, Olof Skötkonung (c 968–1020) is said to have been baptised at St Sigfrid’s Well in Husaby (p228) in 1008 – the well is now a sort of place of pilgrimage for Swedes – but worship continued in Uppsala’s pagan temple until at least 1090. By 1160, King Erik Jedvarsson (Sweden’s patron saint, St Erik) had virtually destroyed the last remnants of paganism.

RISE OF THE SWEDISH STATE
Olof Skötkonung was also the first king to rule over both the Sveas and the Gaus, creating the kernel of the Swedish state. During the 12th and 13th centuries, these united peoples mounted a series of crusades to Finland, Christianising the country and steadily absorbing it into Sweden.

Royal power disintegrated over succession squabbles in the 13th century. The medieval statesman Birger Jarl (1210–66) rose to fill the gap, acting as prince regent for 16 years, and founding the city of Stockholm in 1252.

King Magnus Ladulås (1240–90) introduced a form of feudalism in 1280, but managed to avoid its worst excesses. In fact, the aristocracy were held in check by the king, who forbade them from living off the peasantry when moving from estate to estate.

Magnus’ eldest son Birger (1280–1321) assumed power in 1302. After long feuds with his younger brothers, he tricked them into coming to Nyköping castle (p244), where he threw them into the dungeon and starved them to death. After this fratricidal act, the nobility drove Birger into exile. They then chose their own king of Sweden, the infant grandson of King Haakon V of Norway. When Haakon died without leaving a male heir, the kingdoms of Norway and Sweden were united (1319).

The increasingly wealthy church began to show its might in the 13th and 14th centuries, commissioning monumental buildings such as the domkyrka (cathedral) in Linköping (founded 1250; see p149), and Scandinavia’s largest Gothic cathedral in Uppsala (founded 1285; see p238).

However, in 1350 the rise of state and church endured a horrific setback, when the Black Death swept through the country, carrying off around a third of the Swedish population. In the wake of the horror, St Birgitta (1303–73) reinvigorated the church with her visions and revelations, and founded a nunnery and cathedral in Vadstena, which became Sweden’s most important pilgrimage site.
HANSEATIC LEAGUE & THE UNION OF KALMAR

A strange phenomenon of the time was the German-run Hanseatic League, a group of well-organised merchants who established walled trading towns in Germany and along the Baltic coast. In Sweden, they built Visby (p152) and maintained a strong presence in the young city of Stockholm. Their rapid growth caused great concern around the Baltic in the 14th century: an allied Scandinavian front was vital. Negotiated by the Danish regent Margrethe, the Union of Kalmar (1397) united Denmark, Norway and Sweden under one crown.

Erik of Pomerania, Margrethe’s nephew, held that crown until 1439. High taxation to fund wars against the Hanseatic League made him deeply unpopular and he was eventually deposed. His replacement was short-lived and succession struggles began again: two powerful Swedish families, the unionist Oxenstiernas and the nationalist Stures, fought for supremacy.

Out of the chaos, Sten Sture the Elder (1440–1503) eventually emerged as ‘Guardian of Sweden’ in 1470, going on to fight and defeat an army of unionist Danes at the Battle of Brunkenberg (1471) in Stockholm.

The failing Union’s death-blow came in 1520: Christian II of Denmark invaded Sweden and killed the regent Sten Sture the Younger (1493–1520). After granting a full amnesty to Sture’s followers, Christian went back on his word: 82 of them were arrested, tried and massacred in Stockholm’s main square, Stortorget in Gamla Stan (p83), which ’ran with rivers of blood’.

The brutal ‘Stockholm Bloodbath’ sparked off a major rebellion under the leadership of the young nobleman Gustav Ericsson Vasa (1496–1560). It was a revolution that almost never happened: having failed to raise enough support, Gustav was fleeing for the Norwegian border when two exhausted skiers caught him up to tell him that the people had changed their minds. This legendary ski journey is celebrated every year in the Vasaloppet race (p266) between Salen and Mora.

In 1523, Sweden seceded from the union and installed Gustav as the first Vasa king: he was crowned on 6 June, now the country’s national day.

VASA DYNASTY

Gustav I ruled for 37 years, leaving behind a powerful, centralised nation-state. He introduced the Reformation to Sweden (principally as a fundraising exercise): ecclesiastical property became the king’s, and the Lutheran Protestant Church was placed under the crown’s direct control.

After Gustav Vasa’s death in 1560, bitter rivalry broke out among his sons. His eldest child, Erik XIV (1533–77), held the throne for eight years in a state of increasing paranoia. After committing a trio of injudicious murders at Uppsala Slott (p238), Erik was deposed by his half-brother Johan III (1537–92) and poisoned with pea soup at Örbyhus Slott (p243). During the brothers’ reigns, the Danes tried and failed to reassert sovereignty over Sweden in the Seven Years War (1563–70).

Gustav’s youngest son, Karl IX (1550–1611), finally had a chance at the throne in 1607, but was unsuccessful militarily and ruled for a mere four years. He was succeeded by his 17-year-old son. Despite his youth, Gustav II Adolf (1594–1632) proved to be a military genius, recapturing southern parts of the country from Denmark and consolidating Sweden’s control over the eastern Baltic (the copper mine at Falun financed many of his campaigns: see p260). A devout Lutheran, Gustav II supported the German Protestants during the Thirty Years War (1618–48). He invaded Catholic Poland and defeated his cousin King Sigismund III, later meeting his own end in battle in 1632.

Gustav II’s daughter, Kristina, was still a child in 1632, and her regent continued her father’s warlike policies. In 1654, Kristina abdicated in favour of Karl X Gustav, ending the Vasa dynasty.

For an incredible glimpse into this period, track down Sweden’s 17th-century royal warship Vasa (commissioned by Gustav II in 1625), now in Stockholm’s Vasamuseet (p77).

PEAK & DECLINE OF THE SWEDISH EMPIRE

The zenith and collapse of the Swedish empire happened remarkably quickly. During the harsh winter of 1657, Swedish troops invaded Denmark across the frozen Kattegatt, a strait between Sweden and Denmark, and the last remaining parts of southern Sweden still in Danish hands were handed over at the Peace of Roskilde. Bohuslän, Härjedalen and Jämtland were seized from Norway, and the empire reached its maximum size when Sweden established a short-lived American colony in what is now Delaware.

The end of the 17th century saw a developing period of enlightenment in Sweden; Olof Rudbeck achieved widespread fame for his medical work, which included the discovery of the lymphatic system.

Inheritor of this huge and increasingly sophisticated country was King Karl XII (1681–1718). Karl XII was an overenthusiastic military adventurer who spent almost all of his reign at war: he managed to lose Latvia, Estonia and Poland, and the Swedish coast sustained damaging attacks.

QUEEN KRISTINA

Queen Kristina (1626–89) lived an eccentric and eventful life. Her father, Gustav II, instructed that the girl be brought up as though she were a prince, then promptly went off and died in battle, leaving his six-year-old successor and his country in the hands of the powerful Chancellor Oxenstierna.

Kristina did indeed receive a boy’s education, becoming fluent in six languages and skilled in the arts of war. Childish spats with Oxenstierna increased as she grew older; after being crowned queen in 1644, she delighted in testing her power, defying him even when he had the country’s best interests at heart.

Envious of the elegant European courts, Kristina attempted to modernise old-fashioned Sweden. One of her plans was to gather leading intellectuals for philosophical conversation. She’s often blamed for the death of Descartes, who reluctantly obeyed her summons only to die of pneumonia in the icy north.

Kristina’s ever-erratic behaviour culminated in her abdication in 1654. After handing over the crown to her beloved cousin Karl X Gustav, she threw on men’s clothing and scarpered southwards on horseback. Kristina finished up in Rome, where she converted to Catholicism.

Contrary, curious and spoilt, accused of murder and an affair with one of the Pope’s cardinals, bisexual, rule-bending Kristina was a fascinating and frustrating character, too huge and colourful to do justice to here. If you want to know more, an excellent biography is Clara Christina, Queen of Sweden by Veronica Buckley.

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<td>1350s</td>
<td>The Black Death kills a third of the population</td>
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<td>1477</td>
<td>Founding of Scandinavia’s oldest university, at Uppsala</td>
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<td>1523</td>
<td>Gustav I becomes the first Vasa king</td>
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<td>1628</td>
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from Russia. Karl XII also fought the Great Nordic War against Norway throughout the early 18th century. A winter siege of Trondheim took its toll on his battle-weary army, and Karl XII was mysteriously shot dead while inspecting his troops – a single event that sealed the fate of Sweden’s military might.

LIBERALISATION OF SWEDEN

During the next 50 years, parliament’s power increased and the monarchs became little more than heads of state. Despite the country’s decline, intellectual enlightenment streaked ahead and Sweden produced some celebrated writers, philosophers and scientists, including Anders Celsius, whose temperature scale bears his name; Carl Scheele, the discoverer of chlorine; and Carl von Linné (Linnaeus), the great botanist who developed theories about plant reproduction (see p240).

Gustav III (1746–92) curtailed parliamentary powers and reintroduced absolute rule in 1789. He was a popular and cultivated king who inaugurated the Royal Opera House in Stockholm (1782), and opened the Swedish Academy of Literature (1786), now known for awarding the annual Nobel Prize for literature. His foreign policy was less auspicious and he was considered exceptionally lucky to lead Sweden intact through a two-year war with Russia (1788–90). Enemies in the aristocracy conspired against the king, hiring an assassin to shoot him at a masked ball in 1792.

Gustav IV Adolf (1778–1837), Gustav III’s son, assumed the throne and got drawn into the Napoleonic Wars, permanently losing Finland (one-third of Sweden’s territory) to Russia. Gustav IV was forced to abdicate, and his uncle Karl XIII took the Swedish throne under a new constitution that ended unrestricted royal power.

Out of the blue, Napoleon’s marshal Jean-Baptiste Bernadotte (1763–1844) was invited by a nobleman, Baron Mörner, to succeed the childless Karl XIII to the Swedish throne. The rest of the nobility adjusted to the idea and Bernadotte took up the offer, along with the name Karl Johan. Karl Johan judiciously changed sides in the war, and led Sweden, allied with Britain, Prussia and Russia, against France and Denmark.

After Napoleon’s defeat, Sweden forced Denmark to swap Norway for Swedish Pomerania (1814). The Norwegians objected, defiantly choosing king and constitution, and Swedish troops occupied most of the country. This forced union with Norway was Sweden’s last military action.

INDUSTRIALISATION

Industry arrived late in Sweden (during the second half of the 19th century), but when it did come, it transformed the country from one of Western Europe’s poorest to one of its richest.

The Göta Canal (p146) opened in 1832, providing a valuable transport link between the east and west coasts, and development accelerated when the main railway across Sweden was completed in 1862. Significant Swedish inventions, including dynamite (Alfred Nobel) and the safety match (patented by Johan Edvard Lundstrom; see p116), were carefully exploited by government and industrialists; coupled with efficient steel-making and timber exports, they added to a growing economy and the rise of the new middle class.

However, when small-scale peasant farms were replaced with larger concerns, there was widespread discontent in the countryside, exacerbated by famine. Some agricultural workers joined the population drift from rural areas to towns. Others abandoned Sweden altogether: around one million people (an astonishing quarter of the population!) emigrated over just a few decades, mainly to America.

The transformation to an industrial society brought with it trade unions and the Social Democratic Labour Party (Social Democrats for short), founded in 1889 to support workers. The party grew quickly and obtained parliamentary representation in 1896 when Hjalmar Branting was elected.

In 1905, King Oscar II (1829–1907) was forced to recognise Norwegian independence and the two countries went their separate ways.

WORLD WARS & THE WELFARE STATE

Sweden declared itself neutral in 1912, and remained so throughout the bloodshed of WWI.

In the interwar period, a Social Democrat–Liberal coalition government took control (1921). Reforms followed quickly, including an eight-hour working day and suffrage for all adults aged over 23.

Swedish neutrality during WWII was somewhat ambiguous: allowing German troops to march through to occupy Norway certainly tarnished Sweden’s image. On the other hand, Sweden was a haven for refugees from Finland, Norway, Denmark and the Baltic states; downed allied aircrew who escaped the Gestapo; and many thousands of Jews who escaped persecution and death.

After the war and throughout the 1950s and ‘60s the Social Democrats continued with the creation of folkhemmet, the welfare state. The standard of living for ordinary Swedes rose rapidly and real poverty was virtually eradicated.

MODERN SWEDEN

After a confident few decades, the late 20th century saw some unpleasant surprises for Sweden, as economic pressures clouded Sweden’s social goals and various sacks of dirty laundry fell out of the cupboards.

In 1986, Prime Minister Olof Palme (1927–86) was assassinated as he walked home from the cinema. The murder and bungled police inquiry shook ordinary Swedes’ confidence in their country, institutions and leaders. The killing remains unsolved, but it seems most likely that external destabilisation lay behind this appalling act. Afterwards, the fortunes of the Social Democrats took a turn for the worse as various scandals came to light, including illegal arms trading in the Middle East by the Bofors company.

By late 1992, during the world recession, the country’s budgetary problems culminated in frenzied speculation against the Swedish krona. In November of that year the central bank Sveriges Riksbank was forced to abandon fixed exchange rates and let the krona float freely. The currency immediately devalued by 20%, interest rates shot up by a world-record-breaking 500% and unemployment flew to 14%; the government fought back with tax hikes, punishing cuts to the welfare budget and the scrapping of previously relaxed immigration rules.

PREVIOUS PAGE

On his death, it was discovered that Frenchman Jean-Baptiste Bernadotte (king of Sweden for 26 years) had a tattoo that read ‘Death to kings!’
With both economy and national confidence severely shaken, Swedes narrowly voted in favour of joining the European Union (EU), effective from 1 January 1995. Since then, there have been further major reforms and the economy has improved considerably, with falling unemployment and inflation.

Another shocking political murder, of Foreign Minister Anna Lindh (1957–2003), again rocked Sweden to the core. Far-right involvement was suspected – Lindh was a vocal supporter of the euro, and an outspoken critic of both the war in Iraq and Italy’s Silvio Berlusconi – but it appears that her attacker had psychiatric problems. Lindh’s death occurred just before the Swedish referendum on whether to adopt the single European currency, but didn’t affect the eventual outcome: a ‘No’ vote.
The Culture

THE NATIONAL PSYCHE

There’s a prevailing view of Swedes as cold and reserved, or at least shy – until the snaps comes out, at any rate. Like any stereotype it has some basis in truth, but the national character is, of course, a good deal more complex than popular myth suggests.

Two key concepts that anyone spending a substantial amount of time in Sweden will come to understand are lagom and ordning och reda. Both are vital components in the mindset of the typical Swedish character. Lagom means just right – not too little, not too much. A good example is mellanöl (medium ale) – it’s not strong, but not as weak as a light ale. An exception to lagom is the smorgåsbord.

Ordning och reda connotes tidiness and order, everything in its proper place in the world. A good example is the queuing system; every transaction in all of Sweden requires its participants to take a number and stand in line, which everyone does with the utmost patience. An exception to ordning och reda is Stockholm traffic.

LIFESTYLE

Swedes are a friendly sort, though sometimes in a way that strikes outsiders as stiff or overly formal. The handshake is used liberally in both business and social circles when greeting friends or meeting strangers. Introductions generally include full names. Var så god is a common phrase and carries all sorts of expressions of goodwill, including ‘Welcome’, ‘Please’, ‘Pleased to meet you’, ‘I’m happy to serve you’, ‘Thanks’ and ‘You’re welcome’. Swedes are generous with their use of ‘thank you’ (tack) to the point that language textbooks make jokes about it.

Most Swedes go on holiday for several weeks in the summer, often in rural or wilderness areas of their own countryside. The sommarstuga (summer cottage) is almost de rigueur – there are 600,000 second homes in the country.

Get a two-for-one blast of Swedish culture with Alf Sjöberg’s 1951 film version of August Strindberg’s play Miss Julie, which won the Grand Prix at the Venice Film Festival that year.

TRACING YOUR ANCESTORS  Fran Parnell

Around a million people emigrated from Sweden to the USA and Canada between 1850 and 1930. Many of their 12 million descendants are now returning to find their roots.

Luckily, detailed parish records of births, deaths and marriages have been kept since 1686 and there are landsarkivet (regional archives) around the country. The national archive is Riksarkivet (08-737 63 50; www.ra.se; Box 12541, Fyrverkarbacken 13-17, SE-102 29 Stockholm).

SVAR Forskarcentrum (0623-725 00; www.svar.ra.se; Kägelbacken 6, Box 160, SE-880 40 Ramsele) holds most records from the late 17th century until 1928. You can pay the staff here to research for you (Skr400 per hour) or look for yourself.

Utvandramas Hus (Emigrant House), in Växjö, is a very good museum dedicated to the mass departure (see p122). Attached is Svenska Emigrantinstitutet (Swedish Emigrant Institute; 0470-201 20; www.swemi.se; Vilhelm Mobergs gata 4, Box 201, SE-35104 Växjö), with an extensive research centre that you can use (Skr150/200 per half/full day).

Also worth a look is Tracing Your Swedish Ancestry, by Nils William Olsson, a free do-it-yourself genealogical guide (40 pages). Get a copy by emailing your name and address to info@sweden-newyork.com, or download it from the New York Consulate-General of Sweden’s website: www.swedeninfo.org/tracing.htm (under Press & Information in the menu).
Traditional folk dress is still seen regularly at midsummer, on Swedish National Day, and for weddings, birthdays and other celebrations. Styles vary depending on the region. The national version was designed in the 20th century: women wear a white hat, yellow skirt and blue sleeveless vest with white flowers on top of a white blouse; men wear a simpler costume of knee-length trousers (breeches), white shirt, vest and wide-brimmed hat.

**Population**

Sweden’s population is relatively small given the size of the country – it has one of the lowest population densities in Europe. Most people are concentrated in the large cities of Stockholm, Göteborg, Malmö and Uppsala.

Most of Sweden’s population is considered to be of Nordic stock, thought to have descended from central and northern European tribes who migrated north after the end of the last Ice Age, around 10,000 years ago.

About 30,000 Finnish speakers form a substantial minority in the northeast, near Torneälven (the Torne River). More than 160,000 citizens of other Nordic countries live in Sweden.

Over 20% of Sweden’s population are either foreign-born or have at least one non-Swedish parent. Most immigrants have come from other European countries. The largest non-European ethnic group is made up of Middle Eastern citizens, primarily from Iraq, Turkey and Iran. Other countries with a sizeable presence include Poland, Chile and Somalia. There are also an estimated 25,000 Roma.

**Sami**

Sweden’s approximately 17,000 indigenous Sami people (sometimes known by the inappropriate term Lapps) are a significant ethnic minority. These hardy nomadic people have for centuries occupied northern Scandinavia and northernwestern Russia, living mainly from their large herds of domestic reindeer. The total population of around 60,000 Sami still forms an ethnic minority in four countries – Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia. In Sweden, they’re mainly found in the mountain areas along the Norwegian border, northwards of mid-Dalarna. The Sami people refer to their country as Sápmi.

As in many countries with an indigenous minority, the history of relations between the Sami and Nordic peoples is often a dark one. Since at least the 1600s, the Sami religious practice of shamanism was denigrated, and noaidi (Sami spiritual leaders) were persecuted. Use of the Sami language was discouraged, and Sami children were coerced into school to learn Swedish.

Sami religious traditions are characterised by a relationship to nature. At sites of special power, such as prominent rock formations, people made offerings to their gods and ancestors to ensure success in hunting or other endeavours. Another crucial element in the religious tradition is the singing of the yoik (also spelt joik), or ‘song of the plains’. A yoik or joik is a traditional song of the Sami folk; an emotion-laden storytelling song. They were briefly banned as part of the suppression of the Sami religion, but are now enjoying a resurgence in popularity.

In the 18th and 19th centuries, the Lutheran Church of Sweden set up schools to educate Sami children in their own language, but from 1913 to 1930 the emphasis changed to providing a basic education in Swedish. Nowadays, Sami education is available in government-run Sami schools or regular compulsory nine-year municipal schools, providing identical schooling to that received by Swedish children but taking into account the Sami linguistic and cultural heritage.

Generally speaking, the Sami in Sweden do not enjoy the same rights as Sami people in Norway and Finland; this is partly because hydroelectric developments and mining activities, that are of great importance to the Swedish economy, have been established on traditional Sami land.

The English-language booklet *The Saami – People of the Sun & Wind*, published by Ájtte, the Swedish Mountain and Saami Museum in Jokkmokk, does a good job of describing Sami traditions in all four countries of the Sápmi region and is available at tourist shops around the area.

**Sport**

**Football**

Football is the most popular sporting activity in Sweden and there are 3320 clubs with over one million members. The domestic season runs from April to early November. The national arena, Råsunda Stadium in Solna, a suburb in Stockholm’s northwest, has the capacity to hold 37,000 spectators.

Swedish football coach, Sven Göran Eriksson, has achieved fame and notoriety as the head coach of England’s national team and for rumours of several scandalous affairs. Perhaps the best-known Swedish football player was Gunnar Nordahl (1921–95), who helped Sweden win gold at the 1948 Olympics, and went on to be the all-time top scorer at AC Milan.

**Ice Hockey**

There are amateur ice-hockey teams in most Swedish communities. The national premier league, Elitserien, has 12 professional teams; there are also several lower divisions. Matches take place from autumn to late spring, up to four times a week in Stockholm, primarily at Globen arena (see p100).
Skiing
Alpine skiing competitions are held annually, particularly in Åre (Jämtland, p295), where events include the Ladies World Cup competitions in late February or early March, and Skutsjøet, the world’s greatest downhill ski race (with up to 3000 competitors) in late April or early May.

Vasaloppet (www.vasaloppet.se), the world’s biggest nordic (cross-country) ski race, takes place on the first Sunday in March, when 15,000 competitors follow a 90km route. For further details, see the sections on Sälen (p268) and Mora (Dalarna; p266) or check out the website.

Well-known Swedish skiers include four-time Olympic gold-medal winner Gunde Svan and giant slalom icon Ingemar Stenmark, who won a total of 86 races in the Alpine Skiing World Cup.

Other
Swedish men have excelled at tennis, including Björn Borg, Mats Wilander and Stefan Edberg (all three have now retired). Borg won the Wimbledon Championships in England five times in a row.

Golf is a similarly popular sport in Sweden with more than 400 courses throughout the country. Annika Sörenstam, ranked as one of the game’s leading female players, hails from Sweden.

Bandy, though similar to ice hockey, is played on an outdoor pitch the size of a football field and teams are also the same size as in football.

Sailing is very popular, around Stockholm in particular, where almost half the population owns a yacht.

For more on participating in sports in Sweden, see the Outdoors Activities chapter.

MULTICULTURALISM
During WWII, Sweden, which had essentially been a closed society, opened its borders to immigration. For a time, immigrants were expected to assimilate into Swedish society and essentially ‘become Swedish’. However, in 1975 Parliament adopted a new set of policies that emphasised the freedom to preserve and celebrate traditional native cultures. These days some 200 languages are spoken in Sweden, as well as variations on the standard – the hip-hop crowd around Stockholm, for example, speak a vivid mishmash of slang, Swedish and foreign phrases that’s been dubbed ‘Rinkeby Swedish’ after the immigrant-heavy suburb of Rinkeby.

Asians are predicted to constitute one quarter of all foreign-born residents in Sweden in the near future. Many are Muslim, and some disturbing anti-Islamic sentiment has begun to crop up. In 2004, arsonists set fire to the mosque in Malmö, where one quarter of the population is Muslim. As hip-hop artist Timbuktu (himself the Swedish-born son of a mixed-race American couple) told the Washington Post, ‘Sweden still has a very clear picture of what a Swede is. That no longer exists – the blond, blue-eyed physical traits. That’s changing. But it still exists in the minds of some people’.

MEDIA
Domestic newspapers are published only in Swedish, but a wide variety of English-language imports are available at major transport terminals and newsstands – often even in small towns.

Nearly 90% of Swedish adults read at least one daily newspaper and most people subscribe for home delivery. Dagens Nyheter is a politically independent paper with a liberal bent, while Svenska Dagbladet is the more conservative daily; both are distributed across the country though based in Stockholm. The evening papers (Aftonbladet and Expressen, the Social Democrat and liberal papers respectively) also have national coverage. The Swedish government subsidises the second most popular newspaper in a given market, but never more than 3% of the paper’s revenue.

RELIGION
Christianity arrived fairly late in Sweden, and was preceded by a long-standing loyalty to Norse gods such as Odin, Thor and their warlike ilk. Some of the outer reaches of Sweden, particularly in the far north, were among the last areas to convert to Christianity in Europe. According to the country’s constitution, Swedish people have the right to practise any religion they choose. Complete separation of church and state took place in 2000; prior to that, Evangelical Lutheranism was the official religion. Since 1994 citizens do not legally acquire a religion at birth but voluntarily become members of a faith. Only about 10% of Swedes regularly attend church services, but church marriages, funerals and communions are still popular.

ARTS
Literature
The best known members of Sweden’s artistic community have been writers, chiefly the influential dramatist and author August Strindberg (1849–1912), who wrote Miss Julie and The Red Room among other things, and children’s writer Astrid Lindgren (1907–2002). Lindgren’s book Pippi Longstocking was first published in English in 1950.

During WWII, some Swedish writers took a stand against the Nazis, including Eyvind Johnson (1900–76) with his Krilon trilogy, completed in 1943, and the famous poet and novelist Karin Boye (1900–41), whose novel Kaloclan was published in 1940.

Emil Mörberg (1888–1973), a representative of 20th-century proletarian literature and controversial social critic, won international acclaim with Undervärlden (The Emigrants; 1949) and Nybyggarna (The Settlers; 1956).

The powerful imagination of Göran Tunström (1937–) is reflected in Skimmer (Shimmering; 1996), set in Iceland during Viking times. Other recent authors of note include Torgny Lindgren (1938–), whose novel Pölsan was published in 1940.

The poet Carl Michael Bellman is perhaps the dearest to the Swedish soul. Born in Stockholm in 1740, Bellman completed one of his best-known writings, Fredmans Epistlar (Fredman’s Epistles) at age 30. Greek themes,
with references to drunken revelry and Bacchus, the Greek and Roman god of wine, are strong features in this work. Evert Taube (1890–1976), a sailor, author, composer and painter, is known as a latter-day Bellman.

**Cinema & TV**

Sweden led the way in the silent-film era of the 1920s with such masterpieces as *Körkarlen* (The Phantom Carriage), adapted from a novel by Selma Lagerlöf and directed by Mauritz Stiller. In 1967 came Vilgot Sjöman’s notorious *I Am Curious – Yellow*, a political film that got more attention outside Sweden for its X rating. With a few exceptions, one man has largely defined modern Swedish cinema to the world: Ingmar Bergman. With deeply contemplative films like *The Seventh Seal*, *Through a Glass Darkly* and *Persona*, the beret-clad director explores human alienation, the absence of god, the meaning of life, the certainty of death and other cheerful themes.

More recently, the town of Trollhättan has become a centre of filmmaking, drawing the likes of wunderkind director Lukas Moodysson, whose *Lila 4-Ever, Fucking Åmål* and *Tillsammans* have all been both popular and critical hits. Fellow up-and-comer Josef Fares (*Jalla! Jalla!* and *Kopps*), who came to Sweden from Lebanon, focuses on themes about the country’s growing immigrant communities.

**Music**

Everyone knows about ABBA, but that’s just the tip of the iceberg. Sweden is the third-largest exporter of music in the world, and Swedes buy more recorded music per capita than any other nationality.

Pop bands who actually sing in Swedish are few and far between. Who knew the Caesars (’Jerk It Out’) were Swedish? And what about Helena Paparizou, who won the 2005 Eurovision Song Contest for Greece with ‘My Number One’? Yep, she’s a Swedish citizen.

Other hot names in the pop world are Sahara Hotnights, the Hellacopters, the International Noise Conspiracy and Shout Out Louds. Late-’90s radio favourites the Cardigans are aiming for a comeback, and recent chart-toppers the Hives are still going strong. Sensitive rockers Dungen are notable for singing lyrics in their native language, although they get just as much attention for lead singer Gustav Ejstes’s devastating cheekbones.

Interest in Swedish folk music took off in the 1970s and ’80s, thanks mainly to the Falun Folk Music Festival. Traditional Swedish folk music revolves around the triple-beat *polksa*, originally a Polish dance. Ethnic folk music includes the Sami yoik and a wide range of styles brought to Sweden by immigrants from around the world.

Swedish jazz peaked between the 1920s and ’60s. The pianist Jan Johansson (1931–68) succeeded in blending jazz and folk in a peculiarly Swedish fashion. Both Stockholm and Umeå host popular annual jazz festivals.

Although Sweden has never produced a classical composer to match Norway’s Edvard Grieg, there has been no shortage of contenders. One of the earliest was Emil Sjögren (1853–1918). He was followed by the Wagnerian Wilhelm Peterson-Berger (1867–1942) and Hugo Alfén (1872–1960).

Opera flourished after the opening of the Royal Opera House in Stockholm (1782). Opera singer Jenny Lind (1820–87) is known as the ’Swedish nightingale’.

**Architecture**

Apart from elaborate gravesites, little survives of Bronze Age buildings in Sweden. Several Iron Age relics remain on Öland, including Ismantorp, a fortified village with limestone walls and nine gates.

Excellent examples of Romanesque church architecture dot the country. One of the finest is Domkyrkan (Cathedral) in Lund, consecrated in 1145 and still dominating the city centre with its two imposing square towers.

Gothic styles from the 13th and 14th centuries mainly used brick rather than stone. Some fine examples can be seen at the Mariakyrkan in Sigtuna (completed in 1237) and Uppsala’s Domkyrkan, consecrated in 1435.

Gotland is the best place in Sweden to see ecclesiastical Gothic architecture, with around 100 medieval churches on the island.

During and after the Reformation, monasteries and churches were plundered by the crown in favour of wonderful royal palaces and castles like Gustav Vasa’s Kalmar Slott and Gripsholm Slott, which has one of the best Renaissance interiors in Sweden.

Magnificently ornate baroque architecture arrived in Sweden (mainly from Italy) during the 1640s while Queen Kristina held the throne. Kalmar Cathedral, designed in 1660, the adjacent Kalmar Rådhus and Drottningholmslott (1662), just outside Stockholm, were all designed by the court architect Nicodemus Tessin the Elder. Tessin the Younger designed the vast ‘new’ Royal Palace in Stockholm after the previous palace was gutted by fire in 1697.

The late 19th century and early 20th century saw a rise in romanticism, a particularly Swedish style mainly using wood and brick, which produced such wonders as the Stockholm Rådhus (1916) and Stadshus (City Hall; completed in 1923).

From the 1930s to the ’80s, functionalism and the so-called international style took over, with their emphasis on steel, concrete and glass.

**Painting & Sculpture**

Carl Larsson, part of an artistic revolution in the 1880s, painted some of the best 19th-century oil paintings in a warm Art Nouveau style. Anders Zorn’s portraits of famous Swedes and August Strindberg’s violently moody seascapes have also come to the attention of the art world. The nature paintings of Bruno Liljefors are well regarded.

Although there was an initially cautious approach to Cubism, some artists embraced the concepts of surrealism and abstract art, albeit with their own Swedish style, such as the rather bizarre ‘dreamland’ paintings of Stellan Mörner. Otto Carlund was the driving force behind early abstract art in Sweden.

More radical art movements in the 1960s and ’70s were influenced by diverse sources including far left-wing politics, popular culture, minimalism and pop art.

Carl Milles (1875–1955) is Sweden’s greatest sculptor and one of the 20th century’s most eminent artists in this field. He once worked as Rodin’s assistant and his home in Lidingö, on the outskirts of Stockholm, is a gorgeous museum (p82).

**Theatre & Dance**

King Gustav III founded the Royal Dramatic Theatre, known as Dramaten, in Stockholm in 1773, and interest in theatre and opera blossomed. Greta Garbo attended the Royal Dramatic Theatre drama school in 1922, and Ingmar Bergman made his directorial debut here in 1951.

In 1773, King Gustav III also founded the Royal Swedish Ballet in Stockholm, the world’s fourth-oldest ballet company. Stockholm is home to the House of Dance, the Dance Museum, Kulturhuset and the Dance Centre. Modern dance can also be seen at the Göteborg Opera and the Dance Station in Malmö, with smaller-scale productions performed across Sweden.

‘August Strindberg’s violently moody seascapes have come to the attention of the art world’
Environment

THE LAND

Geography

Sweden occupies the eastern side of the Scandinavian peninsula, and shares borders with Norway, Finland and Denmark (the latter a mere 4km to the southwest of Sweden and joined to it by a spectacular bridge and tunnel).

The surface area of Sweden’s (449,964 sq km) is stretched long and thin. Around one-sixth of the country lies within the Arctic Circle, yet Sweden is surprisingly warm thanks to the Gulf Stream: minimum northern temperatures are around –20°C (compared to –45°C in Alaska).

The country has a 7000km-long coastline, with myriad islands – the Stockholm archipelago alone has an extraordinary 24,000. The largest and most notable islands are Gotland and Oland on the southeast coast, and the best sandy beaches are down the west coast, south of Göteborg.

Forests take up an incredible 57% of Sweden’s landscape. The Swedes aren’t short of inland lakes either: there are around 100,000 of them in all. Vänern is the largest lake in Western Europe at 5585 sq km. Kebnekaise (2111m), part of the glaciated Kjölen Mountains along the Norwegian border, is Sweden’s highest mountain.

Population

Most Swedes live in the flat south of the country, which has an average population density of 35 people per square kilometre. The capital, Stockholm, has 266 people per square kilometre, but in the empty north there are only around nine people per square kilometre.

The 25 historical regions, or landskap, are denominators for people’s identity and a basis for regional tourist promotion, and are used throughout this book. The 21 counties (län) in Sweden form the basis of local government, and these county administrations are responsible for things like regional public transport (länstrafik) and regional museums (länsmuseum).

Geology

Between 500 to 370 million years ago, the European and North American continental plates collided, throwing up an impressive range of peaks called the Caledonian Mountains, which were as tall as today’s Himalaya. Their worn-down stubs form the 800km-long Kjölen Mountains along the border with Norway.

Parts of Skåne and the islands of Oland and Gotland consist of flat limestone and sandstone deposits, probably laid down in a shallow sea east of the Caledonian Mountains during the same period.

Lake Siljan, in the central south, marks the site of Europe’s largest meteoric impact: the 3km-wide fireball hurtled into Sweden 360 million years ago, obliterating all life and creating a 75km ring-shaped crater.

WILDLIFE

Thanks to Sweden’s geographical diversity, it has a great variety of European animals, birds and plants.

Animals

LARGE PREDATORS

Sweden’s big carnivores – the bear, wolf, wolverine, lynx and golden eagle – are all endangered species. Illegal hunting carries a maximum prison sentence of four years. Most conflict between human and beast occurs in the Sami reindeer areas: compensation is paid to the Sami whenever predator populations in their lands increase.

Wolves and wolverines are top of Sweden’s most endangered list. However, wolf numbers are slowly increasing, and there are now between 70 and 80 of these beautiful creatures in Sweden, mainly in Värmland and Dalarna.

The more solitary wolverine, a larger cousin of the weasel, inhabits high forests and alpine areas along the Norwegian border. Most are in Norrbotten and Västerbotten.

Brown bears were persecuted for centuries, but recent conservation measures have seen numbers increase to around 2000. Bears mostly live in forests in the northern half of the country, but are spreading southwards.

Another fascinating forest dweller is the solitary lynx – the Swedes’ favourite endangered species – which belongs to the panther family and is Europe’s only large cat. Sweden’s 1000 lynx are notoriously difficult to spot because of their nocturnal habits.

If you have no luck with wildlife in the wild, Grönklitt Bear Park (see p268) has an endangered-animal breeding programme with large and natural-looking enclosures.

OTHER MAMMALS

More than any other animal, the elk (or moose) is the symbol of Sweden. The elk family is the world’s largest deer, a gentle knobby-kneed creature that grows up to 2m tall. Elk are a serious traffic hazard, particularly at night: they can dart out in front of your car at up to 50km/h. For

The fearsome-looking brown bear’s favourite food is…blueberries!

Swedish elk are slightly smaller than their closely-related American relatives.
elk-spotting and sausages, visit Sweden’s biggest elk park Grönås Älgpark (p129).

Around 260,000 domesticated reindeer roam the northern areas, under the watchful eyes of Sami herders.

Hikers encountering lemmings in the mountains may be surprised when these frantic little creatures become enraged and launch incredibly bold attacks. The brown mouse-like lemmings (white in winter) are famous for their extraordinary reproductive capacity. Every 10 years or so, the population explodes, resulting in denuded landscapes and thousands of dead lemmings in rivers, lakes, and on roads.

Musk ox were reintroduced into Norway in the late 1940s and herds have wandered into Sweden, notably in Härjedalen county. Angry adults have a habit of charging anything that annoys them.

Forests, lakes and rivers support beavers, otters, mink, badgers and pine martens. Weasels and stoats are endemic in all counties; northern varieties turn white in the winter and are trapped for their fur (ermine).

Grey and common seals swim in Swedish waters, although overfishing has caused a serious decline in numbers. In 1988 and 2002, thousands of seals were wiped out by the Phocine distemper virus (PDV) after pollution weakened their immune systems. Common dolphins may also be observed from time to time.

**BIRDS**

Sweden attracts hundreds of nesting species and permanent residents. Some of the best bird-watching sites are the Falsterbo peninsula (p175), Getterö Nature Reserve (p232); Öland, including the nature reserve at its southernmost tip (p141); Täkern (p152); Hornborgasjön, between Skara and Falköping in Västergötland; and the national parks Färnebofjärd, Muddus and Abisko.

The golden eagle is one of Sweden’s most endangered species. It’s found in the mountains, and is easily identified by its immense wing span. Another dramatic bird of prey is the white-tailed sea eagle.

Coastal species include common, little and Arctic terns, various gulls, oystercatchers, cormorants, guillemots and razorbills. Territorial arctic skuas can be seen in a few places, notably the Stockholm archipelago and the coast north of Göteborg.

Look out for lovely little goldcrests in coniferous forests. A few spectacular waxwings breed in Lapland, but in winter they arrive from Russia in large numbers and are found throughout Sweden. Grouse or capercaillie strut the forest floor, while ptarmigan and snow buntings are seen above the tree line along the Norwegian border.

Swedish has a wide range of wading and water birds, including the unusual and beautiful red-necked phalaropes, which only breed in the northern mountains. Other waders you’re likely to encounter are majestic grey herons (south Sweden), noisy bitterns (south-central Sweden), plowers (including dotterel, in the mountains) and turnstones.

See p55 for information about local ornithological groups.

**FISH & CRUSTACEANS**

Many marine species have been badly affected by ecological problems in the Baltic (see p47).

Sprats and berrings are economically important food sources. Among other marine species, haddock, sea trout, whiting, flounder and plaice are reasonably abundant, particularly in the salty waters of the Kattegatt and Skagerrak, but the cod is heading for extinction due to overfishing.

Indigenous crayfish were once netted or trapped in Sweden’s lakes, but overfishing and disease has driven them to extinction.

**Plants**

Sweden flora is typical of that in temperate climates, and includes around 250 species of flowering plants.

In the mountains along the border with Norway, alpine and arctic flowers predominate, including mountain avens, with large white eight-petalled flowers; longstalked mountain sorrel, an unusual source of vitamin C; glacier crowfoot; alpine aster; and various saxifrages (live-long, mossy, purple, pyramidal and starry).

The limy soils of Öland and Gotland produce rare flowering plants including orchids, all of them protected.

Southern Sweden originally had well-mixed woodland, but much of this has been replaced by farmland or conifer plantations. Northern forests are dominated by Scots pine, Norway spruce and various firs.

Grey and common seals swim in Swedish waters, although overfishing has caused a serious decline in numbers. In 1988 and 2002, thousands of seals were wiped out by the Phocine distemper virus (PDV) after pollution weakened their immune systems. Common dolphins may also be observed from time to time.

**NATIONAL PARKS**

Sweden was the first country in Europe to set up a national park (1909). There are now 28 (see below), along with around 2600 smaller nature reserves; together they cover about 9% of Sweden. They’re set up by Naturvårdsverket (see p47), which also produces pamphlets about the parks in Swedish and English, and an excellent book Nationalparkerna i Sverige (National Parks in Sweden).

Four of Sweden’s large rivers (Kalixälven, Piteälven, Vindelälven and Torneälven) have been declared National Heritage Rivers in order to protect them from hydroelectric development.

The right of public access to the countryside (allemansrättet) includes national parks and nature reserves; see p54 for more details.

**Sweden’s National Parks**

**NORTHERN**

**Abisko** Numerous hiking routes and good accessibility. Northern gateway to the famed Kungsleden hiking track (p49).

**Haparanda Skärgård** A group of several islands in the far north of the Gulf of Bothnia, with sandy beaches, striking dunes and migrant bird life. Reached by boat from Haparanda.

**Muddus** Ancient forests and muskeg bogs, plus several deep and impressive gorges, and superb bird-watching opportunities.

**Padjelanta** High moorland surrounds the lakes Vastenjaure and Virihaure, favoured by a range of Swedish wildlife. The renowned hiking trail, Padjelantaleden, is here (p52).

**Pieljekaisen** Just south of the Arctic Circle, with moorlands, birch forests, flowering meadows and lakes rich in arctic char.

**Sarek** Sweden’s best-loved national park, with wild mountain ranges, glaciers, deep valleys, impressive rivers and vast tracts of birch and willow forest. There’s no road access, but experienced hikers can reach the park from the Kungsleden route.

**Stora Sjöfallet** This park, dominated by lake Akkajaure, has been spoiled by hydroelectric development.

**Vadvetjåkka** Sweden’s northernmost national park. Protects a large river delta containing bogs, lakes, limestone caves and numerous bird species. Access on foot from Abisko.
Björnlandet  
In the far south of Lappland and well off the beaten track. Natural forest, cliffs and boulder fields.

Fårnebofjärden  
Noted for its abundant bird life, forests, rare lichens and mosses. Good road access to the eastern side.

Fulufjället  
Sweden’s newest national park (2002) contains Njupeskär, the country’s highest waterfall at 93m.

Garphyttan  
A tiny 111-hectare park easily reached from Örebro. Previously cultivated areas have fantastic springtime flower displays.

Hamra  
Measuring only 800m by 400m, this is a protected area of virgin coniferous forest. Access from a minor road off national road No 45.

Skuleskogen  
A hilly coastal area with untouched forest, deep valleys, Bronze Age graves, good hiking trails and great sea views. Access from the nearby E4 motorway.

Sänjället  
Natural mountain moorland with extensive views. Road and foot access possible from several sides.

Tresticklan  
Natural area of coniferous forest, with small rift valleys and fine bird life. Access by road from Dals-Ed, in Dalstland.

Tyresta  
Stockholm’s own national park: an extensive forest area with huge 300-year-old pines and interesting rock formations. Easy access by car or bus.

Töfsingdalen  
Exceptionally wild and remote, with virtually impenetrable boulder fields and pine forest. Must be approached on foot.

Angsö  
A tiny island in the northern Stockholm archipelago noted for wonderful meadows, deciduous forest, bird life and spring flowers. Boat access from Furusund.

SOUTHERN

Blä Jungfrun  
A wonderful island with smooth granite slabs, caves, a labyrinth and great views. Boat access from Oskarshamn.

Dalby Söderskog  
A forested haven of peace for people and wildlife. Bus access from Lund.

Djurö  
Bird life and deer on an archipelago of 30 islands in Lake Vänern. Access by private boat only.

Gotska Sandön  
A beautiful sandy island featuring dunes, dying pine forest and varied flora and fauna, including unusual beetles. Boats from Nynäshamn and Fårösund.

Norra Kvill  
A tiny 114-hectare park noted for its ancient coniferous forest, excellent flora and gigantic boulders.

Söderåsen  
A new park easily reached by road. Contains deep fissure valleys, lush forests and flowing watercourses. Pleasant hiking trails and cycling paths.

Svenska Naturskyddsföreningen (Swedish Society of Ecotourism; 0647-66 00 25; www .ekoturism.org in Swedish; Box 87, SE-83005 Järfälla) Promotes environmentally friendly tourism.

Svenska Naturvårdsverket  (Swedish Environmental Protection Agency; 08-698 10 00; www.environ .se; Blekholmsterrassen 36, SE-10648 Stockholm) Government-run central environmental authority, with an extensive and informative website.

‘Some 47% of Sweden’s electricity comes from hydroelectric sources’

Environmental organisations

Environmental Issues

Ecological consciousness among Swedes is high, reflected in concern for native animals, clean water and renewable resources. Sweden has a good record when it comes to environmental policies. Industrial and agricultural waste is highly regulated, sewage disposal advanced, greenhouse gas emissions low, and recycling extremely popular.

The North and particularly the Baltic Seas are suffering severe pollution, eutrophication and vast algae blooms, caused partly by nitrogen runoff from Swedish farms. As a result, herring, sprats and Baltic salmon contain high levels of cancer-causing dioxins; they’re still being sold in Sweden at the time of writing (with a health warning attached), but will probably be banned by the end of 2006.

Overfishing of these waters is also a huge cause for concern, with cod and Norwegian lobster on the verge of extinction. Fishing quotas may help numbers return.

Some 47% of Sweden’s electricity generation comes from hydroelectric sources, mainly dams on large northern rivers. However, there are associated problems, including the displacement of Sami people; landscape scarring; dried-up rivers and waterfalls ‘downstream’ of the dams; high-voltage power lines sweeping across remote regions; and the depletion of fish stocks, particularly Baltic salmon which cannot return upriver to their spawning grounds. In 1993 the National Heritage Rivers were created to redress this problem.

Nuclear power generation has always been a contentious issue in Sweden. At a referendum held in March 1980, the electorate narrowly voted for the phasing-out of the nuclear programme by 2010. One nuclear reactor has shut, but the remaining 10 are unlikely to close by the deadline, because of high costs and no viable alternatives (nuclear power currently provides about 51% of Sweden’s electricity generation).
Outdoor Activities

Sweden has thousands of square kilometres of forest with hiking and cycling tracks, vast numbers of lakes connected by mighty rivers, and a range of alpine mountains – it’s ideal for outdoor activities. Most of the information available on the Internet is in Swedish. If you can’t read the language, contact the national organisations (listed under individual activities in this section) for the sport you’re interested in. Regional and local tourist offices are helpful and staff at outdoor stores can also point you in the right direction.

For organised activity holidays, see p332, check individual destinations in this book, or pick up the booklet Active Holidays in Sweden from tourist offices.

**HIKING**

Hiking is well loved in Sweden and there are thousands of kilometres of marked trails. European Long Distance Footpaths Numbers One and Six run from Varberg to Grövelsjön (1200km) and from Malmö to Norrtälje (1400km), respectively.

Nordkalottleden runs for 450km from Sulitjelma to Kautokeino (both in Norway), but passes through Sweden for most of its route. Finnskogleden is a 240km-long route along the border between Norway and the Värmland region in Sweden. The Arctic Trail (800km) is a joint development of Sweden, Norway and Finland and is entirely above the Arctic Circle; it begins near Kautokeino in Norway and ends in Abisko, Sweden. The most popular route is Kungsleden, and its most beautiful – and busiest – sections are in Lappland.

Many counties have networks of easy walking trails perfect for day hikes, such as sections of the 950km Skåneleden (www.skaneleden.org).

Multiday routes are found in the mountains and forests near the Norwegian border. The best hiking time is during the short snow-free season, between late June and mid-September; conditions are better early August when the mosquitoes have gone. Overnight huts and lodges are maintained by Svenska Turistföreningen (STF).

Mountain trails in Sweden are marked with cairns, possibly with some red paint. Marked trails have bridges across all but the smallest streams, and wet or fragile areas are crossed on duckboards. Avoid following winter routes (marked by regular poles with red crosses) since they often cross lakes or marshes!

**Safety Guidelines**

Before embarking on a walking trip, consider the following points to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience:

- Be sure you are healthy and feel comfortable walking for a sustained period.
- Obtain reliable information about physical and environmental conditions along your intended route, and stock up on good maps.
- Be aware of laws, regulations and etiquette regarding wildlife and the environment, including Sweden’s allemansrätten (right of public access to the countryside; see p54).
- Walk only in regions and on trails within your realm of experience.
- Be aware that weather conditions can change quickly in the Northern Sweden: even in summer, prepare for both cold and warm conditions.

- Ask before you set out about the environmental characteristics that can affect your walk and how local, experienced walkers deal with these considerations.

**Equipment**

Hikers should be well equipped and prepared for snow in the mountains, even in summer. Prolonged bad weather in the northwest isn’t uncommon – Sarek and Sylarna are the most notorious areas. In summer you’ll need good boots, waterproof jacket and trousers, several layers of warm clothing (including spare dry clothes), warm hat, sun hat, mosquito repellent (a mosquito head net is also highly advisable), water bottle, maps, compass, and sleeping bag. Basic supplies are often available at huts and most lodges serve meals. If you’re going off the main routes you should obviously take full camping equipment – for more information about camping away from the main routes see p54.

Equipment can usually be hired from the STF, but don’t rely on this. If you need to replace gear, try the small STF lodge shops or the nationwide chain Naturkompaniet (www.naturkompaniet.se). Its a Swedish-only website, but click ‘butiker’ and you’ll find a list of stores.

**Information**

Information in English is scarce – the best source is Svenska Turistföreningen (STF; Swedish Touring Association; ☏ 08-463 21 00; www.svenskaturistforeningen.se; Box 25, SE-10120 Stockholm), one of Sweden’s largest tour operators. Most of its publications are Swedish-only, however STF staff are generally happy to answer questions and provide information in English over the phone or via email.

For nonmountain walking, address enquiries to Svenska Gång- och Vandrarförfundet (SGVF; Swedish Walking Association; ☏ 031-726 61 10; svenskgang@vsif.o.se; Kvibergs Idrottscener, SE-41582 Göteborg).

**MAPS**

STF lodges sell up-to-date maps, but it’s a good idea to buy them in advance. Try local and regional tourist offices, or buy online or in person at Kartbutiken (☎ 08-20 23 03; www.kartbutiken.se; Kungsgatan 74, SE-11122 Stockholm). Maps cost around Skr100 each.

**Kungsleden**

Kungsleden, meaning ‘The King’s Trail’, is Sweden’s most important waymarked hiking and skiing route. Most hikers visit the part that runs for 450km from Abisko (in the north of Lappland) to Hemavan in the south. The route is normally split into five mostly easy or moderate sections. The fifth section has a gap of 188km in STF’s hut network, between Kivikjokk and Ammarnäs. The most popular section is the northern one, from Abisko to Nikkaluokta; Sweden’s highest mountain Kebnekaise (2111m) is a glorious extra for this section.

**ABISKO TO NIKKALUOKTA**

72km to Singi, 86km to Kebnekaise Fjällstation, 105km to Nikkaluokta; 7-8 days; Fjällkartan map B8E.

This section of Kungsleden passes through spectacular alpine scenery and is usually followed from north to south. It includes a 33km-long trail from Singi to Nikkaluokta which isn’t part of Kungsleden, but which allows an easy exit from the area. An alternative (and much more challenging) start is from Riksgränsen on the Norway–Sweden border; the
30km route from there to STF’s Unna Allakas is very rocky in places and you’ll need to camp en route.

The STF has mountain lodges at Abisko and Kebnekaise, and there are also five STF huts. Many people stop at STF’s Kebnekaise Fjällstation for a couple of nights, and some attempt the ascent of Kebnekaise (Sweden’s highest mountain) from there – see the following section.

Public transport is available at Abisko, with rail connections to Narvik (Norway), or east to Kiruna and beyond. There are two buses that run daily between Abisko and Kiruna (Skr97, 1 1/2 hours), and also a twice-daily bus service that runs between Nikkaluokta and Kiruna (Skr71, 1 1/4 hours).

### Kebnekaise (Optional)

The hike to the top of Sweden’s highest mountain is one of the best in the country and the views of the surrounding peaks and glaciers are incredible on a clear day. In July and August, the ascent of Kebnekaise is a popular option. The hike to the top involves 1900m of ascent and descent. Allow 12 hours, and an extra 1 1/2 hours if you want to include the north top.

### Nikkaluokta to Saltoluokta

71km from Nikkaluokta to Vakkotavare, 38km from Singi; 5 days; Fjällkartan map BD8

The scenery south of Singi is more rounded and less dramatic than the landscape around Kebnekaise. STF has mountain lodges at Kebnekaise and Saltoluokta, and regular huts along the trail. You may have to row yourself across lake Teusajaure (there’s an STF boat service in peak season). Everyone takes the bus along the road from Vakkotavare to Kebnats (Sk41), where there’s an STF ferry (Sk70 for members, Sk100 non-members) to Saltoluokta Fjällstation. There’s a twice-daily bus service from Ritsem to Gällivare via Vakkotavare and Kebnats.

### Saltoluokta to Kvikkjokk

73km; 4 days; Fjällkartan map BD10

There are excellent side trips from this section, from Aktse into Sarek National Park, the wildest part of Sweden. Saltoluokta to Kvikkjokk can be completed in four days, but allow six days to include trips into Sarek.

STF has a lodge at Saltoluokta, huts at Sitojaure, Aktse and Pärte, and another lodge in Kvikkjokk.

Sami families run the boat services across the lakes at Sitojaure (010-257 52 31 or 070-274 72 63; Sk100 per trip) and Aktse (0971-220 22). Kvikkjokk has a twice-daily bus service in summer to Jokkmokk (Sk121) and Murjek train stations (Sk171).

### Kvikkjokk to Ammarnäs

188km; 2 weeks; Fjällkartan maps BD14 (north) & BD16 (south)

There are only a few locally-run huts on this section, so you’ll need a tent. The more interesting northern part, Kvikkjokk to Jäkkvik (99km), can be completed in five or six days.

Boat services for lake crossings are available at Kvikkjokk, Vuonatjviken (Lake Riebes) and Sausal (Hornavan). Buses run six days per week (not
Saturday) from Skellefteå to Bode (Norway) via Jäkkvik, and one to four times daily from Sorsele to Ammarnäs.

AMMARNÄS TO HEMAVAN
78km; 4-5 days; Fjällkartan map AC2
Most of the southernmost section of Kungsleden runs through Vindelfjällens Nature Reserve. The trail is mostly easy, but with a long initial climb.

The STF has hostels at Ammarnäs and Hemavan and five huts en route which all sell provisions.

The Umeå to Hemavan bus runs three or four times daily (only once on Sunday; Skr241, seven hours), and continues to Mo i Rana (Norway, eight hours, once daily).

Padjelantaleden
139km; 8-14 days; Fjällkartan maps BD10 & BD7
The entire Padjelantaleden trail can be hiked in 10 to 14 days. It’s generally an easy route, with long sections of duckboards, and all rivers are bridged. The southern section, from Kvikkjokk to Staloluokta (four or five days), is the most popular. At the northern end (by lake Akka), you can start at either STF hut, Vaisaluokta or Akka (the latter is easier). Most of the trail lies in Padjelanta National Park, and all huts in the park are owned by Naturvårdsverket, the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency.

STF runs the Sämmarlappa, Tarrekaise and Njunjes huts at the southern end of the trail, and the hostel at Kvikkjokk. You can buy provisions at Staloluokta, Sämmarlappa, Tarrekaise and Kvikkjokk.

To reach the northern end of the trail, take the bus from Gällivare to Ritsem (twice daily) and connect there with the STF ferry to Vaisaluokta and Ånonjálmme (1.5km north of the Akka STF hut), which runs from midsummer to early August (Skr750 per flight).

Jämtland
The mountainous part of western Jämtland is one of Sweden’s most popular hiking areas. There’s a good network of easy to moderate hiking trails served by STF lodges and huts. The most popular route is the Jämtland Triangle (47km), which takes a minimum of three days; allow an extra day for an ascent of the magnificent 1743m-high mountain Sylarna, easily climbed from STF’s Sylarna lodge – the route is clearly marked with cairns. The hike runs between STF’s Storulvån, Sylarna and Blåhammaren lodges. Sylarna and Blåhammaren don’t have road access and Sylarna only has self-catering; meals at Blåhammaren are excellent. The section from Sylarna to Blåhammaren is very marshy and can be quite difficult in wet conditions. Fjällkartan map Z6 covers the area.

See p296 for public transport details.

MOUNTAINEERING & ROCK CLIMBING
Mountaineers head for Sylarna, Helagsfjället, Sarek National Park and the Kebnekaise region.

The complete traverse of Sarek involves rock climbing up to grade 3. The ridge traverse of Sarektjåhkkå (2089m) in Sarek, the second-highest mountain in Sweden, is about grade 4. There are lots of other glacier and rock routes in Sarek. The Kebnekaise area has many fine climbing routes (grades 2 to 6), including the north wall of Kaskasapakte (2043m), and the steep ridges of Knivkammen (1878m) and Vaktsposten (1852m). Ice climbing in the northern regions is excellent, if you can put up with all the darkness and the cold!

For qualified guides, contact Svenska Bergsguideorganisation (Swedish Mountain Guide Association; 098-01 26 56; www3.utsidan.se/sbo; Rymdvägen 11, SE-98145 Kiruna). The website is in Swedish only but under ‘medlemmar’ there’s a list of guides and their contact details.

Rock climbers can practise on the cliffs around Stockholm and Göteborg – there are about 1000 routes around Göteborg, and some 200 cliffs around the capital. Other popular spots are Bohuslän, the Kulla Peninsula (north of Helsingborg), and a newly developed bouldering area, Kjusekull, a few kilometres northeast of Kristianstad. You’ll find good climbing walls in Stockholm, Göteborg, Uppsala, Skellefteå and Linköping.

Cycling
Sweden is ideal for cycling, with Skåne and Gotland particularly recommended. It’s an excellent way to look for prehistoric sites, rune stones and quiet spots for free camping. The cycling season is from May to September in the south, and July and August in the north.

You can cycle on all roads except motorways (green sign, with two lanes and a bridge on it) and roads for motor vehicles only (green sign with a car symbol). Highways often have a hard shoulder, which keeps cyclists well clear of motor vehicles. Secondary roads are mostly quiet and reasonably safe by European standards.

You can take a bicycle on some länstrafik trains and most regional buses (free, or up to Skr50). On the Skåne region’s Pågatågen trains, a bike costs the price of a child’s ticket. On the Öresund trains (which serve routes between Göteborg–Copenhagen and Kalmar–Alvesta–Copenhagen) you can book a space for your bike on 0771-75 75 75. Long-distance buses usually don’t accept bicycles, and nor does the SJ railway. Bikes are transported free on some ferries, including Vägverket routes.

You can hire bicycles from some campsites, hostels, bike workshops and sports shops; the average price is about Skr100 for a day, or around Skr500 per week (although we have seen costs as high as Skr200 and Skr800 for the same periods of time).

Some country areas, towns and cities have special cycle routes – contact local tourist offices for information and maps. Kustlinjen (591km) runs from Öregrund (Uppland) southwards along the Baltic coast to Västervik, and Skånespåret (800km) is a fine network of cycle routes. The well-signposted 2600km-long Sverigedal extends from Helsingborg in the south to Karesuando in the north, and links points of interest with suitable roads (mostly with an asphalt surface) and bicycle paths.

Brochures and Swedish-text guidebooks with decent maps are available from Svenska Cykelvägsförbundet (Swedish Cycling Association; 08-751 6204; www.svenska-cykelvagförbundet.se; Lagerlöfsgatan 8, SE-11260 Stockholm).

An unusual and very popular cycling activity is dressin – also advertised as ‘rail pedal trolley’, ‘cycle trolley’ or ‘inspection-trolley’ rides – where you pedal a wheeled contraption along a disused railway line. Trips cost around
THE RIGHT OF PUBLIC ACCESS

The right of public access to the countryside (allemansrätten) is not a legal right, more a common-law privilege. It includes national parks and nature reserves, although special rules may apply. Full details in English can be found on the website www.allemansratten.se.

You're allowed to walk, ski, boat 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 pick berries and mushrooms, provided they're not protected species. Generally you should move on after one or two nights' camping.

Don't leave rubbish or take live wood, bark, leaves or nuts. Fires fuelled with fallen wood are allowed where safe, but not on bare rocks (which can crack from the heat). Use a bucket of water to douse a campfire even if you think that it's out. Cars and motorcycles may not be driven across open land or on private roads; look out for the sign ej motorfordon (no motor vehicles). Dogs must be kept on leads from 1 March to 20 August. Close all gates and don’t disturb farm animals or reindeer. Off-limit areas where birds are nesting are marked with a yellow or red-and-yellow sign containing the words fögelskydd – tillträde förbjudet.

If you have a car or bicycle, look for free camping sites around unsealed forest tracks leading from secondary country roads. Make sure your spot is at least 50m from the track and not visible from any house, building or sealed road. Bring drinking water and food, and don’t pollute any water sources with soap or food waste.

Above all, remember the mantra: ‘Do not disturb, do not destroy’!

Skr450 per day or about Skr1800 a week. The best area in the country to try out this novel experience is Värmland, which has miles of old track: phone 054 148041 or check out Activities under www.varmland.org for a list of operators.

For further information on cycling, contact your local cycle-touring club.

SKIING

Lift passes and equipment hire are reasonably priced, resorts are well run and facilities are of a high standard. After the spring solstice (21 March), daylight lasts longer than in the Swiss Alps, so you’ll get more skiing time out of your pass.

Cross-country (nordic) skiing opportunities vary, but the northwest usually has plenty of snow from December to April (but not much daylight in December and January). Kungsleden and other long-distance tracks provide great skiing. Practically all town areas (except those in the far south) have marked and often illuminated skiing tracks.

The large ski resorts cater mainly for downhill (alpine and telemark) skiing and snowboarding, but there’s also scope for cross-country. For resort reviews in English, visit www.goski.com and www.thealps.com.

The southernmost large resort in Sweden, Sälen (Dalarna), appeals particularly to families, as does Idre, a little further north. Åre, in Jämtland, is great for long, downhill runs (over 1000m descent) and cross-country routes, and is the main party place for young skiers. Nearby ski areas at Duved and Storlien are also good, and less crowded. In Lapland, Hemavan gets fairly busy with spring skiers. Riksgränsen (at the border with Norway on the E10 Kiruna–Narvik road) is the world’s northernmost ski resort, and offers interesting options – including heli-skiing and alpine ski touring – from mid-February until late June. Downhill runs at Riksgränsen aren’t suitable for beginners.

Take the usual precautions: don’t leave marked cross-country or downhill routes without emergency food, a good map, local advice, and proper equipment including a bivouac bag. Temperatures of –30°C or lower (including wind-chill factors) are possible, so check the daily forecasts. Police and tourist offices have information on local warnings. In mountain ski resorts, where there’s a risk of avalanche (lavin), susceptible areas are marked by yellow, multilingual signs and buried-skier symbols. Make sure your travel insurance covers skiing.

BOATING & SAILING

Boating and sailing are hugely popular in Sweden. The 7000km-long coastline, with its 60,000 islands, is a sailors’ paradise, but look out for the few restricted military areas off the east coast.

Inland, lakes and canals offer pleasant sailing in spring and summer (the canals are generally open for limited seasons). The main canals are the Götan Canal (see p146), the Kinda Canal and the Dalsland Canal. Various companies offer short canal cruises; contact local tourist offices for details. Steamboats and cruisers ply the shores of lakes Vättern and Vänern: see individual town sections for details.

Those with private boats will have to pay lock fees and guest harbour fees (around Skr150 per night, although some small places are free). A useful guide is the free, annual Gästhamnguiden in Swedish, which is published by Svenska Kryssarklubben (Swedish Cruising Club; 08-448 28 80; info@sxk.se; Augustendalsvägen 54, Box 1189, SE-13127 Nacka Strand). It contains comprehensive details of 500 guest harbours throughout the country. It’s also available from larger tourist offices and most of the harbours listed.

Svenska Sjöfartsverket (Swedish Maritime Administration; 011-19 10 00; www.sjofartsverket.se; Huvudkontoret, SE-60178 Norrköping) can send you information on harbour handbooks and sea charts. For charts you can also try Kartbutiken (08-20 23 03; www.kartbutiken.se; Kungsgatan 74, SE-1122 Stockholm).

SKATING

Whichever the ice is thick enough, Stockholm’s lake and canal system is exploited by skating enthusiasts seeking the longest possible ‘run’. When the Baltic Sea freezes (once or twice every 10 years), fantastic tours of Stockholm’s archipelago are possible. The skating season usually lasts from December to March. Stockholms Skridskoseglarklubb (Stockholm’s Ice Skate Sailing Club; www.sssk.se) has good information on its website, but its services are for members only.

DOGSLEDDING & SNOWMOBILE SAFARIS

Organised tours with Siberian huskies pulling your sledge are fairly popular in Lapland, as are excursions on snowmobiles. For further details see the Northern Sweden chapter.

Further south, you can dogsled through the wintry woods of the Dalarna region with Häst & Vagn (0250-55 30 14; hast.vagn@itadventure.se; Torsmo 1646, SE-79491 Orsa); prices are around Skr600/4800/9600 for a half-day/three-day/six-day adventure.

BIRD-WATCHING

There are many keen ornithologists in Sweden, and there are bird-watchers’ towers and nature reserves everywhere; see p44 for details of the best bird-watching sites. For further information, contact Sveriges Ornitolologiska Förening (Swedish Ornithological Society; 08-612 25 30; www.sofnet.org in Swedish; Ekshagsvägen 3, SE-10405 Stockholm).

Bring a good pair of sunglasses, even if you’re visiting in winter, to protect your eyes from glare off snowy surfaces.
HORSE-RIDING
Sweden’s multitude of tracks, trails, forests, shorelines and mountains make for some fantastically varied riding. Everything from short hacks to full-on treks are on offer, for around Skr300/500/800 per two hours/half day/full day, on Swedish or Icelandic horses.
For more information see the website www.hastlandet.se, which has comprehensive contact details for approved stables.

FISHING
There are national and local restrictions on fishing in many of Sweden’s inland waters, especially for salmon, trout and eel. Before dropping a line, check with local tourist offices or councils. You generally need a permit, but free fishing is allowed on parts of Vänern, Vättern, Mälaren, Hjälmaren and Storsjön Lakes and most of the coastline.
Local permits for the waters of a kommun (municipality) can be bought from tourist offices, sports or camping shops, and some boat or canoe-hire outfits, and typically cost around Skr125 per day. For fishing maps and advice, ask the local tourist office.
Summer is the best fishing time with bait or flies for most species, but trout and pike fishing in southern Sweden is better in spring or autumn and salmon fishing is best in late summer. Ice fishing is popular in winter.
An excellent web resource for fishing in Sweden is www.cinclusc.com /spfguide in Swedish, or contact Sportfiskeförbundet (Angling Federation; 08-704 44 80; info@sportfiskarna.se; Svartviksslingan 28, SE-16739 Bromma).

GOLF
Golf is incredibly fashionable in Sweden. There are over 400 golf courses, open to everyone, and many hotel chains offer golf packages. Courses in the south are often surrounded by rolling farmlands, but things are decidedly wilder in the north – Björkliden, near Abisko, is a golf course 240km above the Arctic Circle, and at the Green Line golf course at Haparanda, playing a round means crossing the Swedish–Finnish border four times. Green fees are around Skr300; for more information, contact Svenska Golfbundet (Swedish Golf Federation; 08-622 15 00; http://sgf.golf.se; Box 84, Kevingsstrand 20, SE-18211 Danderyd).

CANOEING & KAYAKING
Sweden is a real paradise for canoeists and kayakers (canoes are more common than kayaks). The national canoeing body is Svenska Kanotförbundet (Swedish Canoe Federation; 0155-20 90 80; www.kanot.com; Rosvalla, SE-61162 Nyköping). It provides general advice and produces Kanotväg, a free, annual brochure listing 75 approved canoe centres that hire out canoes (for around Skr250/1300 per day/week).
According to the right of common access, canoeists may paddle or moor virtually anywhere provided they respect the privacy of others and avoid sensitive nesting areas. More good information is available on the Internet at www.kanotguiiden.com.

RAFTING
White-water rafting in rubber boats isn’t a big activity, since most rivers have low gradients. Localities that do offer the activity include Arvidsjaur on Piteälven (p305); Haparanda on Tornälven (p291); Järpen in Jämtland (one of the best places for rafting in Sweden, see www.jmt.se for more information); and Vindeln, on Vindelälven (p284). You can also go slow-water rafting, especially on Klarälven in Värmland (see p259).
Food & Drink

It’s fair to say that Swedes are obsessed with food, though they don’t have the kind of reputation for it that, say, the French do. Dining, even down to the afternoon coffee break, is ritualised and taken seriously. Food is often considered a means of exploration of other cultures, as well as a celebration of the traditions that hold Swedish society together.

STAPLES & SPECIALITIES

Most folk start the day with a strong cup of coffee. This is usually accompanied by a frukost (breakfast) of cereal such as cornflakes or muesli with filmjölk (cultured milk) or fruit-flavoured yoghurt. Hotels and hostels offer breakfast buffets of several types of bread, pastries, crispbread and/or rolls, with pålägg (toppings) including butter, sliced cheese, boiled eggs, sliced meat and spicy sausage or salami, liver pâté, Kalles caviar (a ubiquitous caviar spread), pickled herring, sliced cucumber, jam and marmalade.

A hearty lunch has long been a mainstay of the workforce, so it has become institutionalised to a degree – which means it’s an affordable and accessible way to get a good solid sampling of typical Swedish cooking. The dagens rätt (daily lunch special) includes a main course, salad, beverage, bread and butter, and coffee. Smaller cafés offer lighter versions centred on quiches or salads.

For a lighter lunch yet, head to a konditori – an old-fashioned bakery-café where you can get a pastry or a smörgås (sandwich), usually very artfully made with greens, shrimp or salmon, boiled eggs, roe and mustard-dill sauce piled onto a slice of bread.

Seafood and meat includingGAME, form the core of the typical Swedish menu – along with the ever-present potato. The word husmanskost is used to describe a sort of everyman cuisine: basic, unpretentious, traditional meals like köttbullar och potatis (meatballs and potatoes, usually served with lingonberry jam, or lingonsylt), lövbfiff och strips (thinly sliced fried meat and chips/fries) and pytt i panna (equivalent to hash: a mix of diced sausage, beef or pork fried with onion and potato and served with sliced beetroot and an egg). Gravadlax or gravlax (cured salmon), caviar, shrimp, and smoked, fried or pickled herring are all popular.

TRAVEL YOUR TASTEBUDS

A lot of the best in Swedish food sounds rather discouraging – pickled herring in mustard sauce, reindeer-cheese cream in a tube, liver paste for breakfast, black-liquorice ice cream. But those brave enough to follow the locals’ lead will be treated to some surprisingly good flavour combinations. Lingonberries and cloudberries are two distinctive fruits that add flavour to a number of Swedish dishes. Horseradish and dill are key flavours, too. Pairings of food and beverage are important: there’s no crayfish without singing and snaps; there’s no sill (pickled herring) without light ale and strong cheese; there’s no coffee without cake – or, heaven forbid, vice versa. The best way to explore the many flavours of Swedish cuisine, from the sublime to the ridiculous, is to make a few trips to a smörgåsbord. This is especially rewarding around the Christmas holidays, but it’s an adventure any time of year. Start with the cold-fish plates and work your way to dessert! You’re meant to visit the table many times, so take care not to overload.

STOCKHOLM’S TOP FIVE

Here are five places an ambitious diner shouldn’t miss while visiting Stockholm, for both atmosphere and food that’s the best at what it’s trying to be:

- Operakällaren (p94) is famous for its smörgåsbord.
- Eyubi (p94) showcases the sort of bold new cuisine coming from Stockholm’s immigrant communities.
- Gondolen (p96) is old-school fancy with an amazing view.
- Östermalms Saluhall (p97) is a market hall with a huge variety of food stands and restaurants.
- Nystek Strömberg (p95) is the best place in town for fried herring.

DRINKS

Coffee is Sweden’s unofficial national drink, but tea is also generally available. Saff is cordial commonly made from lingonberries and blueberries as well as orange, apple and grape. Tap water is drinkable everywhere, but sparkling mineral water is common and comes in a wide variety.

Beers are ranked by alcohol content; the stronger the beer, the higher its price and, generally speaking, the more flavour it has. Light beers (lättöl, less than 2.25%) and ‘folk’ beers (folköl, 2.25% to 3.5%) account for about two-thirds of all beer sold in Sweden; these can be bought in supermarkets. Medium-strength beer (mellanöl, 3.5% to 4.5%) and strong beer (starköl, over 4.5%) can be bought only at outlets of the state-owned alcohol store, Systembolaget, or in bars and restaurants.

Swedes generally drink strong beer on special occasions – partly because the everyday beer produced by mass breweries like Falcon, Åbro, Pripps and Spendrups is entirely unremarkable. There are a few good microbrews available in taverns (look for Jämtlands brewery’s very good Fallen Angel beers). The Nils Oscar range is good too, and the major producers also tend to bring out decent speciality beers on a limited scale. The large breweries also produce a wide range of drinks from cider to light and dark lagers, porter and stout. Pear and apple ciders are also common, frequently in light-alcohol or alcohol-free versions.

Wines and spirits can be bought only at Systembolaget. Sweden’s trademark spirit, brännvin, also called aquavit (vodka) and drunk as snaps, is a fiery and strongly flavoured drink that’s usually distilled from potatoes and spiced with herbs.

CELEBRATIONS

Certain foods are tied to celebrations and times of the year. The most traditional of these, naturally, is Christmas, when the julbord, a particularly elaborate version of the smörgåsbord, comes out. It contains all the usual delicacies – many types of herring, gravlax, meatballs, short ribs, blödpudding (blood pudding) etc – as well as seasonal delights like baked ham with mustard sauce, and janssons frestelse, a casseroles of sweet cream, potato, onion and anchovy. Julmust, a sweet dark-brown soft drink that foams like a beer when poured, and glögg, warm spiced wine, are also served around the Christmas holidays. The best accompaniment to a warm cup of glögg, available at kiosks everywhere in winter, is a pepparkaka (gingerbread cookie).

In summer, when many Swedes are on holiday in the countryside, people tend to dine outdoors. A typical summer lunch consists of various inlagd sill (pickled herring) with knäckebröd (crispbread), strong cheese like the crumbly Västerbottens ost, boiled potatoes, diced chives and cream, plus

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a finger or two of snaps and some light beer ‘to help the fish swim down to the stomach’. Midsummer, of course, wouldn’t be complete without sill (pickled herring) and strawberries. Towards the end of summer, Swedes celebrate (or commiserate) its passing with Kräftskivor (crayfish parties) where people wearing bibs and party hats get together to eat kräftor boiled with dill, drink snaps and sing snapsvisor (drinking songs).

In August, noses across the nation crinkle in disgust over or anticipation of surströmming, a specially prepared herring that is fermented and tinned and reeks unbearably when opened – definitely an acquired taste, with plentiful snaps being key to the acquisition.

Since pre-Reformation days, split-pea soup and pancakes are traditionally eaten on Thursdays, historically to prepare for fasting on Fridays.

WHERE TO EAT & DRINK

Restaurants are generally open from 11.30am to 2pm or 3pm for lunch, and from 5pm until 10pm for dinner. Cafés, bakeries and coffee shops are likely to be open all day, from 7am or 8am in the morning until at least 6pm.

Tipping is not common in Sweden. A service cost is figured into the bill. If you’ve had excellent service, a 10% to 15% tip is appropriate.

Quick Eats

Street snacks are the cheapest and most convenient way to fill up in Sweden, particularly in cities but also on beaches, along motorways and in many camping areas. A snack kiosk with a grill is known as a gatukök – literally, street kitchen. In the world of Swedish street food, hot dogs reign supreme – the basic model is called a grillad korv med bröd, grilled sausage with bread (hot dog in a bun), although you can also ask for it boiled (kokt korv). Brave souls can do a mind-boggling variety of things to the korv, chiefly involving rolling it up with any number of accompaniments, from shrimp salad to mashed potatoes to fried onions to coleslaw.

Kebab stands and fast-food windows are almost as common as korv carts. Packaged ice-cream treats are another ubiquitous option for quick sustenance on the go.

Self-Catering

Shopping for groceries outside your home country is always illuminating, usually fun and almost inevitably cheaper than eating out. Supermarkets across Sweden have preprepared foods for quick snacks, but making your own meals is easy enough too if you’re hostelling or staying in camping grounds with good facilities.

Supermarkets are easily found in Swedish towns and villages. The main chains are ICA, Konsum and Hemköp (the last often found inside Åhléns department stores). Rimi is another, slightly less common chain.

By law, both the item price and the comparative price per kilogram have to be labeled. Plastic carrier bags usually cost Skr1 at the cashier.

The ideal way to buy produce is through small, rural farm shops or roadside stands. A brochure and website published by Bo på Lantgården (0534-12 07; www.bopalantgard.org) list farms and markets where you can buy fresh produce and smoked fish directly from the folk who raise them.

VEGETARIANS & VEGANS

Vegetarian and vegan restaurants are common; they’re easy to find in the major cities, and even in rural areas restaurants generally have one or two vegetarian main-course options on the menu. For this reason we haven’t created a separate category for vegetarian listings in this book.

EATING WITH KIDS

Dining with children in Sweden is easy, as they are accepted and catered for even in upscale restaurants.

HABITS & CUSTOMS

Table manners in Sweden are fairly standard for a European country – generally more formal than in the US, but if you follow your host’s lead you can’t go far wrong.

Should you like to offer a toast, hold up your glass and say ‘Skål!’ then nod at each person around the table. The host or hostess should make the first toast (see the boxed text, below).

EAT YOUR WORDS

Most people in Sweden speak excellent English and often several other languages, but it’s handy, and polite, to be able to order from a Swedish menu. For key phrases and pronunciation guidelines, see p336.

Useful Phrases

Could I see the menu, please?
Kan jag få se menyn?

Is service included in the bill?
Är serveringsavgiften inräknad?

I’m a vegetarian.
Jag är vegetarian.

I don’t eat meat.
Jag äter inte kött.

breakfast frukost frø-køst
lunch lunch lunf
dinner middag mid-daa
menu meny me-nøw
children’s menu barnmeny baan me-nøw
wine list vinlista veen-list-ta
first course/entrée förätt fer-ret
main course huvudrätt/varmrätt hu-va-dret/vaam-ret
daily special dagens rätt (usually only at lunchtime) døa-gens ret
takeaway avhämtning av-hæmt-ning

Food Glossary

BASICS

bröd brød bread
choklad shoo-klaad chocolate
gräde gre-de cream
honung hu-nung honey
ketchup ke-choop tomato sauce

DOS & DON’TS

On formal occasions, do wait for the host or hostess to welcome you to the table before eating or drinking. Aside from formal ‘skål’, don’t sip from your glass until the host or hostess says, ‘Now everyone may drink when he or she likes.’ Do wear decent socks when dining in someone’s home, as you’ll generally be expected to take off your shoes in the foyer. And do bring a small gift, such as a bottle of wine or flowers.

The classy-looking www.foodfromsweden.com/recipes has a number of how-to (and why-to) guides to preparing Swedish foods, with gorgeous photography too.

The website http://scandinaviancooking.com contains articles about Swedish cuisine and recipes for Scandinavian dishes of all kinds.
### sjötunga
- Baltic herring

### tonfisk
- tuna

### strömming
- cod

### torsk
- whiting

### vitling
- eel

### ål
- sole

### DESSERTS (DESSERTER/EFTERRÄTTER)

<table>
<thead>
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<td>glas</td>
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<td>kaka</td>
<td>kaka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ostkaka</td>
<td>ostkaka</td>
</tr>
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<td>pannkakor</td>
<td>pannkaka</td>
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<tr>
<td>småkakor</td>
<td>smakaka</td>
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<td>tårta</td>
<td>tarla</td>
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<tr>
<td>våffla</td>
<td>varfla</td>
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<tr>
<td>äppelpaj</td>
<td>epepaee</td>
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<td>ice cream</td>
<td>cake</td>
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<td>cheese cake</td>
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</tr>
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<td>cookies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>filled cake</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>waffle</td>
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<td>apple pie</td>
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### COOKING STYLES

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<td>friterad</td>
<td>free-te-rad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gravad</td>
<td>grovad</td>
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<tr>
<td>grillad</td>
<td>grillad</td>
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<tr>
<td>halstrad</td>
<td>hal-strad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kokt</td>
<td>kokt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>marinerad</td>
<td>ma-reen-naar-rad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rökt</td>
<td>rekt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>stekt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ugnstekt</td>
<td>ung-stekt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>roasted/baked</td>
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<tr>
<td>deep fried</td>
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### DRINKS (DRYCKER)

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<tbody>
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<td>epe-sin-yoose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>glögg</td>
<td>glarg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kaffe</td>
<td>kaffe</td>
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<tr>
<td>läsk</td>
<td>lesk</td>
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<tr>
<td>mjölk</td>
<td>myerlk</td>
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<tr>
<td>saft</td>
<td>saaf</td>
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<tr>
<td>te</td>
<td>tay</td>
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<tr>
<td>varm choklad</td>
<td>voam-shoo-klaad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vatten</td>
<td>wat-ten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vin (vitt vin/rödvin)</td>
<td>veen (veen-redveen)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>öl</td>
<td>erl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>orange juice</td>
<td>mulled wine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coffee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>soft drink (carbonated)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>milk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cordial</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tea</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hot chocolate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>water</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wine (white wine/red wine)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beer</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Stockholm

Sweden’s capital is one of the most beautiful major cities in the world, a mirage of saffron- and terracotta-coloured buildings shimmering between blue water and bluer skies all summer, or covered with snow and dotted with lights in winter. It’s also a vibrant, modern city, famous for producing sleek designs, edgy fashion and world-class nightclubs.

The old town, Gamla Stan, is a compact little maze of cobblestone streets apparently built for small, thin people with very sturdy ankles. The stucco walls of its red, orange and vanilla buildings sag toward each other exhaustedly over countless souvenir shops and ice-cream parlours, while the Royal Palace crowns the tiny island. Just to the south of Gamla Stan is another island neighbourhood, Södermalm, where high waterfront hills are graced by lovely old residences and the main drags are lined with bohemian shops, art galleries and rollicking clubs. On the other side of Gamla Stan is the main city centre, a buzzing metropolis whose boutiques and restaurants can hold their own against just about any big city on the continent.

Surrounding all of this is every Stockholmer’s pride and joy – the 24,000 or so rocky islands that make up the archipelago (skärgård).

Stockholmers themselves are almost uniformly polite and friendly, making travel both easy and rewarding. Around 16% of greater Stockholm’s 1.2 million people are immigrants, which creates a much more multicultural and diverse cityscape than many travellers might expect. It’s certainly not all meatballs, ABBA and IKEA these days!

**HIGHLIGHTS**

- Lose yourself in the city’s history by strolling through the medieval streets of Gamla Stan (p72)
- Go on a boat tour of the capital’s waterways (p85) and discover just how accurate Stockholm’s slogan, ‘Beauty on Water’, really is
- Delve into some of Europe’s best-presented art and history museums, such as Nationalmuseum (p74) – often free of charge
- Cycle or walk around the parklike, museum-laden island of Djurgården – especially the beloved open-air museum, Skansen (p76)
- Island hop for a few hours or a few days in Stockholm’s very accessible and dramatically beautiful archipelago (p108)

**AREA:** 216 SQ KM
**POPULATION:** 750,000
**TELEPHONE CODE:** 08
A major rebellion followed and Gustav Vasa finally entered the city in 1523, after a two-year siege. The new king ruled the city with a heavy hand – the role of commerce dwindled and the church was extinguished entirely as royal power grew and the city revolved increasingly around the court. Gustav’s son Erik XIV (and later kings) racked up taxation on the burghers to fund wars, but much of the wealth from armaments manufacture and the city’s importance as a military headquarters increased. At the end of the 16th century Stockholm’s population was 9000, but this expanded in the following century to 60,000, as the Swedish empire reached its greatest extent.

In the 17th century, town planners laid out a street grid beyond the medieval city centre, and Stockholm was proclaimed the capital of Sweden in 1634. Famine wiped out 100,000 people across Sweden during the harsh winter of 1696, and starving hordes descended on the capital. The following year, the original royal castle (Tre Kronor) burned down. In 1711 plague arrived, and the death rate soared to 1200 per day from a population of only 50,000. After the death of King Karl XII, the country, unsurprisingly, stagnated.

In the 18th century, Swedish science and arts blossomed, allowing the creation of institutions and fine buildings. Industrial stagnation followed the assassination of King Gustav III; promised 19th-century reforms never arrived, and bloody street riots were common.

From the 1860s, further town planning created many of the wide avenues and apartment blocks still seen today. The city rapidly industrialised and expanded. In 1912, the Olympic Games were held in Stockholm and by 1915 it was home to 364,000 people. The next major transformation of the city started in the 1960s, when large ‘new towns’ sprung up around the outskirts, and extensive ‘slum’ areas were flattened to make way for concrete office blocks, motorways and other modern developments. The financial and construction boom of the 1980s helped make the city a very expensive place. When that bubble burst due to the 1990s recession, the devalued krona actually helped Stockholms: Swedish tourism grew, and the city’s importance as a military headquarters increased. At the end of the 16th century Stockholm’s population was 9000, but this expanded in the following century to 60,000, as the Swedish empire reached its greatest extent.

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**STOCKHOLM IN...**

**Two Days**

Beat the crowds to the labyrinthine streets of Gamla Stan (p72) for souvenir shopping and a coffee at Sundbergs Konditori (p92). Peek into Storkyrkan (p74) and consider a tour of the royal palace, Kungliga Slottet (p73), or simply watch the midday changing of the guard. Then wander south to the Söder Heights, which you can climb via the stairs, or by taking the elevator Katarinahissen (p82). Most of Stockholm’s best nightlife stretches out before you on the island of Södermalm; don’t miss Kvarnen (p99) or Mondo (p98). Spend the next day at Skansen (p76), and dine at Rosendals Trädgårdscafé (p95).

**Four Days**

Follow the two-day plan, then take a guided boat tour of Stockholm’s waterways (p85) for a different perspective. Afterwards, have a drink at Berns Salonger (p98), where August Strindberg got the inspiration for his first novel, then stroll over to Skeppsholmen for a peek into the always provocative Moderna Museet (p78). Next day, relive Viking history at the Historiska museet (p75), then tour the top-notch Nationalmuseum (p74). When you get peckish, explore the varied options at Östermalms Saluhall (p97). Up for more? Stand in line with Stockholm’s elite partygoers at the Spy Bar (p99).
Hedengrens (Map p80;  8 61 51 28; Sturegallerian) An excellent selection of new books in English.

Kartbutiken (Map p80;  20 23 03; Kungsgatan 74) The city's widest range of maps and guidebooks.

Kartcentrum (Map p80;  411 16 97; Vasagatan 16) Also a good selection of maps and guidebooks.

Konst-ig (Map p80;  50 83 15 18; basement, Kulturhuset) A great selection of lush, expensive books on international and Swedish art, architecture and design.

Pressbyran (Map p80; Centralstationen) For English-language newspapers and pamphlets.

Press Stop Found at a few locations around town — including Drottninggatan 35, Götgatan 31 and Kungsgatan 14 — this guide features maps and listings, including newsagents and supermarkets.

Sweden Bookshop (Map p80;  789 21 31; Slottsbacken 10) A broad selection of high-quality books in English about Sweden, its culture and history.

Emergency
24-hour medical advice ( 463 91 00)
24-hour police stations Kungsholmen (Map pp68-9;  401 00 00; Kungsholmsgatan 37, Kungsholmen); Södermalm (Map p80;  401 03 00; Torkel Knutssonsgatan 20, Södermalm)

Emergency ( 112) Toll-free access to the fire service, police and ambulance.

Larmtjänst ( 020-91 00 40) Roadside assistance for vehicle breakdowns.

Internet Access
Nearby all hosts have a computer or two with Internet access for guests, and most hotels offer wi-fi access in rooms. There are also wi-fi hubs in Centralstationen. Those without their own computer have a bit of a tougher time, but there are a couple of Internet cafés in town.

Access IT (Map p80;  50 83 14 89; Sergels Torg; per hr Skr19;  10am-7pm Tue–Fri, 11am-5pm Sat & Sun) In the basement of Kulturhuset, this space no longer has its own computers, but is a Sidewalk Express point (see below).

Matrik (Map p80;  20 02 93; Hötorget; per hr Skr35;  10am-6pm) Inside PUB department store.

Sidewalk Express (per hr Skr19) Rows of computer monitors and tall red ticket machines mark out these self-service Internet stations, which seem to roam the city and pop up in new places each week. They're found at various locations, including City Bus Terminal (2nd floor), and Robert's Coffee, Drottninggatan 33.

Internet Resources
www.alltomstockholm.se Features loads of information on events, restaurants, sports etc; in Swedish only.

www.stockholmtown.com With excellent tourist information in English (and many other languages).

www.visit-stockholm.com A newly updated source for travellers, with nearly 500 pages of information on sights, food, accommodation, shopping and getting out of town.

Laundry
Laundry options are it’s best to find a hotel or hostel with facilities. A handy, central laundrette is Tvättnatt (Map p66-9;  34 64 80; Västmannagatan 61; metro T-Odenplan; per load from Skr70;  8.30am-6.30pm Mon–Fri, 9am-3pm Sat).

Le Left luggage
There are three sizes of left-luggage boxes (from Skr35-75 per 24hr) at Centralstationen. Similar facilities exist at the neighbouring bus station and at major ferry terminals.

If you have a lost-property inquiry, ask for tillvaratagna effekter.

Libraries
Kulturhuset (Map p80;  50 83 15 08; Sergels Torg;  11am-7pm Tue–Fri, 11am-5pm Sat & Sun) Has a reading room with international periodicals and newspapers as well as books in various languages.

Stadsbiblioteket (Map pp68-9;  50 83 11 30; Sveavägen 73;  15am-9pm Mon–Thu, 9am-7pm Fri, 11am-5pm Sat & Sun; shorter hours in summer) The main city library is just north of the city centre. It’s worth a visit if you’re into architecture — it’s the best example of Stockholm’s 1920s neoclassist style.

Media
The best overall guide for visitors to the capital is the monthly What’s On Stockholm, available free from tourist offices and many hotels. Tourist offices also carry two separate accommodation guides in English — one for camping, the other for hotels and hostels — both are free. If you can navigate event listings in Swedish, look for P2 Stan, the excellent weekly arts and culture supplement to the daily Dagens Nyheter newspaper. Similarly, the free monthly paper Nöjes-guiden has listings in Swedish, focusing on youth culture, music, pub and restaurant reviews and entertainment.

Medical Services
Apoteket CW Scheele (Map p80;  454 81 30; Klarabergsgatan 66) A 24-hour pharmacy.

Sankt Erik Sjukhus (Map pp68-9;  672 20 00, 672 31 00) After 8.30pm; Flemingsberg 22;  8am-9pm) Emergency dental care.

Södersjukhuset (Map pp68-9;  616 10 00; Ringsvägen 52) The most convenient hospital from the city centre.

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If you have a lost-property inquiry, ask for tillvaratagna effekter.

Libraries
Kulturhuset (Map p80;  50 83 15 08; Sergels Torg;  11am-7pm Tue–Fri, 11am-5pm Sat & Sun) Has a reading room with international periodicals and newspapers as well as books in various languages.

Stadsbiblioteket (Map pp68-9;  50 83 11 30; Sveavägen 73;  15am-9pm Mon–Thu, 9am-7pm Fri, 11am-5pm Sat & Sun; shorter hours in summer) The main city library is just north of the city centre. It’s worth a visit if you’re into architecture — it’s the best example of Stockholm’s 1920s neoclassist style.

Media
The best overall guide for visitors to the capital is the monthly What’s On Stockholm, available free from tourist offices and many hotels. Tourist offices also carry two separate accommodation guides in English — one for camping, the other for hotels and hostels — both are free. If you can navigate event listings in Swedish, look for P2 Stan, the excellent weekly arts and culture supplement to the daily Dagens Nyheter newspaper. Similarly, the free monthly paper Nöjes-guiden has listings in Swedish, focusing on youth culture, music, pub and restaurant reviews and entertainment.

Medical Services
Apoteket CW Scheele (Map p80;  454 81 30; Klarabergsgatan 66) A 24-hour pharmacy.

Sankt Erik Sjukhus (Map pp68-9;  672 20 00, 672 31 00) After 8.30pm; Flemingsberg 22;  8am-9pm) Emergency dental care.

Södersjukhuset (Map pp68-9;  616 10 00; Ringsvägen 52) The most convenient hospital from the city centre.

Money
There are ATMs all over town, including a few at Centralstationen; expect long queues.

The exchange company Forex has about a dozen branches in the capital and charges Skr15 per travellers cheque; the following are some of their handy locations:

Hotelcentralen ( 7am to 9pm)
Stockholm Arlanda airport (Terminal 2;  7am–9pm)
Sweden House (Map pp68-9;  789 24 90; Hamngat-ten Centralen)

Post
The always-busy Centralstationen post office ( 7am–10pm Mon–Fri, 10am–7pm Sat & Sun) keeps the longest hours. You can now buy stamps and send letters at a number of city locations, including newsagents and supermarkets — keep an eye out for the Swedish postal symbol (yellow on a blue background) to indicate that postal services are available at that location.

Telephone
Coin-operated phones are virtually non-existent and payphones are operated with phone cards purchased from any Pressbyrån location (or with a credit card, although this is ludicrously expensive). Ask for a telefonkort for Skr35, Skr60 or Skr100. Local call charges are about Skr3 per minute, while the international rate with a phone card is usually Skr8 to Skr10. For mobile phones, check with your service provider to make sure your network is compatible before assuming the phone will work in Sweden.

Toilets
Public toilets nearby everywhere charge Skr5, and most of them take only a Skr5 coin, so it’s handy to keep a few with you if you’re out sightseeing. (If you’re desperate, head for the toilets in one of the city’s free museums, or ask nicely at a café or restaurant.)

Tourist Information
Hotelcentralen (Map p80;  50 82 85 08; Centralstationen;  24hr) This busy and convenient tourist office is located inside the main train station. You can collect tourist information here as well as reserve hotel rooms and hostel beds (for a fee), buy the Stockholm Package, Stockholm Card or SL Tourist Card, book sightseeing tours and buy maps, books and souvenirs.
Sweden House (Map p80; 50 82 85 08; www.stockholmtown.se; Hamngatan 27; 9am-7pm Mon-Fri, 10am-5pm Sat, 10am-4pm Sun) The capital’s main tourist office is just off Kungsträdgården across from the NK department store. It has lots of good brochures and can help book hotel rooms, theatre and concert tickets, and packages such as boat trips to the archipelago. There’s a Forex currency-exchange counter in the same building.

Travel Agencies
STA (Map p80; 54 52 66 66; Kungsgatan 30) and the nearby Kilroy Travels (Map p68-9; 57 51 57 69; Kungsgatan 4) both specialise in discount youth and student flights.

Universities
Stockholm University (Map p105; www.su.se; T-Universitetet) Founded as Stockholm College with a public lecture series in 1788; up until then, students had to go to Uppsala or Lund to further their studies. The university was taken over by the government in 1960 and it is now among the largest in the country, with around 35,000 students. Most of the university is located 3.5km north of the city centre in Frescati district.

DANGERS & ANNOYANCES
Some parts of the city aren’t particularly safe late at night, especially Sergels Torg, Medborgarplatsen (in Södermalm) and Fridhemsplan (on Kungsholmen) when the bars empty and most also have self-guided tours in English and other languages, whether by audiotope or printed brochure.

Stockholm also has 10 royal castles in and around the city, including the largest palace in the world that’s still in use, as well as the World Heritage–listed Drottningholm. The palace and a few other museums and churches are in the Old Town, Gamla Stan; the city centre has the bulk of the museums, while Djurgården hosts the famous outdoor museum Skansen and the Vasa ship museum. Several other worthwhile sights are scattered across the city, but none are too far-flung and they’re all easy to reach by public transport.

Gamla Stan
Stockholm began here, and most visitors to the capital do the same. The old town is full of historic buildings that seem to be collapsing towards each other at a glacial pace. Shops and restaurants line its twisted cobblestone streets and stunted alleys; some of the best are tucked away in vaulted cellars. This island is also, of course, home of the royal palace. The main shopping thoroughfare, Västerlånggatan, is a must, but it’s best early in the day or late at night when the flood of tourists lessens. Don’t hesitate to veer off onto a parallel alley or linger in one of the quiet squares. Part of the fun of exploring central Stockholm is getting relentlessly lost in its labyrinth and suddenly emerging onto a bustling square or waterfront view.

KUNGSLIGA SLOTTET
The ‘new’ Royal Palace (Map p80; 402 61 30; www.royalcourt.se; Slottbacken; adult/child each attraction Skr80/35, combined ticket Skr120/65; most attractions 10am-4pm mid-May-Aug, noon-3pm Tue-Sun Sep–mid-May) is one of Stockholm’s highlights; it was completed on the site of the ‘old’ royal castle, Tre Kronor, which burned down in 1697. The north wing surviving was incorporated into the new palace, but its medieval designs are now concealed by a baroque exterior. The new palace, designed by the court architect Nicodemus Tessin the Younger, wasn’t completed until 1750 years later. With 608 rooms, it’s the world’s largest royal castle still used for its original purpose.

The excellent state apartments, including the Hall of State and the Apartments of the Royal Orders of Chivalry, are both open to the public (except during state functions, most of which happen in September), with two floors of royal pomp, 18th- and 19th-century furnishings, and portraits of pale princes and princesses. Look for Queen Kristina’s silver throne in the Hall of State, and for impressive baroque and rococo designs throughout the rooms.

The Swedish regalia, crowns, scepters, orbs and keys are displayed at Skattkammaren (the Royal Treasury), by the southern entrance to the palace near Slottsbygden (the Royal Chapel). Gustav Ills Antikmuseum displays the Mediterranean treasures, particularly sculpture, acquired by that eccentric monarch. At the Museum Tre Kronor in the palace basement, you can see the foundations of 13th-century defensive walls and exhibits rescued from the medieval castle during the fire of 1697.

The Changing of the Guard takes place in the outer courtyard at 12.15pm Monday to Saturday, and 1.15pm Sunday and public holidays.

HELGEANDSHOLMEN
Though technically separated from Gamla Stan, this little island off Norrström, is home to a couple of the most interesting sights in Stockholm. The Riks­daghuset (Swedish Parliament; Map p80; 786 40 00; www.riksdagen.se; admission free; 1hr tours 12.30pm & 2pm Mon-Fri late Jun-Aug, 3.30pm Sat & Sun rest of year) consists of two parts; the older front section (facading downstream) dates from the early 20th century, but the other, more modern part contains the current debating chamber. Tours of the building are surprisingly compelling and serve as a primer on the Swedish system of consensus-building government.

Medeltidsmuseum (Medieval Museum; Map p80; 50 83 17 90; Strömparterren; adult/child Skr60/40; 4pm Jul & Aug; 11am-4pm Wed, 11am-4pm Tue & Thu-Sun Sep-Jun), at the other end of the island, is one of the city’s most popular, erician museums. While preparing to build a Riksdag car park here in the late 1970s, construction workers unearthed some foundations dating from the 1530s. The ancient walls were preserved as found and a museum was built around them. Faithful reconstructions of typical houses, sheds and workshops transport visitors to medieval Stockholm (though with a better lighting and sound system than they had back then). Also in the museum is the well-preserved, 1520s-era Riddarholmen ship.

OTHER SIGHTS
Livrustkammaren (Royal Armoury; Map p80; 51 95 55 44; Slottbacken 3; admission free; 10am-5pm Jun-Aug, 11am-5pm Tue-Sun & 11am-8pm Thu Sep-May) is part of the palace complex, but it can be visited separately. Best known for displaying Gustav II Adolf’s stuffed (and it must be said, somewhat tattered-looking) battle steed, Streiff, the museum covers 500 years of royal history. There’s a large collection of royal memorabilia, including suits of armour, countless weapons, five elaborately decorated and colourful carriages, all kinds of ceremonial clothing and the costume Gustav III was wearing when he was assassinated at the opera in 1792.

Kungliga Mynthuset (Royal Coin Cabinet; Map p80; 51 35 33 04; Slottbacken 6; admission free; 10am-4pm) is just across the plaza from the Royal Palace. Here you’ll find displays of coins (including Viking silver) and banknotes covering the history of money over the last 2600 years. You’ll see the world’s

PENNY-PINCHING PACKAGES
Getting your money’s worth out of a visit to Stockholm is a lot easier if you take advantage of one or more discounts offered to tourists. The Stockholm Card is available from tourist offices, SL information centres, some museums, some hotels and hostels or online at www.stockholmtown .com. It gives you entry to 75 museums and attractions, travel on public transport (including Katarinahissen, but excluding local ferries, some city buses and airport buses), sightseeing by boat, and parking in certain places. It is valid for 24, 48 or 72 hours and costs Skr260/390/540 (or Skr100/140/190 for accompanying children under 18, maximum two children per adult). To get maximum value, use two 24-hour cards over three days (with a rest day in between) and be sure to note opening hours; for example Skansen remains open until late, whereas royal palaces are only open until 3pm or 4pm.

Students and seniors get discounted admission to most museums and sights without the card, so you’ll need to work out if it’s cheaper for you to just get a transport pass and pay admission charges separately.

Stockholm à la Carte (from Skr450) is a cut-price package that includes a hotel room and the Stockholm Card. It’s available weekends year-round and also throughout the summer (mid-June to mid-August). Its cost depends on the standard of accommodation (prices for central hotels start at around Skr600 per person), travel agents in other Scandinavian capitals or major Swedish cities can help with arrangements, otherwise contact Destination Stockholm (563 00 80; www.destination-stockholm.com). The website has lots of good information and lists details of the 50-odd hotels involved in the scheme.
oldest coin (from 625 BC), the world’s largest coin (a Swedish copper plate weighing 19.7kg) and the world’s first banknote (issued in Sweden in 1661).

Stockholm’s cathedral, Storkyrkan (Map p80; tel 723 39 90; admission free; 9am-7pm mid-May–Aug, 9am-9pm Mon–Sat & 9am–5.30pm Sun Sep–mid-May) is next to the Royal Palace; Sweden’s monarchs used to be crowned here. The brick-built cathedral dates back to the late 13th century (it’s the city’s oldest building and was consecrated in 1306), but the exterior is baroque. The ancient and ornate interior contains a life-size statue of St George and his horse confronting the mythical dragon, created by the German sculptor Berndt Notke in 1494. You’ll also see the two large royal box pews with crown-shaped canopies and the silver altar. Keep an eye out for posters and handbills advertising musical performances here.

Riddarholmskyrkan (Map p80; tel 402 63 30; adult/child Skr20/10; 10am–4pm mid-May–Aug, noon–3pm Tue–Sun Sep 1-18, noon–3pm Sat & Sun 18-30), on the nearby island Riddarholmen, was built by Franciscan monks in the late 13th century. It no longer functions as a church but has been the royal necropolis since the burial of Magnus Ladulås in 1290, and is home to the armourial glory of the Seraphim knightly order. Look for the marble sarcophagus of Gustav Vasa, Sweden’s greatest monarch, and the massed wall plates displaying the coats-of-arms of the knights. There’s a guided tour in English at 1pm all open days.

Until 1865, the Swedish parliament met in the 17th-century Riddarhuset (House of Nobility; Map p80; tel 723 39 90; Riddhustorget 10; adult/child Skr40/20; 10am–3pm mid-May–mid-Sep, 11am–5pm Wed–mid-Sep–mid-May, open until 8pm Tue year round), in the Börsen building (the old Stock Exchange), presents the history of the Nobel Prizes and their recipients. It is a great-looking museum, with well-designed exhibitions on the history of the prize, Alfred Nobel himself, and the various recipients over the years. There are also top-notch films on Gustaf Vasa and Gustav II, Sweden’s mightiest monarch, and is home to Magnus Ladulås in 1290, and is home to the national historical collection at this enthralling museum (Map pp68-9; tel 51 95 55 99; www.historiska.se; Södra Blasieholmshamnen; admission free; 11am–5pm, 11am–8pm Thu Oct–Apr, 10am–5pm May–Sep). A masterpiece of mood and lighting, the Historiska Museet covers 10,000 years of Swedish history and culture (up to 1520), including some archaeological finds from the Viking town, Birka. Don’t miss the incredible Gold Room in the basement, with its rare treasures. The most astonishing artefact is the 5th-century seven-ringed gold collar with 458 carved figures, weighing 823g. It was found in a small island off the coasts of Gotland in the 7th century and was probably used by pagan priests in ritualistic ceremonies. Also don’t miss the medieval tripodch and altar screens.

If you happen to be here in summer but long to experience the legendary Scandinavian winter, stop in at the Ice Gallery (Map p80; tel 790 55 00; Österlånggatan 41; adult/child Skr50/25; 10am–4.30pm Fri–Sun). This small exhibition space has some interesting ice sculptures inspired by the much more elaborate (but winter-only) Ice Hotel in northern Sweden (see p301). The gallery is kept at about −6°C (puffy jackets are provided for visitors).

Central Stockholm

**NATIONALMUSEUM**

Sweden’s largest art museum, the Nationalmuseum (Map p80; tel 51 95 43 00; www.nationalmuseum.se; Södra Blasieholmshamnen; admission free, extra charge for some temporary exhibits; 11am–8pm Tue & Thu, 11am–5pm Wed, Fri–Sun) houses the national collection of painting, sculpture, drawings, decorative arts and graphics, ranging from the Middle Ages to the 20th century. Some of the art became state property on the death of Gustav III in 1792, making this one of the earliest public museums in the world. There are around 16,000 items of painting and sculpture on display, including magnificent works by artists such as Goya, Rembrandt and Rubens. There are also around 30,000 items of decorative artwork, including porcelain, furniture, glassware, silverware and late-medieval tapestries. In 2000, the museum was the victim of a famous robbery in which art thieves made off with three paintings (two Renoirs and a Rembrandt), all of which have since been recovered. There’s an excellent museum shop and a terrace café in the glassed-in Atrium.

**HISTORISKA MUSEET**

The national historical collection is at this enthralling museum (Map pp68-9; tel 51 95 56 00; www.historiska.se; Narvavägen 13; admission free; 11am–5pm, 11am–8pm Thu Oct–Apr, 10am–5pm May–Sep). A masterpiece of mood and lighting, the Historiska Museet covers 10,000 years of Swedish history and culture (up to 1520), including some archaeological finds from the Viking town, Birka. Don’t miss the incredible Gold Room in the basement, with its rare treasures. The most astonishing artefact is the 5th-century seven-ringed gold collar with 458 carved figures, weighing 823g. It was found in a small island off the coasts of Gotland in the 7th century and was probably used by pagan priests in ritualistic ceremonies. Also don’t miss the medieval tripodch and altar screens.

**STADSHUSET**

It looks more like a large church, but the size of Stadshuset (Town Hall; map p80; tel 50 82 90 58; Hantverkargatan 1; entrance by tour only, adult/child Skr60/30; tours 10am, 11am, noon, 2pm & 3pm Jun–Aug, 10am & noon rest of year) is deceptive because it has two internal courtyards. The dominant brown-brick square tower of Stadshuset is topped with a golden spire and the symbol of Swedish power, the three royal crowns. Inside the building, you’ll find the beautiful mosaic-lined Hall, Prins Eugen’s own fresco re-creation of the lake view from the gallery, and the hall where the annual Nobel Prize banquet is held. Part of the tour involves walking down the same stairs you’d use if you had won the big prize. Entry is by daily tour only, and these may be interrupted from time to time by preparation for special events. Climb the tower (adult/child Skr20/free; 10am–4.30pm May–Sep, Sat & Sun in Apr) for a good stair-climbing workout and stellar views of Gamla Stan. In summer a unique feature is that you can dive off the terrace at the edge of the building.

**OTHER SIGHTS**

Though parts of it are rather graphic, the Armémuseum (Map p80; tel 788 95 60; Ridagatan 18; admission free; 11am–8pm Tue, 11am–4pm Wed–Sun) is an excellent place to see vivid displays of Swedish military history, from the Vikings to the present, with an unidealised – not to say pacifist – bent. There are huge cases of weapons, re-created scenes and sound effects, and disturbingly realistic wax figures forever engaged in historic battles.

A private palace completed in 1899, Hallwylska Museet (The Hallwyl Collection; Map p80; tel 51 95 55 99; Hamngatan 4; adult/child Skr40/20; living history tours Skr50/50, free admission to 1st-fl state rooms noon–4pm Tue–Sun) is a showcase of eccentricity. Wilhelmina von Hallwyl collected items as diverse as kitchen utensils, Chinese pottery, 17th-century paintings, silverware, sculpture and jewellery. In 1920, she and her husband donated their entire house (including contents) to the nation. The baroque-style great drawing room is particularly impressive, as it includes a rare, playable grand piano. This delightful museum has guided tours in English at 1pm daily from late June to mid-August; the rest of the year English tours are only at 1pm on Sunday (but you can join one of the more regular tours in Swedish). The Vin & Sprithistoriska Museet (Wine & Spirits Museum; Map pp68-9; tel 744 7070; Dalagatan 100; adult/child Skr40/50; 10am–7pm Tue, 10am–4pm Wed–Fri, noon–4pm Sat & Sun) might be the only museum in Sweden that offers a new drinking song each week (call 0744 70 75 to hear it). The eccentric museum puts the ‘oh’ back in alcohol with informative displays on the distilling and filtering process, the strange saga of the Vodka King, the development of Absolut’s chic labelling, and best of all, a ‘scent organ’ that lets you sample each of 55 spices used in traditional brännvin and snaps recipes. It also has information on Sweden’s conservative alcohol policy and what the future might hold. There’s a small bar for wine- and liquor-tasting. Take bus 69 from Sergels Torg or walk from T-Ödenplan metro station.
The collections in the very attractive Medelhavsmuseet (Museum of Mediterranean Antiquities; Map p80; Tel 51 95 53 80; Fredsgatan 2; admission free; 11am–8pm Tue–Wed, 11am–4pm Thu–Fri, noon–5pm Sat & Sun) include Egyptian, Greek, Cypriot and Roman artefacts. There are decent displays of Islamic art and a small but spectacular gold room, which is unlocked for brief periods by the guard at the front desk – ask politely and you’ll be admitted.

The small but evocative Strindbergsmuseet (Map p80; Tel 411 53 54; Drottninggatan 85; adult/child Skr40/free; 11am–4pm Tue–Sun) in the Blue Tower, is the well-preserved apartment where the writer and painter August Strindberg (1849–1912) spent his final four years. You’ll see the dining room, bedroom, study and his painter of moody scenes. August Strindberg was born in Stockholm in 1849. His mother’s death, when he was 13, was an important event in the life of the tortured genius, who was hailed as the ‘writer of the people’ towards the end of his chaotic life.

In 1884, Strindberg became notorious after the publication of Marriage, a collection of short stories that led to his trial (and acquittal) for blasphemy in the City Court of Stockholm. Much of his work deals with radical approaches to social issues, which didn’t go down well with the Swedish establishment.

Strindberg married three times. His first marriage, to Siri von Essen (married 1877, divorced 1891), produced four children. During his stay in central Europe (1892 to 1899), he led an ‘artist’s life’ with the likes of Edvard Munch and Gauguin, and had a short-lived marriage to an Austrian woman, Frida Uhlf (married 1893, separated 1894, dissolved 1897), which led to the birth of a daughter. As his instability deepened, Strindberg took an interest in the occult, but the crisis was over upon publication of Inferno (1897), an accurate description of his own emotional shambles.

After returning to Stockholm in 1899, he married Norwegian Harriet Bosse in 1901 (divorced 1904) and had yet another daughter.

In 1912, Strindberg was awarded an ‘Anti–Nobel Prize’ (funded by ordinary people from around Sweden) as compensation for not receiving the Nobel Prize for Literature. Although the conservative Swedish Academy basically ignored his work, Strindberg was appreciated by many Swedes and his death, in 1912, was seen as the loss of the country’s greatest writer.

Djurgården

The royal park of Djurgården is a must for visitors to Stockholm. The main attractions are Skansen and the extraordinary Vasa Museum, but there are many other interesting places to visit in the park.

Take bus 47 from Centralstationen, or the Djurgården ferry services from Nybroplan or Slussen (frequent in summer); or take the vintage tram from Norrmalmsgatan.

You can rent bikes by the bridge (see p102), and this is by far the best way to explore the area. Parking is limited during the week and prohibited on summer weekends, when Djurgårdsvägen is closed to traffic.

SKANSEN

The world’s first open-air museum, Skansen (Map pp68–9; Tel 442 80 00; www.skansen.se; adult Skr30–80, child free/Skr30, depending on the time of yr; 10am–8pm May, 10am–10pm Jun–Aug, 10am–5pm Sep, 10am–4pm Oct–Apr) was founded in 1891 by Artur Hazelius to let visitors see how Sweden lived in previous times. You could easily spend a day here and still not see it all. Around 150 traditional houses and other exhibits from all over Sweden occupy the attractive hilltop – it’s meant to be ‘Sweden in miniature’, complete with villages, nature, commerce and industry. The glassbowers’ cottage is a popular stop; watching the intricate forms emerge from glowing blobs of liquid glass is so transfixing the museum has set up a mini-amphitheatre there.

The Nordic Zoo, with moose, reindeer, wolverines and other native wildlife, is a highlight especially in spring when baby critters scamper around.

There’s also a petting zoo for kids.

Buildings and the open-air museum represent various trades and areas of the country. Most are inhabited by staff in period costume, often doing handicrafts, playing music or churning butter while cheerfully answering questions about the folk whose lives they are recreating. Part of the pharmacy was moved here from Drottningholm castle; two little garden huts came from Tantolunden in Södermalm. There’s a bakery (still operational, serving coffee and lunch), a bank/post office, a machine shop, botanical gardens and Hazelius’ mansion, among other things. There are also 46 buildings from rural areas around Sweden, including a Sami camp, farmsteads representing several regions, a manor house and a school. A map and an excellent booklet in English are available to guide you around. Skansen also has a few other museums as well, including the Tobaks & Tändsticksmuseum (Tobacco & Matchstick Museum; Map pp68–9; Tel 442 80 26; 11am–5pm May–Sep; closed Mon rest of yr), which traces the history of smoking, and the more ecologically oriented Skogens Hus (Forestry Information Centre). The Skansen Aquarium (Map pp68–9; Tel 442 8039; adult/child Skr65/35, 10am–4pm Mon–Fri, 10am–5pm Sat & Sun Sep–May, 10am–6pm Jun & Aug, 10am–8pm Jul) is also good – en route to the fish (including piranhas) you’ll walk among the lemur and see pygmy marmosets, the smallest monkeys in the world.

There are a number of cafés, restaurants and hot-dog stands throughout the park. Carrying water isn’t a bad idea in summer. It’s not cheating to take the escalator to the top of the hill and meander down from there.

Daily activities take place on Skansen’s stages, including folk dancing in summer and an enormous public festival at midsummer. If you’re in Stockholm for any of the country’s major celebrations (such as Walpurgis Night, Midsummer’s Eve, Lucia Festival, Christmas), Skansen is the place to see how Swedes celebrate. See p315 for more information on these events.

VASAMUSEET

A good-humoured glorification of some dodgy calculation, Vasamuseet (map pp68–9; Tel 51 95 48 00; www.vasamuseet.se; adult/child Skr85/free; Wed 10am–8pm; Thu–Sun 9am–8pm; noon–5pm & 10am–8pm Wed Sep–May) lets you study the lives of 17th-century sailors while appreciating some brilliant achievements in marine archaeology. On 10 August 1628, within minutes of being launched, the top-heavy flagship Vasa overturned and went straight to the bottom of Salthöjd. Tour guides explain the extraordinary and controversial 300-year story of its death and resurrection. After being painstakingly raised in 1961, the ship and its incredible wooden sculptures were pieced together like a giant jigsaw. Almost all of what you see today is original.

On the entrance level, there’s a model of the ship at scale 1:10 and a cinema that shows a 25-minute film covering topics not included in the exhibitions (in English at 11.30am and 1.30pm daily in summer). There are three other levels of exhibits, including displays of artefacts salvaged from Vasa, exhibits on naval warfare and 17th-century sailing and navigation plus sculpture and temporary exhibitions.

The bookshop is worth a visit and there’s also a restaurant. Guided tours are in English hourly from 10.30am in summer, and at least twice daily the rest of the year. You’ll need a couple of hours to appreciate the place.

GRÖNA LUND TIVOLI

The crowded Gröna Lund Tivoli (Map pp68–9; Tel 58 75 01 00; www.gronalund.com in Swedish; adult/child Skr50/free; noon–11pm Sat–Thu, noon–midnight Fri & Sat, May–mid–Sep; noon–11pm most days mid-Jun–mid–Aug) fun park has more than 25 rides, ranging from the easy circus carousel to the terrifying Free Fall, where you drop from a height of 80m in six seconds (there’s a lovely, if brief, view over Stockholm at the top). There are lots of places to eat and drink in the park, but whether you’ll keep it down is another matter entirely. The Äkbandet day pass gives unlimited rides, or individual rides range from Skr20 to Skr60. Big-name concerts are often staged here in August Strindberg

August Strindberg was born in Stockholm in 1849. His mother’s death, when he was 13, was an important event in the life of the tortured genius, who was hailed as the ‘writer of the people’ towards the end of his chaotic life.

Strindberg periodically studied theology and medicine at Uppsala University from 1867 to 1872, but left without a degree. He then worked as a librarian and journalist prior to becoming a productive author, writing novels, plays, poetry, and over 7000 letters. He was also a talented painter of moody scenes.

His breakthrough as a writer came in 1879 with the publication of his novel The Red Room. In 1884, Strindberg became notorious after the publication of Marriage, a collection of short stories that led to his trial (and acquittal) for blasphemy in the City Court of Stockholm. Much of his work deals with radical approaches to social issues, which didn’t go down well with the Swedish establishment.

Strindberg married three times. His first marriage, to Siri von Essen (married 1877, divorced 1891), produced four children. During his stay in central Europe (1892 to 1899), he led an ‘artist’s life’ with the likes of Edvard Munch and Gauguin, and had a short-lived marriage to an Austrian woman, Frida Uhlf (married 1893, separated 1894, dissolved 1897), which led to the birth of a daughter. As his instability deepened, Strindberg took an interest in the occult, but the crisis was over upon publication of Inferno (1897), an accurate description of his own emotional shambles.

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summer. Admission is free for Stockholm Card or 72-hour SL Tourist Card holders.

OTHER SIGHTS

The enormous, impressive Nordiska Museet (National Museum of Cultural History; Map pp68-9; 51 95 60 00; www.nordiskamuseet.se; Djurgårdsvägen 6-16; admission free; 11am-5pm Jun-Aug, 10am-4pm rest of yr) was also founded by Artur Hazelius. The second-largest indoor space in Sweden, it’s housed in an eclectic, Renaissance-style castle. There are notable temporary exhibitions and endless Swedish collections from 1520 to the present day, with a total of 1.5 million items, including the world’s largest collection of paintings by August Strindberg. The collection can borrow a free CD player and endless Swedish collections from 1520 to the present day, with a total of 1.5 million items, including the world’s largest collection of paintings by August Strindberg.

On the northern side of Djurgården, Rosendals Slott (Map pp68-9; 402 61 30; Rosendalsvägen; adult/child Skr50/25; tours noon, 1pm, 2pm, 3pm Tue-Sun) was built as a palace for Karl XIV Johan in 1820s, and her unpretentious royal furnishings. Admission is by guided tour only. While you’re out this way, be sure to stop in the delightful café, which is set among trees and greenhouses and is very popular with the locals.

Thielska Galleri (Map pp68-9; 662 58 84; Sjötullbacken; bus 69 from Centralstationen; adult/child Skr50/ free; 11am-noon Mon-Sat, 1-4pm Sun) was housed at the east end of Djurgården, has Ernsten Thiel's notable collection of late 19th- and early 20th-century Nordic art, including works by Edvard Munch, Anders Zorn, Bruno Liljefors and Carl Larsson.

Liljevalchs Konsthall (Map pp68-9; 50 83 13 30; Djurgårdsvägen 60; adult/child Skr50/free; 11am-5pm Tue-Sun, until 8pm Tue & Thu May-Sep) has four exhibitions a year of contemporary Swedish and international art, including the popular Spring Salon.

Other minor museums around Djurgården include the charmingly dusty, 1893 Biologiskamuseet (Museum of Biology; Map pp68-9; 442 82 15; Haslumspuren; adult/child Skr30/10; 11am-4pm Apr-Sep, noon-3pm Tue-Fri & 10am-3pm Sat & Sun rest of yr) and Aquaria Vattenmuseum (Map pp68-9; 660 49 40; Falkenbergsgatan 2; adult/child Skr30/15; 10am-6pm Jun-Aug, 10am-4.30pm Tue-Sun rest of yr), a pleasant, conservation-themed aquarium.

Keppsholmen

Moderna Museet (Modern Museum; Map pp68-9; 51 95 52 00; Exercisplan 4; www.modernamuseet.se; admission free; 10am-8pm Tue-Wed, 10am-6pm Thu-Sun) is housed in an equally extraordinary space and has displays on Swedish and international architecture, with a permanent exhibition covering 1000 years of Swedish architecture and an archive of 2.5 million documents, photographs, plans, drawings and models. Ask at the information desk about architectural tours of Stockholm.

Across the bridge from Nationalmuseum, Östasiatiskt Museet (Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities; Map pp68-9; 51 95 57 50; admission free; 11am-8pm Tue, 11am-5pm Wed-Sun) displays ancient and contemporary ceramics, paintings and sculpture. The museum has one of the best collections of Chinese art, stoneware and porcelain in the world, mainly from the Song, Ming and Qing dynasties.

Svensk Form Design Centre (Map pp68-9; 463 31 34; Holmamarens väg 2; adult/child Skr20/free; noon-7pm Thu, noon-5pm Fri-Sun) has design exhibitions and a shop. The centre also produces the excellent magazine Form, a good primer on current trends and artists, available at newstands and design shops around town.

Ladugårdsnäset

The vast inland of Ladugårdsnäset is part of the 27-sq-km Ekoparken (www.ekoparken.com), the world’s national park within a city. Ekoparken is 14km long and stretches far into the northern suburbs of Stockholm. This section of it, reached by bus 69 from Centralstationen or Sergels Torg, boasts three fine museums and one of the city’s most panoramic views.

Sjöhistoriska Museet (National Maritime Museum; Map pp68-9; 51 95 49 00; Djurgårdsbrunnsvägen 24; admission free; 10am-5pm Tue-Sun, until 8.30pm Tue in spring & autumn) has an exhibit of maritime memorabilia and more than 1500 model ships. Displays also cover Swedish shipbuilding, sailors and life on board.

Get your robot fix at Tekniska Museet (Museum of Science & Technology; Map pp68-9; 450 56 00; Museumsvägen 7; adult/child Skr60/30; 10am-5pm Mon-Fri, 11am-5pm Sat & Sun), just around the corner from the maritime museum. It has exhibits on Swedish inventions and their applications, including everything from motorbikes to mobile phones.

Etnografiska Museet (National Museum of Ethnography; Map pp68-9; 51 95 50 00; Djurgårdsbrunnsvägen 34; admission free; 10am-5pm, 10am-8pm Wed) has excellent displays on various aspects of non-European cultures, including several temporary exhibitions each year. The café is a treat, with great music, imported sweets and beverages, and authentically prepared foods from around the world.

About 500m from the museums is the 155m Kaknästornet (Kaknäts TV Tower; Map pp68-9; 667 21 80; adult/child Skr30/15; 9am-10pm May-Aug, 10am-9pm Sep-Apr), the automatic operations centre for radio and TV broadcasting in Sweden. It opened in 1967 and is still the tallest building in the city. There’s a small visitor centre on the ground floor and an observation deck and restaurant near the top, both of which provide stellar 360-degree views. There are guided tours at 2pm and 4pm.

Långholmen

This small island in the Mälaren lake once housed a prison, and Långholmens Fängelsemuseum (Prison Museum; Map p80; 660 0500; adult/child Skr25/10; 11am-4pm) occupies one of the old building’s cells – the rest of the grounds has been converted into a hotel and STF hostel (see p89). The displays here cover 250 years of prison history.

To get to Långholmen, take the metro to Hornstull, then walk along Långholmsgatan. There are some very pleasant picnic and bathing spots on the island.

Södermalm

Known as the quirky, Funky island, Söder is home to several galleries, design collectives, secondhand shops, and notable bars and restaurants, as well as some important museums.

Stockholms Stadsmuseum (City museum; Map p80; 50 83 16 00; Slussen; adult/child Skr60/free; 11am-5pm Tue-Sun, 11am-8pm Thu) is housed in the late-17th-century palace of Nicodemus Tessin the Elder, in Ryssgården. Exhibits cover the history of the city and its people, and it’s worth a visit once you develop a romantic attachment to Stockholm.

Spårvägsmuseum (Transport Museum; Map pp68-9; 462 55 31; Tegelviksgatan 22; adult/child Skr30/15, incl Leksaks museum; 10am-5pm Mon-Fri, noon-4pm Sat & Sun), in the Söderhallen transport depot near the Viking Line terminal, has around 40 vehicles, including horse-drawn carriages, Stockholm metro trains, vintage trams and buses.

Newly reopened in 2000, an entrance with Spårvägsmuseum, Leksaks museum (Toy Museum; Map pp68-9; 641 61 00; Tegelviksgatan 22; 10am-5pm Mon-Fri, noon-4pm Sat & Sun) is an
oversized fantasy nursery full of everything you probably ever wanted as a child, including dolls, model railways, planes and cars. Children will enjoy themselves in the playroom and at the children’s theatre. Head to the northern cliffs of Södermalm for good views and evening walks among the old houses. Some interesting neighbours lie around the Katarina kyra (Map p105), in the park near Sofia kyra (Map pp68–9), around the Puckeln Shop District (Hornsgatan) and on Lotsgatan and Fjällgatan, not far from the Viking Line terminal.

You’ll get great views from the balcony of Katarinahissen (Map p80;  743 13 95; Slussen; adult/child Skr36/free;  7.30am-10pm Mon-Sat, 10am-10pm Sun), a lift dating from the 1930s that takes you up 38m to the heights of Slussen. If you prefer, zigzagging wooden stairs also lead up the cliffs to the balcony. At the top is one of the city’s best restaurants, Gondolen.

**Northern Suburbs**

The areas just north of the city centre are full of green, open spaces. Several large parks, spanning from Djurgården in the south, form Ekoparken (see p79), the first such protected city area in the world. The less wild, more sculpted Hagaparken is also particularly pleasant for walks and bicycle tours and contains some interesting attractions.

**MILLESGÅRDEN**

(formerly Carl Milles’ house; Map p105;  71 95 51 30; adult/child Skr75/50; no children under 5 admitted), a combined planetarium and Imax theatre. The diverse topics covered include Everest, Alaska, the oceans and outer space. It screens films on the hour; reservations are recommended.

**HAGAPARKEN**

Crowning a hilltop at Haga park is the amazing, brightly coloured Koppartätten ( Copper lent; map p105;  71 95 51 30; adult/child Skr75/50, no children under 5 admitted), a combined planetarium and Imax theatre. The diverse topics covered include Everest, Alaska, the oceans and outer space. It screens films on the hour; reservations are recommended.

**Southern Suburbs**

One of Stockholm’s more unusual attractions is Skogskyrkogården (Map p105; Söder- vagen; metro to Tu-Skogskyrkogården; admission free), a cemetery in a peaceful pine woodland setting. The cemetery, designed by the great Gunnar Asplund and Sigurd Lewerentz, is World Heritage–listed in recognition of its unique design and the harmony of function and landscape. The area is dominated by a large granite cross, and there are a number of chapels scattered throughout, this is also where Greta Garbo is buried. It’s a pleasant place for a walk.

**Fjäderholmarna**

These tiny, delightful islands (‘Feather Islands’) offer an easy escape from the city. They’re just 25 minutes away by boat and a favourite swimming spot for locals. As they’re located on the eastern side of Djurgården, take one of the boats (adult/child Skr35/25 return) that leave from either Nybroplan (half-hourly) or from Slussen (hourly) between May and early September. There are a couple of craft shops and restaurants here, though the main activity is relaxation. The last boats leave the islands at midnight, making them a perfect spot to enjoy the long daylight hours.

**Activities**

A number of activities are available in and around Stockholm, many of them water-based. Many people head for the coast and the islands of the archipelago (full of good swimming spots) or organise picnics in the parks and gardens. Summer sees both locals and visitors taking advantage of the good weather and long daylight hours to swim, sail, lounge on beaches, hike, walk or bicycle around. In winter, snowy days bring out cross-country skiers. The Tourist office can provide further details.

**Swimming**

There are indoor and open-air pools as well as a gym at Eriksdalsbadet (Map pp68–9;  60 84 02 50; Hammarby slussväg 8; entry adult/child Skr65/30) in the far south of Södermalm. If you want a relaxing swim in an extraordinary Art Nouveau bathing salon, try Centralbadet (Map pp80;  24 24 00; Drottninggatan 88; Skr65-150;  6am-9pm Mon-Fri, 8am-9pm Sat & Sun), built in 1904. The entrance price includes access to the pool, saunas and gym; treatments, such as massage, are available for an additional fee.

Swimming is also permitted just about anywhere people can scramble their way to the water; look for happy sunbathers clinging to the rocks around Riddarfjärden for a start.

**Sailing/Boating**

From Sjöcafé (Map pp68–9;  660 57 57; canoes Skr75/300;  9am-9pm), by the bridge leading to Djurgården, you can rent bikes, in-line skates, Kayaks, canoes and rowboats. Opposite is Tvillingarnas Sjökrog (Map pp68–9;  663 37 39; www.tvillingarnas.com in Swedish; Strandvägsstigen 27), where you can rent sailing and motorboats in various sizes from April to September. Small boats are available from around Skr350 per hour; larger boats can be rented for a day, weekend or week. You can even rent a 40-foot sailing boat (with or without a skipper).

**Cycling**

Cycling is best in the parks and away from the busy central streets and arterial roads, but some streets have special cycle lanes (often shared with pedestrians). Bicycles can be rented from Sjöcafé ( 660 57 57; bicycles per hr/day Skr65/250). Tourist offices can supply maps of cycle routes, see p330 for further information.

**Hiking & Climbing**

Serious hiking trips in the city are fairly limited, but the parks offer some good walks – the most popular area for short walks is Djurgården. Climbers have better options, with around 150 cliffs within 40 minutes’ drive of the city. There’s also Sweden’s largest indoor climbing centre, Klätterverket (Map pp68–9;  641 10 48; Marcusplatsen 17, Nacka; member/nonmember Skr60/80) next to the J-train Sickla stop, with around 1000 sq metres of artificial climbing.

**Walking Tour**

Stockholm is a compact city, and many of its important historical sights can be visited in a couple of hours on a walking tour. Starting in the middle at Centralstationen (1), cross Vasagatan and enter the side street Klara Vattugränd. Turn left onto Klara V Kyrkogatan, past the church Klara kyra (2), where you can get information on all of Stockholm’s churches, then turn right onto
Klarabergsgatan. This is one of Stockholm’s main modern shopping streets, lined with designer shops, upscale boutiques and department stores such as Åhléns.

Follow Klarabergsgatan to Sergels Torg (3), where you’ll see frenzied commuters, casual shoppers, and possibly a demonstration or a shady deal going down. Regular art exhibitions are held in the basement arena of Planet (1) (Map 18; 08 71 40 30; www.citysightseeing.com) operates frequent 1½ hour sightseeing cruises from early April to mid-December around the central bridges and canals from Strömkanalen (near the Grand Hotel), Nybroplan or Stadshusbron; you will find ticket booths at these departure points. Some of the one-hour tours are free for Stockholm Card holders, but the two-hour tour, Under the Bridges of Stockholm (SKr170), covers more territory and passes under 15 bridges and through two locks, with a recorded commentary in several languages to fill in the history of the areas you pass by.

City Sightseeing (Map 18; 08 71 40 20; www.citysightseeing.com; Gustav Adolfs Torg) is the land-based sister operation, which runs daily tours of the city departing from Gustav Adolfs Torg between April and early October. There are coach tours of the city (SKr395, 2½ hours) and walking tours around Gamla Stan (SKr90, one hour). There are also combo trips offering sightseeing by coach and boat.

There’s a one-hour English-language guided walk (14.30; 37.30pm Mon, Wed, Thu summer, 13.30pm Sat & Sun Sep–May) through Gamla Stan with an authorised guide. Meet at the Obelisk at Slottsbacken, outside the royal palace; no reservation is needed.

To go back even further in time, take a cruise in a great old wooden ship done up as a Viking longboat. Svea Viking (Map 18; 08 20 22 23; www.sveaviking.se; adult/child SKr150/50) runs regular 1½ hour sightseeing cruises of the city’s waterways and out into the archipelago from midsummer to the end of August. You can’t miss the ship, as it’s moored outside the Royal Palace.

Stockholm is one of the few cities that allows hot-air balloons to fly over it. Book a tour with Far & Flyg (Map 18; 645 7700; www.farandflyg.se;
**STOCKHOLM ••  Festivals & Events**

There are many festivals, concerts and other happenings on Sergels Torg and Kungsträdgården throughout the summer, and the major museums exhibit temporary exhibitions on a grand scale. What's on in Stockholm lists daily events.

The biggest events in Stockholm are those celebrated throughout the country, such as Midsummer, Walpurgis Night, Lucia Festival, Christmas and New Year's Eve. See p315 for information on these traditional celebrations, and if you’re in Stockholm at the right time, head to Skansen to participate in the festivities.

**Stockholm International Film Festival**
(www.stockholmfestivals.org) A major celebration of international cinema, held in November, the film fest often brings in Lidingö, on Stockholm's outskirts.

**Lidingöloppet**
(www.lidingoloppet.se) The world’s largest cross-country foot race, with 25,000 to 30,000 participants, is held in late September or early November in Lidingö, on Stockholm’s outskirts.

**Restaurangernas Dag**
In early June, Stockholm’s restaurants set up tables in central Kungsträdgården and offer food, drinks and entertainment.

**Stockholm Jazz Festival**
(www.stockholmjazz.com) Held in mid-July, this is one of Europe’s premier jazz festivals.

**Stockholm Marathon**
(www.marathon.se) Run in June.

**Stockholm Open**
(www.stockholmsopen.se) A major international tennis tournament, held in October.

**Stockholm Pride**
(www.stockholmpride.org) This gay and lesbian event is held annually in early August.

**STOCKHOLM ••  Sleeping**

Whether you choose youth hostels, B&Bs, big-name hotels or boutique digs, you can expect the quality of accommodation in Stockholm to be high. There's little danger you'll turn up to find your bargain-basement room is a fleapit. The trade-off is that it can be an expensive city to sleep in, but there are deals to be found. Most Stockholm hotels offer discounted rates on weekends (Friday, Saturday and often Sunday night) and in summer (from midsummer to mid-August), sometimes up to 50% off the listed price.

The handy booklet *Hotels and Youth Hostels in Stockholm*, available free from tourist offices, lists most hotels and their regular and discount rates. If you need help finding a place to stay, [Hotelcentralen](Map p80; 2090; s/d Skr1690-1790/1990-2090, summer & weekend s/d Skr850-1050/1450-1650) is one of the capital’s best information sources. The hotel offers a wide range of accommodation and even a lesby-nights hotel. Its nautical theme extends to all aspects of the hotel’s operation. Yo-ho-ho, me scurvy barnacles! It’s a tight place, but its pink-painted, glass-fronted building with the feel of a creaky old ship, is well worth checking into. At just 5m wide, the 17th-century building is Sweden’s narrowest hotel. Its nautical theme extends to brass and mahogany furnishings, antique sea-captain trappings and a model ship in each of the small rooms.

**Victory Hotel**
(Map p80; 20 60 40 00; www.victory-hotel.se; Lilla Nygatan 5; s/d Skr1990-21990/2490-3990, summer & weekend s/d Skr1150-1350/1750-2750) This early 17th-century building is literally full of nautical antiques, grandfather clocks, model ships and art. Most rooms are fairly small, but the museum-like suites are larger. They are an apartment available for long-term rentals.

**Lady Hamilton Hotel**
(Map p80; 20 60 40 01; www.lady-hamilton.se; Storkyrkobrinken 5; s/d Skr1790-1990/2290-2490, summer & weekend s/d Skr950-1150/1550-1850) This is old-style luxury (with modern touches where it counts, for example in the bathrooms). The hotel dates back to the 1470s, and is packed with antiques and portraits of Lady Hamilton herself.

**Målardrottningen**
(Map p80; 20 64 01 00; www.malardrottningen.se; Riddarholmen; s/d cabins from Skr1100/1220). At one time the world’s largest motor yacht, this place offers accommodation in very well-appointed cabins, each with en suite. The cosy vessel, launched in 1924, was previously owned by American heiress Barbara Hutton – it was a gift from her father for her 19th birthday!

**GAMLA STAN**

This atmospheric part of town has a few accommodation options that place you right in the thick of the historic Old Town, though budget travellers may be out of luck.

**Rice Hotell**
(Map p80; 20 60 40 00; www.ricehotell.se; Lilla Nygatan 25; s/d Skr1258/1498) This 17th-century waterfront building has been a hotel and a Salvation Army headquarters. Its 51 rooms are quite petite, and despite the location none have a view of the water, but it’s a classy place with unfussy Gustavian décor and good service. The hotel couldn’t be better situated for soaking up the history and atmosphere of Gamla Stan; it’s also in a prime spot for checking out Södermalm and the city centre.

Hostels tend to fill up during the late afternoon in peak summer season, so arrive early or book in advance. They can also be busy in May, when Swedish school groups typically visit the capital.

**The options below are divided by neighbourhood and price range, then listed in order of author preference. Room prices are for peak season unless otherwise noted.**

**GAY & LESBIAN STOCKHOLM**

The gay scene is well established in Stockholm, although Sweden’s famous open-mindedness means people of every sexual orientation are welcome in any bar or club. There is no real ‘gay district’, although Södermalm is where a large section of the gay population lives and plays. The district’s rules are simple: if you respect every other person, you will be respected. People of every sexual orientation are welcome in any bar or club. There is no real ‘gay ghetto’, although Södermalm is where a large section of the gay population lives and plays. The district’s rules are simple: if you respect every other person, you will be respected.

**MIDRANGE**

**Lord Nelson Hotel**
(Map p80; 20 60 40 01; www.lord-nelson.se; Västerlånggatan 22; s/d Skr1690-1790/1990-2090, summer & weekend s/d Skr850-1050/1450-1650) This is old-style luxury (with modern touches where it counts, for example in the bathrooms). The hotel dates back to the 1470s, and is packed with antiques and portraits of Lady Hamilton herself.

**Rica City Hotel Gamla Stan**
(Map p80; 20 60 40 00; www.rica.se in Norwegian & Swedish; Lilla Nygatan 25; s/d Skr1695-1895/1945-2045, summer & weekend s/d Skr1100/1220). At one time the world’s largest motor yacht, this place offers accommodation in very well-appointed cabins, each with en suite. The cozy vessel, launched in 1924, was previously owned by American heiress Barbara Hutton – it was a gift from her father for her 19th birthday!

**TOP END**

**First Hotel Reisen**
(Map p80; 20 60 40 00; reisen@firsthotels.com; Skeppsbrons 12; s/d Skr2199/2599, summer & weekend s/d Skr1258/1498) Stockholm’s oldest hotel, the Reisen in olden days buzzed with sailors sipping coffee. The eight-storey waterfront building still has a distinct seaside atmosphere. Rooms in this luxurious hotel feature exposed brick walls and dark wood paneling, wooden floors and sumptuous furnishings.
Central Stockholm

This part of town is the most convenient to Centralstationen, where most visitors first arrive.

**BUDGET**

City Backpackers (Map p80; ☏ 20 69 20; info@citybackpackers.se; Upplandsgatan 2A; dm from Skr190) The closest hostel to Centralstationen is City Backpackers, and it’s a good choice for the clean rooms, friendly staff and excellent facilities including a kitchen, sauna, laundry and free Internet access.

Hostel Bed & Breakfast (Map p80; ☏ 15 28 38; hostelbedandbreakfast@chello.se; Rehnsgatan 21; dms/d from Skr195/390/430) Near T-Rådmansgatan, north of the city centre, this is a pleasant, informal basement hostel with a kitchen and laundry. There’s also a large, backpacker-friendly summer annex here, with 40 dorm beds (Sk135).

**MIDRANGE**

Rex Hotel (Map pp68-9; ☏ 16 00 40; www.rexhotel.se; Lunnmatkagatan 73; s/d Skr900-1450/1450-1690, summer & weekend s/d Skr800-890/990-1090) This new hotel has recently taken shape in a renovated building, dating from 1866. It’s comfortable, functional, and beautifully designed without being pretentious, pine floors, natural-tone fabrics and no unnecessary flourishes. And the location is one of Stockholm’s most up-and-coming.

Queen’s Hotel (Map p80; ☏ 24 94 60; queenshotel@queenshotel.se; Drottninggatan 71A; s/d Skr750-1290/795-1390, summer & weekend s/d Skr800-890/990-1090) The Queen’s Hotel is a pleasant place to stay in the middle of town. It has comfortable rooms with either shared or private facilities in an early 20th-century building on the pedestrian mall. There’s also a marble staircase and an antique lift.

Central Hotel (Map p80; ☏ 56 62 08 00; bokning@centralhotel.se; Vasagatan 38; s/d Skr1625/1860, weekends s/d Skr195/1295) Central Hotel caters primarily to shoppers and the occasional fan of Stalinist architecture. It has more than 400 rooms and impeccable (if you’re into that sort of thing) 1980’s-era décor.

**BUDGET**

City Backpackers Inn (Map pp66-7; ☏ 51 72 63 00; www.scandin-light.com; Brunkebergstorg 9; s/d from Skr1700/2200, weekends s/d from Skr1950/2500) Situated just off Söder Torg, this enormous beast of a hotel caters for upscale business travellers, shoppers and the occasional fan of Stalinist architecture. It has more than 400 rooms and impeccable (if you’re into that sort of thing) 1980’s-era décor.

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about the hostel’s ‘strong convictions’ and asserts that it is ‘captivating’.

Södermalm
Södermalm, a 15-minute walk or quick subway ride from the Viking Line boats and Centralstationen, is the best bet for interesting budget or midrange accommodation. At the other end of the spectrum, it’s also home to the chic new Clarion.

**BUDGET**

**Zinkensdamm Hotell & Vandrarhem** (Map pp66-9; s 616 81 00; www.zinkensdamm.com; Zinkens väg 20; hotel dm frn Skr185, s without bathroom frn Skr440, hotel s/d Skr1240/1540, summer & weekend s/d Skr890/1190)

With a foyer that looks like one of those old Main Street façade re-creations you find in cheesy museums, the Zinkensdamm STF is unabashedly about playtime. It’s attractive and well equipped – complete with a zany, pink-and-white guest kitchen – and caters for families with kids as well as pub-going backpackers, so it can be crowded and noisy, but that’s the trade-off for fun. The hostel breakfast buffet isn’t spectacular, but hostelers can buy the much better hotel breakfast.

**Den Röda Båten – Mälaren/Ran** (Map p80; s 644 43 85; www.threepad.com; Söder Mälärstrand, Kajplats 8; s/d/triple dm frn Skr195-235-275, s/d from Skr695-950/895-1595) This hotel is a Popular weekend getaway for Stockholmers, and has serious Great Gatsby overtones. The breezy blue-and-white house, built in 1912, is named after the boats used in the America’s Cup. The summer house, built in 1912, is named after the boats used in the America’s Cup. The boat hotel is smack in the middle of Söder’s vibrant nightlife. Its piano bar stays open late, so it can get exquisitely crowded with drunken louts when nearby bars close.

**Columbus Hotel** (Map pp68-9; s 50 31 12 00; www.columbus.se; Stigsvägen 27; beds from Skr180, 6-bed cabin Skr1500) The hotel is a meandering 1km walk from the boats used in the America’s Cup. The boat hotel is smack in the middle of Söder’s vibrant nightlife. Its piano bar stays open late, so it can get exquisitely crowded with drunken louts when nearby bars close.

**Scandic Hotel Malmen**

**First Hotel Amaranten** (Map pp68-9; s 692 52 00; www.firsthotels.com; Kungsholmsgatan 31; s/d frn Skr1499-2499/1899-2699; summer & weekend s/d frn Skr798-1348/1048-1548) The hotel equivalent of a swanky modern office building, this large complex has all the standard comforts. Rooms are decorated with typical Swedish modern design and are meant to serve the business traveller; if you’ve left your laptop at home, you can borrow one from the front desk.

**Midrange**

**Rival Hotel** (Map p80; s 54 57 89 00; www.rival.se; Mariatorget 3; s/d frn Skr990-2740, double Skr2220-3040, weekend s/d frn Skr1190/1340) An exciting place that provides a great example of cohesive design, the Rival is the brainchild of ABBA’s Benny Andersson and two other backers. Retro architecture pervades the building. Each room is decorated with posters from great Swedish films and comes with a teddy bear to make guests feel more at home. The complex, which sits at the edge of the lovely, tree-lined Mariatorget, includes a vintage 1940s movie theatre, with an adorable foyer which sparkles like a red jewel. There’s a good café and bakery adjoining the theatre, and on the opposite side is a nice lounge. The swank cocktail bar is pure over-the-top Art Deco. Several rooms have views over the square.

**Hotel Tre Små Rum** (Map pp66-9; s 641 23 71; www.tresmarum.se; Högbergsgatan 81; rooms without bathroom Skr695) Rooms have been added over the years, so the hotel belies its name (Three Small Rooms) and now has seven, but the charm of this quaint 18th-century hotel in a quiet district of Södermalm hasn’t been disturbed. With its rough-hewn vanilla-coloured walls, Italian-style décor, high ceilings and wooden floors, it’s one of the nicest hotels in Stockholm.

**Columbus Hotel** (Map pp68-9; s 50 31 12 00; www.columbus.se; Tjärhovsgatan 11; s/d Skr950-1250/1250-1550, summer & weekend s/d Skr695-950/895-1250; rooms in budget annex s/d/triple Skr695/895/1095) This highly recommended place is in a quiet part of Södermalm, near T-Medborgarplatsen, and is set around a cobblestone courtyard by a pretty park. As well as the budget rooms (which have TV, telephone and shared bathroom facilities), there are classy hotel-standard rooms.

**Hotel Anno 1647** (Map p80; s 442 16 80; www.anno1647.se; Mariagården 3; s/d frn Skr1495-1795/1695-2295, summer & weekend s/d frn Skr850-1295/1050-1595) This historical building has labyrinthine hallways and a range of rooms, most with private modern bathrooms and wooden floors. Some rooms have tiled Swedish stoves, toilets with chains, small cafés. Aside from the beloved Swedish sandwiches with salami and brie, and typical Swedish husmanskost, or classic Swedish ‘plain food.’ But the city’s increasingly varied culinary scene is making the mark on the menu, you can also find cuisine from a huge variety of cultures. Leading up to the Christmas holidays – and year-round at a few places –
STOCKHOLM • Eating

SOMETHING SPECIAL

Den Gyldene Freden (Map p80; 24 97 60; Österlånggatan 51; mains from Skr250, 2/3-course menu Skr418/468, husmanskost Skr96-185; dinner Mon-Fri, lunch & dinner Sat until midnight; metro T-Gamla Stan) Once owned by famed Swedish painter Anders Zorn, and now run by the Swedish Academy – the folks responsible for awarding the Nobel Prize for Literature – Den Gyldene Freden (meaning ‘the golden peace’) is a cornerstone in Stockholm’s cultural history. Its three barrel-vaulted cellar dining rooms (two with plasterwork paintings) have been open continuously since 1722. There are few better places in town for classic husmanskost, particularly the plate of pickled herring with Västerbotten ost (Skr155). There are also traditionally prepared dishes of goose, duck and salmon, all with interesting accompaniments such as red wine-dill sauce, mashed pumpkins, mushrooms from local forests, or the Swedish standby, almond potatoes.

you’ll find the justifiably famous Swedish smörgåsbord. August and midsummer bring two other beloved Swedish specialities to the table: surströmming and crayfish (kräftfestival). The former is incredibly pungent Baltic herring that’s been tinned and fermented for up to a year; the latter demands a relatively labour-intensive dining process that tends to shatter inhibitions. Both are acquired tastes and best accompanied by plenty of snaps.

Cafés and restaurants usually serve a weekday lunch special (or a choice of several) called dagen rätt at a fixed price (typically Skr65 to Skr85) between 11.30am and 2pm Monday to Friday. It’s a practice originally called weekday lunch special (or a choice of several) getagårdsrätt from Skr35-70) – your basic grilled hotdog on a bun – available for Skr10 to Skr20 from carts all over the city.

Gamla Stan

BUDGET

Café Art (Map p80; 411 76 61; Västerlånggatan 60; sandwiches from Skr35) This barrel-vaulted and brick-lined cellar is a low-key, atmospheric retreat from the Old Town’s shopping mayhem. Nestle in for coffee and cake, shrimp salad or a salami-and-brie baguette.

Hermitage (Map p80; 411 95 00; Stora Nygatan 11; dinner Skr70) This is a welcoming vegetarian restaurant that’s well worth a visit. There’s a hearty dagens rätt available weekdays for Skr65 to Skr70.

Sundbergs Konditori (Map p80; 20 67 35; Jämtorget 83; lunch specials Skr59) This is the oldest bakery-café in Stockholm, dating from 1785, and has a fine early 20th-century-style interior, complete with a copper samovar full of self-serve coffee. The café serves delicious hot sandwiches, pies, omelettes, lasagne and an assortment of ‘to-die-for’ pastries.

Bakfickan (Map p80; 20 31 70; Stortorget; cakes & snacks Skr30-70) This narrow café, strewn with wax-encrusted candlesticks, has wonderful coffee and cakes, plus outdoor seating on bustling Stortorget – what better way to spend a sunny afternoon? It shifts into a gay-friendly disco in the evening.

MIDRANGE

Zum Franziskaner (Map p80; 411 83 30; Skeppsholmen 44; dagen rätt Skr65, husmanskost Skr92-225; 06 10.30am-3pm & 6pm-11pm Mon-Fri, noon-4pm & 5.30-11pm Sat) Just across from the St George monument, this stylish modern restaurant with greenish décor declared was the best in Sweden in 2000 and it deserves the fine reputation. You can eat while seated at a central bar or at regular tables. Courses, including Beluga caviar and Greenhouse canapés, are so pretty to look at you might not want to eat them.

Leijonetornt (Map p80; 14 23 55; Lilla Nygatan 5; starters Skr165-195, mains Skr275-320; 3-/5-course menus Skr420/675; 06 10.30pm Mon-Sat, closed Sun) Lejonetornt’s basement dining room includes the foundations of a 14th-century tower. The brick-vaulted ceilings and candlelight add to the atmosphere, but the furnishings feature modern design. The superb menu, one of the city’s finest, includes fish, duck, game and vegetable dishes. There’s also a cheaper, midrange Italian-style bakfickan menu. The bar menu offers a few tapas plates (three for Skr125) should you just want to linger over a drink.

Central Stockholm

BUDGET

Vetkatten (Map p80; 31 84 54; Kungsgatan 55; tea, coffee & snacks from Skr25; 7.30am-8pm Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm Sat, noon-5pm Sun) Very grandmotherly, the labyrinthine Vetkatten is one of the city’s best-known traditional cafés, with lots of small rooms and a great atmosphere. You can also buy baked goods, large sandwiches and cakes to take away.

Ritorno (Map p80; 32 01 06; Odengatan 80-82; coffee & pastries from Skr25; 7.30am-10pm Mon-Fri, 8am-6pm Sat, 10am-6pm Sun) With scrumptious pastries and a sweet back room that looks like the foyer of an antique movie house that’s fallen on hard times, Ritorno is one of the most comfortable cafés in Stockholm. Miniature jukeboxes grace each table (and they actually work!), smoking students glare into textbooks, and punks and pedestrians congregate with families.

MIDRANGE

Sabai Sabai (Map p80; 790 09 13; www.sabai.se; Kammarkorgatan 44; mains Skr185-175; dinner) Friendly and laid-back Sabai Sabai, frequently named as Stockholm’s best Thai restaurant, serves great food in an ornate tropical-style interior. The extensive menu includes wok, noodle, curry, fish and seafood dishes. Reservations are recommended.

Tranan (Map p68-9; 52 72 81 00; Karlsbergsgången 14; starters Skr55-125, mains Skr95-265; dinner until 1am) This stylish, busy place on Odenplan looks like a classic French bistro, with its rustic furniture and checked tablecloths. It’s one of the most popular neighbourhood restaurants in Stockholm, constantly recommended by devoted locals. It has an excellent and comprehensive international menu, including a traditional Swedish herring platter. Don’t miss the basement bar.

Narknöi (Map p68-9; 30 70 70; Odengatan 94; mains Skr121-184; lunch & dinner) This award-winning, friendly and unpretentious restaurant is fairly small, with minimalist styles. The mild to hot dishes on the menu include many types of meat and fish, and a few vegetarian selections. Book well in advance.

Bistro Boheme (Map p80; 411 90 41; Drottninggatan 71A; mains Skr65-175) This place has weird designer furniture (gigantic chairs), huge beer mugs, a tiled bar with loud music, and a beer garden in summer. The menu includes Czech goulash soup and vegetarian lasagne – ask about the all-you-can-eat Sunday soup.

Grill (Map p80; 31 45 30; www.grill.se; Drottninggatan 89; starters Skr55-195, mains Skr315-285; lunch & dinner until 1am, 10pm Sun) This oddly homely restaurant, started by renowned chefs Melker Andersson and Danyel Couet, inhabits a sprawling space that looks like a furniture store, with 10 small dining areas set up like demo living rooms. The menu is arranged by grill type: rotisserie, charcoal, barbecue, etc. Mix and match with Asian table-grilled tuna, BBQ beef brisket, blackened salmon, wood-fired duck, scrumptious desserts and lots of sides, all from Skr45 to Skr130. The wine list, also conveniently organised by flavour. The restaurant’s service is casual and accommodating.
Lao Wai (Map p68-9;  673 78 00; Luntmakargatan 74; mains Skr100-185;  dinner Tue-Sat) This strictly vegetarian restaurant is heavy on philosophy (it’s less a menu than a manifesto) and simple in presentation. In a small white room with simple wooden tables, spices coax miraculous flavours out of various tofu and vegetable combinations.

Restaurant KB (Map p80;  679 60 32; Södermalm;  starters Skr95; dagens humskanskt Skr120-150, mains Skr180-250, bar menu Skr75-125;  11.30am-midnight Mon-Fri, 5pm-midnight Sat) KB stands for Konståns Bar – (the artists’ bar). On the ground floor of Konståns Huset, which provides housing, studio space and classes for artists, the restaurant serves traditional Swedish cuisine in arrangements that highlight each plate’s visual beauty. The assorted herring dishes and anything vegetarian or fish-based are highly recommended. The attached bar has wall paintings from 1931.

TOP END

Franska Matsalen (Map p80;  679 35 84; www.franska matsalen.se; Grand Hôtel Stockholm, Södra Blasieholmshamnen 8; breakfast Skr185, mains Skr180-250, bar menu Skr75-125;  6-11pm Mon-Fri) The ornate French restaurant at the Grand Hôtel fairly wallows in decadence, with elaborate chandeliers, lots of dark wood and deep red carpets. It has been called the best restaurant in Sweden, and the food is spectacular. A twist on beef tartare at the Grand Hôtel fairly wallows in excess, and it’s known for its outstanding herring smörgåsbord. There’s also an extensive French menu with all the classics, and it’s known for its outstanding herring smörgåsbord.

Franska Matsalen (Map p80;  676 58 08; mains Skr85-125;  11.30am-midnight Mon-Sat) With superb service, Art Nouveau decor, stools around the bar and opera-related photos, this little restaurant – the ‘back pocket’ of Operakällaren – serves gourmet Swedish humskanskt at moderate prices. Try the assorted herring, boiled potatoes and crispbread. Look out for opera singers, who tend to eat here after a performance.

Eyubi (Map pp68-9;  673 52 36; www.eyubi.com in Swedish; Döbelnsgatan 45; mains Skr60-195, meze platter Skr180;  5pm-midnight Tue-Thur, 1am Fri & Sat; closed Midsummer-Aug T-Rådmansgatan) Dramatically situated in a former car park, at the end of a long concrete hallway lined with photos by cutting-edge Stockholm artists, Eyubi makes it clear straightaway that it is no ordinary Mediterranean restaurant. Its classy industrial style and sophisticated menu – where hummus and tabbouleh rub shoulders with saffron-marinated chicken, scampi and lime-orange salmon – draw the trendy and arty from all over the city.

Östermalm

BUDGET

Sturekatten (Map p80;  611 16 12; Riddargatan 4; cakes & pies Skr15-70, baguettes Skr65;  8:30am-8pm Mon, 10am-6pm Sat & 11am-6pm Sun) This café looks like a full-grown dollhouse, with three levels and featuring a quaint late-19th-century ambience, with antique chairs, paintings and lamps. This is where the ladies-who-lunch take their mothers-in-law. In summer, if there’s room, you can fika (a uniquely Swedish word meaning to meet up friends or family to have coffee and cake) in the cute little courtyard.

MIDRANGE

Grodan Grev Ture (Map p88;  679 61 00; Grev Turegatan 16; lunch Skr95, mains Skr97-202, dinner mains Skr127-219;  11.30am-1am Mon-Thu, until 2am Fri & Sat) This huge, sophisticated place includes modern dining areas, a raging cocktail bar and a picture-windowed 18th-century-style room with ornate plasterwork, antique paintings and lighting worthy of Rembrandt. The French-leaning menu includes venison, pike and vegetarian lasagne and is popular with young professional types.

MIDRANGE

Södermalm

BUDGET

Nyhetströmming (Map p80; Södermalmstorg;  64% har normally lunch & dinner) The best place to get fried (stekt) herring in all of Stockholm is this unassuming cart outside the metro station at Slussen. Combo plates cost about Skr30 to Skr45, and there are picnic tables outside, perfect for people-watching while you eat.

Soda (Map p80;  4620075; Bellmansgatan 26;  8am-8pm Mon-Fri, 10am-7pm Sat & Sun) This is a smoky café full of moody teens and twenty-somethings moaning over their diaries and stealing secret glances at each other. Soda serves coffee American-style in huge green and yellow mugs. It has enduring indie-rock artwork on the walls, and best of all it’ll let you read its diaries.

TOP END

Restaurang Hasselbacken (Map pp68-9;  51 73 43 07; www.restauranghasselbacken.com; Hesseliusbacken 20; 2-/3-course menu Skr325/375;  1-10pm Mon-Sat late Jun to mid-Aug (restricted menu); otherwise 10am-2pm & 5-10pm Mon-Fri, 1-10pm Sat & 1-9pm Sun) This restaurant, in Scandic Hotel Hasselbacken, serves fine classical Swedish meals with foreign influences in a wonderful jewel box dining room dating from 1923. The menu includes such twists on husmanskost as reindeer fillet with Västerbottens ost potatoes and morel-currant gravy. There is a superb ceiling and a raised dining area with alcoves and sofas.

Wärdhuset Ulla Winblad (Map pp68-9;  663 05 71; www.uullawinblad.se in Swedish; Rosendalsvägen 8; starters Skr195-240; mains Skr195-290) Named after one of Carl Michael Bellman’s lovers, this villa was built as a steam bakery for the Stockholm World’s Fair (1897) and now serves fine food in an early 20th-century-style restaurant with a garden setting. The menu features international dishes and traditional Swedish meals, including meatballs and crayfish tails, and it’s known for its outstanding herring smörgåsbord.
Pelikan (Map p68-9; 65 50 90 90; Blekingegatan 40; mains Skr75-185; 1 dinner daily & lunch Sat & Sun; minimum age 23) This well-established place has a unique atmosphere with rooms in three different styles, including a German-style beer hall with monkeys painted on the pillars and ceiling. The food is good – the menu is classic husmanskost, and there’s usually a vegetarian special on the blackboard.

Koh Phangan (Map p68-9; 65 62 68 65; www.koh PHangan.ru in Swedish; Skånegatan 57; mains Skr125-265; 1 dinner Mon-Fri; 1 lunch & dinner weekends) This outrageous kitsch Thai restaurant has to be seen to be believed. It’s best at night, when you can enjoy your meal in a real tak-tuk to the accompanying racket of crickets and a tropical thunderstorm. The food is good, but service tends to be sluggish. There’s a DJ after 10pm, Tuesday to Sunday.

Crepérie Fyra Knop (Map p80; 65 64 77 27; Svar- tensgatan 4; crepes from Skr35; mains Skr60-80; 1 dinner Mon-Fri; lunch & dinner weekends) Fyra Knop serves excellent crepes in an intimate, romantic little place, with lots of small rooms tucked away just off the main drag in Söder. A good place for a quiet chat before you hit the clubs down the street.

Kungsholmen

STOCKHOLM ••  Eating

Spisa Hos Helena (Map p68-9; 65 60 12 38; www.elcuba.nito.se; Södermalmstorg 3; starters Skr60-70, mains Skr125-195; 1 dinner, bar until late) This tiny Cuban bar and restaurant’s luscious dark wooden floor, pressed-tin bar and decorative ceramic tiles give it the lived-in feel of a stylish old bodega. On the menu are favourites such as ropa vieja, fried plantains, tropical chicken and flan for dessert, plus specialities such as arroz a la Hemingway, red snapper marinated in cardamom and Cuban approaches to Caribbean cooking, such as fillet of venison in lingon and guava. You can also, of course, get Cuban cigars and a wide selection of rum drinks.

Spis Haga Helena (Map p68-9; 65 64 77 27; www.elikis.se in Swedish; Sverigesktorg 3; starters Skr65-75, mains Skr125-250; 1 dinner & lunch until 1am) This restaurant is on the top of the heap, both figuratively and literally. With perhaps the most unusual location in Stockholm – it is situated at the top of Katarinaihessen, the Slussen elevator built in 1883 – Gondolen offers fantastic views, a dizzyingly patterned wood floor, very comfortable armchairs in the bar and seating area, and very good food. Swedish style dishes such as the herring plate and the warm cloudberries with ice cream are particularly recommended.

Kungsholmen

STOCKHOLM ••  Drinking

Soldaten Svejk (Map p68-9; 64 33 66; Östgöta- gatan 35) In this crowded, amber-windowed, wooden-floored pub, decorated with heraldic shields, you can get great Czech beer, including the massively popular Staropramen, on tap. There are also simple and solid Czech meals (Skr75 to Skr115); try some of the excellent smoked cheese along with your beer. Be sure to arrive early – there are often long queues for tables.

ICA Baronen (Map p68-9; Odengatan 4; 65 40 38; 1 lunch only) A cheap and cheerful place with a cellar full of beer and wine, along with a small selection of international beers and good selection of spirits. The staff are friendly and the price is right.

Spisa Hos Helena

STOCKHOLM ••  Market Halls

This outrageously kitsch Thai restaurant has to be seen to be believed. It’s best at night, when you can enjoy your meal in a real tak-tuk to the accompanying racket of crickets and a tropical thunderstorm. The food is good, but service tends to be sluggish. There’s a DJ after 10pm, Tuesday to Sunday.

Crepérie Fyra Knop

STOCKHOLM ••  Eating

Spisa Hos Helena

STOCKHOLM ••  Drinking

Soldaten Svejk

STOCKHOLM ••  Market Halls

This colourful market halls are excellent places to sample both local and exotic treats. Östermalms Saluhall (Map p80; Östermalmsgatan; www.ostermalmshallen.se in Swedish; 9.30am-6pm Mon-Thu, until 6.30pm Fri & 4pm Sat – until 2pm Sat in summer; T-Östermalmsgatan) More upscale than Hötorgshallen, Östermalms Saluhall is excellent for fresh fish and meat, as well as hard-to-find cheeses. The building itself is the Stockholm landmark, designed as a Romanesque cathedral of food in 1885. For a quick lunch, belly up to the bar at Dadà Sushi; for more substantial fare, check the extensive dagens rätt board at the classy Tysta Mari (Skr60 to Skr85). The pastries at Andamans Brödbard are gorgeous. There’s a clean, well-hidden and free toilet in the far corner opposite the entrance.

Hötorgshallen (Map p80; Hötorget; www.hotorgshallen.se; 10am-6pm Mon-Thu, 10am-6.30pm Fri, 10am-4pm Sat, summer 10am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-3pm Sat; T-Hötorget) Located in the basement below Filmstaden cinema, Hötorgshallen has several fine speciality food shops selling fish, meat, cheese, groceries, coffee and tea, plus Asian fast-food stands, kebabs and the like. At lunchtime, locals cram themselves into a galleried-themed dining nook of Kajsa’s Fiskrestaurang for huge bowls of fiskoppa (fish stew) with mussels and aioli for Skr75 – a treat not to be missed. One side of the square there’s a daily street market with stalls selling flowers, fruits and vegetables and knick-knacks.

Söderhallarna (Map p68-9; Medborgargatan 3; www.soderhallarna.se in Swedish; 10am-6pm Mon-Thu, 10am-7pm Thu & Fri, 10am-4pm Sat; T-Medborgarplatsen) This more modern food hall includes a great vegetarian restaurant, deli, cheese shop, an Asian supermarket and a pub that has live jazz most nights. It’s not the most atmospheric place, so plan on enjoying your lunch outdoors on Medborgargatan.

Self-Catering

The handiest central supermarket is ICA Baronen (Map p68-9; Inside the Östermalmstorg Tunnelbana station; 17am-9pm Mon-Fri, 10am-7pm Sat, noon-6pm Sun) Enter from Frev Turegatan.

Kooper (Map p80; Katarinavägen 3-7; 17am- 9pm Mon-Fri, 9am-9pm Sat & Sun; T-Slussen)
Queues are fairly constant but, for once, justifiable. Clif Barnes (Map pp68-9; 31 80 70; Norrtullgatan 45; until 1am Mon-Sat) Named after the loser from the Dallas TV soap. People come here to sing along to popular tunes, dance on the tables and get inebriated. It’s a hugely popular beer-hall-type place with an outdoor bar and tables and get inebriated. It’s a hugely popular bar food. Bonden (Map pp68-9; 641 86 79; Bondegatan 1C; until 1am) In this small bar, located by a cow sign outside the door, you’ll find a strangely curved ceiling with 19th-century-style light bulbs. It’s a nice place to sit and have a quiet chat, but it fills up fast. Next door is the larger, more rock-oriented Bonden Club.

East (Map p80; 611 49 59; www.east-restaurant.se; Stureplan 13; until 3am) The dance floor here is seriously hopping at night, but there are always a few quiet seats near the bar where you can relax over cocktails, sake and sushi.

Etna Trappa Plus (Map p80; 611 02 75; Lidmalmgatan 3; until 3am, closing at 1am Mon-Fri) The back patio here has its own bar and heaters, making it a popular summertime hangout – if you can get in. The classy, labyrinthine bar and chill-out lounges are notoriously well-protected from anything that might seem less than the height of fashion. Dress like the mannequins in the Filippa K windows and all is acceptable.

Bers Salonger (Map p80; 56 61 20 00; www.bers . se; Berzelii Park; until 1am Mon-Tue, 3am Wed-Thu, 4am Fri & Sat, midnight Sun) With half a dozen bars spread across three levels, this grand mansion of a bar is drenched in history but buzzing with contemporary energy. On the basement level is a popular disco; there’s also a wine bar, a cocktail bar, a mirrored bar and a terrace.

Neat (Map p80; 50 56 30 00; www.neathotels . se; inside the Nordic Sea Hotel, Vasaplan 4; admission Skr125; until 1am Mon-Sat, 2am Sun) Of course it’s silly, but you’re intrigued, admit it. Built entirely out of ice; you drink from ice-carved glasses at tables made of ice. The admission price gets you warm booties, mittens, a parka and one drink; refills cost extra, but you’ll probably be too cold to want one anyway.

Storstad (Map pp68-9; 673 38 00; Döngestaden 41; until 1am Mon-Tue, 3am Wed-Sat) This super-trendy bar is the dictionary definition of Stockholm style, with its bright-white walls, right-angle bar and enormous picture windows. It has a more relaxed vibe than usual, though – this is one of the few places in town where someone might noticeably try to pick you up. DJs play most nights.

Akkurat (Map p80; 644 00 15; www.akkurat.se in Swedish; Hornsgatan 18; until 1am Mon-Sat) Fans of beer should make a point of visiting Akkurat. It has a huge selection of Belgian ales as well as a good range of Swedish-made microbrews, cider and, of course, Jamunds Bryggeri trio: Heaven, Hell, and Fallen Angel. There’s also a vast wall of whiskey, and mussels are on the menu.

August Bar & Bistro (Map pp68-9; 644 87 00; Folkungagatan 59; until 1am) Comfortable, classy and laid-back, this place has become the haven of the Medborgarplatsen area’s hipsters who have outgrown Söderkällaren but are tired of waiting to get into Kvarnen. It serves beer, wine and affordable bar food.

Kvarnen (Map pp68-9; 617 78 00; www.stu . recompagniet.se in Swedish; Stureplan 4; admission Skr120 after 10pm Fri & Sat; 10pm-5am Wed-Sat) One of the more welcoming clubs in Stureplan, this ornate, high-ceilinged, red-velvet-curtained bar also serves decent food.

Bryggeriet (Map p80; 54 50 37 01; www.theosybar . com in Swedish; Birger Jarlsgatan 20; admission Skr125; 10pm-5am Wed-Sat) Nicknamed ‘the Puke’ (because spy in Swedish means vomit), this bar is the ice queen of the club scene – you can’t help wanting to get in, but you hate it because it won’t let you.

Hamburgi (Map pp68-9; 16 64 65; Sveavägen 108; until 1am) This Cuban restaurant turns into a crowded salsa bar at night, with limber-legged Swedes and Latinos intermingling over cuba libres and mojitos in the basement.

Mondo (Map pp68-9; 673 10 32; Medborgarplatsen 8; until 3am) This newly opened club and cultural centre, in a former school building, is like a new nightclub opening every night of the week. It has a bar/restaurant, a large dance floor and music hall, and a tinier club upstairs, plus a gallery and a small movie theatre.

Live jazz is extremely popular in the capital and there are a number of excellent venues that show-case it and an annual jazz festival is held in mid-July. All the following clubs have admission charges, which will vary depending on what’s featuring on the night.

Glenn Miller Café (Map p80; 10 03 22; Brunnsgatan 21A; 5pm midnight Mon-Thu, 5pm-1am Fri & Sat; T-Hötorg, bus 1, 43, 52, 56) This tiny jazz and blues bar draws a faithful, fun-loving crowd to its performances. It’s also known for serving excellent, affordable husmanskost meals.

Jazzclub Fasching (Map p80; 21 62 67; www . fasching.se in Swedish; Kungsgatan 63; until 1am Mon-Thu, 4am Fri & Sat; tickets Skr20-200; T-Centralen, bus 1, 47, 53, 69) A world-renowned jazz club, Fasching hosts local artists and unknowns as well as big names in the international jazz world. It’s a small, cozy place, with a great view from the balcony but limited standing room.

Stampen (Map p80; 20 57 93; www.stampen . se; Stora Nygatan 5; 8pm-1am Mon-Thu, until 2am Thu-Sat; tickets Skr100-150; T-Gamla Stan, bus 3, 53, 55, 59, 76) This well-known club in Old Town, with timeworn, quirky décor and a friendly vibe, has blues and some jazz concerts every night. There’s a free blues jam featuring local musicians at 2pm on Saturday afternoons.

Mosebacke Etablissement (Map p80; 55 60 98 80; www.mosebacke . se in Swedish; Mosebacketorg 3; 4pm-1am Mon-Thu, Sun, until 2am Fri & Sat; tickets Skr80-250; T-Sweden, bus 3, 46, 53, 76) Well-known acts of all genres play at the historic Mosebacke, where the sophisticated, regal atmosphere augments any style of music. The outdoor bar here offers a great view of the city.

Concerts & Theatre

Stockholm is a theatre city, with outstanding dance, opera and music performances; for an overview, pick up the free Teater Guide from tourist offices. Ticket sales are handled by the tourist office at Swedish House, or you can buy direct from BiljettDirekt (0771-70 70 70; www.ticnet.se). Tickets generally aren’t cheap and they’re often sold out, especially for Saturday shows, but you can occasionally find good-value last-minute deals. Operas are usually performed in their original language, while theatre performances are invariably in Swedish.

Konserthuset (Map p80; 50 66 77 88; www . konserthuset.se; Hötorg; tickets Skr50-350) This venue features classical concerts and other musical events, including the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

Operan (Map p80; 24 82 40; www.operan . se; Gustav Adolfs Torg; tickets Skr135-400) The Royal Opera is the place to go for opera and classical ballet. It also has some bargain tickets in seats with poor views for as little as Skr40, and occasional luncheon concerts for Skr140 (including lunch).

Folkoperan (Map p80; 616 07 50; www.folkop eran.se; Hornsgatan 72; tickets Skr250-390) Folkoperan stages unconventional productions of opera and modern ballet that bring the audience close to the stage.

Dramaten (Map p80; 667 06 80; www.dramaten . se in Swedish; Nybroplan; tickets Skr175-280) The Royal Theatre stages a range of plays in a fantastic Art Nouveau environment.
Sport
Bandy matches, a uniquely Scandinavian phenomenon, take place all winter at Stockholm’s ice arenas. Impromptu ones happen in the square at Medborgarplatsen, while official games are scheduled at Zinkensdamm Idrottsplass.

Zinkensdamm Idrottsplass (Map p80; %668 93 31; Ringvägen 12-14; Nov-Feb 8am-2pm Tue-Thu, 8am-11pm Sat, 1-4pm Sun; T-Zinkensdamm) Watch a bandy match at Zinkensdamm is great fun. The sport, a precursor to ice hockey but with rules similar to football, except that you use a round vinyl ball instead of a puck, and the matches take place here up to three times a week from October to April (tickets cost Skr10 for children).

Södermalm. Skate-rental booths next to the basin on Kungsholmen offer (Map p80; %50 83 15 20; Basement, Kulturhuset, Södermalm 8) Catch the city’s cutting-edge new designers before they’re famous enough to be unaffordable at a branch of this cooperative décor store; there’s a central branch in the basement of Kulturhuset, and one on Söder’s main drag.

Hennes & Mauritz (H&M; Map p80; %796 54 46; Södermalm) Heaven for the budget-conscious couture-seeker, H&M specialises in classy Swedish knockoffs of designer clothing.

Svenskt Tenn (Map p80; %670 16 00; Strandvägen 5) For a taste of Swedish design history that’s literally museum-calibre, visit this deluxe shop enshrining the big stage regular big-name pop and rock acts, and some are not easy to cart around or handle along to an ice hockey game. Contact telephone number displayed.

Train
Stockholm is the hub for national train services run by Sveriges Järnväg (SJ; %0771-75 75 75; www.sj.se) and Tågkompaniet (Map p80; %020 44 11 41; www.tågkompaniet.se in Swedish).

Centralstationen (Stockholm C; %5am-midnight) is the central train station. At the domestic ticket office (Tel 7.30am-8pm Mon-Fri, 8.30am-6pm Sat, 9.30am-7pm Sun) there are special ticket windows when you need to purchase international or long-distance train tickets between 10am and 6pm, Monday to Friday. If your train departs outside these times, you can buy a ticket from the ticket collector on the train.

Direct SJ trains to/from Copenhagen, Oslo and Storlind (for Trondheim) arrive and depart from Centralstationen, as do the overnight Tågkompaniet trains from Göteborg (via Stockholm and Boden) to Kiruna and Narvik; the Arlanda Express; and the SL pendeltåg commuter services that run to/from Nynäshamn, Södertälje and Märsta. Other SL local rail lines (Roslagsbanan and Saltsjöbanan) run from Stockholm Östertälje (T-Tekniska Högskolan) and Slussen, respectively.

In the basement at Centralstationen, you’ll find lockers costing Skr35 to Skr75 (depending on size) for 24 hours, toilets for Skr5, and showers (next to the toilets) for Skr25. These facilities are open 5am to midnight daily. There’s also a left-luggage office, open daily, and a lost property office (Tel 762 25 50; 10am-6pm Mon-Fri).

Follow the signs to find your way to the local metro (T-bana) network; the underwater station here is called T-Centralen.

GETTING AROUND
To/from the Airports
The Arlanda Express (Tel 58 88 90 00; tickets from Skr200) train from Centralstationen takes only 20 minutes to reach Arlanda; trains run every 15 minutes from about 5am to midnight. The same trip in a taxi costs Skr350, but agree on the fare first and don’t use any taxi without a contact telephone number displayed. Taxi Stockholm (%15 00 00) is one reputable operator.

The cheaper option is the Flygbuss service between Arlanda airport and Cityterminalen. Buses leave every 10 to 15 minutes (Skr89, 40 minutes). It’s also possible to arrange a connecting Flygtaxi (Skr115) to meet you at your Flygbuss stop and take you directly to your door. Tickets for both can be

Boat
Silja Line (Tel 22 21 40; www.silja.com) runs ferries to Helsinki and Turku. Viking Line (Tel 452 40 00; www.vikingline.fi) ferries run to Turku and Helsinki. Tallink (Tel 666 60 01; www.tallink.ee) ferries go to Tallinn (Estonia).

Bus
Most long-distance buses arrive and depart from Cityterminalen, which is connected to Centralstationen. Here you’ll find the bus stop ticket office (%440 85 70; Cityterminalen; 9am-5.30pm Mon-Fri), which represents the biggest concern since Eurolines and Y-Bussen, along with many of the direct buses to the north.

Sweabus Express (Tel 0200 21 82 18; www.sweabuspress.se; 2nd level, Cityterminalen) runs daily to Malmö (9¾ hours), Göteborg (seven hours), Norrköping (two hours, Kalmar (six hours), Mora (4¾ hours), Orebro (three hours) and Oslo (eight hours). There are also direct runs to Gävle (2¼ hours), Uppsala (one hour) and Västerås (1¼ hours).

Ybuss (Tel 020 033 44 44; www.ybuss.se in Swedish; Cityterminalen) runs services to Sundsvall, Östersund and Umeå. You’ll also find a number of companies running buses from many provincial towns directly to Stockholm. See the relevant destination chapters for details.

Car & Motorcycle
The E4 motorway passes through the city, just west of the centre, on its way from Helsingborg to Haparanda. The E20 motorway from Stockholm to Göteborg via Örebro, follows the E4 as far as Södertälje. The E18 from Kapellskär to Oslo runs from east to west and passes just north of the city centre.

For car hire close to Centralstationen, contact Statoil (Map p80; %20 20 64; Vasagatan 16), or Avis (Map p80; %20 20 60; Vasagatan 10B).
purchased on arrival at the Flygbuss counter at Arlanda airport’s main terminal.

**Bicycle**

Stockholm has a wide network of bicycle paths and in summer you won’t regret bringing a bicycle with you or hiring one to get around. The tourist offices have maps for sale, but they’re not usually necessary if you have a basic city map already.

Top day trips include Djurgården; Drottningholm (return by steamer); Haga Park or the adjoining Ulriksdal Park or a loop from Gamla Stan to Södermalm, Långholmen and Kungsholmen (on lakeside paths). Trails and bike lanes are clearly marked with traffic signs. Some long-distance routes are marked all the way from central Stockholm: Nynäsleden to Nynäshamn joins Sommarleden near Västerhaninge and swings west to Södertälje. Roslagsleden leads to Norrtälje (linking Blåleden and Vaxholm). Upplandsleden leads to Märsta north of Stockholm, and you can ride to Uppsala via Sigtuna. Sörmlandsleden leads to Södertälje.

Bicycles can be carried free on SL local trains, except during peak hour (6am to 9am and 3pm to 6pm weekdays). They are not allowed in Centralstationen or on the metro, although you’ll see some daring souls from time to time.

**Sjöcafé** [660 575; 9am–9pm], by the bridge across to Djurgården, rents out bikes for Skr65/250 per hour/day (with options for longer rentals). For about the same price they also rent in-line skates, another good way to get around.

**Boat**

Djurgårdfärjan city ferry services connect Gröna Lund Tivoli on Djurgården with Nybroplan and Slussen as frequently as every 10 minutes in summer (considerably less frequently in the low season); a single trip costs Skr20 (free with the SL Tourist Card or a monthly SL card).

**Car & Motorcycle**

Driving in central Stockholm is not recommended. Small one-way streets, congested bridges and limited parking all present problems; note that Djurgårdsvägen is closed near Skansen at night, on summer weekends and some holidays. Don’t attempt to drive through the narrow streets of Gamla Stan.

Parking is a major problem, but there are P-hus (parking stations) throughout the city; they charge up to Skr50 per hour, though the fixed evening rate is usually more reasonable. If you do have a car, one of the best options is to stay on the outskirts of town and catch public transport into the centre.

**Public Transport**

**Storstockholms Lokaltrafik** (SL; www.sl.se) runs all tunnelbana (T or T-bana) metro trains, local trains and buses within the entire Stockholm county. There is an SL information office in the basement of Centralstationen near the Sergels Torg entrance (open until 11.15pm), which issues timetables and sells the SL Tourist Card and Stockholm Card.

You can also call 600 10 00 for schedule and travel information from 7am to 9pm weekdays, and 8am to 9pm on weekends.

The Stockholm Card (p72 for more information) covers travel on all SL trains and buses in greater Stockholm. The 24-hour (Sk80) and 72-hour (Sk150) SL Tourist Cards are primarily for transport and only give free entry to a few attractions. The 72-hour SL Tourist Card is good value, especially if you use the third afternoon for transport to either end of the county – you can reach the ferry terminals in Grisslehamn, Kapellskär or Nynäshamn, as well as all of the archipelago harbours. If you want to explore the county in more detail, bring a passport photo and get yourself a 30-day SL pass (Sk600, or Sk360 for children age seven to 18 and seniors).

On Stockholm’s public transport system the minimum fare costs two coupons, and each additional zone costs another coupon (up to five coupons for four or five zones). Coupons cost Skr10 each, but it’s much better to buy strips of tickets for Skr110. Coupons are stamped at the start of a journey. Travelling without a valid ticket can lead to a fine of Skr600 or more. Coupons, tickets and passes can be bought at metro stations, Pressbyrán kiosks, SL railway stations, SL information offices, and from bus drivers.

International rail passes (eg Scanrail, Interail) aren’t valid on SL trains.

**BUS**

While the bus timetables and route maps are complicated, they’re worth studying as there are some useful connections to suburban...
attractions. Ask SL (660 10 00) or any tourist office for the handy inner-city route map Inredningsbusser.

Inner-city buses radiate from Sergels Torg, Östermalm, Fridhemsplan and Slussen. Bus 47 runs from Sergels Torg to Djurgården, and bus 69 runs from Centralsationen and Sergels Torg to the Ladugårdsgräset museums and Kåkåstornet. Useful for hostellers include bus 65, which goes from Centralsationen to Skeppsholmen, and bus 43, which runs from Regeringsgatan to Södermalm.

Inner-city night buses run from 1am to 5pm on a few routes. Most leave from Centralsationen, Sergels Torg, Slussen, Östermalm and Fridhemsplan to the suburbs.

Check where the regional bus hub is for each outlying area. Islands of the Ekerö municipality (including Drottningholm palace) are served by buses with numbers 301 to 323 from T-Bromma plan. Buses to Vaxholm (the 670) and the Åland ferries to the Åland ferries (the 670) and the Åland ferries (the 637 to Kapellskär) depart from T-Techniska Högskolan. Östermalm is the hub for buses to the northern suburbs, including Hagaparken.

TRAIN
Local pendeltåg trains are useful for connections to Nynäshamn (for ferries to Gotland), to Mårsta (for buses to Sigtuna and the short hop to Arlanda Airport) and Södertälje. There are also services to Nockeby from T-Alvik; Lidingö from T-Ropsten; Kårsta, Österskär and Näsbypark from T-Techniska Högskolan; and to Saltsjöbaden from T-Slussen. SL coupons can be used on these trains, or you can pay on board.

TRAM
The historic No 7 tram (660 77 00) runs between Norrmalmstorg and Skansen, passing most attractions on Djurgården. Separate fees apply for those with a Stockholm Card (adult/child Skr20/10), but the SL Tourist Card is valid.

METRO
The most useful mode of transport in Stockholm is the tunnelbana, run by SL. Its lines converge on T-Centralen, connected by an underground walkway to Centralsationen. There are three main lines with branches. (See the Stockholm Metro map p103 for route details). The blue line has a comprehensive collection of modern art decorating the underneath stations, and several stations other lines are decorated as well, often by famous artists.

Taxi
There’s usually no problem finding a taxi, but they’re expensive, so check for a meter or arrange the fare first. The flag fall is Skr35, then about Skr7 per kilometre. At night, women should ask about taxi, a discount rate offered by some operators. Reputable firms are Taxi Stockholm (15 00 00), Taxi 020 (020 93 93 93) and Taxi Kurl (30 00 00).

AROUND STOCKHOLM
You can explore the county of greater Stockholm with the SL Tourist Card or monthly passes that allow unlimited travel on all buses and local trains. Free timetables are available from the SL office in Centralstationen or the SL terminals at Slussen or Östrastationen.

The delightful islands of the Stockholm archipelago are within easy reach of the city. Ferry services aren’t expensive and there’s a travel pass available if you want to tour around the islands for a while. On warm and sunny summer days, you could easily believe you’re in the south of France rather than in the northern reaches of Europe.

EKERÖ DISTRICT
The pastoral Ekerö district, just 20km west of Stockholm, is home to the fabulous Drottningholm palace as well as several large islands and parks. Among these are the UNESCO World Heritage site, Skoghisholm slott.

Drottningholm
The royal residence and parks of Drottningholm on Lovön are popular attractions and easy to visit from the capital. If you’re not short of time you can cycle out to the palace. Otherwise, take the metro to T-Brommaplan and change to a bus number between 301 and 323. If you’re driving, there are few road signs for Drottningholm, so get hold of a decent map. The car park is on the left after crossing Drottningholmsbron.

Strömma Kanalbolaget (Map p80; 58 71 40 00; www.strommakanalbolaget.com) will take you to...
the palace by boat. They have frequent boats departing from Stadshusbron (Stockholm) daily between May and mid-September, and weekends between mid-September and the end of October (one way/return Skr90/120). It’s a good idea to use the Stockholm Card here, as otherwise seeing everything on the grounds can get expensive.

**Drottningholms Sledt**

Still home to the royal family for part of the year, the Renaissance-inspired main palace (402 62 80; www.royalcourt.se; adult/child Skr60/30; 10am-4.30pm May-Aug, noon-3.30pm Sep, noon-3.30pm Sat & Sun Oct-Apr), with its geometric baroque gardens, was designed by the great architect Nicodemus Tessin the Elder and begun in 1662, about the same time as Versailles. You’ll see hand-painted 18th-century wall-paper and an Italian-style room (salon de déjeuner) with fake three-dimensional wall effects and a ceiling that resembles the sky.

Ilusion was the order of the day here, and accordingly the theatre makes use of fake marble, fake curtains and papier-mâché viewing boxes. Even the stage was designed to create illusions regarding size.

The interesting guided tour will also take you into other rooms in the same building. You’ll see hand-painted 18th-century wall-paper and an Italian-style room (salon de déjeuner) with fake three-dimensional wall effects and a ceiling that resembles the sky.

**Kina Sledt**

At the far end of the gardens is Kina Sledt (402 62 70; adult/child Skr50/25; 11am-4.30pm May-Aug, noon-3.30pm Sep), a lavishly decorated Chinese pavilion built by King Adolf Fredrik as a birthday gift to Queen Lovisa Ulrika (1753). It was restored between 1989 and 1996 and is now used for small private parties and weddings.

There’s a café on the premises serving good waffles, and the admission price includes guided tours, which run at 11am, noon, 2pm and 3pm daily from June to August (the schedule is reduced from May to September).

On the slope below Kina Sledt, the striking Guards’ Tent (admission free; noon-4pm Jun–mid-Aug) was erected in 1781 as quarters for the dra-goons of Gustav III, but it’s not really a tent at all. The building now has displays about the gardens and Drottningholms’ Royal Guard.

**Eating**

Bring a picnic with you and enjoy it in the gardens, or dine in one of the two restaurants by the palace. There’s also a small kiosk by the driveway entrance.

Drottningholms Paviljongen (759 04 25; light meals Skr33-100, mains Skr120-185) Close to the boat dock, this café with outdoor seating, serves light meals like sandwiches and heartier mains, as well as coffee and cakes.

Drottningholms Vårdhus (759 03 08; mains Skr185-230) Opposite the palace grounds, this is a little more upmarket. It offers an extensive menu, with simple hamskost dishes, such as meatballs, from Skr95 and fancier meat and fish mains.

**ENTERTAINMENT**

Drottningholms Sledtsteater (660 82 25; www.drottningholmsstadssteater.dtm.se; Drottningholm; tickets Skr100-410) This is a beautiful, small 18th-century theatre at the royal palace. It stages opera and ballet productions in summer that are well worth attending.

**Ekerö & Munsö**

These long and narrow islands in Mälaren lake are joined together and have a main road running most of their length. The free car ferry to Adelsö departs from the northern end of Munsö.

The two churches of Ekerö and Munsö both date from the 12th century. Munsökyrka is an interesting structure with a round-tower and a narrow steeple.

Buses 311 and 312 frequently run out here from T-Brommaplan in Stockholm.

**Birka**

The Viking trading centre of Birka (56 05 14 45; www.raa.se/birka; 11am-6pm May-Sep), on Björkö in Mälaren lake, is now a Unesco World Heritage Site and was founded around AD 760 with the intention of expanding and controlling trade in the region. The village attracted merchants and craft workers, and the population grew to about 700. A large defensive fort with thick dry-stone ramparts was constructed next to the village. In 830, the Benedictine monk Ansar was sent to Birka by the Holy Roman Em- peror to convert the heathen Vikings to Christianity and he lived in Birka for 18 months. Birka was abandoned in the late 10th century when Sigtuna took over the role of commercial centre.

The village site is surrounded by a vast graydav. It’s the largest Viking age cem- etery in Scandinavia, with around 3000 graves. Most people were cremated, then mounds of earth were piled over the remains, but some Christian coffins and chambered tombs have been found. The fort and harbour have also been excavated. A cross to the memory of St Ansar can be seen on top of a nearby hill.

The Birka Museum (11am-6pm May-Sep) is excellent. Exhibits include finds from the excavations (which are still proceeding), copies of the most magnificent objects, and an interesting model showing the village as it was in Viking times.

Cruises to Birka run from early May to late September; the round-trip on Strömma Kanalbolaget’s Victoria from Stadshusbron, Stockholm, is a full day’s outing (Skr255). The cruise price includes a visit to the museum and a guided tour in English of the settlement’s burial mounds and fortifications. Call 5871 40 00 for details; boats leave around 9am. Ferries do not run during the midsummer holidays.

Boats also leave from Adelsö (Hov-gården) to Birka (Skr95, including museum entry); call 711 14 57 for details. Summer cruises to Birka depart from many other places around Mälaren, including Marie-fred, Södertälje, Strängnäs and Västerås.

**VAXHOLM**

There’s a good reason this pastoral island runs thick with tourists in summer. About 35km northeast of the city, Vaxholm is dotted with the kind of quaint summerhouses kept by the fashionable set in the 19th cen-tury. The settlement was founded in 1647, and the oldest buildings are in Norrhamn, a few minutes’ walk north of the town hall. There’s also interesting architecture along Hamngatan, as well as galleries, boutiques and souvenir shops.

Vaxholm is the gateway to the central and northern reaches of the archipelago. It’s a pleasant place with many attractions and a relaxed atmosphere, and it’s well worth a visit.

**Information**

There’s a tourist office (54 13 14 80; info@visitvaxholm.com, www.visitvaxholm.com; 10am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-4pm Sat & Sun Jun-Aug, 10am-3pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat & Sep-May) inside the rådhus (town hall), off Hamngatan; look for the onion dome, a product of the rådhus rebuilding in 1925. Also on Hamngatan are a bank, supermarkets and other services.

**Sights**

The construction of Vaxholm Kastell (Gatad; 54 17 21 57; adult/child Skr50/free; noon-4pm (Jun–mid-Aug), a fortress on an islet just east of the town, was originally ordered by Gustav Vasa in 1544, but most of the current structure dates from 1863. The fortress was
attacked by the Danes in 1612 and the Russian navy in 1719. Nowadays, it’s home to the National Museum of Coastal Defence and a restaurant-conference centre. The ferry across to the island departs regularly from Söderhamn (the bustling harbour) and the admission price is included in the fare.

The Hembygdsgård (54 13 17 20; Trädgårdsgatan 19; admission free; 11am-4pm Sat & Sun May-Aug) is a popular outdoor café in Norrland. The Fiskekarestost is an excellent example of a late-19th-century fisherman’s house, with a typical Swedish fireplace. The café here is open daily from May to mid-September.

Sleeping & Eating
Bogesund Vandrarhem (54 13 22 40; dm Skr210). By a castle 5km southwest of Vaxholm, this is a pleasant, well-equipped STF hostel located in peaceful countryside. Bus 671 stops on the main road about 500m from the hostel.

Waxholms Hotel (54 13 01 50; info@waxholms hotel.se; Hamngatan 2; s/d from Skr900/1025) Just opposite the harbour front, this hotel is a mixture of Art Nouveau and modern styles. Discounted rooms are available here in July, and on weekends year-round. This grand house is a castle 5km southwest of Vaxholm, this is a

Getting There & Away
Boats sail frequently between Söderhamn (the bustling harbour) and Vaxholm, has rocky cliffs and a small beach with good swimming opportunities. Finnhamn is fairly trendy, attracting wealthy visitors from Stockholm and beyond. If you want to escape or if accommodation is booked up, you can camp in the woods.

Finnhamn Café (54 24 64 04) serves good meals, and has a lovely view.

You can sail with Waxholmsbolaget (Map p80; 679 58 30 from Strömhamn (Stockholm) to Finnhamn, via Vaxholm, up to five times daily (Sk115, two hours). Cinderella Båtarna (Map p80; 58 71 40 50) also sails here daily from Strandvägens in Stockholm (Sk125).

Sandön Sandön is 2.5km long and has superb sandy beaches that are reminiscent of the Mediterranean on a sunny day. Sandhamn is the northern settlement on the island, but the best beaches are at Trevill, near the southern tip. The wooden houses and narrow alleys of Sandhamn are worth exploring too. How- ever, the island is a popular destination for partygoers and wealthy sailors – many regattas start or finish here. As a result of this, the place is rather expensive and it is best visited just as a day trip. Camping is prohibited.

Sandhams Vårdshus (57 15 30 51; s/d from Skr50/850) first opened in 1672 and still serves good food. Popular Dykarbaren (57 15 35 54; mains around Skr140) is a fashionable restaurant/bar just 50m from the quay, with lunch specials from Skr75.

Waxholmsbolaget (679 58 30) sails from Strömhamn to Sandhamn, via Vaxholm, one to four times daily (Sk115, two hours). Cinderella Båtarna (58 71 40 50) do the same run regularly from Strandvägens (Skr125).

STOCKHOLM ARCHIPELAGO
Ask anyone in Stockholm what one summer activity no visitor should miss, and most will tell you to see the archipelago. With anything between 14,000 and 100,000 islands, depending on whom you ask (the general consensus is 24,000), the archipelago around Stockholm is surprisingly accessible and very rewarding. Every Stockholm’s dream is to own a little red summer cottage on a rocky islet, but visitors can rent them even for short stays, and regular boats offer great opportunities for outings.

Information
For information on cabin and chalet rental in the archipelago, contact Destination Stockholms Skärgård (54 24 81 00; dess@skargard.se, www.dess.se; Lillström, SE-18497 Ljuterö).

For excellent information about the archipelago, in English and other languages, check out www.skargardstiftelsen.se.

Activities
There is a boat operator in the archipelago is Waxholmsbolaget (Map p80; 679 58 30; www.waxholmsbolaget.se). Timetables and information are available from its offices outside the Grand Hotel on Strömkajen in Stockholm, and at the harbour in Vaxholm, as well as online. It divides the archipelago into three areas: Norra Skärgården is the northern section (north from Ljusterö to Arholma); Mellersta Skärgården is the middle section, taking in Vaxholm, Ingmarsö, Stora Kalholmen, Finnhamn, Möja and Sandhamn; and Södra Skärgården is the southern section, with boats south to Näröd, Örön and Utö.

Waxholmsbolaget’s Båtfluffarkortet pass (Skr300 for five days) gives unlimited rides on its services plus a handy island map.

If your time is short, a recommended tour is the Thousand Island Cruise offered by Strommakanalbolaget (Map p80; 58 71 40 00; www.strommakanalbolaget.com; Nybrokajen), running daily between late June and mid-August. The full day’s tour departs from Stockholm’s Nybrokajen at 9.30am and returns at 8.30pm. The cost of Skr900 includes lunch, dinner, drinks and guided tours ashore. The boat pulls in to a number of interesting islands, and there are opportunities for swimming.

Islands
ARHOLMA
Arholma is one of the most interesting islands in the far north of the archipelago. Everything became a popular resort in the early 20th century. It’s noted for its traditional village and chapel, and has fine sandy beaches and good swimming from the rocks.

Arholma has a summer café, a shop, a simple camping ground and bike rental. Van- dhramar Arholma (0176-560 18; beds Skr120; Skr- round) is a pleasant STF hostel in a renovated barn; advance booking is essential.

Preserves the finest old houses in Norrland. The Fiskekarestost is an excellent example of a late-19th-century fisherman’s house, with a typical Swedish fireplace. The café here is open daily from May to mid-September.

Ansgör
This island, 15km south of Norrtälje, was declared a national park as early as 1909, despite being only 1.5km long and 600m wide. It is characterised by meadows, virgin woodland and magnificent displays of wild flowers (especially in spring). You may also see ospreys, sea eagles and great-crested grebes.

You can’t stay overnight in the park, but there are boat trips (from Furusund) and guided walks; contact Norrtälje tourist office (0176-719 90) for current details. Bus 621 runs every hour or two (fewer at weekends) between T-Danderyds sjukhus (Stockholm) to Norrland. There are three daily or four times daily from Norrtälje to Furusund. Alternatively, there are boats from Stockholm and Vaxholm to Furusund (Sk100).

Siaröfortet
The tiny island of Kyrkogårdöns, in the important sea lane just north of Ljusterö (40km due northeast of Stockholm), may be only 400m long but it’s one of the most fascinating islands in the archipelago.

After the outbreak of WWI, military authorities decided that the Vaxholm Kastell wasn’t good enough and, in 1916, construction of a new fort began on Kyrkogårdöns. This powerful defence facility, Siaröfortet, was never used in anger. Renovated in 1996, it’s now open as a museum (admission free) and a visit is highly recommended. You’ll see the officers’ mess, kitchen, sleeping quarters and tunnels, plus two impressive 15.2cm cannons (they’re trained on passing Viking Line ferries!). There are no fixed opening times; contact the STF hostel to arrange a tour.

STF Vandrhem Siaröfortet (54 24 30 90; beds Skr165; Skr165-May-Sep) is an excellent STF hostel in the old soldiers’ barracks. Canoe hire and breakfast are available; advance booking is recommended.

Waxholmsbolaget ferries to Siaröfortet depart from Strömhamn in Stockholm and sail to Siaröfortet via Vaxholm once or twice daily. The journey takes 1½ hours from Stockholm, or 50 minutes from Vaxholm (Sk100 and Skr90 respectively).

FINNHAMN
This 900m-long island, northeast of Stock-

ham, has rocky cliffs and a small beach with good swimming opportunities. Finnhamn is fairly trendy, attracting wealthy visitors from Stockholm and beyond. If you want to escape or if accommodation is booked up, you can camp in the woods.

Vandrarhem Finnhamn (54 24 62 12; info@finn

ham.nu; dm Skr230; Skr140-round) is a STF hostel in a large converted warehouse, with availability to hire. It’s the largest hostel in the archipelago; advance booking is essential. The Finnhamn Café (54 24 64 04) serves good meals, and has a lovely view.

You can sail with Waxholmsbolaget (Map p80; 679 58 30) from Strömhamn (Stockholm) to Finnhamn, via Vaxholm, up to five times daily (Sk115, two hours). Cinderella Båtarna (Map p80; 58 71 40 50) also sails here daily from Strandvägen in Stockholm (Sk125).

SANDÖN
Sandön is 2.5km long and has superb sandy beaches that are reminiscent of the Mediterranean on a sunny day. Sandhamn is the northern settlement on the island, but the best beaches are at Trevill, near the southern tip. The wooden houses and narrow alleys of Sandhamn are worth exploring too. However, the island is a popular destination for partygoers and wealthy sailors – many regatta-
Strömma Kanalbolaget (☎ 58 71 40 00) runs tours from Nybroplan to Sandhamn daily between mid-June and mid-August (one way/return Skr130/225), departing at 10am and returning at 6pm (with two hours at Sandhamn). The price includes a one-hour guided walking tour around Sandhamn.

UTÖ

Utö is a delightful island in the southern section of the archipelago – it’s 13km long and up to 4km wide. The road and track network make it popular with cyclists.

You can get a reasonable sketch map of the island from the tourist office (☎ 50 15 74 10; ☏ 10am-4pm Mon-Fri Apr-Sep), found in a small cabin by the guest harbour at Gruvbryggen, also known as Grubyn (the northernmost village). When the tourist office is closed, ask at the värdshus, which is just up the hill.

Sights & Activities

Most of the sights are at the northern end of the island, near Gruvbryggen. The most unusual is Sweden’s oldest iron mine, which opened in 1150 but closed in 1879. The three pits are now flooded – the deepest is Nyköpinguvan (215m). The mining museum (opposite the värdshus) keeps variable hours, so check locally. The well-preserved, 18th-century miners’ houses and the woods are worth a look, and the windmill (☎ 11am-3pm) is fun. The best sandy beach is on the north coast, it’s a 10 minute walk from the värdshus in the direction of Kroka. To see the glaciated rock slabs on the east coast, walk for about 20 minutes through the forest towards Råvästvik.

Sleeping & Eating

Open from May to September, the STF hostel (☎ 50 42 03 15; reception@uto-vardshus.se; Gruvbryggen, dm Skr200), associated with the nearby värdshus, is in a former summer house. Reception and meals are at the värdshus.

Utö Vårdshus (☎ 50 42 03 00; reception@uto-vards hus.se; 2-person chalets with breakfast per person low/high season Skr75/100) This is the only hotel on the island and isn’t cheap, but facilities are good and there’s the bonus of the on-site restaurant, considered the best in the archipelago. Lunch specials are about Skr80, à la carte dining main courses around Skr65, 45 minutes, but make sure you know whether your boat stops at Spränga or Gruvbryggen first. Ask at the guest harbour (☎ 50 15 74 10) about bike hire (from Skr75 per day).

KAPELLSKÄR

Kapellskär is so tiny it can’t really even be described as a village – there’s little to it except for a camping ground, hostel and large ferry terminal. The coastline, however, is spectacular, dotted with small, still-working fishing villages, and the surrounding countryside is delightfully pastoral. Most people come here for ferry connections to Finland and Estonia; see p328 for details.

There is also a small memorial for the 852 passengers killed in the Estonia ferry disaster of September 1999; it’s up the hill across the main road from the ferry terminal.

There’s an STF hostel (☎ 076-441 69; Riddersholmsminne 8; Skr50-100), 10 minute walk from the ferry terminal; you’ll need to book in advance if you plan to stay out of peak summer season (mid-June to mid-August), and there’s no restaurant, so bring your own food.

Viking Line’s direct bus from Stockholm Cityterminalen to meet the ferries costs Skr65, but if you have an SL pass, take bus 640 or 644 from T-Tekniska Högskolan to Norttöja and change to 631, which runs every two hours or so (infrequently at weekends).

TYRESTA NATIONAL PARK

Some of the best hiking and wilderness scenery can be found in the 4900-hectare Tyresta National Park, only 20km southeast of Stockholm. The park, established in 1993, is noted for its virgin forest, which includes 300-year-old pine trees. This is a beautiful area, with rocky outcrops, small lakes, marshes and a wide variety of birdlife, and it’s an easy, worthwhile trip if you’re looking for a reason to get out of the city and into nature.

At the southwestern edge of the park is Tyresta Nationalparks Hus (National Parks Visitors Centre; ☏ 08-745 33 94; adult/child Skr30/15; ✈ Tue-Sun). Here you can discover all of Sweden’s national parks (28 at the time of research) through exhibitions and slide shows, but be sure to check out the centre itself – it’s been restored in the shape of Sweden, complete with all 41 corners! There are even ‘lakes’ on the floor, indicating the different stones.

Ask for the national park leaflet in English and the Tyresta Nationalpark och Natursavet leaflet in Swedish, which includes an excellent topographical map at 1:25,000 scale. From the visitors centre there are various trails to the park. Sörmlandsleden track cuts across 6km of the park on its way to central Stockholm.

Access to the park is easy. Take the pendeltåg to Hånginge centrum (also called Handen station) on the Nynäshamn line, then change to bus 807 or 834. Some buses run all the way to the park, others stop at Svartbäcken (2km west of Tyresta village).

SIGHTS

During medieval times there were seven stone-built churches in Sigtuna, but most have since crumbled. The ruins of the churches of St Per and St Lars can be seen off Pråstagatan. St Olof church was built in the early 12th century, but was ruined by the 17th century. The adjacent Maria kyrkan (☎ 9am-4pm Sep-May, 9am-8pm Jun-Aug) is the oldest brick building in the town. It was the first church from around 1250, but became the parish church in 1529 after the monastery was demolished by Gustav Vasa. There are restored medieval paintings inside and free summer concerts are held weekly.

Sigtuna Museum (☎ 59 73 87 30; Storagatan 55; adult/child Skr20/free; ☏ noon-4pm Tue-Sun Sep-May, noon-4pm Jul-Aug) looks after several attractions in the town, all of them on Stora gatan and near the tourist office. Lundström’s gårdar (adult/child Skr15/5; ☏ noon-4pm Jun-Aug, noon-4pm Sat & Sun Sep) is an early-20th-century, middle-class home and adjacent general store, complete with period furnishings and goods. Sigtuna rådhus (admission free; ☏ noon-4pm Jun-Aug, noon-4pm Sat & Sun Sep), the smallest town hall in Scandinavia, dates from 1744 and was designed by the mayor himself. It’s on the town square opposite the tourist office. The main museum building has displays of gold jewellery, runes, costumes and local farm life.

The magnificent private palace Steninge Slott (☎ 50 25 95 00; 7km east of Sigtuna, dates from 1705 and was designed by Nicodemus Tessin the Younger. On the guided palace tour (Skr55; noon and 2pm daily in summer), you’ll see luxuriously ornate interiors; in the beautiful grounds there is also the excellent Cultural Centre (gallery tour Skr75; ✈ yr-round). In a converted stone barn dating from the 1870s, you’ll find an art gallery, glassworks, a candle-making area, café and restaurant.

Another palace, Rosersbergs Slott (☎ 59 03 50 39; tours adult/child Skr50/25; ✈ 1-3pm mid-May–Aug), is on Målaren lake about 9km southeast of Sigtuna. It was constructed in the 1630s and used as a royal residence from 1762 to 1860; the interior has excellent furnishings from the Empire period (1790–1820) and Queen Hedvig Elisabeth Charlotta’s conversation room – it was a Dominica monastery. Best in light snow, Stokloster Slott (☎ 018-38 60 77; adult/child Skr40/20), around 11km due northwest of Sigtuna (26km by road), is an exceptionally fine whitewashed baroque
palace with a fragile beauty unusual in Sweden. It was built between 1654 and 1671 and has impressive stucco ceilings and collections of furniture, textiles, art and arms. There’s a small café at the palace. Guided tours run daily from April to October; it’s a good idea to call in advance to check times, as the schedule is complicated and ever-shifting.

Skoklosterspelen is a popular medieval festival held at Skokloster Slott. It lasts five days in mid-July and includes around 350 performances, including tournaments, exhibitions, concerts, 18th-century activities. Performances, such as tournaments, exhibitions, concerts, and Skoklosterspel, are especially between 1773 and 1785. The moat was filled in and, in 1730 and later in 1827, two 11th-century rune stones were found. These stones stand by the access road and are frequent buses to Sigtuna (570 or 575). Bus 883 runs every hour or two from Upplands-Sigtuna to Sigtuna. To get to Rosersbergs Slott, take the SL pendeltåg train to Rosersborg, then walk the final 2km to the palace (signposted). For Skokloster, take an hourly SJ train to Bälsta, then the infrequent bus 894.

Strömma Kanalbolaget (www.strommakanalbolaget.com) offers full-day cruises four times a week from June to September between Stockholm and Uppsala via Sigtuna and Skokloster. The price (from Skr600) includes lunch, dinner and guided tours; with 1/4 hours in Sigtuna and 1/4 hours at Skokloster.

**MARIEFRED**

Tiny, lakeside Mariefred is a pretty little village that draws visitors to its impressive castle, Gripsholm Slott.

**INFORMATION**

Visit the tourist office (0 297 90; malar turism@strangnas.se, www.mariefred.se; Jun-Aug, Mon-Fri Sep-May) and pick up a map and notes (in English) for a self-guided walking tour of the idyllic village centre, with cobblestone streets and many 18th-century buildings.

**SIGHTS**

Gripsholm Slott (0 101 94; adult/child Skr60/30; 10am-4pm mid-May–mid-Sep, noon-3pm Sat & Sun mid-Sep–mid-May) is the epimote of castles, with its round towers, spires and drawbridge. It contains some of the state portrait collection, which dates from the 16th century and you can explore the well-decorated rooms. Originally built in the 1370s, Gripsholm Slott passed into crown hands by the early 16th century. In 1526, Gustav Vasa took over and ordered the demolition of the adjacent monastery. A new castle with walls up to 5m thick was built using materials from the monastery, but extensions, conversions, repairs and redesigns continued for years. The oldest ‘untouched’ room is Karl IX’s bedchamber, dating from the 1570s. The castle was abandoned in 1715, but it was renovated and extended during the reign of Gustav III (especially between 1773 and 1785). The moat was filled in and, in 1730 and later in 1827, two 11th-century rune stones were found. These stones stand by the access road and are well worth a look; one has a Christian cross, while the other describes an expedition against the Saracens. The castle was restored again in the 1890s, the moat was cleared and the drawbridge rebuilt.

You can also visit nearby Grafikens Hus (0 231 60; adult/child Skr50/free; 11am-5pm May-Aug, 11am-5pm Tue-Sep-Apr), which is a centre for contemporary graphic art and printmaking.

**SLEEPING & EATING**

STF Vandrhem Mariefred (0 367 00; receptionen@stfh.hotels.nordic.se; beds Skr90; mid-Jun–mid-Aug) This hostel with excellent facilities is only 500m west of the castle in lovely grounds. It’s a Red Cross educational centre for most of the year, but during summer break the student lodgings are turned into hostel accommodation. Gripsholms Vårdshus & Hotell (0 347 50; info@gripsholm-varshus.nu; Kyrkokogatan 1; s/d from Skr1400/1600) This place opened in 1609, this is Sweden’s oldest inn. This charming and elegant place has 45 individually furnished rooms, full of antiques, and many rooms have great views of the castle. There is also a highly regarded restaurant here, with a beautiful setting and main courses for around Skr250.

Gripsholms Slottscafé (0 100 23; meals Skr65-160) In the gardens by the castle, this is a good place for coffee and cake, or for light meals such as quiche, salad or sandwiches.

**GETTING THERE & AWAY**

Mariefred isn’t on the main railway line – the nearest station is at Läggesta, 3km west, with hourly trains from Stockholm. A museum railway (0 210 01; one way/return Skr40/50) from Läggesta to Mariefred runs on weekends from mid-May to September (daily from midsummer to mid-August), hourly during the day; call to check schedule. Bus 304 runs hourly from Läggesta to Mariefred.

The steamship S/S Mariefred (0 08-669 88 50) departs from Stadshusbron (Stockholm) for Mariefred, daily from mid-June to mid-August, and weekends only from mid-May to mid-June and mid-August to mid-September (round-trip Skr250). A round-trip ticket from Stockholm, incl. an SJ train, the museum railway, admission to the castle and S/S Mariefred, costs around Skr350 one way and is available at tourist offices.
Southeast Sweden

This superb region has something for everyone: tiny islands, fairytale castles, an epic canal, wonderful medieval towns and a party-hard beach life.

Småland’s most famous feature is Glasriket, the ‘Kingdom of Crystal’, where beautiful glass artworks are produced. Don’t miss a mesmerising visit to one of the ‘hot shops’, where globules of molten glass are twisted and tweaked into wondrous shapes.

Blekinge was the seat of Sweden’s 17th-century sea power and the incredible naval city of Karlskrona, now a Unesco World Heritage site, is a singular mixture of brutal fortresses and grandiloquent design.

Most of the superb island of Öland has also made the Unesco list, due to its unique geology, ring forts and Iron Age burial sites. It’s also one of Sweden’s favourite vacation spots, even the king and queen kick off the cares of state here on their summer holidays.

Östergötland, laced through by the Göta Canal, is home to the small but perky industrial cities of Norrköping and Linköping as well as the lakeside town of Vadstena, one of Sweden’s jewels.

Gotland is one of Sweden’s richest historical regions with untold numbers of prehistoric sites, Viking rune stones galore, medieval churches and the Unesco-listed walled town of Visby. Throw in endless sandy beaches and you’ve got yourself a perfect holiday destination.

HIGHLIGHTS
- Admire the military might of Karlskrona (p133), a superb naval fortress town
- Check out the Renaissance perfection of Kalmar’s Slott (p125), a castle right out of a storybook
- Let the kids run wild with Pippi Longstocking at Vimmerby’s theme park, Astrid Lingren’s Värld (p132) or spend a day at the vast Kolmården zoo (p143)
- Blow your own glass vase, or buy one made by a master in Glasriket (p127)
- Wonder at the windmills, bask on a beach, or get medieval at Eketorp fortress on long, thin Öland (p137)
- Climb the hilly streets and prowl the walls of 13th-century Visby (p152)
- Take a lazy trip on the Göta Canal (p146)

POPULATION: 1,404,652
AREA: 49,748 SQ KM
HIGHEST POINT: STENABOHÖJDEN (327M)

Orientation
Southeast Sweden stretches south along the coast from Stockholm to Skåne and inland as far as Lake Vättern. It incorporates the following landskap areas: Småland (including Jönköpings län, Kronobergs län and Kalmar län); the island Öland, off the east coast; Blekinge in the south; Östergötland, the eastern part of Gotland, which is split off from the western half by the massive Lake Vättern; and the island of Gotland.

Information

REGIONAL TOURIST OFFICES
Visitors can contact the following for more detailed information on the area:

- **Blekinge Turism** (0455-30 50 20; www.blekingeturism.com; Ronnebygatan 2, SE-37132 Karlskrona)
- **Gotlands Turistföreningen** (0485-56 06 00; www.olandsturist.se; Turistvägen, Box 74, SE-38621 Färjestaden)
- **Ölands Turistförening** (0485-56 06 00; www.olandsturist.se; Turistvägen, Box 74, SE-38621 Färjestaden)
- **Jönköpings Länstrafik** (0771-444333; www.jlt.se)
- **Östgöta Trafiken** (0771-760776; www.ostgota Она se)
- **Smålands Turism** (036-35 12 70; www.visit-smaland.com; Västra Storgatan 18A, Box 1027, SE-55111 Jönköping)
- **Turism i Kronoberg** (0470-74 25 70; turism.kronoberg@kommun.vaxjo.se; Stationen, Norra Järnvägsgatan, SE-35230 Växjö)
- **Turism i Kalmar Län** (0480-44 83 30; www.kalmarregionforbund.se; Nygatan 34, Box 762, SE-39127 Kalmar)
- **Visby Tourist Information** (0571-19 44 73; www.ostsvenskaturistkolmarden.com; SE-60181 Norrköping)
- **Östgotatrafiken** (0771-211010; www.ostgotatrafiken.se)
- **Smålands Turism** (036-35 12 70; www.visit-smaland.com; Västra Storgatan 18A, Box 1027, SE-55111 Jönköping)
- **Turism i Västervik** (0721-21 41 12)
- **Turism i Kalmar Län** (0480-44 83 30; www.kalmarregionforbund.se; Nygatan 34, Box 762, SE-39127 Kalmar)
- **Kalmar Läns Trafik** (0491-761200; www.klt.se)
- **Smålands Turism** (036-35 12 70; www.visit-smaland.com; Västra Storgatan 18A, Box 1027, SE-55111 Jönköping)

Småland

The region of Småland is one of dense forests, glinting lakes and bare marshlands. Historically it served as buffer zone between the Swedes and Danes; the eastern and southern coasts in particular saw territorial tussles. Today it’s better known for the Glasriket (Kingdom of Glass), a sparsely populated area in the central southeast, which is dotted with crystal workshops. Småland is broken up into smaller counties (läns): Jönköpings in the northwest, Kronobergs in the southwest, and Kalmar in the east.

Jönköping & Huskvarna

The main Malmö to Stockholm railway runs through the region, but you’ll have to change to local trains to reach most places of interest. SJ trains run west from Karlskrona to Kristianstad or north from Karlskrona to Kalmar. There are also SJ services from Kalmar to Linköping, and inland routes from Oskarshamn to Nässjö and Kalmar to Göteborg. The Nässjö to Jönköping and Falköping trains are run by Våttertrafik (0380-35 44 02).

The following companies provide regional transport links. If you’re planning to spend some time here, it’s worth enquiring about monthly passes or a sommarkort, offering discount travel from midsummer to mid-August. Check also the respective websites for routes, schedules, fares and passes; these sites don’t always have information in English, but if you call the telephone numbers listed you’ll usually reach someone who can help you in English.

Blekinge Trafiken (0455-56980; www.blekingetrafiken.se)
Jönköpings Länstrafik (0771-444333; www.jlt.se)
Kalmar Läns Trafik (0491-761200; www.klt.se)
Kollektiv Trafik (0771-21 41 12)
Länstrafiken Kronberg (0771-760776; www.lanstrafikenkronberg.se)
Östgötatrafiken (0771-211010; www.ostgotalänstrafiken.se)

SOUTHEAST SWEDEN

SEITEN

HIGHLIGHTS
- Admire the military might of Karlskrona (p133), a superb naval fortress town
- Check out the Renaissance perfection of Kalmar’s Slott (p125), a castle right out of a storybook
- Let the kids run wild with Pippi Longstocking at Vimmerby’s theme park, Astrid Lingren’s Värld (p132) or spend a day at the vast Kolmården zoo (p143)
- Blow your own glass vase, or buy one made by a master in Glasriket (p127)
- Wonder at the windmills, bask on a beach, or get medieval at Eketorp fortress on long, thin Öland (p137)
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POPULATION: 1,404,652
AREA: 49,748 SQ KM
HIGHEST POINT: STENABOHÖJDEN (327M)
From April to September, visitors can enjoy different cruises (070 637 1700) on Lake Vättern, aboard the MS Nya Skärgården. Evening trips include a buffet dinner and cost around Skr420. The boat departs from Hamnpiren; book at the tourist office.

For waterskiing or boat hire, contact Marinbod (12 04 67; Hamnpiren; Jun-early Sep). Waterskiing, wakeboarding and kneeboarding all cost Skr200 per 15 minutes; small motor boats cost Skr250 per three hours or Skr495 for one day.

**HUSKVARNA**

Square-jawed men going hunting while their wives snuggle up to their sewing machines: the Husqvarna Fabriksmuseum (14 61 62; www.husqvarna-museum.se; Hakarpsvägen 1; adult/child Skr40/20; 10am-5pm Mon-Fri, noon-4pm Sat & Sun May-Sep, 10am-3pm Mon-Fri Oct-Apr) conjures up a vivid technicolor 1950s world. The factory began as an arms manufacturer, but diverted into motorbikes, chainsaws, cooking ranges and microwave ovens over the years, and this interesting museum charts the company’s rise.

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Sights & Activities

JÖNKÖPING

Apparently ‘the only match museum in the world’, Tändsticksmuseet (10 55 43; Tändsticksgränd 27; adult/under 19yr Skr40/free; 10am-5pm Mon-Fri, 10am-3pm Sat & Sun Jun-Aug, 11am-3pm Tue-Sat May-Aug), in an old match factory, deals with this practical Swedish invention. It’s quite an eye-opener: the industry was initially based on cheap child labour, workers frequently suffered from repulsive ‘phossy jaw’, and it was common knowledge that phosphorus matches were good for ‘speeding up inheritance and inducing abortion’.

Near the Tändsticksmuseet is the Radio Museum (71 39 59; Tändsticksgränd 16; admission Skr20; 10am-5pm Mon-Fri, 10am-1pm Sat, 11am-3pm Sun Jun-mid-Aug; closed Sun & Mon mid-Aug–May) with a collection of over 1000 radio sets and related memorabilia.

Jönköpings Länsmuseum (30 18 00; Dag Hammarskjölds Plats; adult/under 18yr Skr40/free; 11am-5pm Tue & Thu-Sun, 11am-8pm Wed) has collections covering local history and contemporary culture, but the real reason for coming here is to see the haunting fantasy works of artist John Bauer (1882–1918), inspired by Jönköping’s countryside.

West of town is the expanse of Stadsparken. Its curiosities include the 1458 mounted ornithological taxidermic masterpieces of Fågelmuseum (12 99 83; admission free; 11am-5pm May-Aug), and the Fruktsmuseet (30 18 00; admission free; 11am-5pm Jun-Aug) with a charming collection of old buildings.

Snakes, crocodiles, primates and tropical birds fill Tropikhuset (16 89 75; Kompanigatan 8; adult/child Skr30/15; 10am-5pm Jun-Aug, 10am-4pm Sep-May), 2km east of town in the A6 Centre. Also here, military history fans will appreciate the Försvarshistoriska Museet (19 04 12; adult/child Skr30/15; 10am-5pm), which examines 18th- and 19th-century soldiers’ lives.

Princesses. Other famous sons and daughters include ABBA’s Agnetha Fältskog, and indie band The Cardigans.

From Jönköping, at Vättern’s southern end, an urban strip stretches 7km eastwards, sucking in Huskvarna, famous for its sewing machines, chainsaws and motorcycles.
For powerful drama, catch Huskvarna’s Fallsen Dag (Waterfall Day), at the end of August. When darkness falls the floodgates open and a torrential illuminated waterfall is released; contact the tourist office for details.

From Jönköping, take bus 1 to Huskvarna (Sk20), 7km away.

Eating & Drinking
For a seaside vibe and loads of choice head straight for Hamnpiren (the harbour pier), where you’ll find a blur of restaurants with good lunch specials (around Skr70) and merry crowds gathered for evening meals. For cheaper alternatives, try inside the Juneporten transport/shopping complex.

Krogen Svarta Börsen (71 22 22; Kirkogatan 4; mains Skr270-335) Fresh, seasonal ingredients grace the plates at the best dining establishment in town. A great atmosphere, superb food and superb service justify the high prices.

Mäster Gudmunds Källare (71 06 40; Kapellgatan 2; lunch Skr65, dinner mains Skr150-195; closed Sun summer) This appealing place is in a 17th-century cellar, with beautiful vaulted ceilings, and has good-value lunches (although not in summer). Evening mains are mainly meaty and fishy local Swedish dishes, such as grilled fish from Vättern lake, with a few nods to French cuisine.

Nyfickan (19 06 86; lunch Skr50) In an unusual brick building that once belonged to the match-making empire, the excellent Nyfickan is part of the town’s cultural centre. It’s an arty affair with good coffee, cakes, tacos, falafel and sandwiches. There’s a decent veggie selection, and options for people on gluten- and sugar-free diets.

Other good cafes include Claras Coffeebar (30 01 15; Barnarpagatan 18), serving gourmet panini in stylish surrounds; and Bernards Konditori (71 11 21; Kirkogatan 12), with commendable coffee and a glassed-in terrace for people-watching. There is also a KA supermarket (Juneporten complex) and Systembolaget (nr Skogilåten & Trädgårdsstreet) nearby.

Getting There & Around
Jönköping airport (31 11 00) is located about 8km southwest of the town centre. Skyways (0771-95 95 00) has daily flights to/from Stockholm Arlanda, and SAS (070-72 77 27) operates daily flights to/from Copenhagen. Bus 18 serves the airport, or else a taxi costs around Skr180.

Most local buses leave from opposite Juneporten on Västra Storgatan. Local transport is run by Jönköpings Länstrafik (0771-44 33; www.jlt.se in Swedish; Juneporten: 7.30am-6pm Mon-Fri; there’s an office with information, tickets and passes in Juneporten.

The long-distance bus station is next to the train station. There are at least eight daily Swedbus Express (0200-21 82 18; www.swedbus.se) services to Göteborg (Skr120, two hours) and Stockholm (Skr320, 4½ hours); five to Helsingborg (Skr245, three hours) and Malmö (Skr293, 4½ hours); two to Karlstad (Skr265, four hours); and two to Västervik (Skr211, three hours). Svenska Buss runs to Eksjö, Göteborg, Kalmar, Oskarshamn and Stockholm.

Jönköping is on a regional train line; you’ll need to change trains in either Nässjö or Falköping to get to or from larger towns.

Taxi Jönköping (34 40 00) is the local taxi company. You can hire bicycles from Marimbod (12 04 87; Hamnpiren; per day Skr150; June-early Sep).

GRÅNNA & VISINGSÖ

GRÅNNA & VISINGSÖ (0390)
All that’s missing from Grånna are Oompa-Loompas. The sweet smell of sugar hangs over the village, and the shops overflow with the village’s trademark red-and-white peppermint rock (polkagris). It’s a touristy spot with touches of tacksiness, but the steep streets, lakeside location and excellent polar exhibition give it a good dose of character. Across the water and 6km west is the peaceful island of Visingsö. Connected by frequent ferries it’s a great place for cycling.

Information
There’s a tourist office (410 10; www.grm.se; Grenna Kulturgård, Brahegatan 38; 10am-7pm mid-May–Aug, 10am-4pm Sep–mid-May) in central Grånna, and another tourist office (401 93; www.visingso.net; 10am-5pm May-Aug, to 7pm late Jun–mid-Aug, 11am-6pm Mon, 8am-2pm Tue-Fri Apr) at the harbour in Visingsö.

With ID, you can use the Internet at Grånna library (410 15; 10am-7pm Mon-Thu, 10am-1pm Fri), upstairs from the tourist office.

Brahegatan, the main street of Grånna, has a bank and ATM.

Sights
In the same building as the tourist office, Andréexpedition Polarcenter (adult/child Skr50/20; 10am-7pm mid-May–Aug, 10am-4pm Sep–mid-May) describes the disastrous attempt of Salomon August Andrée to reach the North Pole by balloon in 1897 (see below). It’s riveting stuff, particularly the poignant remnants of the expedition: cracked leather boots, monogrammed handkerchiefs, lucky beans, monogrammed handkerchiefs, lucky
amulets, and mustard paper to ward off those polar winds. But don’t be put off by Andréée’s ballooning tragedy; for Skr1695 per person you can take a one-hour scenic hot-air balloon trip (> 305 25; Bengt@flyg-ballon.nu) over the area. Several sweet-makers have kitchens where you can see traditional red-and-white candy being made. One is Greeta Polgakrisokkeri (> 100 17; Brahegatan 39), directly opposite the tourist office, which uses an authentic 19th-century recipe. You can watch porridge-looking crisps being produced at Granna Knäcke (> 100 57; Brahegatan 43).

Visingsö has a 17th-century church, castle and aromatic herb garden. An extensive network of footpaths and bicycle trails lead through oak woods and at the harbour you can hire bikes (per three hours/one day Skr40/75). The beautiful lakes of Bunn and Oren, and their dark forests, inspired local artist John Bauer to paint his trolls, princesses and magical pools (see p117). From June to mid-August, you can take a boat tour (> 510 50; adult/child Skr150/80; 12.30pm Sat & Sun Jun, 12.30pm Jul–mid-Aug) to the lakes, departing from Bunnströms badpats, 2.5km from Granna.

**Sleeping & Eating GRENNA**

The tourist office arranges private rooms from Skr140 to Skr250 per person per night (plus Skr100 booking fee).

**Granna Turistbyrå Vandrhem** (> 410 10; Bergsgatan 70; dm; mid-June–early Aug. P) The tourist office administers this SVIF hostel, perched on a hill overlooking the town. It’s basic, but central and cheap, plus there’s a pleasant garden and a few parking spaces up for grabs.

**Gyllene Uttern** (> 108 00; info@gylleneuttern.se; s/d from Skr1150/1395, discounted to Skr750/995; S) South of town is imposing Gyllene Uttern, an elegant hotel off the E4. Rooms are simple but masterful, and there are good-value packages including a ‘Romantic’ weekend option.

**Hotell Västanå Slott** (> 107 00; info@vastanastott.se; d from Skr1290; May–Sep. P) This super-stately manor house, about 6km south of town, is a pad for regal relaxation. Per Brahe owned it in the 17th century, although today it’s decorated according to its 18th-century past, with chandeliers, dark oil paintings and suits of armour. There are super views over the lake.

The Granna–Visingsö ferry (> 410 25) runs every 15 minutes in summer, less frequently the rest of the year. Return tickets for foot passengers are Skr50 per adult, and Skr25 for those between six and 15 years of age; a bicycle is Skr30 and a car with up to five people is Skr230.

**EKJÖ**

Eksjö is one of the most exclusively preserved wooden towns in Sweden, with buildings in the old town dating back to the 17th century. It’s a joy to wander round its lopsided, flower-filled courtyards, and the local museum is a credit to the place.

**The tourist office** (> 361 70; www.eksjo.se; Norra Storgatan 29; 8am-8pm Jul–mid-Aug, 10am-6pm Mon–Fri, 10am–2pm Sat rest of yr) can occasionally arrange English-language guided town tours (Skr30), and it also has bicycles for hire (per day/week: Skr60/225).

**Sights**

Stroll through the delightful streets and yards of Eksjö, especially those north of Stora Torget. You’ll see excellent old buildings at its heart. The tourist office arranges guided tours at 1pm and 3pm daily July and August (Skr50).

**VÄXJÖ**

A venerable old market town, Växjö (pronounced vak-choo, with the ‘ch’ sound as in the Scottish ‘loch’ – ask a local to demonstrate), in Kronobergs län, is a very important stop for Americans seeking their

The Höglandsleden passes through the region: ask the tourist office for details of this walking trail and of the Höglandsstrampen cycle route (booklets in English Skr40).

**Sleeping**

**STF Vandrhem Eksjö** (> 361 70; vandrhem@eksjo.se; Österlånggatan 31; dm/s/d from Skr130/170/330). In the heart of the old town, this vandrhem is based in a 13th-century quaint building, with a gallery running round the upper floor. Reception is at the tourist office.

**Stadshotell** (> 130 20; stadshotellet@eksjostadshotell.se; Stora Torget; ›; Skr845/1090, discounted to Skr595/790; A) The impressive Stadshotell dominates one edge of the huge 19th-century main square. It has the flashiest accommodation in town, with comfortable long-windowed rooms and an elegant restaurant-bar.

**Eksjö Camping** (> 395 08; info@eksjocamping.nu; sites Skr100, 2-/4-bed cabins from Skr200/340). This is a friendly nook by picturesque Husnäsen lake, about a kilometre east of town. There’s a restaurant and café, plus minigolf and good swimming. There’s also a hostel (dm Skr150).

**Eating & Drinking**

**Lennarts Konditori** (> 61 13 90; Stora Torget) With an outdoor terrace and views of dramatic Stora Torget, this traditional konditori is the place to go for cakes, créme and quiche.

**Restaurant Balkan** (> 100 20; Norra Storgatan 23; lunch from Skr65, pizzas Skr60, à la carte dishes Skr90–150) The Balkan has a surprising menu of Chinese, Swedish and pizza dishes.

**Getting There & Around**

The bus and train stations are in the southern part of town. The tiny länståg (regional train) runs up to seven times daily to/from Jönköping. Local buses run to Näsjö (Skr42, hourly Monday to Friday, six at weekends). Swebus Express runs two buses on the Göteborg–Jönköping–Eksjö–Vimmerby–Växjö route on Fridays and Sundays.

**VÄXJÖ**

(0470) / pop 76,755

A venerable old market town, Växjö (pronounced vak-choo, with the ‘ch’ sound as in the Scottish ‘loch’ – ask a local to demonstrate), in Kronobergs län, is a very important stop for Americans seeking their...
Swedish roots. In mid-August, Karl Oscar Days commemorates the mass 19th-century emigration from the area, and the Swedish-American of the year is chosen. There’s also a fantastic glass collection in town, plus a little something to stop the kids getting bored…

Information

The tourist office (414 10; www.turism.vaxjo.se; Västra Esplanaden 7; 9:30am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat & Sun mid-Jun-Aug, 9:30am-4:30pm Mon-Fri rest of yr) shares a building with the library, and allows 30 minutes of free Internet access per day. Storgatan is the main pedestrian mall, where you’ll find banks and other services.

Sights

Utvandrarinas Hus (Emigrant House; 201 20; www.sweimi.se; Växjö, Mobergs gata 4; adult/7-16yr Skr40/5; 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, 11am-4pm Sat & Sun May-Aug, 9am-4pm Tue-Fri, 11am-4pm Sat Sep-Apr) has scores of intelligent displays on the emigration of over one million Swedes to America (1850–1930). It also includes a replica of Vilhelm Moberg’s office and original manuscripts of his famous emigration novels. It’s all fascinating stuff, and the centre also has an excellent research facility (open weekdays only, reservations advised) for those tracing their Swedish ancestors.

Next door is Smålands Museum (70 42 00; www.smalandsmuseum.se; Södra Jämvägs gatan 2; adult/under 19yr Skr40/free; 10am-5pm Mon-Fri, 11am-5pm Sat & Sun Jun-Aug, closed Mon-Sep-May), with a superb exhibition about Sweden’s 500-year-old glass industry. Four of the rooms are filled with work from medieval goblins to the most contemporary sculptures, and there’s also a great café.

Kids can jump on a spaceship to the Milky Way or create the world’s biggest soap bubble at Xperiment Huset (101 25; www.xperiment.se; Lokstallarna; adult/child Skr75/60; 10am-6pm Mon-Fri, 11am-4pm Sat & Sun Jun-Aug, 10am-4pm Tue-Fri, 11am-4pm Sat & Sep-May), a hands-on science and illusion centre.

The impressive twin-spired Domkyrkan (Cathedral; 9am-5pm) has been struck by lightning and repeatedly ravaged by fire – the latest renovation was in 1995. Inside, there’s a fine 15th-century altar and displays of local artwork (in glass, wood and iron). You’ll also find a Viking rune stone in the eastern wall.

In 1542, the Småland rebel Nils Dacke spent Christmas in Kronobergs Slott, now a ruin. The 14th-century castle is on a small island (reached by footbridge) in photogenic Helgasjön lake, about 8km north of the town.

Boat trips (70 42 00; adult/5-12yr Skr125/50; 7-8pm) mid-Jun-mid-Aug on Sweden’s oldest steamship, Thor, leave from just below the ruins. Take bus 1B from town.

Enquire at the tourist office about guided summer walking tours (5:30pm Mon) of town, and also about two-hour summer sightseeing tours (816 84; adult/child Skr35/10) in a red double-decker London bus.

Sleeping

Many of the big chain hotels have a hotel in Växjö.

Växjö Vandrarhem (630 70; www.vaxjovandrarhem.nu; dm from Skr155; ) Also at Evedal, this former spa hotel dates from the late 18th century. All rooms have washbasins, there’s a big kitchen, laundry, and a wonderful lounge in the attic. It’s deservedly well loved, so book early. Take bus 1C from town.

Hotel Esplanad (225 80; Enera Esplanaden 21A; s/d Skr700/800, discounted to Skr470/570; ) The cheapest central accommodation is at the Esplanad, with unfussy, adequate rooms. The lowest-priced have corridor bathrooms.

First Hotel Cardinal (72 28 00; cardinalsotel@jesa.se; Söder Jämvägs gatan 10; standard s/d Skr1094/1484, discounted to Skr608/848; ) A jump up in quality, the central Cardinal has ‘budget-style’ (in a second building round the corner) and more luxurious rooms. There’s a sauna, bar and brand-new restaurant.

Elite Stadshotellet (134 00; info@vaxjo.elit.se; Kungsgatan 6; s/d from Skr1195/1395, discounted to Skr650/775; ) This grand-looking 19th-century building offers a distinctively swish experience. Rooms are large and confident-looking, and there’s a popular restaurant and English-style Bishop’s Arms pub, serving a good range of food and international beers.

Evedals Camping (630 34; evedals.camping@telia.com; www.evedalsvagen.se; sites Skr175-215, 4-6-bed cabins Skr600-700) Evedal is a huge lakeside recreation area, 10km north of the centre, where this campsite is based. You can enjoy the beaches, swimming, canoeing and boating (per hour/day Skr80/200) on Helga lake. There are two restaurants nearby – Restaurang Brunnen, and the more upmarket Evedals Vårdshus.

Eating & Drinking

Wibrovs (70 74 04; bar meals Skr65-150, mains Skr190-330; closed Sun) This stylish place is a favourite spot for fashionable locals; the décor is all brushed steel and leather benches, and there are occasional DJs. Dishes steal from all over the world, with Caribbean, Indian, Mexican and African ingredients all popping up.

Café Momento (391 29; meals around Skr70) A classy restaurant in Växjö’s oldest timber house. Retire to the outdoor terrace in fine weather.

Information

INFORMATION

International Tourist Office..............................

SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES

Domkyrkan...........................................

Smålands Museum.................................

Utvandrarinas Hus................................

Sleeping

First Hotel Cardinal................................

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DRINKING

Askelyckan...........................................

Café Momento......................................

ICA Supermarket..................................

PM & Vänner........................................

Wibrovski............................................

TRANSPORT

Bus Stop...............................................

Getting There & Away

Småland airport (9km); To Evedals Camping (6km); To Linnéparken (5km); Kronobergs Slott (8km); To Alvesta (20km); To Kalmar (109km); To Xperiment Huset (350m); Systembolaget (cnr Klostergatan & Nygatan)
KALMAR

KALMAR

(www.kalmarlansmuseum.se; Skeppsbrogatan; adult/under 18yr Skr50/free; 11am-4pm mid-Jun–mid-Aug, plus 3.30pm Jul, included in the admission price. There are also children’s activities here in summer; contact the castle for details.

KALMAR LÄNSMUSEUM

The highlight of this museum (45 13 00; www.kalmarlansmuseum.se; Skepsbrogatan; adult/under 18yr Skr50/free; 11am-6pm mid-Jun–mid-Aug, 11am-4pm Mon-Fri, 11am-5pm Sat & Sun mid-Aug–mid-Jun), is a large steam mill by the harbour, are finds from the 17th-century flagship Kronan. The ship exploded and sank just before a battle in 1676, with the loss of almost 800 men. It was rediscovered in 1980, and over 22,000 wonderfully preserved items have been excavated so far, including a spectacular gold hoard, clothing, musical instruments and cannon.

OTHER SIGHTS

Aft and slightly to port of the county museum, Kalmar Sjöfartsmuseum (158 75; Södra Långgatan 81; adult/17-12yr Skr30/10; 11am-4pm mid-Jun–mid-Sep, noon-4pm Sun mid-Sep–mid-Jun) contains a delightfully eccentric maritime collection, with nautical instruments, bottled ships, frog-horns, and things made out of knots and armadillos.

The landmark baroque Domkyrkan (Cathedral; Stortorget) was designed by Tessin, King Karl X Gusta’s favourite architect. Its sage-green interior is very restful, and there's a spectacular pulpit. To find out more, plug into one of the audiophones by the main door.

Krusenstierna’s Garden (41 15 52; Stora Dammgatan 11; adult/child Skr25/7; 1-5pm Mon-Fri, Jun-Aug) is a fully furnished, 19th-century middle-class home, 500m from the castle entrance. Tours of the house are on the hour, but entry to the pretty gardens and café is free.

Kalmar Konstmuseum (42 62 82; Slottsvägen 1; adult/under 18yr Skr40/free; 11am-5pm, to 8pm Thu), near the castle, displays works by well-known Swedish artists like Carl Larsson and Anders Zorn, and houses temporary modern exhibitions.

Västerport was the original point of entry into the city. Nowadays you can watch glass-blowing and pottery-making at the studios here, and buy the results.

Festivals & Events

Historical Kalmar has lots of summery events. One of the biggest is the Medeltidsfestival & Marknad (45 13 74), a medieval festival and market with jousting, music, handicrafts, food and drink. It’s held in Salvestaden – a reconstructed medieval village about 500m south of the castle in Kalmarundsparken – on a weekend in late July. Entry costs Skr80 (family ticket Skr290) per day.

Sleeping

Hotel Svanen (255 60; www.hotellsvanen.se; Rappegasan 1; dm Skr205; s/d from Skr520/625; P) This ‘low-price hotel’ is an excellent choice. Its simple rooms are newly restored, with cable TV and private toilets. It's close to the castle, and has a good English-language town walking guide, Wander Round Kalmar by Yourself (Skr30).

To get free Internet access join the library (45 06 30; Tullslätten 4; closed Sun May-Aug) as a temporary member.

You’ll find banks and other services on Storgatan.

Sights

KALMAR SLOTT

Fairytale turrets, moat, drawbridge, foul dungeon and secret passages – yes, Kalmar Slott (45 14 90; adult/7-16yr Skr75/20; 10am-6pm Jul, 10am-5pm Jun & Aug, 10am-4pm Apr, May & Sep, 11am-3.30pm 2nd weekend of month Oct-Mar) has absolutely everything that a proper castle should. This powerful Renaissance building was once the most important in Sweden, and it’s fortified accordingly. It has one of the best-preserved interiors from the period.

King Erik’s chamber is a real highlight. Erik’s rivalry with his brother Johan caused him to install a secret passage in the loo! There’s also a superb suspended ceiling in the Golden Hall; eye-boggling wall-to-wall and floor-to-ceiling marquetry in the Chequered Hall; an elaborate bed, stolen as war booty then carefully vandalised so that no Danish ghosts could haunt it; and a delightful chapel, one of Sweden’s Most Wanted for weddings.

To find out more, join one of the fascinating guided tours (in English at 11.30am & 2.30pm mid-Jun–mid-Aug, plus 3.30pm Jul), included in the admission price. There are also children’s activities here in summer; contact the castle for details.

KALMAR SJÖFARTSMUSEUM

(158 75; Södra Långgatan 81; adult/17-12yr Skr30/10; 11am-4pm mid-Jun–mid-Sep, noon-4pm Sun mid-Sep–mid-Jun) contains a delightfully eccentric maritime collection, with nautical instruments, bottled ships, frog-horns, and things made out of knots and armadillos.
have been transformed into this high-calibre experience, where a small but select evening menu is served under a snug vaulted ceiling. Mains are mostly meat and fish, but an effort is made for veggies too.

Kullenska Caféet (☎ 288 82; 1st fl, Kaggensgatan 26; snacks from Skr30) The pick of the town’s cafés is this gorgeous maze of genteel 19th-century rooms, with original tiled stoves and fumed free tee. There’s a range of sandwiches and cakes (try the great fruit crumbles).

Graffiti Café (☎ 256 36; Storgatan 24; meals around Skr50; ☺ closed Sun) Part of the small food hall inside the Ströget arcade, this fast-food café offers salads, baguettes and tasty baked potatoes with a multitude of fillings.

There’s also an ICA supermarket in the Baronen shopping centre.

Drinking

The following places are popular for food, and also turn into lively drinking spots later in the evening.

Molly Malones (☎ 41 13 44; Lärmgatan 6; meals Skr45-120; ☺ closed Sun & Mon) This cosy Irish pub serves bar snacks as well as ‘authentic’ Irish meals (such as steak-and-Guinness pie, and fish and chips).

O’Leary’s (☎ 44 09 70; Larmtorget 4; mains Skr140-200) Nearby, this Boston-style sports bar has outdoor seating on the square, and is a crowd-pleaser on summer evenings. Food is of the type that goes well with beer: fajitas, ribs, chicken wings and burgers.

Emesto in Totale (☎ 200 50; Larmtorget 4; mains Skr90-170; ☺ until 2am Wed, Fri & Sat) This Italian café, restaurant, bar and nightclub also attracts scores of people, with its barristas, extensive menu, after-work promotions, long cocktail list and weekend dancing.

For alcohol, visit Systembolaget (Norra Länggatan 23).

Entertainment

The Biostaden (☎ 122 44; Skr85) cinema is in the Baronen shopping centre on Skeppsbrogatan.

Getting There & Around

The airport (☎ 587 00) is 6km west of town.

All regional and long-distance buses depart from the train station; local town buses have their own station on Östra Sjögatan. Regional buses run by Kalmar Länstrafik (☎ 0491-76 12 00; www.klt.se in Swedish), including buses to Oland.

Four Swebus Express (☎ 0200-21 82 18; www.swebusexpress.se) services daily run north to Västervik (Skr130, two hours), Norrköping (Skr220, four hours) and Stockholm (Skr316, 6½ hours); and two services daily run south to Karlskrona (Skr80, 1½ hours), Karlshamn (Skr110, two hours), Kristianstad (Skr170, three hours), Lund (Skr230, four hours) and Malmö (Skr230, 4½ hours).

Svenska Buss (☎ 0771-67 67 67; www.svenskabuss.se in Swedish) has four services per week on the same route; journey times and prices are similar.

Silverlinjen (☎ 0485 261 11; www.silverlinjen.se in Swedish) runs three daily direct buses from Oland to Stockholm (Skr270), calling at Kalmar; reservations are essential.

SJ trains run every two hours between Kalmar and Alvesta (Skr181, 1¼ hours), where you can connect with the main Stockholm–Malmö line and trains to Göteborg. There are direct trains running to Linköping up to five times daily (Skr268, three hours), also with connections to Stockholm.

For bicycle hire, contact Team Sporta (☎ 212 44; Södervägen 2; per day/week Skr100-400; ☺ Mon-Sat). Taxi Kalmar (☎ 44 44 44) can help you get around town.

GLASRIKET

The ‘Kingdom of Crystal’ (www.glasriket.se), with its hypnotic glassblowing workshops hidden in among dense forests, is the most visited area in Sweden outside Stockholm and Göteborg. There are at least 11 glass factories (look for glasbruk signs), most with long histories: Kosta, for example, was founded in 1742. The immense popularity of this region is not only with northern Europeans – lots of Americans tour the country tracing their ancestors, many of whom emigrated from this area at the end of the 19th century.

The glassworks have similar opening hours, usually 10am to 6pm Monday to Friday, 10am to 4pm Saturday and noon to 4pm Sunday. Expert glass designers produce some extraordinary avant-garde pieces, often with a good dollop of Swedish humour involved. Factory outlets have substantial discounts on seconds (around 30% to 40% off), and larger places can arrange shipping to your home country.

There’s a Glasriket Pass (Skr55), which allows free admission into ‘hot shops’ and museums, and discounts on purchases and hyttsill parties; but unless you’re intending to go completely glass crazy, it doesn’t really add up.

Most of Glasriket is in Kalmar län, with some in Kronobergs län; all parts are covered in this section.

Getting There & Around

Apart from the main routes, bus services around the area are pretty much nonexistent. The easiest way to explore is with your own transport (beware of elk). Bicycle tours on the unsurfaced country roads are excellent; there are plenty of hostels, and you can camp almost anywhere except near the military area on the Kosta–Orrefors road.
Kalmar Länstrafik’s bus 139 runs from mid-June to mid-August only and calls at a few of the glass factories. The service operates four times per day on weekdays, once on Saturday, and runs from Nybro to Orrefors and Målerås. Year-round bus services connect Nybro and Orrefors (one weekdays), and Kosta is served by regular bus 218 from Växjö (two or three daily).

Buses and trains run from Emmaboda to Nybro and Kalmar (roughly hourly); trains also run to Karlskrona, Växjö and Alvesta, from where there are direct services to Göteborg and Stockholm.

Nybro

**0481 / pop 19,882**

The biggest town in Glasriket, Nybro makes a good base for exploration. It was once an important centre for hand-blown light bulbs(!), and still has two glassworks on its doorstep. Nybro’s **tourist office** (450 85; www.nybro.se; Stadshusplan; V; 10am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-4pm Sat mid-Jun–mid-Aug, 10am-5pm Mon-Fri mid-Aug–mid-Jun) is inside the town hall.

Of the two glassworks, 130-year-old **Pukeberg** (800 29; www.pukeberg.se; Pukebergavän vän), just southeast of the centre, is perhaps more interesting for its quaint setting. **Nybro** (428 87; Hertigsgatan; www.nybro-glaskrok.se) is smaller but also has several typical items, like the range of Beatles glassware.

There’s a superior homestead museum **Madesjö Hembygdsår** (179 35; adult/child Skr25/5; 10am-5pm Mon-Fri, 11am-5pm Sat & Sun late Jun–Aug), about 2.5km west of town. It’s housed inside the 200m-long kyrkstallarna (former church stables), and contains an admirable collection, which includes cannonsball, clothing, coffins, carpenters’ tools, chainsaws, a classroom, a country shop and a fantastic (ice-) cycle – and they’re just the things beginning with ‘C’.

**Nybro Lägrishotel & Vandrarhem** (109 32; Vasagatan 22; dm Skr150-225, s/d Skr490/740; ) The local STF hostel, near Pugeberg, is clean and comfortable and has a kitchen on each floor as well as a sauna. More expensive ‘hotel’ rooms have cable TV, nonbunk beds and private showers and toilets. You can rent bicycles.

**Stora Hotellet** (519 35; rumboekning@telia.com; Mellangatan 11; s/d Skr25/1195, discounted to Skr550/850) The town’s other option is this dated but reasonable central hotel, by the tourist office. It contains Scandinavia’s largest work of art, an impressive 70 sq metre fresco of Nybro’s industrial history. The restaurant offers the best choice in town for a meal (pizzas around Skr85).

**Joelskogens Camping** (450 86; www.joelskogens camping.com; Grönviken 31; s/t Skr120; V; May–mid-Sep) Campers should head for this little lakeside ground just out of the centre, with basic facilities (kitchen, laundry, shop) and a small beach area.

SJ trains to Alvesta and Kalmar stop here every hour or two. Regional bus 131 runs to/from Kalmar.

Orrefors

**0481**

Founded in 1898, **Orrefors** (341 95; www.orref ors.se; V; year-round) is perhaps the most famous of Sweden’s glassworks. The huge site holds a factory with glass-blowing demonstrations, museum, impressive gallery and large shop with a shipping service. Orrefors is its glassworks and there’s little else to the village.

**STF Vandrarhem Orrefors** (300 20, 0708 26 78 78; orreforsvandrarhem@tele2.se; Silversparregatan 14; dm/s/d from Skr230/252/320; V; May–Aug). If you need a lie-down after all the glass-buying, this excellent hostel is located conveniently near the factory. Quaint red houses surround a grassy garden, and the peaceful rooms have proper beds. Breakfast is available on request.

**Vårdsuett Orren** (300 59; meals around Skr100; V; 10am-5pm Mon-Fri, 11am-5pm Sat & Sun mid-Jun–mid-Aug, 9am-2pm Mon-Fri mid-Aug–mid-Jun) is in the factory grounds, this inn offers good lunches. There’s also a kiosk in the glassworks area selling hot dogs and ice cream.

Gullaskruv & Målerås

**0481**

Don’t miss the glassworks at Gullaskruv, about 6km northwest of Orrefors. Here, Uruguay-born artist **Carlos P Rebagúe** (321 17; www.carlosartglass.com) makes utterly extraordinary vases in his one glass oven.

Completely different in scale and style is the large and popular **Mats Jonasson factory** (314 00; www.matsjonason.com), 8km further northwest in Målerås, which sells engraved glass animal designs from around Skr200. There’s a restaurant serving lunches.

**Hallégårdens Vandrarhem** (320 21; Hallégården; per person from Skr175; V) A kilometre or so southeast of Gullaskruv, this super youth hostel is in a tranquil rustic setting. Rooms all have washbasins, and there’s a sunny café selling baked potatoes, salads and cakes.

**Malerås Vandrarhem** (311 75; frank.fender@ telia.com; Lindvägen 5, Målerås; per person Skr150; V) Very handy for the Mats Jonasson glassworks, this SVIF hostel is another good place to stay.

For coffee and buns, try the tiny **Café Kon-**

ditori (310 44; Lindvägen 1, Målerås; V closed Sun) attached to Målerås’s bakery.

**Kosta**

**0478**

Kosta is where Glasriket started in 1742. Today the **Kosta Boda** (503 00; www.kastaboda.se) complex draws in coach loads of visitors, who are all elbows and claws in the vast discount shop. But don’t be put off – Sweden even manages to make its tourist traps pleasant places. The two museums contain some amazing creations, there are plenty of glass-blowing demos in the old factory quarters, and there’s a good café too.

To see beautiful bandy-legged elk at close quarters, head for **Grönåsens Älgpark** (503 70; www.moosepark.net; V; 10am-8pm Apr-Nov) Sweden’s biggest elk park, located 3km west of town towards Orrefors. You can admire these gentle creatures on a 1.3km walk in the forested enclosure (Skr35). Then, if you wish, you can practise blasting 2D elk, shapes made of metal in the shooting range, buy elk sausages to roast on the barbecue outside or purchase an elk-skin baseball cap. And, talking of horror, don’t miss the display in the building behind the shop: it’s guaranteed that you’ll drive 50% slower after you’ve seen the crumpled metal, glassy eyes and lolling tongue…

**Kosta Bad & Camping** (505 17; info@klastik se; www.kosta.se; sites Skr150, cabin from Skr425; V; May–Aug). There are great facilities at this campsite on the edge of Kosta village, including a pool, sauna, show and bowling.

**Kosta Värds** (500 06; lunch Skr75, s/d Skr420/690) Across the road from the Kosta Boda factory, this hotel.restaurant currently has 10 simple, old fashioned rooms, but big plans are afoot: a new wing with 20 modern rooms is to be built in 2007. The värds also attracts crowds for its cheap lunches.

For other eating options, try cheerful **Café Kosta** (502 60) inside the factory’s outlet store, with tasty quiches and baked potatoes for around Skr55.

GLASS-BLOWING FUN!

If you feel inspired by Glasriket’s top designers, why not have a go at glass-blowing (Skr150; V most days mid-Jun–mid-Aug) yourself? Several hotshots – Orrefors, Kosta, Pugeberg and Johansfors – risk litigation by allowing you to blow, shape and ‘open out’ the treacly molten glass. It’s the greatest fun, and the endearingly misshapen result will be a source of pride for years to come. Your masterpiece has to cool for two hours before you can take it away.

OSKARSHAMN

**0491 / pop 26,300**

Quiet Oskarshamn is useful for its regular boat connections with Gotland, and there are several sights to see while waiting for transport. The **tourist office** (881 88; www.oskarshamn.se; Hantverksgatan 18; V; 9am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-3pm Sat, 11am-4pm Sun Jun–mid-Aug, 9-11.30am & 12.30–4.30pm Mon-Fri mid-Aug–May) is in Kulturhuset, along with the library, which has free Internet access.

**Sights**

Upstairs in Kulturhuset, **Döderhultarns** (0491 80-40; V; 10am-6pm Mon-Fri & 11am-4pm Sat & Sun Jun–mid-Aug, noon-4pm Tue-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat mid-Aug–May) is well worth a visit. It features the work of local artist, Axel Petersson ‘Döderhultarn’ (1868–1925), who captured local characters and occasions – weddings, funerals, country dances etc – in vigorous and funny wood carvings; around 200 of which are on display. Next door, with the same opening hours, **Sjöfartsmuséet** (880 45) contains local maritime exhibits.

One admission price (adult/12–20 years Skr35/15) covers entry to both museums.

Blå Jungfrun National Park

Blå Jungfrun (the Blue Maiden), a 1km-long granite island, is known as the ‘Witches’ Mountain’ because, according to tradition, this is where they gather every Easter to meet the devil. The island is a nature reserve loved for its fantastic scenery, gnarled trees, blue hues and bird life, and the curious stone maze, **Trojeborg**.

Between mid-June and August a local launch (per adult/7-15yr Skr180/90) departs up to six
times weekly (usually not Mondays) from Brädholmskajen, the quay at the head of the harbour in Oskarshamn, allowing passengers 3½ hours to explore the island. Contact the tourist office for information and bookings.

Sleeping & Eating
Vandrarhemmet Oscar
(158 00; forum@oskarshamn .se; Södra Länggatan 15-17; hostel dm/s/d Skr205/305/410, discounted to Skr100/160/220; P). This shiny place, half hotel half hostel, is a brilliant budget option. Rooms have TV, fans and private bathrooms – only the kitchen for self-caters gives it away as a hostel. It’s conveniently placed for travellers, just opposite the bus station.

Sjöfarthotellet
(76 83 00; sjofarthotell@telia .com; Sjöfarthotell 13; s/d Skr395/595, discounted to Skr195/395; P). The hotel was created as a sailors’ foundation, hence the harbour setting and nautical décor. Its function is still the same today, and sailors have priority, with remaining rooms let to nonnautical guests. Rooms are comfortable, if on the small side, and there’s a sauna.

Comfort Hotel Post
(160 60; Stora Torget; s/d Skr1325/1525, discounted to Skr790/990; P). A step up in both price and location is offered at this upmarket hotel on the main square, which also has an interesting history – the hotel was once the grand old post house. The agreeable and ample-sized rooms reflect this past. All prices include an evening buffet, making the discounted prices particularly good value. The hotel’s facilities include a sauna, Jacuzzi, restaurant, bar and a cosy lounge.

Gunnarsö Camping
(132 98; Österjövägen: sites low/high season Skr105/125; May–mid-Sep: P). Located 3km southeast of town, this has seaside sites, a heated pool, restaurant, minigolf and other family campsite necessaries. However, it is difficult to get to without a car as public transport connections are very poor.

There are no outstanding restaurants, but there are a couple of pleasant ones. Lilla Frej
(843 00; Lilla Torget; lunch Skr70, meals Skr80-160) has modern décor and a varied menu of pizza, pasta, salads, and fish and steak dishes. Just across the square, Cecil Kinesiska Restaurang
(187 50; Lilla Torget; dishes Skr89-170) has Chinese cuisine as well as Swedish and even French dishes.

Coffeehouse Kronan
(143 80; Fladen 6; snacks from Skr45) This is a great lunch spot, with filled baguettes and panini, plus tasty cakes and good coffee. In summer there’s seating on the bustling pedestrian street outside.

There’s a Hemköp supermarket nearby in the Flanaden shopping centre.

Getting There & Away
Oskarshamn airport (332 00) is 12km north of town and Svedline Express
(0495-24 90 65) flies twice on weekdays to Stockholm Arlanda.

The bus station is very central, while the train station is on the other side of town, close to the ferry terminal. Long-distance bus services stop at the bus station, but some also stop at the train station (local buses run frequently between the two).

Regional bus services run up to six times daily from Oskarshamn to Kalmar (Skr72, 1½ hours) and Västervik (Skr64, one hour).

Swebus Express has three daily buses between Stockholm and Kalmar that call in at Oskarshamn. Svenska Buss operates four services weekly from Stockholm to Malmö via Oskarshamn, Kalmar and Karlskrona. Regional trains run from Linköping and Nässjö.

Boats to Visby depart from the ferry terminal near the train station, daily in winter and twice daily in summer. There are also boats to Öland leaving from the ferry terminal off Skeppsbro; see p126 for more information.

Västervik
0490 / pop 36,566
Västervik is a popular summer resort on the Baltic Sea, with camera-friendly cobbled streets, bustling nightlife, sandy beaches just east of town, and 5000 islands on the doorstep. Harried by the Danes in its early years, Västervik grew to become a major shipbuilding centre between the 17th and 19th centuries. Famous sons include former tennis player Stefan Edberg, and Björn Ulvaeus from Abba. Björn often returns in mid-July for Västerviks Folk Art Nouveau bathhouse, the tourist office
(889 00; www.vastervik.se/turist; Strömsholmen; 10am-7pm Mon-Fri, 10am-5pm Sat & Sun Jul-Aug, 10am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat
May, Jun & late Aug, 10am-6pm Mon-Fri Sep-Apr) is located on an islet linked by road to the town centre. There’s a library
(887 77; Spötorget; Mon-Fri summer, plus Sat winter) with free Internet access.

Sights & Activities
Västervik is stuffed with beautiful old buildings; ask the tourist office for its first-class town-walk brochure, which leads you round the best. St Petri Kyrka is a dramatic mass of spires and buttresses, while the older, calmer St Gertruds Kyrka (Västra Kyrkogata) dates from 1433 and has taken lightning strikes and riots in its stride. Nearby, Aspågdalen (Västra Kyrkogata 9), dating from the 17th century, is the oldest wooden house in town. Other old houses from the 1740s can be seen at picturesque Båtmansstugor (Båtmansgatan) – former fishermen’s cottages.

Displays at Kulbackens Museum
gives an insight into the Swedish mercantile empire of the 17th century.

The town bursts at the seams in summer, so book accommodation ahead.

Båtmansstugor
(317 67, 1940; Strömsgatan 42; cottages per person Skr200) This is a collection of delightful 18th-century fishermen’s cottages for rent in an atmospheric old part of town. Most cottages sleep four and have their own kitchen, but bathrooms are shared.

Västerviks stadshotell
(820 00; info@stadshotell .nu; Storgatan 3; s/d Skr1250/1700, discounted to Skr750/1200; P). Belonging to the Best Western chain, the central Stadshotell has modern, comfortable rooms, sauna and gym, private parking (Skr90 per day), and a restaurant and a popular nightclub on Friday and Saturday nights.

Lyssningsbodet
(889 20; lyssningsbodet@vastervik .se; low/high season sites Skr120/215, beds Skr140/160, d Skr300/350, cabins from Skr215/365; P). This huge, five-star ‘holiday village’ by the sea (2.5km southeast of town) is a world of its own. Restaurant, golf, a swimming pool, beaches, and boat, bicycle and kayak hire are all available,
ASTRID & PIPPI

If you’re a fan of the red-headed, pigtailed strongest girl in the world, you’ll already know and revere the name of author Astrid Lindgren (1907–2002). Astrid, a farmer’s daughter, was herself an unconventional tomboy, causing scandals in her home town of Vimmerby first by cutting off all her hair as the jazz age dawned, and then by becoming a single mother.

In 1941, Astrid’s daughter Karin was stuck in bed with pneumonia, and asked her mother for a story about ‘Pippi Longstocking’. The weird name inspired Astrid to invent a stream of stories about that original wild child, an immediate hit with Karin and her friends.

In 1944, Lindgren sprained her ankle and passed the time by writing down the Pippi stories. They were refused for publication, but another book of hers won second prize in a girls’ story competition. The next year Lindgren entered a revised Pippi manuscript into another competition, where it won first prize.

This was just the beginning of a prolific career. Lindgren’s impressive output included picture books, plays and songs, and her books have been translated into more than 60 languages. She worked in radio, TV and films, was head of the Children’s Book Department at her publishers for four years and received numerous honours and awards from around the world.

plus there are extra activities like circus-skull workshops, pony trekking and karaoke evenings. The hostel opens June to August, but cabins and hotel rooms are available year-round. Take local bus 5 (Skr13).

Eating & Drinking

Restaurang Smugglaren (3 213 22; Smugglaregränd 1; mains Skr180-230; 16 from 6pm summer, shorter hr winter) Tucked down an alley off Strandvägen is the charming Smugglaren, which offers quality quiches, salads, baked potatoes and hot dishes. You may have to lurk for a table.

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You’ll find ATMs and the post office in the Wachtmeister shopping centre on Borgmästergatan.

Library (77 30 64; Stortorget 15-17; 10am-7pm Mon, Wed & Thu, noon-7pm Tue, 10am-5pm Fri, 10am-1pm Sat) Free internet access.

Tourist office (77 30 90; www.karlskrona.se/tourism; Stortorget 2; 9am-7pm Mon-Fri, 9am-4pm Sat & Sun Jun-Aug, 10am-5pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat Sep-May)

Video shop (Admiralitetsgatan 4; per hr Skr29) Internet access.

The most captivating part is Grevagården, an 18th-century house where each room is filled with thousands of contemporary objects, from thimbles to coffins. There’s also a small baroque garden and a pleasant café.

The surprising Museum Leonardo da Vinci Ideale (255 73; Drottninggatan 28) exhibits a private collection of original art, but was closed at the time of writing; phone for information.

Other sights & activities

Stortorget is the town’s monumental square, deliberately created to rival the best in Europe. It’s dominated by symbols of law and religion: the courthouse; the baroque church Fredrikskyrkan (77 11-4pm Mon-Fri, 9.30am-2pm Sat); and Trefaldighetskyrkan (Trinity Church; 77 11am-4pm Mon-Fri, 9.30am-2pm Sat), inspired by Rome’s Pantheon.

Sweden’s oldest wooden church is Amira litetskyrkan (103 56; Vallgatan); outside is a guided tour of Kungsholm, depart from Fisktorget; book at the tourist office. Another option is the boat operated by Skärgårdstrafiken (783 30), which runs from Fisktorget and circles the fort five times daily from mid-June to mid-August (adult/child Skr80/35); you must inform the tourist office of your visit in advance if you take this second option.

Bristling with cannons, the tower Drottningöskärskastell on the island of Aspö was described by Admiral Nelson of the British Royal Navy as ‘impenetrable’ — and it looks it. You can visit it on a Skärgårdstrafiken boat (adult/child return Skr80/35; 77 Jun-Aug), departing from the end of Östra Köpmansgatan.

Museums

The striking Marinmuseum (359 30 02; Stortorget) admission free; 77 10am-6pm Jun-Aug, 11am-5pm Tue-Sun Sep-May) is the national naval museum. Inside are reconstructions of a battle deck in wartime, a hall full of fantastic figureheads, piles of model boats, and even some of the real thing — such as a minesweeper, a sailing ship and a submarine.

Nearby, the Konstmuseet (77 30 42; Bastionsgatan 8; admission free; noon-5pm Tue-Fri, to 7pm Wed, noon-5pm Sat & Sun) is one of a seamen’s barracks, now a modern art gallery.

The extensive Blekinge Museum (77 30 49 60; Fisktorget 2; admission free; 77 10am-6pm mid-Jun-mid-Aug, 11am-5pm Tue-Sun mid-Aug-mid-Jun) explains the local fishing, boat-building and quarying trades. The most captivating part is Grevgården, an 18th-century house where each room is filled with thousands of contemporary objects, from thimbles to coffins. There’s also a small baroque garden and a pleasant café.

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The touristic office and pizzeria with its lovely summer courtyard. The huge queues tell you that something special is going on here, and true enough, Glassiären sells some of the best ice cream in the northern hemisphere! You can watch waffle cones being made as you wait.

TheICA supermarket and Systembolaget are inside the Wachtmeister shopping centre.

Eating & Drinking

Nivå (010 71; Norra Kungsgatan 3; light meals Skr50-120, grill Skr120-225; Sun) Just off Stortorget, this steakhouse has an excellent menu of light, well-priced dishes (nachos, burgers, baguettes, salads, baked potatoes), plus heartier meals from the grill. It’s also a very cool bar that gets lively later, until at least 1am.

Två Rum & Kök (010 22; Södra Smedjeugatan 3; food Skr100-200; Sun) Another good choice for an evening is this classy place, which is known for its magnificent fondue (minimum two persons); go for savoury meat, fish or vegetable, or pig out on scrumptious chocolate.

Hamnkrogen (080 36; Skeppsbrokajen 18; lunch Skr70, mains Skr79-175) Hamnkrogen is right by the guest harbour, and has outdoor summer seating; it’s favoured by people who’ve just got off the bobbing boats. It offers pizzas, steaks and grilled fish, but if you fancy something spicier, great tandoori dishes, baltis and biryanis are cooked by the restaurant’s Indian chef.

Montmartre (31 18 33; Ronnebygatan 18; pizza Skr65-80, mains Skr80-160) Taking its cue from the Museum Leonardo da Vinci next door, this upmarket pizza restaurant sells Florentine-influenced food and comes complete with its own art gallery.

Goa (133 70; Drottninggatan 61; lunch Skr75; 9.30am-3.30pm Mon-Fri) Veggies and diners with a conscience will love this small, welcoming cafe, decorated with bright Mexican colours and cacti. It serves tasty lunches of lasagne, soup, salads, quiches and so on, that you can wash down with a healthy smoothie or Fair Trade tea.

Lennarths Konditori (31 03 32; Norra Kungsatan 3; Sun) This is an old-fashioned bakery-café, good for coffee and snacks. In summer you can sit by the splashing fountain, or on the secluded terrace upstairs.

Glasiiärens Glassbar (170 05; Stortorget 4; May-Sep) The huge queues tell you that something special is going on here, and true enough, Glassiären sells some of the best ice cream in the northern hemisphere! You can watch waffle cones being made as you wait.

TheICA supermarket and Systembolaget are inside the Wachtmeister shopping centre.

Getting There & Around

Ronneby airport (0457-255 90) is 33km west of Karlskrona; the Flygbuss leaves from Stortorget (Skr75). SAS flies to Stockholm Arlanda, and Stockholmshavn flies to Stockholm Bromma daily.

The bus and train stations are just north of the town centre. Regional buses are operated by BlekingeTrafiken (0455-569 80; www.blekingetrafiken.se). Regular Kustbussen (coast buses) operate between Kalmar, Karlskrona, Karlshamn and Kristianstad.

Svenska Buss runs four times a week from Malmö to Stockholm, calling at Kristianstad, Karlshamn and Karlskrona on the way. Swebus Express service 834 runs twice daily from Malmö to Kalmar, calling at Kristianstad, Karlshamn and Karlskrona.

Direct trains run at least 16 times daily to Karlshamn (Skr59, one hour) and Kristianstad (Skr13, two hours), at least six times daily to Emmaboda (Skr69, 40 minutes), and at least a couple of trains to Göteborg (Skr388, five hours). Change at Kristianstad or Emmaboda for Malmö and Lund; at Emmaboda for Kalmar.

Stena Line ferries to Gdynia (Poland) depart from Verkō, 10km east of Karlskrona (take bus 6); see p328 for details.

For a taxi, call Taxi Karlskrona (191 00).

KARLSHAMN

Gourmet Grön (164-40; Östra Piren; www.gourmetgron.se; lunch Skr75; 10am-1pm Mon-Fri, noon-3pm Sat & Sun) This award-winning waterside restaurant has wonderful lunch-time and evening buffets, with an emphasis on vegetarian food. Nibble on a ciabatta, tapas-style goodties, or inventive spreads with Tunisian, French, Greek and Italian influences.

Köpmannagården (317 18; Drottninggatan 8; pizzas around Skr70) For cheaper eats, try this pleasant restaurant and pizzeria with its lovely summer courtyard.

Getting There & Away

The bus and train stations are in the northeastern part of the town. For travel information, see the previous section on Karlskrona.

Lisco Line sails daily between Karlskrona and Klaipėda in Lithuania; see p328 for details.

Sights

The utvandrarmonument stands in a park by the harbour, commemorating all the America-bound emigrants. The figures on the monument are characters from Vilhelm Moberg’s classic work The Emigrants – Karl Oscar, looking forward to the new country, and Kristina, looking back towards her beloved Duvemåla. Nearby, you’ll find a 300-year-old fishing cottage – open summer only.

The ‘culture quarter’ Karlskramns Kulturvård (148 68; Vinkelsgatan 8; noon-5pm Mon-Fri; Jul-Aug, 1-4pm Mon-Fri Sep-May) has interesting information about Karlshamn’s tobacco and punsch-producing history, and some 18th-century merchants’ houses.

Sleeping & Eating

STF Vandrhem Carlshamn (140 40; stfturist@karlshamn.se; Varvsgratan 1; d/s Skr1120/1329, discounted to Skr668/868; For high-quality accommod-ation, walk out of the tourist office and across the road into this upmarket hotel. Cushy rooms are clean-lined and modern, and some have harbour views. There’s a sauna, 24-hour bar and a top-quality restaurant too.

SOUTH SWEDEN

STF Turiststation Tjärö (600 63; tjare@stfturist.se; beds Skr280, camp sites per person Skr75; early May–early Sep) This place lies on an idyllic island nature reserve, off the coast of Blekinge between Karlskrona and Karlskrona, with walking trails and peaceful beaches. The hostel is highly recom-mended; breakfast is available and there’s a café and fully licensed restaurant, plus boat and canoe hire. Boats run from Jämavik at least six times daily in summer (return Skr80) – it’s a good idea to call the hostel to confirm sailing times.
campsites and at least a dozen hostels (book ahead). Camping between midsummer and mid-August can cost up to Skr250 per site. The island has developed a reputation as a foodie’s delight, and there are lots of excellent restaurants.

Information
The bridge from Kalmar lands you on the island just north of Färjestaden, where there is a large and well-stocked tourist office (056 06 00; www.olandsturist.com; 8:30am-8:30pm Mon-Sat, 9:30am-7pm Sun Jul, 9am-5:30pm Mon-Fri, 10am-4pm Sat & Sun May, Jun & early Aug, 9am-5:30pm Mon-Fri rest of yr; closed late-Dec–early Jan) at the Träffpunkt Öland centre. Staff can book accommodation throughout the island (including cottages and cabins for a Skr75 fee). Model monks and ring forts illustrate the island’s history in the Historium inside the tourist office, and there’s a Naturum (Swedish only) for wildlife spotter.

There’s also a smaller tourist office in Borgholm (see opposite).

Getting There & Around

BICYCLE
There are no bicycle lanes on the bridge between Öland and Kalmar, so cyclists take their lives into their own hands! Cyclists aren’t allowed on the bridge in summer – instead there’s a free service to get you across (roughly hourly; enquire at the tourist office in Kalmar). The following shops hire out bicycles in summer for around Skr100 per day, or about Skr400 a week:

**Bicycle Rentals**

- Byxelkrok Cykeluthyrning (070 579 61 00; www.byxelkrok.se)
- ERSA-Cykeluthyrning (0708-17 75 50; www.ersa.se)

**Boat**

From mid-June to mid-August, MS Solsund (070 42 42 60) sails daily from Byxelkrok (northwest Öland) and Oskarshamn (on the mainland 60km north of Kalmar). One-way tickets cost Skr150/100 per adult/seven-16 years; a car and up to five people costs Skr550, and a bicycle Skr50.

**Bus**

Silverlinjen (0485-26111; www.silverlinjen.se) runs three daily direct buses from Öland to Stockholm (Sk570, 6½ hours), calling at Kalmar – reservations are essential.

Buses connect all the main towns on the island from Kalmar, and run every hour or two to Borgholm (Sk48, 50 minutes) and Mörlånga (Sk32, one hour). A few buses per day run to Byxelkrok and Grankullavik (both Sk88, around 2½ hours), in the far north of the island. Services to the south are poor, with some improvement from May to August.

**Borgholm & Around**

The most happening town on Öland is Borgholm, the ‘capital’ of the island (it’s a small island!). It’s a real family place, with every other shop selling flip-flops, plastic octopuses and ice cream. The most dramatic sight is the enormous ruined castle on its outskirts.

**Tourist Office**

(073 890 90 00; www.borgholmsturist.se; 10am-3pm Mon-Fri rest of yr) is at the bus station. Banks and other services are on Storgatan.

**Sights**

Northern Europe’s largest ruined castle, **Borgholm Slott** (013 33; www.borgholmslott.se; adult/17-yr Skr50/20; 10am-6pm May-Aug, 10am-4pm Apr-Sep), looms just south of town. This epic limestone structure was finally burnt and abandoned early in the 18th century, after being used as a dye works. There’s a very good museum inside and a nature reserve nearby.

The ruins are a frequent summer concert venue, and there are children’s activities between late June and mid-August.

Sweden’s most famous ‘summer house’, **Solldiden** (0153 55; adult/17-yr Skr60/30; 11am-6pm May–mid-Sep), 2.5km south of the town centre, is used by the royal family. Its exceptional gardens are open to the public and are well worth a wander.

**Vida Museum & Konsthall** (0774 40; www.vidamuseum.com; adult/under 15yr Skr40/free; 11am-6pm) is a strikingly modern museum and art gallery in Halltorp, about 9km south of Borgholm. Its best halls are devoted to two of Sweden’s top glass designers.

On the east coast, about 13km southeast of Borgholm, is **Gårdsösa kyrka** (11am-5pm mid-May–mid-Sep), the best-preserved medieval church (1138) on Öland, with reasonably intact wall and ceiling paintings.

Sleeping
The tourist office can help you find rooms round town.

**Ebbas Vandrarhem & Trädgårdscafé** (010 94; www.ebbas.se; lunch Skr75, 2-/4-bed rm Skr530/880; 11am-6pm) runs three daily direct buses from Öland to Stockholm (Sk570, 6½ hours), calling at Kalmar – reservations are essential.

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**Tourist Office**

(010 890 90 00; www.borgholmsturist.se; 10am-3pm Mon-Fri rest of yr) is at the bus station. Banks and other services are on Storgatan.
delightful old farmhouse east of town. The accommodation is excellent, with either pale romantic rooms, or brash modern black-white-and-red colour schemes. There’s the added drawcard of a huge smörgåsbord (Skr175 per person; from 6pm daily) of potato dumplings stuffed with pork), served with lingonberry jam and cream. There’s a large sunny terrace with wonderful views over Kalmarsund.

**WINDMILL MANIA**

Once, the little island of Öland had more windmills than Holland! During the 1750s, the wooden mills suddenly became symbols of wealth and power, and every aspiring man-about-town had to have one. Öland’s oak forests vanished under the mill-building craze, and soon around 2000 sets of sails were spinning across the island. By the 1950s, the mills had become obsolete and most fell into disrepair. Nowadays, the 400 or so remaining windmills are recognised as unique historical monuments, and are lovingly restored and tended by local windmill associations.

You’ll see two basic types of windmill on Öland: an early style known as ‘German’ or ‘post’, where the whole mill was turned into the wind; and later versions known as ‘Dutch’ or ‘tower’ windmills, where just the cap revolved.

**Eating & Drinking**

**Nya Conditioriet** (100 11; Storgatan 28) This busy old-fashioned bakery-café serves good sandwickes and pastries.

**Pubben** (124 15; Storgatan 18) There are snacks and light meals here, but mainly people come to this English-style pub for the beer. With genial service and a summery terrace, it’s one of the best deal in town.

There are supermarkets on Storgatan, and a central Systembolaget (Östra Kyrkogatan 19).

**NORTHERN ÖLAND**

At Sandvik on the west coast, about 30km north of Borgholm, Sandvikskvarn (261 72; www.sandvikskvarn.com; pizzas from Skr65; noon-8pm May-Sep, to 10pm mid-Jun–mid-Aug) is a Dutch-style windmill and one of the largest in the world. In summer, you can climb its seven storeys for good views across to the mainland. There’s a restaurant with old barrels for seats where you can try the local speciality, lufska (baked pork and potato, Skr65); and an adjacent pizzeria.

**Källa kyra**, at a little harbour about 36km northeast of Borgholm, off road 136, is a fine example of Öland’s medieval fortified churches. The broken runestone inside shows the Christian Cross growing from the pagan tree of life.

**Grankullavik**, in the far north, has sandy beaches and dense summer crowds; Lyckesand is one of the island’s best beaches and the strangely twisted trees and ancient barrows at the nearby Trollskogen nature reserve are well worth a visit.

**Grankullaviks Vandrarhem** (240 40, fax 24010; dm from Skr150; May–Sep), a SVIF hostel, is superbly situated on the beachfront and has a kitchen, restaurant and bakery.

**Neptuni Camping** (284 95; www.neptunincamping.se; Småskåpövägen; sites Skr150, cabins from Skr400) This wild and grassy place is handy for people jumping off the ferry in Byxelkrok, and also has good amenities.

**Lamm & Grisen** (203 50; Löttorp; from 5pm), 10km south of Böda, is popular for its all-you-can-eat evenings (Skr245), with whole spit-roasted lamb and pork on the menu and live entertainment. The restaurant has recently been renovated, and it’s very family-friendly.

Bus 106 runs a route to the north from Borgholm.

**CENTRAL ÖLAND**

Fortresses, a zoo and an excellent farm village are central Öland’s biggest sights. The largest settlement is Färjestaden (Ferry Town), where you can find banks and services; the town rather lost its purpose in life after the bridge was built, although an effort has been made to rejuvenate the old jetty.

**Olånds Djurpark** (392 22; admission Skr220; 10am-6pm May-Aug, to 8pm mid-Jun–mid-Aug, 11am-4pm Sep) is a zoo, amusement park and water park favoured by families, just north of the bridge near the tourist office. Kids under 12 enter free.

The largest Iron Age ring fort in Sweden, Gräbog, was built as the Roman Empire was crumbling. Its monumental walls measure 640m around and are seriously impressive, even though much of the stonework was plundered for later housing. After falling into disuse, the fort sprang back to life around 1200, when the adjacent St Knut's chapel (now a ruin) was also built. The Gräbog complex is about 16km east of Färjestaden, just off the Norra Möckleby road; you really need your own transport to get there.

The vast Ismantorp fortress, with the remains of 88 houses and nine mysterious gates, is deep in the woods, 5km west of the Himlberga museum. It’s an undisturbed forrest ruin, clearly showing how the village’s tiny huts were encircled by the outer wall (Eketorp, see right, is an imaginative reconstruction of similar remains). The area, just south of the island’s Ekerum–Långlöt road, can be freely visited at any time.

A 17km hiking trail leads from Gräbog to Ismantorp fortress.

The best open-air museum on Öland is Himmelsberga (56 10 22; adult/under 15yr Skr55/free; 10am-5.30pm mid-May–mid-Aug), a farm village on the east coast at Långlöt. Its quaint cottages are fully furnished. There’s hay in the mangers and slippers by the door; it’s all so well done you feel as though the inhabitants have just popped out for a minute. There’s also a dinky café and a modern art gallery.

**STF Vandrarhem Olånds Skogsby** (383 95; info@vandrarhemolands.se; dms@d50140/200/280; mid-Apr–Sep.), a charming STF hostel, claims to be Sweden’s oldest (it dates from 1934). It’s based in a flowery old wooden house, 3km southeast of Färjestaden. The Färjestaden–Mörbylånga bus 103 (Skr18) runs past at least five times daily.

There are a few good eateries at the old jetty in Färjestaden, including Café Restaurang Bojen (310 37; mains Skr90–140; from 11.30am Jun-Aug, shorter hr rest of yr), where you can sample fresh fish dishes or try Öland’s speciality, kroppkakor (potato dumplings stuffed with pork), served with lingonberry jam and cream. There’s a large sunny terrace with wonderful views over Kalmarsund.

**SOUTHERN ÖLAND**

The southern half of the island has made it onto Unesco’s World Heritage List. Its treetops are criss-crossed with the relics of human settlement and conflict. Besides linear villages. Iron Age fortresses and tombs, this area is also a natural haven for plants and wildlife.

Birds, insects and flowers populate the unusual limestone plain of Stora Alvaret. Bird-spotting is best in May and June, which is also when the Alvar’s rock roses and rare orchids burst into bloom. The plain occupies most of the inland area of southern Öland, and can be crossed by road from Mörbylånga or Degerhamn.

The ancient grave fields of Mysinge and Gettlinge, stretching for kilometres on the ridge alongside the main Mörbylånga–Degerhamn road, include burial sites and standing stones from the Stone Age to the late Iron Age. The biggest single monument is the Bronze Age tomb Mysinge hög. 4km east of Mörbylånga, from where there are views of almost the whole Southern Öland.

If you can’t picture how the ring forts looked in their prime, take a trip to Eketorp (66 20 00; www.eketorp.se; adult/7-14yr Skr70/40; 10am-5pm), at a little harbour about 36km east of Eke-torp, a charming STF hostel, claims to be Sweden's oldest (it dates from 1934). It's based in a flowery old wooden house, 3km southeast of Färjestaden. The Färjestaden–Mörbylånga bus 103 (Skr18) runs past at least five times daily.

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On the east coast, about 5km north of Eketorp, Gräddårts Fiskehamn is a delightful little fishing harbour. A little further north, there’s an 11th-century runestone at Seby, and in Segerstad there are standing stones, stone circles and over 200 graves.
Österbotten's southernmost point is a curious place. A nature reserve (10am-8pm mid-Jun–early Aug, 11am-4pm Sat & Sun Easter–mid-Jun & late Aug–Sep), almost surrounded by sea, it's popular with families and bird-spotters. Pay Skr50 to park, then you're free to wander round the Naturum, snack in the café-restaurant, or climb Scandinavia’s tallest lighthouse, Långespan (42m).

SLEEPING & EATING
Mörby Vandrarhem & Lägrishotell (491 93; morby@hotelskansen.com; Brugskatan; hotel 1/2-/6-bed rm Skr300/400/600/800, hotel s/d from Skr400/600; May-Aug; P S) In the small village of Mörbylånga, this has a mixture of hostel- and hotel-style accommodation. It's great for families, with a nearby park and beaches, and bikes for hire. There's also a restaurant on site.

Kajut哈尔 Hotel & Vandrarhem (408 10; kajut哈尔@hotelskansen.com; lunch Skr40, dinner Skr100–180, 1/2-/6-bed room Skr300/400/600/800, hotel s/d from Skr900/980) Kajutan is down by Mörbylånga harbour. The new management were revamping the rooms for the 2006 season - although when they'll find time out from the busy bar-restaurant is anyone's guess! Summer lunches, served in a sunny courtyard, are particularly popular.

Gammlasbygårdens Gästgivare (66 30 51; info@gammlasbygarden.se; s/d Skr900/800; desed Mon & Jan-Feb; P) A graceful country farmhouse on the east coast, 5km north of Eketorp. Rooms (all doubles except one) are individually decorated, with neat whitewashed walls, a couple have private balconies. The food (mains around Skr160), mostly fish and venison, is also very good - reservations are a must.

Restaurang Fägel Blå (66 12 01; mains Skr90-130; 11am-5pm Jun-Aug, to 10pm Wed & Fri Jul) This super café-restaurant is by the lighthouse in the far south. The sharply designed building offers un paralleled sea views. Scoff à la carte local favourites like venison, herring and kroppkakor, or roll up for the twice-weekly evening buffet in July.

There are supermarkets in Mörbylånga, and a Systembolaget.

ÖSTERGÖTLAND

The Göta Canal threads diagonally across Östergötland, with the region’s main towns beaded along its banks. These are generally old 19th-century industrial heartlands, full of fascinating architecture, their buildings given new leases of life as heritage centres, restaurants and concert halls. The west of the region, bordered by the mighty Lake Vättern, fits a different pattern. Its flat green countryside is steeped in ancient history, and includes both Sweden’s most impressive rune stone and the unmissable medieval town of Vadstena.

NORRKÖPING

0 50 miles

SLEEPING & EATING
HOTELS

Mariestad (www.mariestad.com; Albertslund; hotel s/d from Skr400/600; May-Aug; P) A graceful country farmhouse on the east coast, 5km north of Eketorp. Rooms (all doubles except one) are individually decorated, with neat whitewashed walls, a couple have private balconies. The food (mains around Skr160), mostly fish and venison, is also very good - reservations are a must.

The industrial development of Norrköping began in the 17th century, but really took off in the late 19th century when textile mills and factories sprang up alongside the swift-flowing Motals ström. Seventy percent of Sweden’s textiles were once made in Norrköping, but the last mill closed in the 1970s.

Information

Banks and ATMs can be found along Drottninggatan.

Forex (0200-22 22 20; www.forex.se; Drottninggatan 46; 10am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat) Money exchange.

Library (Stadshuset; Drottninggatan 46; 10am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat) Free Internet access.

Norrköping Biljard och IT Café (16 34 00; Pristugatan 46; per min Skr25) Internet access.

Tourist office (15 50 00; www.destination.norrko.png.se; Dalsgatan 16; 10am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat & Sun Jul–mid-Aug, shorter hr rest of the yr)

Sights & Activities

Industrilandskapet is the well-preserved industrial area near the river. Pedestrian walkways and bridges lead past magnificent former factory buildings and around the ingenious system of locks and canals. The most thunderous waterfall is Kungsfall, near the islet Laxholmen.

Within the area are several interesting museums, all with free admission. The excellent and unique Arbetets Museum (18 98 00; 11am-5pm) documents working life. There’s one permanent display about Alva Carlsson, a typical worker in the former cotton mill, and numerous inventive temporary exhibitions. The seven-sided building, designed in the 1920s, is a work of art in itself - go and see!

Over the bridge, Stadsmuseet (15 26 20; www.museum.norrko.png.se; Dalsgatan 15; 10am-4pm Tue & Thu) describes the history of Louis de Geer’s paper factory, which was founded in the early 17th century.

A modern addition to the riverside scenery is the extraordinary 1300-seat Louis de Geer Konserthus (15 50 30; Konserthuset; Dalsgatan 15), in a former paper mill. Still containing the original balconies, it’s a superb venue which is used for orchestral, jazz and pop concerts.

Other Sights & Activities

Konstmuseum (15 26 00; Kristinaplatsen; adult/under 18yr Skr40/free; noon-4pm Tue & Thu-Sun, noon-8pm Wed mid-Jun–mid-Aug, 11am-5pm Wed & Fri-Sun, 11am-8pm Tue & Thu-Sep-May), the large art museum south of the centre, has important early-20th-century works, including examples of modernism and cubism.

For great city views, climb the 68m-high Rådstugutorn (Tower Hall Tower; Drottninggatan; Skr30; 3pm Mon-Fri Jul).

Two kilometres west of the city centre, near the river, are good examples of Bronze Age rock carvings, with an adjacent museum, Hallristningsmuseet (16 55 45; www.brin.se; Himmeleland; admission free, guided tours adult/under 18yr Skr30/free; 11am-6pm mid-Jun–Jul, 10am-4.30pm May–mid-Jun & Aug). Guided tours of the rock carvings take place at 2pm in July. Take bus 115 to Råksvägen, then walk the last 500m.

In July, the tiny vintage tram No 1 runs a short guided tour through the town centre. It leaves from outside the train station at 5pm and 5.30pm Monday, Wednesday and Friday (Skr40).

Kolmården

Kolmården zoo (24 90 00; www.kolmarden.com; 10am-6pm Jul, 10am-5pm May, Jun & Aug, Sat & Sun
You’ll need all day to take the zoo in fully. Kolmården is 35 km north of Norrköping, on the north shore of Bräviken (regular bus 432 or 433 from Norrköping; Skr60, 40 minutes).

**Sleeping**

**CAMPING & HOSTELS**

Höumans Hotell & Vandrarhem (416 58 90; car Högstangan & Sänti Persgatan; dm Skr200, s/d Skr385/700)

This is the only budget option right in the heart of town. Rooms are above a busy pub-restaurant, so after a night out you haven’t far to go. Most were renovated in 2005, and all come with cable TV.

**STF Vandrarhem Abborreberg** (31 93 44; abbor reberg@telia; dm Skr175; Apr–mid-Oct; P)

Sweet-toothed hostellers will appreciate this place, with its associated ice-cream parlour. It’s beautifully situated in a coastal pine wood 6 km east of town, with accommodation in huts scattered through the surrounding park, and is definitely worth the trek. Take bus 111 to Lindö.

**Himmelstalund’s Camping**

This little campsite opposite the entrance has spiders, sharks, alligators and snakes and completes the attraction.

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fills up after the locals have finished work. Another spot that gets busy after office hours is nearby Pub Wasa ( 08 26 06; Gamla Rådhusgatan). The Bishop’s Arms ( 36 41 20; Tsya Torget 2), at the Grand Hotel, is a good English-style pub where you can while away an hour or two, sitting outside with a beer and a great view of the river.

The blocks between Drottninggatan and Olai Kyrkgata contain big shopping centres full of chain stores and supermarkets. For alcohol, go to Systembolaget (Drottninggatan 508).

Getting There & Away
Sweden’s third-largest airport (Nyköping Skavsta) is 60km away – see  p323 for details. To get there take the train to Nyköping, then catch a local bus.

The regional bus station is next to the train station, and long-distance buses leave from a terminal across the road. Swebus Express ( 0200-21 82 18; www.swebusexpress.se) has very frequent services to Stockholm (SkR110, 2½ hours) and Jönköping (SkR140, 2½ hours), and several services daily to Göteborg (SkR216, five hours) and Kalmar (SkR170, four hours). Svenska Buss ( 0771-67 67 67; www.svenskabuss.se in Swedish) runs similar, though less frequent, routes.

Norrköping is on the main north–south railway line, and SJ trains depart every two hours for Stockholm (SkR193, 1½ hours) and Malmö (SkR519, four hours). Kustpilen SJ trains run roughly every two hours, north to Nyköping (SkR75, 40 minutes) and south to Linköping (SkR43, 25 minutes).

Getting Around
Minimum fare on Norrköping’s urban transport is SkR20. Trams cover the city and are the quickest option for short hops, especially along Drottninggatan from the train station.

For a taxi, ring Taxi Norrköping ( 010 10 00).

SÖDERKÖPING

0121 / pop 14,095

Söderköping, 17km southeast of Norrköping, is a delightfull town in which to spend a few hours. Admire its quaint churches and tiny wooden houses, meander the quayside, or use it as the starting place for a trip along the Göta Canal.

Sights & Activities
Staff at the tourist office ( 181 60; www.soderkoping.se; Margaretagatan 19; 10am-7pm Mon-Fri, 10am-4pm Sat & Sun Jun-Jul, 10am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-4pm Sat Jun-Aug, 10am-4pm Mon-Fri Sep-May) can help you plan an exploration of the Göta Canal, including cycling or walking along part of it, or cruising some or all of its length.

The quaintest area is Drothems Kvarteren, where there are two medieval churches. St Laurentii Kyrkan is the most impressive, with its ridiculously pointy Gothic spires, wood-shingled bell tower and 11th-century rune stone. The 14th-century Drothemskyrkan is a more homely affair.

If you want to know more about the town’s history, visit the little Stadsmuseum ( 214 84; Gamla Skolgatan 6; admission free; 10am-4pm Jun-Aug, 10am-4pm Mon-Fri Sep-May). Cross the canal from Slussgränd and climb the steps to the top of 78m-high Ramundberget for a great view. The town boasts the world’s oldest existing dry dock, by the canal.

Sleeping & Eating
STF Vandrarehem Mangelgården ( 102 13; Skönbergagatan 48; dm SkR160; May-Aug; P ) Next door to the camping ground is this STF hostel, in a lovely 18th-century wooden building. Söderköpings Brunns ( 109 00; info@soderkopingsbrunn.se; Skånsbergagatan 35; s/d from SKr175/1800) Stockholms Brunns ( 08 50 00; info@soderkopingsbrunn.se; Skånsbergagatan 35; s/d from SKr175/1800) is a lovely 18th-century wooden building. Söderkopings Brunns ( 109 00; info@soderkopingsbrunn.se; Skånsbergagatan 35; s/d from SkR145/1600; P ) Söderköping enjoyed a brief spell as a health resort, and you can continue the tradition at this large, luxurious spa, dating from the 1770s and full of old-world class. It offers quality accommodation, pretty grounds and a top-notch restaurant; the company also run Göta Canal boat trips in July.

Korskullens Camping ( 216 21; korskullenscamp@hotmail.com; sites SkR140, cabins & chalets from SkR350;
Tourist office (20 68 35; www.linköping.se; Klostergatan 68) Inside Quality Hotel Ekoxen. Open 24hr, but staffed only during office hours.

Sights

GAMLAM LINKÖPING & VALLA FRITIDSMÖRÅDE

The town’s best attractions are just outside the centre. Half a million people flock to Gamla Linköping (12 11 10; admission free; bus 202 or 214, Skr20), 2km west of the city. One of the biggest living-museum villages in Sweden, it consists of six streets and around 90 quaint 19th-century houses. They contain about a dozen theme houses (all free, with various opening times), crafty shops and even a small chocolate factory. You can wander among the 19th-century buildings at will.

Just 300m through the forest is Valla Fritidsområde, a recreation area with domestic animals, a children’s playground, minigolf, a few small museums and many old houses.

KINDA CANAL

Most visitors to Sweden know about the engineering marvel of the Göta Canal, but Linköping boasts its own canal system, the 90km Kinda Canal, which opened in 1871. It has 15 locks, including the deepest one in Sweden. Possible cruises include evening sailings, musical outings and wine tasting trips. For a simple day excursion, from late June to early August the M/S Kind (0141-23 33 70) leaves Tullbron dock at 10am on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, and travels to Rimforsa (adult/6-15yr Skr345/110, return by bus or train included).

Other sights

Made from blocks of hard carved limestone, the enormous Domkyrka (9am-6pm) was the country’s largest and most expensive church in the Middle Ages. Its foundations were laid around 1250, with its 107m spire and vast interior, it’s still astonishing visitors today. Inside, green men stud the ceiling, and there are numerous medieval treasures dating back to the 14th century.

The struggle between church and state is explored in the nearby castle’s Slotts & Domkyrkonomuseum (12 23 80; adult/under 7yr Skr40/free; noon-4pm Tue-Sun Apr-Sep), where the boisterous, large-than-life King Gustav Vasa and the last Catholic bishop, Hans Brask, made friends, ate, drank and fell out again. Archaeological finds include two mummmified black rats from the bishop’s privy.

Just north of the cathedral, Östergötlands Länsmuseum (23 03 00; Vasavägen; adult/child Skr20/10; 11am-8pm Tue, 11am-4pm Wed, Sat & Sun) has a decent European art collection (Gra-nach’s painting of Eden, Original Sin, is wonderful, with a smiling Eve twiddling her toes), and Swedish art up to the Middle Ages.

The concrete floor of Sankt Lars Kyrka (Storgatan; 11am-5pm Mon-Fri, 11am-1pm Sat) was built in 1802 above the previous medieval church crypt. Downstairs, you can see 11th-century grave stones and skeletons.

Approximately 7km west of the centre is Flygvapenmuseum (28 35 67; Carl Cederströms gata; admission free; 10am-5pm Jun-Aug, noon-4pm Tue-Sun Sep-May; bus 213), with exhibits on aircraft history and 60 aircraft, including a Swedish art hospital and the Middle Ages.

Ekenäs Slott (771 46; tours Skr90; guided tours on the hr 1-3pm Tue-Sun Jul, Sat & Sun May-Jun & Aug), built between 1630 and 1644, is one of the best-preserved Renaissance castles in Sweden. It has three spectacular towers, a moat, and furniture and fittings from the 17th to 19th centuries. The castle is 20km east of Linköping; you’ll need your own transport to get there.

Sleeping

Linköping STF Vandrarhem & Hotel (35 90 00; www.lvh.se; Klostergatan 52A; dm from Skr190, s/d hotel rooms Skr650/760, discounted weekends to Skr490/590) A well-swish central hostel with hotel-style accommodation too, mostly with kitchenettes. All rooms have private bathrooms and TVs. It fills up fast, so book ahead.

Hotell Östergyllen (10 20 75; Hamngatan 28; from Skr395/550) There’s a slight air of peeling paint at this budget hotel not far from the train station, but rooms are comfortable enough. You can pay up to Skr200 extra for a private bathroom.

Hotel du Nord (12 98 95; www.hotellundnord.se; Reglagaregatan 5; s/d from Skr680/880, discounted to Skr700/840) This fuchsia-pink 19th-century building sits in parkland. Rooms are pleasant and light, and you can eat breakfast on the patio in summer.

Quality Hotel Ekoxen (25 26 00; www.ekoxen.se; Klostergatan 68; s/d from Skr1395/1695, discounted to Skr795/995) The large Ekoxen has stylish, modern newly renovated rooms. There’s a spa and massage centre (including flotation tanks!), and an acclaimed restaurant.

Glittrings Camping (17 49 28; glittringscamping.se; Berggårdsvägen; sites Skr150; May-Sep) This huge campsite, with minigolf and cycle hire, is 4km west of the city centre.

Eating & Drinking

Most places to eat (and drink) are found around the main square or nearby streets, especially along buzzing Ågatan. To Gamla Linköping (2km); Sturegatan 12 21 21 14 13 12 11 10; www.fawltytowers.se; Klostergatan 68; s/d from Skr1395/1695, discounted to Skr795/995) The large Fawlty has stylish, modern newly renovated rooms. There’s a spa and massage centre (including flotation tanks!), and an acclaimed restaurant.

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Eating & Drinking

Most places to eat (and drink) are found around the main square or nearby streets, especially along bustling Ågatan. Stångs PM&C (31 20 00; Södra Stånggatan 1; lunch Skr90, mains Skr250-250; lunch Tue-Fri, from 6pm Thu-Sat, closed lunch Jul) In a 200-year-old warehouse down near the kind of Canal docks, this is a splendid restaurant with a location to match. The dinner menu is impressive, with old Swedish favourites given snappy new interpretations, and there are frequent evening barbecues in summer.

Riva (12 95 15; Ågatan 43; mains Skr160-250; 5pm Mon-Sat) Gourmet pizzas (with toppings such as honey and goat’s cheese, or marinated squid) and huge wood-fired ovens at this trendy Italian restaurant.

Kikobar (13 13 10; Klostergatan 26; mains Skr130-180) Kikobar is a cool corner house with...
an international menu where ‘East meets West’ – meaning Western mains like steak and salmon, and plenty of sushi and stir-fry dishes too.

Gula Huset (13 88 38; Ågatan; lunch Sk69, dinner mains Skr100-200) The courtyard tables are much sought after in summer at the traditional ‘Yellow House’. It offers a good-value lunch, plus a long menu featuring pasta, Swedish specialities, and seafood, meat and vegetarian dishes.

BK (10 01 11; Ågatan 47; tapas around Skr30, mains Skr120-200) It positively leaves on Friday nights. Dabbled at the extensive tapas menu, or go for burgers enlivened with mango salsa as the crowds get increasingly raucous.

Harrys (13 33 90; Ågatan 43) Another lively pub-restaurant with beer-drinking food like spareribs, burgers and burritos.

Café Ciocolata (13 18 88; Hanterkaregatan 1) A genuine Italian-run café, stylish Ciocolata has a wide range of coffees and filled panini or ciabatta (around Skr40).

Yngves Liva (31 88 88; Ågatan 38) A godsend for vegans or anyone with milk allergies, this may be the only café in Sweden to serve vegan latté! There are crêpes, sandwiches and nubs to nibble on too.

The Hemköp supermarket on Storgatan has the longest opening hours – until 10pm daily. The Filthygallerian shopping centre contains a small Systembolaget (27 09 48; Stora Torget).

Getting There & Away

The airport (18 10 30) is only 2km east of town. Skyways (020-95 95 00; www.skyways.se) fly daily direct to Stockholm Arlanda and Copenhagen. There’s no airport bus, but Taxi Linköping (14 60 00) charges around Skr130 for the ride.

Regional and local buses, run by Östgötatrafiken (0771-21 10 10; www.ostgotsatrafiken.se), leave from the terminal next to the train station; route maps and timetables are available at the information office. Journeys cost from Skr20; the 24-hour dygnskort (Skr110) is valid on all buses and local trains within the region. Up to four express buses per day go to Vadstena, otherwise change at Motala.

Long-distance buses depart from a terminal 500m northwest of the train station. Swebus Express runs seven or eight times daily to Jönköping (Skr157, 1½ hours) and Göteborg (Skr271, four hours), and north to Norrköping (Skr65, 40 minutes) and Stockholm (Skr190, three hours).

Linköping is on the main north–south railway line. Regional and express trains run to Stockholm roughly every two hours; express trains go to Malmö. Frequent regional trains run north to Norrköping (Skr43, 25 minutes). Kustplanen Sj trains run every few hours to Norrköping, Nyköping and Kalmar.

Sights

Located near the lake, the mighty Renaissance castle Vadstena Slott (315 70; Stortorget; adult/7-15yr Skr15.40/10.50; 10am-7pm Jul, 10am-6pm Jun & early Aug, 10am-2pm or 3pm Mon-Fri rest of yr) is the focal point of the early Vasa kings. The lower floors contain a small historical display. The furnished upper floors are more interesting, but are only open during guided tours (in English at 2pm mid-May–mid-Sep); it’s worth going on one if only to visit the chapel, which has an incredible 17-second echo!

The Sancta Birgitta Klostermuseum (100 31; Lasarettsgatan; adult/8-18yr Sk50/20; 11am-6pm Jul, 11am-4pm Jun & Aug) is in Bjälboättens Palats (a royal residence that became a convent in 1384), and tells the story of St Birgitta’s rollercoaster life and those of all her saint-and-sinner children. It contains the coffin that she was brought back from Rome in, and there are realistic waxworks in the old nuns’ cells.

Of plain construction, humble and strong, Klosterkyrkan (abbey church; admission free; 9am-8pm Jul, 9am-7pm Jun & Aug, 9am-5pm May & Sep) was built in response to one of St Birgitta’s visions. After the church’s consecration in 1430, Vadstena became the top pilgrimage site in Sweden – a trend which is being revived today. Inside are medieval sculptures and some interesting carved floor slabs.

The old courthouse rådhus, on the town square, and Rödtornet (Säntgatan) both date from late medieval times.

Sleeping

Chains hotels don’t get a look-in here; pretty and personal is the rule. Booking accommodation well in advance.

STF Vandrarhem Vadstena (103 02; www.va-bostaelle.se/vadstena; Kringlingen 20; dm Skr170; ) This is a lovely big central hostel, with kindly staff, sunny dorms and a large underground kitchen decorated with cheerful red Dala horses. From late August to early June it’s essential to book in advance.

27ans Nattlogi (176 64; 27ans@va-bostaelle.se; Storgatan 27; s/d from Skr500/150; ) Cool white paint and wooden floors give a calming feel to the six rooms (some with views of Klosterkyrkan). More expensive rooms have private bathrooms. All include breakfast.

Pensionat Solgården (143 50; Strågatan 3; s/d from Skr540/690; 100 31; mid-May–Aug) There’s a range of uniquely decorated rooms (some with private bathrooms) at this family-run hotel, all with an artist/artisan connection. They’re all very different – see the photos at www.pensionatsolgarden.se (Swedish only) to see what takes your fancy.

Vadstena Klosterhotel (315 30; hotel@klosterhotell.com; s/d from Skr150/145; ) History and luxury do a little dance together at this fine hotel in St Birgitta’s old convent. The bathrooms are a wee bit dated, but the medieval-style rooms are great, with chandeliers, high wooden beds, indispensable coffee-makers. Most also have stunning lake views.

Vättviksbadet (127 30; sites Skr165, simple rooms & cabins from Skr350; 100 31; May–mid-Sep). This quality campsite is near the lake, 2km north of the town. Its family-friendly amenities include a beach with shallow waters, minigolf, boules, a kiosk and a café.

Eating & Drinking

Restaurant Munkklostret (130 00; lunch Sk65, mains Skr230-250; 103 02; www.va-bostaelle.se/vadstena; Sånggatan) is one of the most scenic sections of the Göta Canal – there are seven locks with a height gain of 19m – very impressive in canal terms! The nearby ruin Vreta kloster (14 60 00) is another lively pub-restaurant with beer-drinking food like spareribs, burgers and burritos.

Harrys (13 46 46; Plantensgatan 27) is a lively pub-restaurant with beer-drinking food like spareribs, burgers and burritos.

The town has a central supermarket, Coop-Konsum (121 70; Rådhustorget; mains Skr50/20; %; 10am-6pm Mon-Sat). The old courthouse is the best place to eat in town. Seasonal, succulent steak, lamb, game and fish dishes are flavoured with herbs from the monastery garden, and served in the monks’ old dormitories. Try a cleansing green-apple sorbet to finish your meal.

Rådhuskällaren (121 70; Rådhustorget; mains Skr90 to Skr180; ) This is a lovely big central hostel, with kindly staff, sunny dorms and a large underground kitchen decorated with cheerful red Dala horses. From late August to early June it’s essential to book in advance.

Skyways (020-95 95 00; www.skyways.se) charges around Skr130 for the ride.

The Hemköp supermarket on Storgatan has the longest opening hours – until 10pm daily. The Filthygallerian shopping centre contains a small Systembolaget (27 09 48; Stora Torget).

Getting There & Around

See Linköping for regional transport information. Only buses run to Vadstena – take bus 610 to Motala (for trains to Örebro), or bus 661 to Mjölby (for trains to Linköping and Stockholm). Swebus Express runs on Fridays and Sundays to/from Stockholm (Skr233, four hours). Bläklintsbuss (0412-121 50; www.blaklintsbuss.se) runs one service daily.
from the Viking Line Terminal in Stockholm to Vadstena (Sk160).

**Sport Höman** (0 103 62; Storgatan 8; ☏ 9.30am-6.30pm Mon-Fri, 9.30am-2pm Sat) has bikes for rent (per day/week Sk160/300).

### AROUND VADSTENA

**Rökenstenen**

Sweden’s most famous rune stone, the 9th-century **Rökenstenen**, is near the church at Rök (just off the E4 on the road to Heda and Alvastra). It’s a monumental memorial stone raised to a dead son. On it is carved the longest runic inscription in the world, an ancient, intricate verse so cryptic that scholars constantly scrap over its interpretation.

There’s a small, seasonal **tourist office** (042-721 784; 10am-4pm Jun–mid-Aug, 9am-3pm Mon-Fri, 10am-4pm Sat & Sun May & late Aug) on site. The outdoor exhibition and the stone are open at all times.

Buses are virtually nonexistent, but cycling is a good option, as the scenic flatlands around Vättern lend themselves to the pedal.

**Väversunda**

The Romanesque 12th-century limestone **Väversunda kyrka**, situated 15km southwest of Vadstena, is a bizarre-looking church, which contains restored 13th-century wall paintings. The adjacent **Tåkern Nature Reserve** attracts lots of different bird species and there’s a bird-watcher’s tower near the church.

Again, buses are hopeless; a bicycle is by far the best way to explore.

### VISBY

**0 20 miles**

The medieval port town of Visby is enough to warrant a trip to Gotland all by itself. A walled city, full of ruined churches and well-preserved buildings both public and residential, the city is a wonder to look at and a delight to get lost in. Its cobbled streets are full of twists and turns and steep hills, with another gorgeous view around

### GOTLAND: THE ISLAND OF CHURCHES

Nowhere else in northern Europe are there so many medieval churches in such a small area. There are 92 of them in villages outside Visby; more than 70 still have medieval frescos, and a few also contain very rare medieval stained glass. Visby alone has a dozen church ruins and a magnificent cathedral.

A church was built in most villages during prosperous times from the early 12th century to mid-14th century. After 1350, the money ran out (mainly due to war), and the tradition ended. A lack of funds helped to keep the island in an ecclesiastical time-warp; the old churches weren’t demolished, and new ones were never built (until 1960). Each church is still in use, and all those medieval villages still exist as entities.

Most churches are open 9am to 6pm daily from mid-May to late August. Some churches have the old key in the door even before 15 May, or sometimes the key is hidden above the door.

The **Key to the Churches in the Diocese of Visby** is a very useful English-language brochure, which is available free from tourist offices.

**GOTLAND**

Gotland is one of the richest historical regions in Sweden, with around 100 medieval churches and an untold number of prehistoric sites, including stone ship settings, burial mounds and the remains of hilltop fortresses. Keep your eyes open for the information boards indicating sites along roadsides.

The island lies nearly halfway between Sweden and Latvia, in the middle of the Baltic Sea, roughly equidistant from the mainland ports of Nynäshamn and Oskarshamn. Gotland is both a region (landskap) and a county (län). Visby is the only town, but there are several large, and many small villages. The large island, Fårö, lies off Gotland’s northeastern tip. The smaller island, Gotska Sandön lies 38km further north. Stora Karlsö and Lilla Karlsö are two small islets just off the western coast.

More good information about Gotland is available on the Internet at www.gotland.net and www.guteinfo.com (in Swedish).
Sights & Activities

The town is a noble sight, with its 13th-century wall of 40 towers – be sure to take a few hours and walk around the perimeter (3.5km). Also set aside time to stroll around the Botanic Gardens and the narrow roads and pretty lanes just south of the gardens. Pick up a copy of the booklet Visby on Your Own (Skr35, available at the tourist office), which will guide you around the town and give you good snippets of local history. In summer the tourist office also organises two-hour guided walking tours of the town (Skr80), with English-language walks up to four times a week.

The ruins of 10 medieval churches, all located within the town walls, include St Nicolai Kyrka, built in 1230 by Dominican monks. The monastery was burned down when the Teutones attacked Visby in 1525; in Helge And Kyra Ruins is the only stone-built octagonal church in Sweden, and it was built in 1200, possibly by the Bishop of Riga; the roof collapsed after a fire in 1611. On Stora Torget, St Karins Kyrka has a beautiful Gothic interior and was founded by Francisicans in 1233. The church was extended in the early 14th century, but the monastery was closed by the Reformation and the church fell into disrepair. The ruins contrast with the old but sound Sankta Maria kykra (Cathedral of St Maria; 8am-5pm Mon-Fri, 8am-6:30pm Sat, 9am-5pm & 6-8pm Sun summer, shorter hr rest of yr). This is an impressive building, with stained-glass windows, carved floor slabs, an ornate carved reredos and wall plaques.

Gotlands Turistförening ( 20 17 00; www.gotlandcity.se; Kungs gamn 57) A central travel agency in Stockholm, useful if you’re planning your trip from the capital.

Transport

Airport (4km); Fårö (56km)

Getting around

By Bike: About 30% of the town is pedestrianised, but there are plenty of lanes left for the bike, and in summer, and from mid-May to mid-August cars are banned in the old town. For many, the highlight of the season is the costumed, performances, crafts, markets and re-enactments of Medieval Week (www.medelidsvsvekan.com), held during the first or second week of August. Finding any sort of accommodation during this time is almost impossible unless you have booked ahead.

Everyday facilities

Bank

Bank & ATM (Adelsgatan 11; s/d low season Skr860/970, s/d high season Skr910/1070) This place has pleasant rooms set around a pretty, quiet courtyard, and an intimate breakfast room with French doors and stained glass, that’s also a prime spot for people-watching.

Gotlands Resor ( 20 12 60; info@gotlandssresor.se; Fåröjeden 3) This is a travel agency in Hamnhotellet that books private rooms in Visby – singles/doubles cost around Skr285/425 inside the town walls, or Skr240/380 outside. This agency can also organise cabin rental, provide bike hire and rent camping equipment.

Norderstrands Camping ( 21 21 57; sites low/high season Skr85/145, cabins low/high season from Skr350/550;
Eating & Drinking
There are more restaurants per capita in Visby than in any other Swedish city. Most are clustered around the Old Town squares, on the main road, or near the harbour. Whichever you choose, do not pass up a chance to try the island’s speciality - a saffron pancake (saffranspannkaka) with berries and cream. You’ll find it at most food shops in Visby and around the island, usually for around Skr45 with coffee.

Donners Brunn (21 70 90; Donners plats; mains Skr95-235) This is among the finest restaurants in town – brunn means ‘well’ and you’ll see it just inside the door. The Swedish and international menu is adventurous and tempting, and there are also cheaper vegetarian and husmanskost (home-style fare) options. This restaurant is deservedly popular, so it’s wise to book ahead.

Clematis (21 02 88; Strandgatan 20; mid-summer–mid-Aug) In summer, visit Clematis, which looks as much like a museum as a restaurant; the medieval atmosphere backs up a menu of food cooked according to medieval recipes. There’s also period music and entertainers, including the occasional fire-eater.

Nunnan (21 28 94; meals Skr80 to Skr180; lunch & dinner until 1am) With a menu featuring Greek dishes, Nunnan is an appealing option right on the main square.

Bakfickan (21 18 07; mains Skr118-218; lunch & dinner) The menu at the highly rated Bakfickan features well-prepared fish and seafood – good luck trying to walk past if you’re hungry.

Isola Bella (21 87 87; Siså Kyrkogatan 20; mains Skr75-185) Between Stora Torget and the cathedral is this narrow place, serving authentic Italian cuisine. There’s a thin slice of garden out the back where meals are served in summer.

Nya Effes (21 06 22; snacks & meals Skr70-145) Be sure to also check out this place, just off Adelsgatan. Full of character, it’s a pub-bar built into the town wall, and is a good place for a meal or a drink. There’s a simple bar menu, an outdoor courtyard, pool tables and regular live music here in summer.

Rosas (21 21 35 14; St Hansgatan 22) This pretty, half-timbered house with a sunny courtyard is an excellent lunch spot, serving baguettes, filled crêpes, baked potatoes and saffron pancakes (all around Skr30 to Skr50).

Skafferi (21 45 97; Adelsgatan 38; sandwiches from Skr35) This casual lunch spot has a tempting array of open-faced sandwiches displayed on its counters.

Krog Rosengården (21 81 90) In the shadow of the ruins and facing Stora Torget, this garden restaurant offers weekday lunches of unambitious but filling fare, such as salads and quiches for Skr62, plus evening à la carte dishes from around Skr105.

Hamnplan 5 (21 07 10; Hamnplan 5) Formerly called Skepet, this place down by the water is an upmarket restaurant by day and a nightclub by night.

Other hang-outs around the harbour are popular on warm summer days and evenings, including the restaurants Anna Dubbe’s (pastas from Skr69) and Trossen (lunch & dinner from Skr95) and the cheap stalls selling ice cream, sandwiches and pizza inside Saluhall 1.

A pair of neighbouring restaurant-bars with seemingly infinite levels of seating, from cellars to balconies, Gutekällaren (21 00 43) and Munkkälleren (227 14 00) are both home to nightclubs popular with the summer crowd.

There is a tiny ICA supermarket (Stora Torget) for self-caters, next-door to Nunnan, or a much larger one on Söderväg, which is south of Söderport. Systembolaget (Stora Torget) is central.

Entertainment
For rainy days, there’s the Röda Kvarn cinema (21 01 87; Mellangatan 17; tickets Skr60; (21:30pm).

Getting There & Away
AIR
There are regular Skystays (020 95 95 00; www.skystay.se) flights between Visby and three mainland airports: Stockholm Arlanda, Stockholm Bromma (up to 10 times a day for each airport) and Norrköping (three flights daily on weekdays). Flights between Stockholm and Visby generally cost Skr650 and up, but if your dates are flexible you can get deals from Skr295.

The cheaper local airline is Gotlands Flyg (22 22 22; www.gotlandsflyg.se), with regular flights between Visby and Stockholm.

BOAT
Year-round car ferries between Visby and both Nynäshamn and Oskarshamn are operated by Destination Gotland (20 10 10; www.destinationgotland.se). There are departures from Nynäshamn one to five times daily (about five hours, or three by high-speed catamaran). From Oskarshamn, there are one or two daily departures (except Saturday from early November until mid-March) in either direction (four to five hours).

Regular one-way adult tickets for the ferry/catamaran cost Skr228/291, but from mid-June to mid-August there is a far more complicated fare system; some overnight, evening and early-morning sailings in the middle of the week have cheaper fares.

If you want to transport a bicycle it will cost Skr41; a car usually costs Skr317/415, although again in the peak summer season a tiered price system operates. If you hope to take a car on the ferry or catamaran between mid-June and mid-August, it’s essential to reserve a place well in advance, as spots fill up quickly with Swedes going on holiday.

Getting Around
There are over 1200km of roads in Gotland, typically running from village to village through the pretty landscape. Cycling on the quiet roads is highly recommended, and bikes can be hired from a number of places in Visby. The forested belt south and east of Visby is useful if you bring a tent and want to take advantage of the liberal camping laws.

Many travel agents and bike-rental places on the island also rent out camping equipment. In Visby, you can hire bikes at about Skr65/325 per day/week from behind Saluhall (on the harbour) or at Osterport (down by the outside of the wall). Gotlands Cykeluthyrning (21 41 33), behind Saluhall, also rents tents (Skr75/250 per day/week), or for Skr250 per week (Skr1250 per month) you can hire the ‘camping package’ – two bikes (or one tandem bike), a tent, a camping stove and two sleeping mats.

Gotlands Resor (20 27 02 11; info@gotlandsresor.se; Färjeleden 3) offers similar packages.

A few companies and service stations offer car hire. A central office in Visby is Avis (21 98 10; godman@gotlandica.se; Donners plats), where you can rent a small car from Skr550/3000 per day/week. At the guest harbour (21 21 90) you can also rent cars, motorbikes and mopeds.

Kollektiv Trafiken (21 41 12) runs buses via most villages to all corners of the island. The most useful routes, that have connections up to seven times daily, operate between Visby and Burgsvik in the far south, Visby and Färösund in the north (also with bus connections on Fårö), and Visby and Klintemåla. A one-way ticket will not cost you more than Skr59 (although if you take a bike on board it will cost an additional Skr40), but enthusiasts will find a monthly ticket good value at Skr590.

AROUND VISBY
There’s not much but forest and farmland until you’re at least 10km from Visby. If you’re heading northeast, visit the remarkable 12th-century Cistercian monastery ruin Romakloster (21 05 12; adult/child Skr20/free; (21:0am-6pm Jun-Aug, & weekends May & Sep), a kilometre from the main road. Summer theatre performances here cost around Skr250 (tickets from Visby tourist office). The 18th-century manor house is also impressive.

Dalhem, 6km northeast of the Cistercian monastery, has a large church with 14th-century stained glass (the oldest in Gotland) and magnificent (albeit restored) wall and ceiling paintings; take note of the scales of good and evil. There’s also a historic steam railway (380 43; adult/child Skr40/20; (21:11.15am-3.30pm Wed-Thur, Sat & Sun Jun-Aug) and museum in Dalhem.

There’s a good range of services in the reasonable-sized town of Klintemåla. From here, you can catch a passenger-only boat to the island nature reserve Stora Karlsö (www.storakarls.com) one to three times daily from May to early September (adult/child return Skr225/110, 30 minutes). You can visit the
island as a day trip (with five or six hours ashore), or stay overnight at the hostel (see below). This fairly remote island is home to extensive birdlife including thousands of guillemots and razorbills, there are also impressive cliffs by the lighthouse.

**Sleeping & Eating**

**Pensionat Warsholm** (24 00 10; warsholm@telia.com; sites Skr65; dm from Skr150; rooms per person with/without bath from Skr440/250) In Klintehamm, this is a hotel, hostel and campground in a pretty waterside spot with a restaurant attached.

**STF hostel** (24 05 00; boka@storakarls.com; dm Skr150) If you want to get away from it all, you can stay on Stora Karlsö at the simple STF hostel. There’s a nature exhibit, restaurant and café on the island. Booking ahead is required.

**EASTERN GOTLAND**

Ancient monuments include the Bronze Age ship setting, Tjelvars grav, 1.5km west of road No 146 (level with Visby), and its surrounding landscape of standing stones, almost all linked with the Gutasaga legends. Gothem church is one of the most impressive in Gotland; the nave is decorated with friezes dating from 1300. Torsby, northwest of Ljugarn, is a partly walled hill fort (the largest in Scandinavia) measuring 5km around its irregular perimeter.

Ljugarn is a small seaside resort, and there are impressive *räukar* formations at Folhammar Nature Reserve, 2km north. Southwest of Ljugarn in the village of Alskog, **Gotlands Djurpark** (49 35 00; adult/child Skr65/50; 10am-4pm mid-May–Aug, closed midsummer eve) is a small zoo, home to around 40 types of animals, including kangaroos, ostriches and zebras. Southwest of here, the impressive Garde church has four extraordinary medieval lych gates and an upside-down medieval key in the door; the original 12th-century roof can also still be seen.

**Sleeping & Eating**

**STF hostel Ljugarn** (49 31 84; dm from Skr130;  mid-May–Aug) This place has a fine spot at the eastern end of the Ljugarn village (down by the water).

**STF hostel Garda** (49 13 91; gardavh@sverige.nu; dm Skr125; Feb–Dec) The hostel in Garda is a series of cabins with three golf courses in the immediate vicinity.

**Frejs Magasin** (49 30 11; info@ljugarn.com; s/d Skr450/650, with private facilities Skr700/800) This is a large, central, wooden-built pension, surrounded by green countryside in Ljugarn. It also offers three- and four-bed rooms, and has apartments and cabins available by the week, if you’re travelling in a group.

**Konsum supermarket** in Ljugarn, and some good dining options in summer.

**Restaurang Kråkan** (49 33 71; mains Skr150-200), just off the main road through town, is an upmarket place, and nearby **Bruna Dörren** (49 32 89; Strandvägen 5; meals from Skr60) is a more casual restaurant and pizzeria with a large outdoor courtyard.

**NORTHERN GOTLAND & FÄRÖ**

It’s hard to imagine a better way to see the area than by cycling up to Färo and following the bike trails around the little island. There’s a **visitors centre** (0498-22 40 22; 10am-6pm in summer, Sat & Sun rest of yr) with Internet access in Färo town.

On your way, stop at the **Bungemuseet** (22 10 18; adult/child Skr70/free; 10am-4pm mid-May–Aug, 10am-6pm Jul–mid-Aug), an open-air museum with 17th-century houses and picture stones dating from 800. It’s near the northeast-facing cliffs of Ljugarn, a partly walled hill fort (the largest in Scandinavia) measuring 5km around its irregular perimeter.

The **grotto** (27 30 50; adult/child Skr70/50; May–mid-Sep) south of Lummelunda is the largest in Gotland. The temperature in the grotto is a cool 8°C, so bring warm clothing. The impressive *räukar* formations at nearby **Lickershamn** are up to 12m high; look out for **Jungfru** (signposted), with its haunting legend. Near the Jungfru trailhead at Lickershamn there’s a campground and friendly café serving authentic Thai food (from Skr75) and a hut where you can buy smoked fish (both 10am-6pm in summer).

The frequent ferry to Färo is free for cars, passengers and cyclists. This island, home to Ingmar Bergman, has magnificent *räkar* formations; watch the sunset at Längsharshammar. There are lots of fossils in the rocks by Färo lighthouse, at the eastern tip of the island. British troops who fought in the Crimean war are buried at Ryssnäs, in the extreme south; obey signs posted along roads here, as this area is still used for military training and testing.

**Sleeping & Eating**

There is a good **STF hostel in Lärbro** (22 50 33; dm Skr150; reception 8-11am & 5-10pm), on road No 148 between Visby and Färösund, open from mid-May to the end of August. It has a gym open to hostel guests for Skr65. There is a beachside **SVIF hostel** (27 30 43; dm from Skr175) in Lummelunda, signposted from the main road; call ahead if you’ll be arriving after 5pm.

There’s an **ICA supermarket** (with an ATMs) on the main street near the ferry terminal in Färösund, and another on Färo near the tourist office.

**GOTSKA SANDÖN NATIONAL PARK**

Isolated, triangular-shaped **Gotska Sandön** (www.gotskasandーン.com in Swedish), with an area of 37 sq km, is an unusual island, with lighthouses at its three corners, 30km of beaches, sand dunes, pine forest and a church. There is a really good network of trails right around the island.

**Camping** (sites per person Skr50, beds in basic huts Skr110, cabins from Skr450) near the northern tip is possible; there are basic facilities but you must bring all supplies with you.

**Boats** (24 04 50; early May–early Sep) run from Färösund and Nynäshamn three to four times weekly when operating (Skr695/885 return from Färösund/Nynäshamn, Skr100 for bikes).

**SOUTHERN GOTLAND**

**Hemse** is a commercial centre, with good services (such as supermarkets, banks and a bakery), and the smaller village of Burgsvik, further south, is similar.

The **uja church** dates from 1232 and has Gotland’s highest church tower (67m). It has a magnificent cross, and the wall and ceiling paintings are very detailed. Look for the inscribed stone slabs under the covered shelter just outside the churchyard. **Hablingbo church** has three lavishly carved doorways, a votive ship, carved floor slabs and run stones.

**Lojsta** has the deepest lakes in Gotland, remains of an early medieval fortress and a fine church. On the eastern coast near Ronehamn, **Uggarderojr** is a huge, late-Bronze Age cairn with nearby traces of settlement. The cairn, probably a navigation marker, is now a long way inland due to post-glacial uplift.

**Sleeping & Eating**

The **Hablingbo STF hostel** (48 70 70; vandrarhem@gutenv.se; beds Skr150; May-Sep) is next to Gute Vin, a good restaurant and commercial vineyard.

In **Björklunda**, 2km north of Burgsvik, friendly **Vårdsomtsett Björklunda** (49 71 90; dm from Skr165; s/d from Skr590/790) is a delightful place reminiscent of a Greek villa, with pretty whitewashed buildings. Meals at the restaurant here are good and reasonably priced.
Southern Sweden

Stimulating to brain, body and soul, the county of Skåne (Scania) lies in the extreme south of the country and has a whirl of wonderful sights and activities. The artsy city of Malmö is full of interesting architecture and design, and has picked up some cosmopolitan customs from its big sister across the water, Copenhagen. For charm on a smaller scale, visit the green university town of Lund or meander through the delightful cobbled streets of medieval Ystad. Fans of the Vikings can make a pilgrimage to several fantastic sites, and the region also contains mysterious Bronze Age remains.

Skåne’s gently rolling landscape makes you itch to get outdoors, on two feet or two wheels: the Österlen area, with its wandering coastline, waving wheat fields and teeny villages, is particularly enchanting to cycle round. Relax with the children on golden sandy beaches, or get your binoculars ready for some of Sweden’s best coastal bird-watching. There are more hostels here than in any other region of the country, so you have no excuse not to get out and about!

Skåne was part of Denmark until 1658 and still retains differences from the rest of Sweden. You can detect it easily in the strong dialect (skånska) and the distinctive architecture. Natives of Skåne look more towards Copenhagen than Stockholm, and the record-breaking Öresund bridge has brought Copenhagen even closer.

HIGHLIGHTS
- Ponder the enigma of ‘Sweden’s Stonehenge’, the ship-shaped Ales Stenar (p180)
- Talk to real, live Vikings at the excellent (and slightly eccentric) Foteviken Viking Reserve (p175)
- Enjoy a continental dining experience in cosmopolitan Malmö’s Lilla Torg (p167)
- Explore the medieval streets of Ystad in the footsteps of fictional crime-fighter Inspector Wallander (p179)
- Travel across an engineering miracle, the Öresund bridge (p169)
- Cycle past sweet-smelling orchards, or hike through the coastal nature reserve in mellow Österlen (p181)

Information
REGIONAL TOURIST OFFICES
There are helpful tourist offices in all major towns. Position Skåne (040-20 96 00; www.skane.com; Stortorget 9, SE-21122 Malmö) dispenses information about the entire region and publishes good brochures and maps.

If you enter the region from Denmark via the bridge over the Öresund, there’s a tourist office just off the motorway a few kilometres into the country. This office, called Skånegården (040-34 12 00; Bankeflyvägen 40), is open daily and can supply information on Malmö, Skåne and the whole of Sweden.

Many of the tourist offices in Skåne stock information for Copenhagen and Denmark for those planning to cross the Öresund.

Getting Around
Public transport in Skåne is efficient and well managed; Skånetrafiken (0771-77 77 77; www.sknetrafiken.skane.se) operates the local bus and train (Pågatågen) networks, and there are regular connections to Denmark via the Öresund bridge or the Helsingborg–Helsingør ferry.

An integrated Öresund region travel system links trains from Helsingborg via Malmö and Copenhagen to Helsingør. For a round tour of the Öresund or a visit to Copenhagen, the ‘Around the Sound’ card (Skr249) gives 48 hours unlimited travel on ferries and local trains; this covers transport within Skåne and also along the coast north of Copenhagen.
If you’re planning to spend some time here, it’s worth enquiring about monthly passes or a sommarkort, offering discount travel from midsummer to mid-August: see the Skånetrafiken website for details. These cards also cover public transport in Blekinge, Jönköping, Kronoberg, Örebro and Östergötland (all covered in the Southeast Sweden chapter) and Västergötland and Halland (covered in the Southwest Sweden chapter).

MALMÖ

Marvellous Malmö is the most ‘continental’ of Sweden’s cities. It’s a vibrant and multi-cultural place, influenced by Copenhagen across the Öresund and populated by people from 150 nations. Malmö also seems to attract one-off works of architecture and design: the Turning Torso, created by Santiago Calatrava, is the latest wonder, after the jaw-dropping Öresund bridge and tunnel linking Copenhagen and Malmö. On a more personal scale, there are some great modern-art exhibition spaces; and several of the city’s half-timbered houses contain unique art and craft galleries. Near these nifty gift shops, the whole of Lilla Torg is a chattering, clinking mass of alfresco diners.

History

Malmö really took off in the 14th century with the arrival of the Hanseatic traders, when grand merchants’ houses were built, followed by churches and a castle. The greatest medieval expansion occurred under Jörgen Kock, who became the city’s mayor in 1524. The town square, Stortorget, was laid out at that time, and many of the best 16th-century buildings are still standing. After the city capitulated to the Swedes in 1658, Malmö rose in importance as a commercial centre and its castle was strengthened to protect trade.

Nowadays, the 20th century’s heavy industries (car and aircraft manufacture, and shipbuilding) have been replaced by smaller companies, particularly in the service, financial and IT sectors. There’s also been an upsurge in the number of students living in Malmö (currently around 18,000) with the opening of a new university campus here in the late 1990s.

Orientation

Gamla Staden (Old Town) is the city centre and is encircled by a canal. There are three principal squares here: Stortorget, Lilla Torg and Gustav Adolfs Torg. Malmöhus castle, in its park setting, guards the western end of Gamla Staden. Across the canal on the northern side you’ll find the bus and train stations as well as the harbour. South of the city centre, there’s a complex network of more modern streets with most interest focused on the square Möllevångstorget. The Öresund bridge is about 8km west of the city centre, served by a motorway which passes south and east of the city.

Information

BOOKSHOPS

Akademibokhandeln (664 29 90; Södra Tullgatan 3; Mon-Sat) Good selection of general books and guidebooks.

Hamrelius (12 02 88; Södergatan 28) Wide variety of English-language books.

Pressbyrån (Centralstationer: until 11pm) Newspapers and international magazines.

SOUTHERN SWEDEN
**TURIST OFFICES**
An excellent source of information on the city can be found on the Internet at www.malmo.com.

Skånegården (☎ 040-20 96 00; www.skane.com; Stortorget 9, SE-21221 Malmö; 9am-8pm mid-Jun–mid-Aug, to 6pm early Jun & late Aug, 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, 10am-3pm Sat & Sun Sep-May) On the E20, 800m from the Öresund bridge tollgate. A tourist office designed purely to give information to motorists entering the country from Denmark. Can provide details on Malmö, Skåne and the whole of Sweden.

**EMERGENCY**
Dial ☎ 112 for fire, police or ambulance.

Akutklinik (☎ 33 36 85; entrance 36, Södra Förstadsgatan 101) Emergency ward at the general hospital.

**INTERNET ACCESS**
Cyberspace Café (☎ 611 01 16; Engelbrektsgatan 13; per 30min/1hr Skr20/30; ☎ 11am-11pm Mon-Fri, 1-11pm Sat & Sun)

Malmö Stadsbibliotek (☎ 660 85 00; Regementsgatan; ☎ 10am-7pm Mon-Thu, 10am-6pm Fri, 11am-3pm Sat) Free Internet access.

Sidewalk Express (Centralstationen; per hr Skr19)

**LAUNDRY**
Most hotels, hostels and camping grounds have laundries.

Tvätt-Tjänst i Malmö (☎ 611 70 70; St Knuts Torg 5; ☎ 8am-5pm Mon-Fri) Closed in July.

**LEFT LUGGAGE**
There are small/medium/large lockers by platform 4 in Centralstationen for Skr20/25/30 per 24 hours.

**MEDICAL SERVICES**
You can call the dentist and doctor on duty on ☎ 020-43 44 44.

Apotek Gripen (☎ 19 21 13; Bergsgatan 48; ☎ 8am-10pm) After-hours pharmacy.

**WALLET**
Banks and ATMs are found on Södergatan.

Forex (☎ 30 40 31; Centralstationen; ☎ 7am-9pm) Money exchange, with another branch opposite Centralstationen on Skeppsholmen and two more on Gustav Adolfs Torg.

X-Change (☎ 788 88; Hämngatan 1; ☎ 8am-7pm Mon-Fri, 9am-4pm Sat) Money exchange.

**POST**
You can buy stamps and post letters from a number of shops and kiosks around town.

Post office (Skeppsholmen; ☎ 7am-7pm Mon-Fri) Behind the train station.
Rådhustorget (the city hall) was originally built in 1546, but has been altered since then. At the southern end is one of the longest canals in Sweden, the Öresund, which was the road. Thottskans Huset, or the oldest half-timbered house in Malmö (1558), has been turned into a restaurant, so you can take a look inside.

**Activities**

Ask the tourist office for the free cycling map Cykla i Malmö. See p171 for information about renting bikes.

**Aq-vakul** (30 05 40; Regementsgatan 24; adult/7-17yr/6-18yr: Skr/Skr75/50/30; 9am-9.30pm Mon & Thu, 9am-8.30pm Tue & Wed, 9am-7.30pm Fri, 9am-5.30pm Sat & Sun) is a water park with heated indoor and outdoor pools, wave machine, a sauna, solarium and even a Turkish bath.

‘Malmö’s Copacabana’ is stretching it, but Ribersborg is a lovely long sandy beach backed by parkland, about 2km west of the town centre. Off the beach, at the end of a 200m-long pier, is Ribersborgs Kalbsbadhus (26 08 33; adult/under-17yr: Skr50/35; 9am-7pm Mon-Fri, 9am-4pm Sat & Sun), an open-air naturalist salt water pool, with separate sections for men and women, and wood-fired sauna dating from 1898.

Scooting round Malmö’s canals in a pedal boat is great fun: hire one from City Boats Malmö (0704-71 00 67; Amiraltsbron, Södra Promenaden; per 30/60min Skr70/100, 50% discount with Malmökortet; mid-Apr–mid-Aug), just east of Gustav Adolfs Torg.

To experience Malmö by water, visit Rundan (611 74 88; www.rundan.se; adult/5-15yr/family: Skr5/15/35; 11am-4pm May–mid-Sep, 11am-4pm Tue-Sun mid-Sep–mid-May), opposite Centralstationen. Depending on the weather, 45-minute boat tours of the canals run regularly from May to September (11am to 7pm mid-June to mid-August, less frequently at other times). Commentary is in Swedish, German and English.

The 1½-hour sightseeing bus tours (adult/child: Skr35/25, free with Malmökortet) take you to some odd places – like the industrial district and an old limestone quarry! – as well as round parts of the city centre and out to the Öresund bridge; they’re good for getting your bearings. The tours run on open days (June to August), and guides speak Swedish, English and German. Pick up your ticket first at the tourist office, and the staff will show you where to catch the bus on Norra Vallgatan.

**Festivals & Events**

The biggest annual event – with 1.5 million visitors! – is the week-long Malmö Festival (www.malmofestivalen.se) in mid-August. Most events are free and include theatre, art, singing, music, dance and dragon boat competitions. The opening night is celebrated with a fireworks display and there’s a huge crayfish party on Friday in Stortorget. During the week you can get food at a great variety of international stalls. Ask at the tourist office for details.

**Sleeping**

**Camping, Hostels & Private Rooms**

Private rooms or apartments from about Skr300 per person are available through City Room (795 94; cityroom@telia.com). The agency has no office address but staffed on weekdays during office hours. Otherwise, contact the tourist office.

**Basses Gästvåningar** (32 62 50; Södra Förstadsgatan 110B; s/d/tr/q from Skr500/550/650) The clean, quiet central rooms in this CVIF hostel are like those of a budget hotel, with proper beds, TVs and shared bathrooms. It’s run by a seriously hard working couple, and is close to Malmöhusstorg and opposite the town hospital. For lists of signs for ‘Sjukhuset’ if arriving by car.

**Vandrarhemmet Villa Hilleröd** (26 56 26; info@villahillerod.se; Angdalavägen 38; dm Skr190-230) Malmö has a brand-new hotel in the shape of Villa Hilleröd, in a delightful little detached house in the west of the city. The hotel touches like houseplants keep things looking homely. Arrive in good time, as there’s a fee of Skr100 if you appear after 8pm.

**Malmö Kommunal Hotell**** (adult/child: Skr36/21; 32 65 00; Drottningtorget; admis-

**Comforthotel Malmö** (33 10 00; www.malmofestivalen.se) is a recommended cheap

**Hotel Baltzar** (665 57 00; www.baltzarthotel.se; Södergatan 20; s/d from Skr920/1030, discounted to Skr700/850). This is a recommended cheapish hotel near the train station. Most rooms are singles; all are fairly simple but let grace by the lovely 17th-century building. You can pay extra for a huge double room (Skr575); breakfast costs Skr30.

**Hotel Formule 1** (www.hotelformule1.ch; Norra Vallgatan 20; rooms Skr395/495) This is a recommended cheapish hotel near the train station. Most rooms are singles; all are fairly simple but let grace by the lovely 17th-century building. You can pay extra for a huge double room (Skr575); breakfast costs Skr30.

**Hotel Formule 1** (793 05 80; www.hotelformule1.com; Lundavägen 28; rooms Skr330) The bargain base

**Hotel Pallas** (611 50 77; Norra Vallgatan 74; s/d from Skr395/495) This is a recommended cheapish hotel near the train station. Most rooms are singles; all are fairly simple but let grace by the lovely 17th-century building. You can pay extra for a huge double room (Skr575); breakfast costs Skr30.

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La Empanada (tel 12 02 62; Säljborgsgatan 10; mains Skr45-65; closed Sun) This cheap and cheerful plate, opposite Sankt Petri Kyrka, is highly recommended for those on a budget. Mainly Mexican dishes (tacos,enchiladas and burritos) are served caféteria-style; it closes in the early evening.

Vegegården (tel 611 38 88; Stora Nygatan 18; lunch Skr38; lunch, dinner, Thu-Sun) Veggies and vegans can enjoy this Chinese restaurant, tucked in a quiet corner of the city near the Rooseum. Many of the long list of dishes are soy-based, and there’s a warm and cold lunchtime buffet.

Krua Thai (tel 12 22 87; Möllevästergatan 14; meals around Skr70; 11am-4pm Mon, 11am-3pm & 5-10pm Tue-Fri, 1-10pm Sat, 2-10pm Sun) Down the southern end of town is this large, popular and long-standing Thai restaurant. The family have also opened a central takeaway (downstairs, Södergatan 22), for spicy meals on the move.

Konditori Hollandia (tel 12 48 86; Södra Förstadsplatsen; closed Sun) This classic café has the feel of some Victorian lady’s parlour! Nibble daintily on salad and sandwiches, or throw the dipping sauce and indulge in one of their delicious patisserie offerings.

Saluhallen (Lilla Torg) For a light meal, snack or picnic, head to the covered market, with food stalls to appeal to every taste (fish, baked potatoes). Bageri Caféet (tel 30 35 13), inside Saluhallen, does filled bagels, baguettes and ciabattas from Skr30.

Self-caters can buy supplies at the central Mästerlivs supermarket (Engelbrektsgatan 15; Sun-Sat 9am-9pm). The best produce market is on Möllevästergatan, from Monday to Saturday.

Drinking
On Lilla Torg, the absolute coolest places are Victors (tel 12 76 70), Moosehead (tel 12 04 23) and Mello Yello (tel 30 45 25), which stand in a row competing for custom; they’re all great spots, with friendly service, outdoor summer seating (you may have to wait for a table), tasty meals, and lots of drinks, from dry white wine to the most lurid of cocktails.

There are numerous bars around Möllevästergatan, which probably appeal to a more studenty crowd, such as Nyhavn (tel 12 88 30), a pub with reasonably priced meals to go along with the beer.

Systembolaget (Södergatan 22) sells beers, wines and spirits.

Entertainment
Malmö has an excellent array of nightlife venues – for up-to-date information pick up the local newspaper Sydsvenskan on a Friday, when it contains the listings for Dygnet Runt (which covers Lund as well as Malmö). It’s all in Swedish but the club and cinema information is understandable. Alternatively, take the train across to Copenhagen for a huge selection of capital city delights; trains run every 20 minutes until around 11pm, then hourly until 5am.

Nightclubs generally stay open until around 1am, clubs to 4am or 5am on Friday and Saturday although some bars stay open late during the week; minimum age requirements (20 to 25) vary from venue to venue, and from night to night, so bring some ID. Entry usually costs between Skr50 and Skr100.

Jeriko (tel 611 84 29; Spångatan 38) Regular performances of jazz, folk and world music.

Kulturbolaget (tel 30 20 11; Bergsgatan 18) Big-name bands and big-name acts perform here, but even if there’s no-one playing, ‘KB’ has a good bar, nightclub (usually Friday and Saturday), and a highly regarded restaurant.

Etage (tel 23 20 60; Stortorget 6; Mon-Sat) This central, mainstream club has two dance floors (one of them playing classics and the other playing dance music) and four bars, and quite a large gay clientele.

Slagthuset (tel 711 12; Jörgen Kocksgatan 7A) The massive (8500-sq-m) ‘Slaughterhouse’ entertainment complex lies north of the train station. There are restaurants and bars here, and a nightclub (Skr90) until 5am on Friday and Saturday nights, with the latest dance tunes plus hits from the 1970s and 80s.

Cinemas
There are several cinemas in the city centre; the biggest are these two:

Biograf Spegeln (tel 12 59 78; Stortorget 29) Hosts alternative selections.

Filmstaden Malmö (tel 660 20 90; Stortorget 22) Showstopping Hollywood movies.

Getting There & Away
TO/FROM THE AIRPORT
The regular Flygbuss (tel 669 62 09) runs from Centralstationen to Sturup airport (Skr90, 45 minutes): roughly every 40 minutes on weekdays, hourly on Sunday, six services on Saturday; a taxi should cost no more than Skr400.

AIR
Sturup airport (tel 613 1000) is 33km southeast of the city. SAS (tel 0707-72 77 27; www.sandinavian.net) has up to eight nonstop flights to Stockholm

Bridging the Gap
In 1995, technology finally caught up with a 100-year-old dream: to build a bridge between Sweden and Denmark Construction began just outside Malmö in October that year, and the Öresund bridge and tunnel opened to traffic in the summer of 2000: you can now drive all the way from Sweden to Germany without using a ferry.

Viewed from the shore, without any surrounding reference points, it’s difficult to comprehend the vast scale of the project. Those insignificant-looking central pylons are actually 4km away and are over three times as high as Nelson’s Column! It’s actually the longest cable-tied road and rail bridge in the world, measuring 7.8km from Lernacken (on the Swedish side, near Malmö) to the artificial island Peberholm, south of Saltholm. After the island, there’s a 3km undersea tunnel which emerges just north of Copenhagen airport.

After a slightly shaky start, with less traffic than predicted, bridge usage is increasing: about four million cars drove over it in 2004. Local commuters pay via an electronic transmitter, while tolls for the rest of us are payable by credit card, debit card or in Danish and Swedish currency at the Lernacken toll booths. The crossing isn’t cheap – for a motorcycle the price is Skr160, private vehicles (up to 6m) pay Skr285 and private vehicles with trailers, vans or minibuses cost Skr570.

If you’re travelling between Sweden and Denmark with your own transport, you may want to look at other options (such as ferries between Helsingborg and Helsingør).
Arlanda daily. Malmö Aviation (0771-55 00 10; malmöavia.se) flies a number of times daily to Stockholm Bromma airport. There are also infrequent flights to Antalya, Budapest, Larnaca and Varna. The low-cost carrier Ryanair (0900-202 02 40; www.ryanair.com) flies to Sturup from London’s Stansted airport.

Trains run directly from Malmö to Copenhagen’s main airport (SkR85, 35 minutes, every 20 minutes), which has a much better international flight selection.

BOAT
Although the Öresund bridge has rendered most of the ferries obsolete, romantics can still travel between Malmö and Copenhagen on the Terasund (17 04 90; www.turasund.se; Skeppsholmen 10). A single ticket per adult/4-15 years/bicycle costs SkR65/40/40, and there are three crossings per day (Wednesday to Saturday in May, Monday to Saturday June to early September).

BUS
Local & Regional
The länstrafik (public transport network) operates in zones, with a single journey ranging from SkR15 within the city of Malmö to a maximum of SkR84 within the county. The local trains are your best bet for travel to/from the major towns in Skåne; buses are a good option for those towns and out-of-the-way areas not on the train lines.

City buses depart from Centralplan, in front of the train station, and the Busscentralen (43 16 70) office there handles inquiries and sells tickets. Most regional buses leave from the bus station on Sparvägsgatan, while a few go from the section of Norra Vallgatan which symbol to look for) is free with your train ticket.

Car rental companies in Malmö: Avis (50 05 15), is represented at Sturup airport.

TRAIN
Pågatågen (local trains) run regularly to Helsingborg (SkR84, one hour), Landskrona (SkR72, 40 minutes), Lund (SkR36, 15 minutes), Simrishamn (SkR84, 1½ hours), Ystad (SkR72, 50 minutes), and other destinations in Skåne (bicycles are half-fare, but are not allowed during peak times, except during mid-June to mid-August). The platform is at the end of Centralstationen and you buy tickets from the machine. International rail passes are accepted.

There’s an integrated Öresundregionen transport system which operates trains from Helsingborg via Malmö and Copenhagen to Helsingør. The Malmö to Copenhagen Kastrup route takes 20 and 35 minutes, respectively (both journeys SkR87); trains leave every 20 minutes.

X2000 (SkR482, 2½ hours) and regional (SkR294, ¾ hours) trains run regularly to/from Göteborg. X2000 (SkR1060, 4½ hours, hourly) and Intercity (SkR675, 6½ hours, infrequent) trains run between Stockholm and Malmö.

Getting Around
Get bus information and buy tickets at the customer service desks in Centralstationen, at Gustav Adolfs Torg and at Värnhemstorget (at the eastern end of Kungsgatan). Local tickets are SkR15 for one hour’s travel. The bus hubs are Centralplan (in front of Centralstationen), Gustav Adolfs Torg, Värnhemstorget and Triangeln. Malmökortet includes city bus travel.

Car parking in the city is expensive: typical charges are around SkR15 per hour or SkR90 per day (24 hours). Most hotels also charge for parking. Parking in municipal spaces (‘Catukontoret’: ask the tourist office which symbol to look for) is free with Malmökortet.

Taxi companies in Malmö have a bad reputation for ripping people off: avoid them if you can, or else don’t get into any taxi or luring a fare with the driver in advance. The tourist office recommends Taxi Skåne (33 03 30) and Taxi 97 (97 97 97).

In summer, Rent-A-Bike (0707-49 94 22; www.rent-a-bike.se; per day SkR90) has a handy rental counter inside the tourist office in Centralstationen. Otherwise, try Fridhemms Cykelaffär (26 03 35; Tesislundsväg 13; per day SkR75) west of the castle, or Cykelklunken (611 66 66; Regementsgatan 12; per day SkR120).

LUND

SOUTHERN SWEDEN • Malmö

LUND

There are 12 visits to the castle, and a couple originating from Berlin and continuing on to Oslo.

Lund’s magnificent Romanesque cathedral, Domkyrkobasallen (35 87 00; 8am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat & Sun Jul-Aug, 10am-5pm Mon-Sat, 10am-2pm Sun May-Sep, 10am-5pm Mon-Fri Oct-Apr) is open to the public.

Sights
DOMKYRKAN
Lund’s magnificent Romanesque cathedral, Domkyrkobasallen (35 87 00; 8am-6pm Mon-Fri, 9.30am-5pm Sat, 9.30am-6pm Sun), with its impressive twin towers, is a must-see. Try to pop in at noon or 3pm (1pm and 3pm on Sunday and holidays) when the marvellous astronomical clock strikes up In Dulci Jubilo and the wooden figures at the top whir into action. Within the crypt, you can find Finn, the mythological giant who helped construct the cathedral, and a 16th-century well carved with comical scenes.

MUSEUMS
The wonderful Kulturen (35 04 00; www.kulturen.se; Tegnerplatsen; adult/child SkR50/free; 11am-7pm mid-Apr-Sep, to 9pm Jul–mid-Aug, noon-4pm Tue-Sun Oct–mid-Apr), opened in 1892, is a huge open-air museum filling two whole blocks. Its

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www.lonelyplanet.com

SOUTHERN SWEDEN •• Lund

www.lonelyplanet.com

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There are a number of galleries, plus small, special-interest museums and archives in town, many attached to university departments — enquire at the tourist office.

OTHER SIGHTS

The main university building, topped by four sphinxes representing the original faculties, is worth a glance inside.

The 8-hectare Botanical Gardens (172 73 20; Östra Vallgatan 20; admission free; 6am-9:30pm mid-May–mid-Sep, 6am-8pm rest of yr), east of the town centre, feature around 7000 species. Also on the site are tropical greenhouses (admission free; noon-3pm).

Take a look inside the charming old-style pharmacy, Apoteket Svanen (Kyrkogatan 5), not far from the tourist office. Across the park, Hökriet (35 04 04; cnr St Amnegatan & Tornegatsgatan; noon-5pm Tue-Sun) is a tiny old-fashioned general store.

Sleeping

The tourist office can book private rooms from Skr225 per person plus a Skr50 fee.

STF Vandrahem Lund Tåget (14 28 72; www.stfhostel.com; Vävaregatan 22; dm Skr135) Children will love the novelty of this hostel, based in old railway carriages in parkland behind the station. The triple bunks and tatty rooms are fine if you’re cosying up with loved ones, but a little claustrophobic with strangers; they aren’t very soundproof, either.

Hotel Oskar (18 80 85; www.hotelloskar.com; Bytaregatan 3; s/d Skr980/1350, discounted to Skr700/900) This dinky place in a 19th-century townhouse has smashing rooms filled with sleek Scandinavian designs. It’s also well equipped, with DVD players, kettles and stereos. Breakfast is served in lovely Ebba Skafferi next door.

Hotel Ahlström (211 01 74; info@hotellahlstrom.se; Skomakaregatan 3; s/d from Skr955/850, discounted to Skr500/650) Lund’s oldest hotel is a cheap and friendly option, on a quiet but very central street. Rooms have parquet floors, cool white walls and washbasins (bathrooms are shared). There’s no dining room, so breakfast is brought right to your door.

Hotel Lundia (280 65 00; info@lundia.se; Knut den Storegatan 2; s/d from Skr1395/1795, discounted to Skr795/985) The designers here have gone for a contemporary Scandinavian/Japanese look, leading to sleek but slightly Spartan-looking rooms. There’s a stylish brasserie downstairs, serving international cuisine.

Lilla Hotellet i Lund (32 88 88; lillahotellet@telia.com; Bankgatan 7; s/d Skr930/1130, discounted to Skr730/930; closed early Jul-early Aug; P) Rather rititatively, this little place closes in peak season, but it’s a good choice if you’re here at other times. The cutey 19th-century building has cozy rooms with DVD players, and there’s a sunny courtyard and guest lounge.

Grand Hotel (280 61 00; hotel@grandlund.se; Bantorget 1; s/d from Skr1925/2295, discounted to Skr1250/1955; ) Lund’s most luxurious establishment is the Grand, opened in 1899 and resplendent with gilt and chandeliers. Rooms are on the small side, but decorated in grand style with heavy wooden beds, Persian carpets and cherub wallpaper. It too has an upmarket restaurant on site, and a sauna.

Eating

Grand Hotel (280 61 00; Bantorget 1; lunch Skr90, dinner mains Skr220-320) The Grand’s refined restaurant serves classic menu items like roast venison, wild duck breast and fillets of sole with lobster sauce; the wine selection is equally impressive. The Lund menu features local dishes and/or ingredients; and there’s a separate list of veggie creations too.

Bantorget 9 (32 02 90; Bantorget 9; mains Skr190-250; from 6pm Mon-Sat) Another of the gourmet’s delight, with a small but perfectly formed menu. Snuggle down in the cozy candlelight and feast on wild duck and oyster mushrooms, venison in red wine and trifles or a fresh-fish dish. There’s a good wine list to oil the evening further.

&p; (211 22 88; Märtetenborg 9; lunch Skr65-79, dinner mains Skr90-210) The fashionable &p; is relaxed enough to attract a range of people for its lunchtime bagels, salads and specials. A la carte dinner mains are Swedish and international favourites. From 10pm it’s a

AUTHOR CHOICE

Ebbas Skafferi (13 41 56; Bytaregatan 5; lunch Skr50, 7am-9pm Mon-Fri, 8am-6pm Sat, 9am-8pm Sun) Ebbas is everything you’d want a cafe to be: worn wooden tables, green plants and flowers, odd bits of artwork, a delightful courtyard, and of course excellent coffee, tea, cakes and lunches (including quiche, risotto, enchiladas and crêpes).
place for cocktails and DJs playing disco, electronics, house, soul and hip-hop (until 2am Thursday to Saturday).

V.E.S.P.A. (tel 12 71 27; Karl XI gatan 1; pizza Skr65-95; [email] lunch & dinner[/email]) For pizza and a glass of wine, this shiny-bright Italian bar-restaurant is a good choice; there’s outdoor seating in summer.

Cafe Ariman (tel 13 12 63; Kungsgate 2B; snacks around Skr4; 11am-midnight Mon, 11am-1am Tue-Thu, 11am-1am Fri & Sat, noon-midnight Sun) This slightly grungy place has a great view of the cathedral, strong coffee and a fine array of café fare along the lines of ciabatta, salads and burritos. It’s popular with leftwing students: think nose-rings, dreads and leis.

Entertainment

Pick up the brochure i Lund from the tourist office to find out what’s going on in town.

There are several cinemas in Lund, including:
- Biografen Kino ([phone] 30 30 80; Kyrkogatan 3) Arts cinema.
- SF Bio Filmstaden ([phone] 0856-26 00 00; Västra Mårtensgatan 12) Mainstream cinema.

Getting There & Away

The regular Flygbuss ([phone] 0771-77 77 77) runs to Malmo’s Sturup airport (Skr90) – see p169.

It’s just 15 minutes from Lund to Malmo by train, with frequent SJ and local Pågatågen departures (Skr36). Some trains continue to Copenhagen (Skr127, one hour). Other direct services run from Malmo to Kristianstad and Karlskrona via Lund. All long-distance trains from Stockholm or Göteborg to Malmo stop in Lund.

Long-distance buses leave from outside the train station. Most buses to/from Malmo (except buses to Trelleborg and Falsterbo) run via Lund. See p170 for details.

Getting Around

Stadsbussarna ([phone] 35 53 00) Local town buses cost Skr12 per ride; the terminal is on Botulfsgatan, west of Mårtenstorget. Phone Taxi Skåne ([phone] 33 03 30) for a taxi. To hire a bike, go to Godsmagasinet ([phone] 35 57 42; Bangatan; [email] 6.30am-9.30pm Mon-Fri), a huge bicycle lock-up in the northernmost train-station building.

FALSTERBO PENINSULA

[phone] 404 Families and sun-worshippers will love the white-sand beaches at the edges of Falsterbo Peninsula, and ornithologists will enjoy the area’s birdlife. The peninsula’s south of Malmo also has some real on-off attractions: the unmissable Viking reserve Fotevikens, and the weird little amber museum.

The area’s major tourist office ([phone] 42 54 54; www.vallinge.se/turism/; Östra Hamnplan 2; [email] 10am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat & Sun mid-Jun–mid-Aug, 10am-noon & 1-3pm mid-Aug–mid-Jun) is just outside Höllviken, near the lifting bridge. Höllviken is a reasonable-sized town with facilities like banks and supermarkets.

Bårstensmuseum

Trapped in sticky resin 40 million years ago, insects, frogs, birds, fish, and other sea-life is on display in the Bårstensmuseum (Amber Museum; [phone] 45 45 04; www.brost.se; Södra Mariavägen 4; adult/child Skr10/5; [email] 11am-5pm mid-May–mid-Oct, 11am-5pm Sat & Sun mid-Oct–mid-May). It’s small but interesting; movie buffs might like to know that the museum staff acted as advisors to the makers of Jurassic Park. Beachcombers may find pieces of washed-up amber in this part of Sweden.

The museum is near the southern edge of Höllviken (just off the coast road towards Trelleborg).

Fotevikens

If you tour the mixing of handsome men in longboats, don’t miss one of Sweden’s most interesting and unusual attractions, the 700m north of Höllviken. Vikenareservatet vid Fotevikens (Fotevikens Viking Reserve; [phone] 33 08 00; www.fotevikens.se, adult/6-15yr Skr60/25; [email] 10am-4pm Jun-Aug, 10am-9pm Mon-Fri May–Sep; mid-Oct) is unique, an excellent ‘living’ reconstruction of a late-Viking Age village. Entry price includes a highly recommended one-hour guided tour (Swedish, plus English and German if there are enough people); these depart at 11am, 1pm and 2.30pm.

Around 20 authentic reconstructions of houses with reed or turf roofs have been built on the coast, near to the site of the Battle of Fotevikens (1134). These belong to various tribes that used the town’s harbour (command of the armed forces), juror and scribe; and the chieftain, whose home has wooden floorboards, fleeces and a Battle of Fotevikens tapestry. There’s even a shield-lined great hall (the Thinghöll), and a reconstructed warship and lethally powerful war catapult, which you may get to see fired at the end of your tour.

The amazing thing is that this reserve is home to people who live as the Vikings did, eschewing most modern conveniences and following the old traditions, laws and religions – even after the last tourist has left! These modern-day Vikings lead visitors on guided tours through their houses and provide an entertaining and insightful glimpse into Viking times.

If you visit in early June you can witness warrior training and a re-enactment of the 1134 battle; Viking Week is held in late June. To minimize noise in a Viking market.

There’s a reasonable hostel (2-bedr Skr350, cottage Skr630) just outside the reserve for visitors.

Falsterbo

Little Falsterbo Museum ([phone] 47 05 13; falsterbomuseum eum@mail.bip.net; Sjögatan; adult/7-16yr Skr20/10; [email] 10am-7pm mid-Jun–mid-Aug), at the southern tip of the peninsula, is a pleasing jumble: a small Naturol, old shops and smithies, WWII mines, and the remains of a 13th-century boat.

Falsterbo has a long sandy beach that’s popular with locals and Malmo holiday-makers. The sandy hook-shaped island of Måkäppan is a nature reserve, off-limits to the public from February to October. There are seals and over 50 species of birds, including little terns, Kentish plovers (rare in Sweden) and avocets; in the autumn, between one and three million migrating birds rest their wings here. Near the museum is Falsterbo Fägelstation ([phone] 47 06 88; birdobs@bio.pp.se; Sjögatan), a bird observatory which study the island’s birdlife.

Kust Café ([phone] 47 38 30; Storgatan 14; Skr60; [email] 11am-10pm summer) Catering to the fashionable city, this is a stylish nautical café, with excellent coffee, ciabattas, salads, pasta and cakes.

Getting There & Away

Bus 100 (Skr48, one hour, every 30 minutes Monday to Saturday, hourly Sunday) runs from Malmo to Falsterbo Strandbad (about 600m east of the Fägelstation).

TRELLEBORG

[phone] 0411 / pop 39,477

Trelleborg is the main gateway between Sweden and Germany, with frequent ferries coming and going. It’s not really on the tourist trail: if you’re arriving in Sweden here, it’s probably better to head on for Malmö or Ystad. However, the town will be celebrating its 750th birthday in 2007, so snooze around to see what’s worth sticking around for.

Information

Banks and ATMs can be found near Forex and on Algotagatan.

Internetcafé Gamezone.nu ([phone] 415 10; Algotagatan 66; per hr Skr20) Internet access.

Forex (CB Friisgatan 1; [email] 8am-10pm Mon-Fri, 8am-2pm Sat, noon-5pm Sun) Money exchange.
SOUTHERN SWEDEN • Ystad

Hamngatan 9; s/d Skr795/995, discounted to Skr650/850; p Absolutely the most beautiful place in town is this old sea captain’s villa. Rooms are luxurious but being over-the-top, there’s a high-quality restaurant on the premises, and the gardens are lovely.

Dalabades Camping (149 05; Dalabades Strandväg 2; sites Skr140, 4-bed cabins from Skr350) This is the nearest camping ground, over 3km east. It’s a well-equipped place between road No 9 and the beach.

Restaurang & Pizzeria Istanbül (44 44 44; Algatan 30; mains Skr60-150) This bustling place has a huge menu of pasta, pizza, salad and kebabs, plus more expensive Swedish fish and meat dishes.

Café Vattentornet (530 70; Stormorget; Mon-Sat) Inside the splendid 58m-high water tower (1912), this is a pleasant ground-floor café selling sandwiches, cakes and other snacks. Its outdoor tables are great for people-watching in summer.

Getting There & Away
Bus 146 runs every half-hour or so between Malmö and Trelleborg, via Ystad. For details of international trains from Malmö to Berlin via Trelleborg, see p327.

Sleeping & Eating
The tourist office can book private rooms run by the local Residents Association. There’s a town centre in Ystad, which has a substantial collection of southern Swedish and Danish art.

Forex Cat terminal (9am-6.30pm Mon-Fri, 8am-3pm Sat; ferry terminal (8am-9.30pm Mon-Fri, 10am-9.30pm Sat & Sun) Money exchange.
Futurezone Internetcafé (106 99; Jennygatan 3; per hr Skr25; 10am-midnight) Internet access.
Library (Södergatan 4; 11am-7pm Mon-Thu, 11am-5pm Fri, 10am-2pm Sat) With free internet access.
Paperback Shop (734 14; Stora Östergatan 27) Friendly bookshop selling Henning Mankell’s books in English.
Tourist office (57 75 83; www.visitystad.com; St Johns Tower: 9am-7pm Mon-Fri, 10am-6pm Sat & Sun mid-June–mid-Aug, 9am-5pm Mon Fri rest of yr, plus 11am-2pm Sat mid-May–mid-Jun & late Aug–late Sep) Just opposite the train station.

Sights
YSYAD

Fire works and Kryka, is a late-15th-century brick church clock-tower (every 15 minutes from 9.15pm to 3am). The watchman was traditionally beheaded if he fell asleep! Some of the interesting features inside include a baroque pulpit (1722), a huge 19th-century organ and the pew near the entrance for women who had recently given birth and hadn’t yet been churched. Latinsskolan, next to Sanka Maria Kyrka, is a late-15th-century brick building and is the oldest preserved school in Scandinavia.

Klostret i Ystad (57 72 86; St Petri Kyrkoban; adult/under 16yr Skr40/free; 10am-5pm Tue-Fri, noon-4pm Sat & Sun Jun-Aug, noon-5pm Tue-Fri, noon-4pm Sat & Sun May–Sep) In the Middle Ages Franciscan monastery of Gråbrödraklostret, features local textiles and silverware, and there’s a slide show. The monastery includes the 13th-century consecrated St Petri Kyrkan, now used for art exhibitions, which has around 80 gravestones from the 14th to 18th centuries. Included in the same ticket, and with the same opening hours, is the large Ystad Konstmuseum (57 72 85; adult/under 16yr Skr40/free), next door to the tourist office, which has a substantial collection of southern Swedish and Danish art.

Charlotte Berlins Museum (188 66; Damgatan 23; adult/under 16yr Skr10/free; noon-5pm Mon-Fri,
noon-4pm Sat & Sun Jun-Aug) is a small, late-19th-century middle-class home. Model railway enthusiasts will enjoy Ystad Järnvägmuseum (☎ 130 13; 11am-7pm Mon-Fri, 1-5pm Sat & Sun mid-Jun–mid-Aug), inside the train station, with historic items from the local railway.

Sleeping
Those with their own wheels can choose B&B and cabin options along the scenic coastal roads on either side of Ystad. The tourist office can arrange a B&B from Skr200 per person (plus a Skr40 fee)

Sekelgården Hotel (☎ 739 00; info@sekelgarden.se; Långtanan 18; s/d from Skr695/895) is this is a romantic family-run hotel in a magnificent half-timbered house (1793). The rooms take their inspiration from historical styles or people, and there’s a sauna and very nice courtyard.

Hotel Bjäckgården (☎ 198 48; www.backgarden.nu; Dammtagn 36; s/d from Skr590/720) is a cozy, charming house in a 17th-century home, one block behind the tourist office. On fine mornings, you can eat breakfast in the lovely walled garden.

Sandskogens Camping (☎ 192 70; info@sandskogenscamping.se; low/high season sites Skr130/160, cabins from Skr380/440; May-Sep) This super-friendly (and super-busy) wooded site is 2km east of Ystad on road No 9 to Simrishamn, across the road from the beach and STF hostel. Bus 572 drives past from town.

Eating & Drinking
Store Thor (☎ 185 10; Stortorget; mains Skr100-200; closed Sun) For an upmarket treat, class Store Thor is an amazing place in the archde celar of the old town hall (1572). The decor, food and service are excellent; there are light meals such as tapas, spicy chicken and feta salad, or a gourmet burger, or a selection of grilled meats with a variety of sauces.

Bryggeriet (☎ 699 99; Långtatan 20; lunch Skr65, dinner mains Skr95-195) Another good recommendation is the unique Bryggeriet, a relaxed restaurant and pub in an old brewery. The sunny courtyard is an excellent spot to linger over a well-prepared meal and Ystad Färskol, a beer brewed on the premises.

Kellys (☎ 123 70; Stora Östergatan 18; lunch Skr60, dinner mains Skr85-105) This place has an excellent international menu; main courses include fish, steaks and curries, with the added bonus of few dishes over Skr100.

Book Café (☎ 134 03; Gasegränd; ☵ closed Sun & Mon) This charming café is well worth seeking out: inside is an inviting living room full of mismatched old furniture and books; outside there’s a delightful courtyard. There’s good focaccia, pastries and coffee on offer.

Bäckahästen (☎ 140 00; Lilla Östergatan 6; meals from Skr55) There’s lots of garden seating at this old-fashioned place in a half-timbered house. Food includes sandwiches and baguettes, and light meals like salads and pastas.

Most budget eating places are on Stora Östergatan, the main pedestrian street, like busy Maltes Mackor (☎ 101 30; ☵ closed Sun) at No 12, with a great range of sandwiches and rolls. The Saluhallen (Stora Västergatan; 8am-9pm), behind the church, is a great central place to stock up on groceries. For alcohol, head to Systembolaget (Stora Östergatan 13).

Entertainment
The extraordinary Ystads Teater (☎ 57 71 99; Skansgatan; tickets around Skr300) has remained virtually unchanged since opening in 1894 and unusual operas are performed here in late June and July, and also in September and October. Contact the tourist office for details.
Getting There & Away

BOAT
There are daily crossings between Ystad and Swinoujście by *Unity Line* (05 59 69 00; www.unityline.pl) and *Polferries* (040 12 17 00; www.polferries.se); see p328 for details. The ferry terminal in Ystad is within walking distance of the train station (drivers follow a more circuitous route).

*Bornholmstrafiken* (05 55 87 00; www.bornholmferries.dk) operate frequent ferries and catamarans between Ystad and Rønne, on the Danish island of Bornholm: see p328. Catamarans depart from and arrive at a new terminal directly behind the train station.

BUS
In Ystad, buses depart from outside the train station. To get to Trelleborg (Skř42, one hour), first take bus 303 to Skövde then transfer to bus 183. The direct bus to Simrishamn (Skř42, one hour) via Löderup and Skillinge runs three to nine times daily. Bus 322 to Skillinge runs via Ales Stenar and Löderups Strandbad three times daily in summer.

SkåneExpressen bus 6 runs to Lund (Skř42, 1 1/2 hours, hourly weekdays, infrequently on weekends) and bus 4 runs three to nine times daily to Kristianstad (Skř60, 1 1/2 hours). Local train is the best way to get to Malmö.

TRAIN
There are Pågatågen trains running roughly every hour (fewer on weekends) to/from Malmö (Skř72, 50 minutes). Other local trains run up to 12 times daily to Simrishamn (Skř36, 40 minutes).

Getting Around
There are a handful of local bus services; all depart from outside the tourist office (St Knuts Torg). Try *Taxi Ystad* (720 00) for a taxi. For bike hire, contact *Roslins Cykel* (123 15; Jennygatan 11; per day mountain/road bike Skř40/65; closed Sun).

AROUND YSTAD Ales Stenar
Advertised as the Nordic Stonehenge. Ales Stenar has all the mystery of England’s monument and none of the money-grabbing greed. This is Sweden’s largest stone ship setting, and it’s an intriguing attraction. The 67-m-long oval of stones, placed in the shape of a boat, was probably constructed around AD 600; why, no-one knows. Limited excursions at the site have revealed no body; it’s possible that this wasn’t a grave but a ritual site, with built-in solar calendar (the ‘stem’ and ‘stern’ stones point towards the midsummer sunset and midwinter sunrise).

It’s worth going there to speculate: the enigmatic ship is in the middle of a raised field, with an uncommonly low and level 360° horizon. However, the area does get swamped by visitors, particularly in summer. There’s a tiny *shack* at Kaseberga harbour giving away information about the stones. The harbour car park is chaotic, though: the one just off the main road is better. From either place, the setting is a 1km walk.

Ales Stenar is always open and admission is free. The monument is 9km east of Ystad at Kaseberga, and badly served by public transport: bus 322 from Ystad runs three times daily in summer.

Löderups Strandbad

*0411*

With its long stretches of white-sand beaches, the Baltic resort of Löderups Strandbad, 4km east of Ales Stenar, is a decent place for lolling. It can get busy when the Swedish schools are on holiday. The monument is 9km east of Ystad at Kaseberga, and badly served by public transport: bus 322 from Ystad runs three times daily in summer.

Simrishamn
Summer holidaymakers mill around Simrishamn harbour, idly eating ice cream or waiting for the ferry to the Danish island of Bornholm. The rather quaint pastel-coloured houses on Lilla Norregatan are worth a look, as is nearby *St Nikolai Kyrka*.

The *tourist office* (81 98 00; www.turistbyra.simrishamn.se; Tullhusgatan 2; 9am-8pm Mon-Fri, 10am-8pm Sat, 11am-8pm Sun Jun–mid-Aug, 9am-5pm Mon-Fri rest of yr) has information on the whole of Österlen. For Internet access, go to P&M’s Coffeehouse (right). Banks and other services are along Storgatan.

Sleeping & Eating

**STF Vandrhem Simrishamn** (010 45; Christian Bamekowskagatan 10C; dm Skř190) Pick up a map before setting off – this place is quite well hidden, near the town hospital. It’s worth seeking out, however; it offers spotless, colourful, modern accommodation with bathroom and TV in every room. Outside June to August, bookings are vital.

**Maritim Kro & Hotell** (41 13 60; info@maritimhotel.se; Hamngatan 31; s/d from Skř80/100, dm Skř120, mains Skř170-210) The old blue building by the harbour is a wonderful boutique hotel with very stylish décor (ask for the Herrings Room, the pick of the rooms, with balcony and sea views). Also on the premises is an excellent restaurant: unsurprisingly it specialises in creative fish dishes.

**Tobisviks Camping** (41 27 78; sites Skř180, cabins from Skř500; ) By the beach 2km north of the town centre, this serviceable site is attached to a sports centre and swimming pool.

**Kamshogs Kro** (143 48; www.kamshogs.kro.se; Storgatan 3; lunch Skř75, dinner mains Skř175-195; noon-10pm Jul & Aug, shorter hr rest of yr) Another restaurant putting the emphasis on friendly service, local ingredients and prime preparation is this krog, with dishes like seafood casserole, or cod in cider garnished with rosemary. The outside seats on pedestrianised Storgatan are perfect for people-watching.

**P&M’s Coffeehouse** (149 24; Stortorget 2; 10am-9pm summer, shorter hr rest of yr) This huge barn of a café has changing artwork on the walls and an Internet café (per 30 minutes Skř15 hidden in the basement).

Getting There & Away
See opposite for bus details from Ystad.

ÖSTERLEN

*0414 / pop 19,400*

Artists appreciate the soft light of Österlen and have moved here en masse. It’s an alluring area full of waving wheat fields, tiny fishing villages and glorious apple orchards, and is well worth exploring if you want a taste of the Swedish countryside. Everything moves at a slow, seductive speed; cycling is the best way of fitting in with the tempo.

Simrishamn
Summer holidaymakers mill around Simrishamn harbour, idly eating ice cream or waiting for the ferry to the Danish island of Bornholm. The rather quaint pastel-coloured houses on Lilla Norregatan are worth a look, as is nearby *St Nikolai Kyrka*.

The *tourist office* (81 98 00; www.turistbyra.simrishamn.se; Tullhusgatan 2; 9am-8pm Mon-Fri, 10am-8pm Sat, 11am-8pm Sun Jun–mid-Aug, 9am-5pm Mon-Fri rest of yr) has information on the whole of Österlen. For Internet access, go to P&M’s Coffeehouse (right). Banks and other services are along Storgatan.

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**P&M’s Coffeehouse** (149 24; Stortorget 2; 10am-9pm summer, shorter hr rest of yr) This huge barn of a café has changing artwork on the walls and an Internet café (per 30 minutes Skř15 hidden in the basement).
6pm Jun-Aug, 11am-4pm Apr, May & Sep), about 5km inland, is the main attraction in these parts. It’s scarcely been tinkered with since it was built (some time in the early 1500s), making it one of the best-preserved medieval castles you’ll find, with an all-encompassing moat and 11 different ghosts! Guided tours in English are at 2pm daily from July to mid-September (at 2pm weekends in May, June and August). In summer, there’s a programme of medieval events and activities: contact the castle for details. The programme of medieval events and activities (in Tivoliparken) include music, dance and a jazz festival.

For bus information see p180 and p181.

**Kristianstad**

Kristianstad, so it’s appropriate that the city’s main attraction is the large Domus shopping centre contains the film museum, is based here.

Another of the best Renaissance churches in Scandinavia, Trefaldighetskyrkan (Västra Storgatan 6; 10am-4pm) was completed in 1628 when Skåne was still under Danish control. The light-filled interior still has many of its original fittings, including wonderfully carved oak pews, and an ornate marble and alabaster pulpit.

Riverside Tivoli Park is a great place for a stroll on summer evenings, or for a waffle or two at the pretty café. For a walking tour round 23 of the town’s stately buildings (including the Renaissance-style town hall and the restored rampart Bastinonen Konungen), pick up the good free English brochure Kristianstad at your own pace from the tourist office.

**Transport**

- **Regionalbuss på länstrafik** (`13 57 29; Stora Storgatan 53; admission free; 1-4pm Tue-Fri, noon-5pm Sun Jun-Aug), Sweden’s only film museum, is based here.

**Sights & Activities**

One of the best Renaissance churches in Scandinavia, Trefaldighetskyrkan (Västra Storgatan 6; 10am-4pm) was completed in 1628 when Skåne was still under Danish control. The light-filled interior still has many of its original fittings, including wonderfully carved oak pews, and an ornate marble and alabaster pulpit.

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otherwise budget accommodation is very limited.

Charlotteborgs Camping & Vandrarhem (☎ 21 07 67; charlotteborg@swinet.net; Slättängsvägen 98; sites & hostel beds Skr155, cabins from Skr270) is about 3km southwest of the centre (take bus 22 or 23, but we found it to be dirty and the staff rude. If you have private transport, Bäckasgäst Slott is a much better budget option; or head for Rådhuset (see right).

First Hotel Christian IV (☎ 12 63 00; Västra Boulevarden 15; s/d from Skr160/210, discounted to Skr600/860; P }). The best place in town, this grand hotel offers fine, modern rooms in a turn-of-the-century building that was once a bank. One of the bank vaults now houses a wine cellar; there’s also a restaurant and a sauna here.

Hotel Turisten (☎ 12 61 50; info@turisten.se; Västra Storgatan 17; s/d Skr795/995, discounted to Skr550/750; P). Friendly family-run Turisten has expanded, with 10 new rooms painted in pale colours with smart oak furniture. All have cable TV, and there’s a sauna in the building.

Bäckasgäst Slott (☎ 530 20; info@backasglastOTT.se; Barumvägen 113, Kåby; dm Skr250, s/d from Skr600/900, discounted to Skr550/780; P). This is a charming castle set between two lakes 15km northeast of Kristianstad. It was originally built as a monastery in the mid-13th century and in an impressive place – hotel and hotel accommodation is available in various wings and outhouses. All prices include breakfast, there’s also a moderately priced restaurant. The bus connections aren’t great – there are three buses (Skr18, 20 minutes) on weekdays from Kristianstad Resecentrum.

Kippers Källare (☎ 10 62 00; Östra Storgatan 9; mains Skr180-250; C closed Sun & Mon summer). In a 17th-century brasserie, this is the most atmospheric restaurant in town. Main courses include vegetarian options. The popular Harry’s Bar is on the same premises.

Garvargården (☎ 21 35 00; Tivoligatan 9; lunch Skr60, meals Skr140-190). This appealing place offers an interesting menu ranging from simple pasta dishes to the super-rich house speciality of lobster-stuffed steak with gorgonzola sauce and potatoes gratin. Enjoy your food in the great outdoor dining area, underneath a crooked 17th-century gallery.

Banken Pub & Restaurang (☎ 10 20 23; Stora Torg; bar meals Skr40-100; C closed Sun-Tue summer). In an old bank, this restaurant was being completely renovated at the time of writing. Its new interior promises to be cutting-edge cool, serving good beers and bar snacks (club sandwiches, Tex-Mex).

Grafitti Café (☎ 12 59 90; Västra Storgatan; meals around Skr50; 10am-6.30pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat, 11am-5pm Sun). A healthier option is the Grafitti franchise, with excellent budget meals, including salads, baguettes and baked spuds.

There’s a large supermarket inside the Domus centre on Östra Boulevarden, and Systembolaget is also here.

Getting There & Around

Skylaws (☎ 0771 95 95 00) flies direct most days to Stockholm from Kristianstad’s airport (✈ 23 88 50, about 20km south of the town centre. Airport buses (Skr70) depart from the Resecentrum 50 minutes before flight departures.

All buses depart from the Resecentrum on Östra Boulevarden. There are frequent SkåneExpressen buses: bus 1 to Malmö (Skr84, 1¼ hours), bus 2 to Lund (Skr78, 1½ hours), bus 3 to Simrishamn (Skr42, 1¼ hours) and bus 4 to Ystad (Skr60, 1½ hours); the latter two services run infrequently on weekends. There are also two to five departures daily to Helsingborg on bus 8.

Svenska Buss (☎ 0771-67 67 67; www.svenskabuss.se) runs to Malmö, Karlskrona, Kalmar and Stockholm several times weekly.

The train station is across town from the Resecentrum. Trains run daily to Lund (Skr84, one hour) and Malmö (Skr84, 1¼ hours), and many services continue on to Copenhagen (Skr150, two hours). Kustbilen trains run every hour or two to Malmö (with connections at Hässleholm for Helsingborg or Stockholm).

Taxi Kristianstad (☎ 24 62 46) can help you get around. Central car hire is available from Avis (☎ 10 30 20; Östra Storgatan 10).

Åhus (☎ 044)

The small coastal town of Åhus (about 18km southeast of Kristianstad) is a popular summer spot thanks to its long sandy beach. The area is also known for its eels: the Eel Coast runs south from Åhus, and this delicacy is served up boiled, fried, smoked, grilled, or cooked on a bed of straw at restaurants and at autumn Eel Feasts throughout the region.

There’s a small tourist office (☎ 13 47 77; turistinfo.ahu@christianstad.se; Järnvägsgatan 7; 10am-7pm Mon-Fri, 9am-6pm Sat, 10am-2pm Sun mid-Jun–mid-Aug, 10am-5pm mid-Aug–mid-Jun). All the facilities you’ll need (bank, supermarket etc) are nearby.

Åhus is the home town of Absolut Vodka, and about half a million bottles are produced here every day. The distillery is open to the public on rare occasions in the summer: ask the tourist office for details.

Naturens Bästa (see p183) also run their boat trips (adult/child/family Skr60/40/170) from Åhus.

STF Vandrarhem Åhus (☎ 24 85 35; info@cigarr kungshus.se; Stavagan 3; dm Skr160-200, hostel s/d from Skr200/320, B&B d from Skr500) Very close to the harbour, this youth hostel/B&B is based in a 19th-century cigar factory. Rooms are newly renovated, and in July there’s a tiny waffel hüt in the garden.

There are several good dining possibilities down by the harbour.

Bus 551 runs two or three times an hour between Kristianstad and Åhus (Skr24, 25 minutes); it drops you off at the tourist office.

Helsingborg

042 / pop 121,179

Fourteen million passengers per year pass through Helsingborg on their way to/from Denmark: many of them see very little of this handsome little town. There are all kinds of small and specialist museums (about the fire brigade, medical
SOUTHERN SWEDEN  ••  Helsingborg

FREDRIKSDAL & SOFIERO

4

One of Sweden’s best open-air museums is Fredriksdals Friluftsmuseum (0 10 45 00; www.fredriksdalsfriluftsmuseum.se; off Hävertsgatan; adult/under 16yr Skr60/30; 10am-7.30pm Jun-Aug, 10am-6pm Apr, May & Sep, 11am-4pm Oct-May). It’s based around an 18th-century manor house, with a street of old houses, children’s farm, graphics museum, and extensive grounds. Wildflowers from the area grow in the beautiful botanic gardens, and there’s also a grand summer programme of activities and performances in the French baroque open-air theatre. Check the website for current events.

Tropikaret (0 13 00 35; Hävertsgatan 21; adult/under 16yr Skr60/30; 11am-4pm Tue-Sun) is a semizoo, with reptile house, aquarium, tiny monkeys and other animals, housed in environments that attempt to recreate their natural habitats. It’s just opposite the entrance to Fredriksdal museum.

About 5km north of the town centre (bus 219), Sofiero (0 13 74 00; www.sofiero.helsingborg.se; Sofierovägen; adult/under 16yr Skr80/free; 11am-5pm mid-Apr–Sep, to 6pm Jun-Aug) is an impressive former summer residence and park with great rhododendrons (best seen when in full bloom in May and June).

SLEEPING

One of Sweden’s best open-air museums is Fredriksdals Friluftsmuseum (0 10 45 00; www.fredriksdalsfriluftsmuseum.se; off Hävertsgatan; adult/under 16yr Skr60/30; 10am-7.30pm Jun-Aug, 10am-6pm Apr, May & Sep, 11am-4pm Oct-May). It’s based around an 18th-century manor house, with a street of old houses, children’s farm, graphics museum, and extensive grounds. Wildflowers from the area grow in the beautiful botanic gardens, and there’s also a grand summer programme of activities and performances in the French baroque open-air theatre. Check the website for current events.

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About 5km north of the town centre (bus 219), Sofiero (0 13 74 00; www.sofiero.helsingborg.se; Sofierovägen; adult/under 16yr Skr80/free; 11am-5pm mid-Apr–Sep, to 6pm Jun-Aug) is an impressive former summer residence and park with great rhododendrons (best seen when in full bloom in May and June).

Sleeping Cottage & Hostels

The tourist office can organise private rooms for as little as Skr180 per person (without breakfast), but charges a booking fee.

Helsingborgs Vandrarehem (0 14 58 50; info@hbgturist.com; Järnvägsgatan 39; dm from Skr185) The only central hostel, this is an excellent modern choice about 200m from Knutpunkten. Reception opens, rather unusually, between 3pm and 5pm.

Villa Thalassa (0 38 06 60; www.villathalassa.com; Dag Hammarskjöldsväg; dm from Skr420; P) This SVIF place is a lovely early-20th-century villa situated in beautiful gardens. Hostel accommodation is in huts, but the hotel-standard rooms (with or without private bathroom) are a cut above if your budget will stretch. The villa is 3km north of the city centre in the Pålsjö area. Bus 219 stops 500m short, at the Pålsjöbaden bus stop.

Råå Vallar Camping (0 10 76 80; helsingborg.camping@telia.com; Kustgatan; low/high season sites Skr180/230, cabins Skr550/950; Apr-Oct; ) About 5km south of the city centre, by Öresund, this is a huge, well-equipped camping ground, with a shop, café and sandy beach. Take bus 1 from the town hall.

HOTELS

Hotell Linnea (0 37 24 00; www.hotell-linnea.se; Prästgatan 4; s/d from Skr935/1085, discounted to Skr745/845) The charming, central Linnéa has friendly management and pretty, personal rooms with wooden floors, crisp bedspreads and antique furniture. It’s the pick of the town’s midrange offerings.

Hotell Viking (0 14 44 20; hotell.viking@helsingborg .se; Fågelsångsgatan 1; s/d from Skr655/895, discounted to Skr550/845; P) Another inviting hotel, the well-established Viking is on an old and peaceful street but still nicely central. The smart rooms are kept up-to-date: at the time of research Room 15 (Skr1635, discounted to Skr1245) was the flashiest, with its own computer, leather recliners and whirlpool massage bath.

Elite Hotel Mollberg (0 37 37 00; molberg.helsingborg@el ite.se; Stortorget 18; s/d from Skr1195/1295, discounted to Skr720/870; P) The main square is dominated by this 19th-century building with its red brick facade exterior. An understated elegance underpins the rooms, there are excellent facilities, and the restaurant here is one of the best in town.

Elite Hotel Marina Plaza (0 19 21 00; reservations .marinaplace@elite.se; Kungstorget 6; s/d Skr1225/1395, discounted to Skr730/790; P) The Mollberg’s sister establishment has modern, luxurious rooms right by the harbour, with a number of restaurants and bars on the premises. You can pay a little extra for sea views.

Eating

Helsingborg has a great selection of restaurants, although a fair few close on Sundays. It’s also got a great selection of cafés.

Restaurang Niklas (0 28 00 80; www.niklas .se; Norra Storgatan 16; mains Skr195-245, 7-course menu Skr95; 6pm-1am Mon-Sat) Niklas is one of Sweden’s top TV chefs; he opened his restaurant here in 2000, and it’s now a highly feted institution. The menu is influenced by classic Provencal cookery, but the gourmet touches are all his own. If you’re going to treat yourself, make it here; just look for the giant iron spoon!

Dunker Bar & Matsalar (0 32 29 95; Kungsta- gat 11; lunch Sk89, light meals Sk80-140, dinner mains Skr240-300) At the Kulturhus, this is an excellent option: good views, a light and airy interior, and tasty menu items. The restaurant is another gourmet wonder, but there’s a cheaper bistro and a good weekend brunch.

Pålsjö Krog (0 14 97 30; Drottninggatan 151; mains Skr150-210; from 11.30am Mon-Sat) Near Villa Thalassa hostel, this is a great old seaside inn that has been renovated and turned into an elegant restaurant. There’s a lovely veranda and outdoor seating, plus good food choices with the emphasis on fish and seafood.

Olsons Skafferi (0 14 07 80; Mariagatan 6; lunch Sk65; 10am-10.30pm Mon-Sat) Olsons is a super little spot, with outdoor seating on the pe- destrian square right in front of Mariakyr- kan. It doubles as an Italian deli and café, with a rustic look, cheery striped tablecloths and piles of pasta. It’s particularly popular at lunchtime.

Vegeriet (0 24 03 03; Järnvägsgatan 25; lunch around Sk65; closed Sun) Veggies will rejoice at this place, an appealing veggie café-restaurant with dishes like quiche, lasagne, tortilla and stir-fries; there are also vegan options. However, it usually closes for a month in summer.

Ebbas Fik (0 28 14 40; Brugsstorgatan 20; 9am-6pm Mon-Fri, 9am-4pm Sat) Ebbas is the most fantastic...
1950s retro café, complete with jukebox, quiffs and hamburgers made to Elvis’s recipe. The extensive café menu also includes (huge) sandwiches, baked potatoes and crazy cakes and buns. It’s just perfect – absolutely don’t miss it.

**Fahlmans Konditori** ( tel: 21 30 60; Stortorget 11; & 8am–6pm Mon–Fri, 8am–4pm Sat, 11am–5pm Sun) Those with a hatred of rock ’n’ roll could turn to Fahlmans, the most traditional of the town’s cafés. It’s been selling sandwiches and pastries to its customers in genteel surroundings since 1914.

The quickest snacks and a good variety of restaurants are found upstairs in the extensive Knutpunkten complex. Two excellent offerings in the city centre are **Kyoto Sushi** ( tel: 0200–2128; www.swebus.se) and **Svenska Buss** ( tel: 0771–67 67 67; www.svenskabus.se) and **Säfflebussen** ( tel: 0771–15 15 15; www.safflebussen.se).

All three companies offer services north to Halmstad and Göteborg (Swebus Express and Säfflebussen services continue to Oslo), and Swebus Express and Svenska Buss operate south to Malmö. Swebus Express and Säfflebussen also run services northeast to Stockholm via Jönköping. Peak fares to Helsingør (adult Skr22, free with rail passes). Across the inner harbour, **Kulla Dyk** ( tel: 34 77 14; www.kullendyk.nu; Möllehåssé Camping) runs a ferry every evening to Oslo (from Skr598) from the Sunds terminal. For more details.

**BUS**

The bus terminal is at ground level in Knutpunkten. Regional Skånetrafiken buses dominate (see respective destinations for details), but long-distance services are offered by **Swebus Express** ( tel: 0200–2128; www.swebus.se), **Svenska Buss** (tel: 0771–67 67 67; www.svenskabus.se) and **Säfflebussen** (tel: 0771–15 15 15; www.safflebussen.se).

Drinking

There are lots of good pubs and bars around town, including **Harrys** ( tel: 13 91 91; Järwågsgatan 7) and the **Bishops Arms** ( tel: 37 37 77; Södra Storgatan 2), both English-style pubs with a range of beers and comprehensive food menus.

There’s a **Systembolaget** on Håstmöllegränd.

**Entertainment**

**Helsingborgs Stadsteater** ( tel: 10 68 10; Karl Johans gata 1) has regular drama performances, and its neighbour, the **Konserthus** ( tel: 10 45 50; Drottninggatan 19), regularly plays host to Helsingborg’s Symphony Orchestra. Information and tickets are available from the tourist office.

The **Tivoli** ( tel: 18 71 71; Kungsplan 1) is a popular nightclub with a younger crowd, and there’s sometimes live music.

Central **Biograf Röda Kvarn** ( tel: 14 50 90; Karlsgatan 7) is Helsingborg’s oldest cinema. It shows mostly independent films, but closes from mid-June to mid-August. For mainstream efforts, try the eight-screen **Filmstaden** (Södergatan 19).

**Getting There & Away**

The main transport centre is the large, waterfront Knutpunkten complex.
The southwest is Sweden in a nutshell. For big-city living, gorgeous green Göteborg (or Gothenburg in English) offers all the restaurants, culture and theme-park screams you could need. Take advantage of the excellent summer pass and explore every facet of the city for next to nothing.

The rest of the Västergötland region contains a funny old mixture of surprising sights: don’t miss Trollhättan, Sweden’s film-production capital; Läckö Slott, fairytale castle supreme; and the quiet delights of the Göta Canal, which threads its way across the region.

Facing westwards onto the ocean, the beautiful Bohuslän coastline is a favourite Swedish holiday destination. With its myriad islands, tiny fishing villages and mysterious Bronze Age rock carvings, it manages to retain an enigmatic air in spite of all its adoring visitors.

Europe’s third-largest lake, Vänern, strokes the edges of watery, forested Dalsland, a canoeists’ paradise and a county for really getting away from the tourist trail. For wilder waves and historical seaside towns, head for Halland. It has clean, sandy Blue Flag beaches and the best windsurfing in Sweden.

**HIGHLIGHTS**

- Ride till you puke at Sweden’s number one attraction, Liseberg fun park (p204), in Göteborg
- Puzzle over the weird and wonderful Bronze Age artwork (p222) at the Unesco World Heritage site in Tanumshede, Bohuslän
- Enjoy the strange film-set industrial landscape of Trollhättan (p226)
- Cruise down the river to the Nya Älvsborg Fästning (Nya Älvsborg Fortress; p206) in Göteborg
- Stroll round the picturesque fishing villages of Bohuslän, particularly Smögen (p220), Åstol (p218) and Fjällbacka (p220)
- Catch the waves at Apelviken (p232), the country’s premier windsurfing beach

**Orientation & Information**

Götaland is a large area of Sweden that consists of five different regions or landskaps: Bohuslän, Dalsland and Västergötland in the west, Halland in the south, and Östergötland in the east (covered in the Southeast Sweden chapter p142). These regions are grouped together into the three counties or läns of Västra Götalands län (taking in Västergötland, Dalsland and Bohuslän), Hallands län and Östergötlands län. Götaland is also the region containing the two largest lakes in Sweden – Vänern and Vättern, which are connected by the Göta canal. The latter lake divides Götaland into two distinct parts.
REGIONAL TOURIST OFFICES
Visitors can contact the following agencies for more detailed information on the area:

HallandsTurist (035-10 95 60; www.hallandsturist.se; Box 538, SE-30801 Halmstad)

Västsvenska Turistrådet (031-81 83 00; www.vast sverige.com; Kungsportsavenyn 31-35, SE-41136 Göteborg)

Getting Around
The following companies provide regional transport links. If you are planning to spend some time in any of these counties, it’s worth enquiring about discount cards, monthly passes or a sommarkort, allowing cheaper travel in the peak summer period (from midsummer to mid-August). Also check the respective websites for routes, schedules, fares and passes; these sites don’t always have information in English, but if you call the telephone numbers listed you’ll usually reach someone who can help you in English.

Hallandsstrafiken (0346-486 00, 0771-33 10 30; www.hl.t.se)
Västrafik (0771-41 43 00; www.vasttrafik.se)

The main railway lines in the west connect Göteborg to Karlstad, Stockholm, Malmö and Oslo. In the east, the most important line runs from Stockholm via Norrköping and Linköping to Malmö. Express buses connect major towns on much the same routes.

One of the best ways of seeing the region is by taking the long and unforgettable journey along the Göta Canal (see p146) – from the rolling country of Östergötland, north of Linköping, into the great Lake Vättern, before continuing into the region of Västergötland on the other side and on to Göteborg. See p330.

GÖTEBORG
031 / pop 481,410
In expensive Sweden, Göteborg, with its cheap fares, cheap accommodation and fantastic attractions, is a top tip for anyone visiting the country that shouldn’t make your piggy bank turn up its trottets. Göteborg (pronounced something like ‘yer-te-bor’) is also known by its English name Gothenburg. It is Scandinavia’s busiest port and has a continental outlook; its showpiece Kungsportsavenyn boulevard is often nicknamed the ‘Champs Élysées’, and the comparison is justified (in a low-key Nordic way). The cheerful, relaxed atmosphere is enhanced by the city’s large student population.

Scandinavia’s largest amusement park, Liseberg, froths over with rollercoasters, ice creams and glittery lights, and the nearby Universeum is another wonder-world well worth exploring. Heritage sites and museums sprout from every street, from 17th-century fortresses to state-of-the-art 21st-century multimedia extravaganzas. A tremendous 10% of Göteborg is green space: take time out to stroll through its charming parks and gardens.

The Göta älv (Göta river) runs through the city: in sunny weather boat trips are a pure delight. You can easily escape westwards on the efficient tram system for a mellow island-hopping trip. Despite being a coastal city, the weather is good with high sunshine levels.

History
Gamla Älvsborg fortress, standing guard over the river 3km downstream of the centre, is Göteborg’s oldest significant structure, with portions dating back to medieval times. It was a key strategic point in the 17th-century territorial wars, and was held by Denmark for seven years before being yielded to Sweden in 1619. Two years later, the Swedes founded Göteborg.

Dutch players played an important part in shaping the young city. Still fearful of Danish attack, the Swedes employed Dutch experts to construct a defensive canal system in shaping the young city. Still fearful of Danish attack, the Swedes employed Dutch experts to construct a defensive canal system between the islands of Hisingen and Öland, the so-called Öland canal. It served as an effective barrier to any Danish attacks. The canal was completed in 1635 and is now the revitalised Haga area: around a fifth of the original buildings are still standing. Most of Göteborg’s oldest wooden buildings went up in smoke long ago – the city was devastated by no less than nine major fires between 1669 and 1804.

Once Sweden had annexed Skåne in 1658, Göteborg expanded as a trading centre. Boom-time came in the 18th century, when merchant companies like the Swedish East India Company made huge profits of that period.

From the 19th century, shipbuilding was a major part of the city’s economy, until the industry totally collapsed in the 1980s. Volvo’s first car wheeled out of Göteborg in 1927. It’s now one of Sweden’s largest companies (although it was taken over by Ford in 1999), and it’s estimated that a quarter of the city relies on the company in some way. Today, Göteborg is Sweden’s most important industrial and commercial city. Most of Sweden’s oil is imported through the vast port.

 Orientation
From the centre of the city, Kungsports- savenyn (known simply as ‘Avenyn’) crosses one of the city’s original 17th-century canals (most have been filled in) and leads southeast up to Götaäpplet. The Avenyn is the heart of the city with boutiques, restaurants, galleries, theatres and street cafés. The huge Nordstan shopping centre lies just north of the canal system, opposite the central train station.

The former shipyards and much of the heavy industry (including Volvo) are on the northern island of Hisingen, formed by bifurcation of the Göta älv. Hisingen is reached by road via the monumental Alvsborgsbron (bridge), southwest of the city; by Götaälvbron (north of Centralstationen); and by the E6 motorway tunnel, Tingstadstunnelen, northeast of the city.

The main E6 motorway, just east of the city centre, runs north–south between Oslo and Malmö.

Information
BOOKSHOPS

Akademibokhandeln Kgogatan (031 02 84;
Kungsparus 61; 10am-7pm Mon-Fri, 10am-4pm Sat,
noon-4pm Sun; Nordstan shopping complex (61 70
30; Nordstan shopping complex; 10am-7pm Mon-Fri,
10am-6pm Sat, 11am-5pm Sun; Vasaagatan (60 96 86;
Vasaagatan 26-30; 10am-6pm Mon-Thur, 10am-4pm
Fri, 10am-2pm Sat, closed Jul) The three central branches of Akademibokhandeln offer the best selection of English-language books in the city.

Pocketshop (010 49 40; Centralstationen; 6.15am-
9pm Mon-Fri, 7am-8pm Sat, 8.30am-9pm Sun) English-
language books.

Press Stop (031 15 84 45; Drottninggatan 58; 9.30am-
6.30pm Mon-Fri, 10am-4pm Sat, noon-3pm Sun) For
English-language newspapers and magazines.

Pressbyrán (031 37 90; Centralstationen; 6am-
10pm Mon-Fri, 8am-8pm Sat, 8am-10pm Sun) Similar
to Press Stop. There is another outlet in Centralstationen open until midnight and a platform kiosk as well.

EMERGENCY
Dial 112 for fire, police or ambulance in
emergency situations only.

Police station (0739 20 00: Ernst Fontells Plats)

INTERNET ACCESS

GameNet (071 71 90 16; Viktoriagatan 22; per hr Skr30;
1-10pm)

IT Grottan (078 73 73; Chalmersgatan 27; per
hr Skr43; 11am-11pm)

Palaset (031 13 24 00; Ekelundsgatan 9-11; per hr Skr25;
until at least midnight) A large bar and billiards hall.

Sidewalk Express (www.sidewalkexpress.se; per
hr Skr19) Sidewalk Express computers are found at Centralstationen & the 7-Eleven shop on Vasaplatsen. To log on, buy vouchers from the coin-operated machines and you’ll be
issued with a username and password.

LEFT LUGGAGE

Luggage lockers (small/medium/large Skr20/30/40 for
up to 24h) are available at Centralstationen and the long-distance bus terminal Nils
Ericson Terminalen.

GOteborgspaketet

The excellent Göteborg Pass discount card is well worth getting, even if all you’re going to do
is park in Göteborg (which has the most expensive street parking in Sweden, and the most
dedicated traffic wards). You also get free or reduced admission to a bundle of attractions (including Liseberg and the museums), plus free city sightseeing tours, bicycle hire and travel
by public transport within the region.

The card costs Skr210/150 per adult/child for 24 hours, Skr295/210 for 48 hours. It’s available
at tourist offices, hotels and Pressbyrán newspapers.

Göteborgspaketet is an accommodation package offered at various hotels with prices starting
at Skr475 per person per night. It includes the Göteborg Pass for the number of nights you
stay. You can book the package in advance over the Internet or telephone the tourist office on
61 25 00. A variety of more expensive packages includes theatre or concert tickets, casino
passes, spa visits etc.
SOUTHWEST SWEDEN •• Göteborg

LIBRARIES
Stadsbiblioteket (☎ 61 65 00; Götaplatsen; 10am-8pm Mon-Fri, 11am-5pm Sat & Sun) The city library has imported newspapers and magazines, books in English, a good café and a modern computer section (free internet access for 15/30min without/library card).

MEDICAL SERVICES
Medical information is available around the clock, but they’re all visiting at once!
There are a few fairly big rides – for example, the 90kph wooden rollercoaster Balder, and 2005’s new ride Kanonen, where you’re blasted from 0 to 75kph in under two seconds. For views of the city without losing your lunch, the ride to the top of the Liseberg Tower, 83m above the ground, claximes in a slow spinning dance with a breathtaking panorama. There are plenty of carousels and fairytale castles for smaller kids, and frequent summer shows and concerts.
Each ride costs between one and four coupons (Skr15 each) per go, but it probably makes sense to buy a pass (one/two days Skr265/335). Opening hours are complex – check the website.

SIGHTS
LISEBERG
Sweden’s most popular attraction is this theme park (☎ 4001 00; www.liseberg.se; adult/under 7yr Skr60/free; ☏ to 10pm or 11pm most days May-Aug, & during Christmas period), southeast of the city centre. Take tram 4 or 5, and enter from Örgrytevägen or Getebergsled. The park gets over three million visitors every year (and sometimes it feels like clock, or they’re all visiting at once!).

funicular takes you to the top of an indoor mountain, from where you follow the course of a Scandinavian stream down through rivers and lakes to the sea – shark tunnel aho!
Things take a tropical turn in the absorbing rainforest: birds and butterflies flutter, while more gruesome denizens dwell in Piranha River, Caiman Creek, Anaconda Swamp and Stingray Lagoon.

Röhsska Museet
A carnival of creativity awaits you at Röhsska Museet (☎ 61 38 50; www.designmuseum.se; Vasagatan 37; adult/under 20yr Skr40/free; ☏ noon-8pm Tue, noon-5pm Wed-Fri, 11am-5pm Sat & Sun), Sweden’s only art and design museum. Exquisite Chinese and Japanese sculptures and baroque furniture make up the older historical exhibitions. For a huge culture shock, descend to the ultramodern 20th- and 21st-century Scandinavian design section – furniture features strongly, but there’s also some outrageous cakery.

Maritiman
Near the opera house north of the centre is the largest floating ship museum (○ 10 59 50; Packhuskajen; adult/7-15yr Skr75/30; ☏ 10am-6pm May-Aug, 10am-4pm Mar, Apr, Sep & Oct, 10am-4pm Fri-Sun Nov) in the world! It’s made up of 19 historical crafts, including fishing boats, a light vessel and a firefighter, linked by walkways. Shiny down into the 69m-long submarine Nordkaparen, a throat-tightening glimpse into underwater warfare. Another highlight is the museum’s biggest craft, the labyrinthine 121m-long destroyer Småland, which saw service from 1952 to 1979. Inside, hunched figures listen to crackling radio messages, and the bunks look just-slept-in – you half expect to meet uniformed sailors in the dim, twisting passages…
There’s a lot to see, so allow a couple of hours.

Konstmuseum
The main city art collection is at Konstmuseum (☎ 61 29 00; www.konstmuseum.goteborg.se; Karl Johansgatan 1; adult/under 20yr Skr40/free; ☏ 10am-5pm May-Aug, 9am-4pm Tue-Fri, to 8pm Wed, 11am-5pm Sat & Sun Sep-Apr), by Stigbergstorget about 2km west of the city centre. Tram 3, 9 or 11 will get you there. It includes model ships, cannons, a ship’s medical room and a large collection of figureheads, such as the vicious-looking Vinthunden from the frigate with the same name. The attached aquarium (included in the entry fee) has a good selection of Nordic marine life. Outside, the Sjömanstornet (Mariner’s Tower), topped by a statue of a grieving woman, commemorates the Swedish sailors killed in WWI.

Naturhistoriska Museet
The Natural History Museum (☎ 775 24 00; www.gnm.se; Slottsskogen Park; adult/under 20yr Skr60/free; ☏ 11am-5pm May-Aug, 9am-4pm Tue-Fri, 11am-5pm Sat & Sun Sep-Apr) contains the world’s only stuffed blue whale, which you could once walk inside its mouth, until an amorous couple were discovered inside and the jaws were firmly shut. As natural history museums go, this

POST
Postal services are now mainly provided by kiosks, newsagents, petrol stations and supermarkets – look for the blue-and-yellow postal symbol.

TOURIST OFFICES
Main tourist office (☎ 61 25 00; www.goteborg.com; Kungsporsporten 2; ☏ 9.30am-8pm mid-Jun–mid-Aug, 9am-5pm Mon-Fri & 10am-2pm Sat Sep–Apr, 9.30am-6pm Mon-Fri & 10am-2pm Sat & Sun May–mid-Jun & end Aug) Central and very busy, with good free brochures and maps.

branch tourist office (Nordstan complex; ☏ 10am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-5pm Sat, noon-4pm Sun)
is a large and impressive one, with some 10 million specimens of wildlife from around the world. To get there, take tram 1 or 6.

**Nya Älvsborgs Fästning**

At the mouth of the Göta alv, squat red Elfsborgs Fortress has had an interesting history. It was built in the 17th century to defend the young city from Danish attack, and saw action again in the early 18th century during the Great Nordic War. Visitors can see the church built for Karl XII’s troops, and the dungeons for when they stepped out-of-line.

The fortress is about 8km downstream from Göteborg. Boat trips and guided tours (adult/6-12yr/family Skr110/60/280) are run six times a day from May to August by Börjessons (see opposite). Tours depart from Lilla Bommen harbour, north of the train station. Most are free for holders of the Göteborg Pass.

**Volvo Museum**

Just celebrating its 10th birthday, the Volvo Museum (66 48 14; Hisgisen; adult/child Skr30/10; 10am-5pm Tue-Thu, 7pm Sat) contains everything from the company’s very first car to the most cutting-edge experimental designs – including the first jet engine used by the Swedish Air Force.

The museum is about 8km west of the city centre at Arendal. Fittingly, it’s tricky to get to without a car. Take tram 2, 4 or 5 to city centre at Arendal. Fittingly, it’s tricky to get there without a car. Take tram 2, 4 or 5 to city centre at Arendal. Fittingly, it’s tricky to get there without a car.

**PARKS**

Laid out in 1842, the lovely Trädgårdsforeningen (City Park; 365 58 58; Nya Allen; adult/under 17yr Skr15/free; 7am-9pm May-Aug, 7am-6pm or 7.30pm Sep-Apr) is a large protected area off Nya Allen, full of flowers and tiny cafés and popular for lunchtime escapes. It contains Europe’s largest rosarium, with around 2500 varieties, and the 19th-century Palmhuset (61 57 73; adult/under 20yr Skr20/free; 10am-5pm May-Aug, 10am-4pm Sep-Apr). This graceful building is a miniature version of Crystal Palace in London, with five differently heated halls: plant highlights of a very high standard. All are open year-round.

Sweden’s largest botanical garden is the Botaniska Trädgården (Carl Skottsbergsgatan 22a; admission free; 9am-sunset, greenhouses 10am-5pm), with around 12,000 plant species.

Just across Dag Hammarskjöldsleden, Söttsskogsparken (admission free; 24hr) is great for a stroll. The Naturhistorisk Museet is perched on a hill in the park. There’s also Barnens Zoo (Children’s Zoo; May–early Sep) and Djurgården, an animal park with farm animals, elk, deer and other Swedish animals and birds. Feeding time at the seal pond is 2pm daily.

The city heights of Ramberget (87m) in Keillers Park (Hisgisen) give the best view of the city. You can get there on the city bus tour (see opposite), or take a tram to Ramsbergsvallen and walk up.

**CHURCHES**

Göteborg’s churches aren’t very old but they’re a better reflection of Swedish architecture than Stockholm’s Italian imitations. The classical Domkyrkan (Gustavi cathedral; Västra Hamngatan; 8am-6pm Mon-Fri, 9am-4pm Sat, 10am-3pm Sun) was consecrated in 1815 – two previous cathedrals were destroyed by town fires. Many of the cathedral’s contents are modern, but there’s an 18th-century clock and reredos. Two other remarkable 19th-century churches are Hagakyrkan (73 61 60; Haga Kyrkogatan; 11am-3pm Mon-Thu & Sat) and the neo-Gothic Oscar Fredriks kyrka (73 92 50; Oscar Fredriks Kyrkogatan; 8am-4pm Mon-Fri).

One of the most distinctive buildings in Göteborg is Masthuggskyrkan (Storebackegatan; 9am-6pm summer, 11am-4pm rest of yr), a welcome landmark for sailors and a smashing viewpoint over the western half of the city. Completed in 1914, its interior is like an upturned boat.

**OTHER SIGHTS**

The Haga district is Göteborg’s oldest suburb and dates back to 1648. In the 1880s and 90s, the area was thoroughly renovated and it’s now a pleasant mixture of old and new buildings, independent knick-knack shops and cool cafés.

The red-and-white ‘sky scraper’ Göteborgs-Utkiken (61 61 47; Lilla Bommen 1 adult/child Skr30/10; 11am-5pm May-Aug, 11am-4pm Sat & Sun Sep-Apr), nicknamed ‘The Lipstick’ by city-dwellers for obvious reasons, has superior views of the harbour from the top.

The Klippan precinct was once a bustle of industry – glassworks, foundries, breweries and salting houses – which has been turned into a picturesque heritage centre. It includes 18th-century sailor’s cottages, the remains of Gamla Älvsborgs fort (ransomed from the Danes in 1619), a brewery opened by the Scot David Carnegie (now a hotel), and St Birgittas kapell. Klippan is just off Oscarsleden, about 400m east of Älvsborgsbron – take tram 3 or 9 to Vagnhallen Majorna.

Kronhuset, lying between Postgatan and Kronhusgatan, is the city’s oldest secular building and former arsenal built in Dutch style between 1642 and 1654. It was here that Karl X held the disastrous riksdag (parliament) in 1660 – he died while it was in session.

Kronhusbodarna, just across the courtyard from Kronhuset, consists of several workshops making and selling pottery, silverware, glass and textiles.

The curious Feskekörka (711 35 09; Rosenlundsgatan; 9am-6pm Mon-Fri, 8am-1pm Sat Jun-Aug, closed Mon rest of yr), or ‘Fish Church’, has nothing remotely to do with ecclesiastical matters – it’s a seafood market.

**Activities**

Cyclists should ask the tourist office for the map Cykel Karta Göteborg, which shows the best routes in and around the city. It’s divided into three parts (Skr20 each, or Skr50 for all three). See p215 for bike hire.

The best indoor pool is the magnificent and exclusive Gamhabadet (60 60 00; Stora Allevatan 3; 6.30am-9.30pm Mon-Thu, 6.30am-8.30pm Fri, 9am-6pm Sat, 10am-6pm Sun). For Skr50 you can swim all day and use the attached sauna, gym and aerobics facilities; between 6.30am and 9am, you can swim for Skr100. There’s a Roman bath and all manner of health and beauty treatments if you’re feeling travel-weary.

Contained within the vast Valhallagymn/sport/bowling complex is the indoor pool Valhallabadet (61 19 56; Valhallagatan 3; 7am-7pm Mon-Fri, 7am-3pm Sat, 11am-3pm Sun), A swim and sauna costs Skr40, and there’s also a relaxing Roman bath here (Skr110).

Outdoor swimming is best in Delsjön lake, 6km east of the centre (take tram 5 to Töpelsgatan). You can also hire canoes (40 34 88) and fish for pike or perch here: ask the tourist office for tackle shop details, as you’ll need a permit.

Bohusleden is an easy walking trail that runs for 360km through Bohuslän, from Lindome (south of Göteborg) to Strömstad, passing just east of the city. You can buy a guide to the route from the tourist offices (Skr45).

For serious island hopping, take tram 11 southwest to Saltholmen and you’ll have at least 15 different islands to explore – see p215.

There’s some good rock climbing around Göteborg. Tram 6, 7 and 11 go to Kviberg, close to some of the best climbing, at Utby. Contact Göteborgs Klätterklubb (43 13 86; www.gbkklubben.se) for more information.

**Tours**

Börjessons (69 96 70; www.borjessons.se) run 50-minute city bus and boat tours (some under the name ‘Paddan Sightseeing’). They’re a great way to get your bearings and are free with the Göteborg Pass; as are tours to Nya Älvsborgs Fästning. There may be restrictions on times you can go, so check first.

**Sleeping**

Göteborg has several high-quality hostels near the city centre. Most hotels offer exceptional discounts at weekends and in summer.

**PRIVATE ROOMS**

The tourist office can arrange private rooms from Skr175/225 for a single/double, plus a Skr60 booking fee.

**HOSTELS**

Most hostels are clustered in the central southwest area, in apartment buildings that sometimes inspire little confidence from the outside, but inside offer accommodation of a very high standard. All are open year-round.

STF Vandrarhem Slottsskogens (42 65 20; www.sov.nu; Vegagatan 21; dm Skr120-140, s/d Skr260/330; )
Unlike many Swedish hostels, big, friendly Slottsskogen is a cracking place for meeting other travellers. For a small extra payment there’s access to a laundry, sauna and sun bed. You can also hire bikes (per day/two days Skr90/160), and the hostel’s buffet breakfast (Skr55) is acquiring legendary status. If you’re really penny-pinching, you may get an even cheaper bed in one of the inner windowless rooms. Parking spaces can be booked for a fee. Tram 1 or 2 to Olive-dalsgatan will get you there.

**STF Västra Hamngatan** (Tel 42 16 20; vandrarhem.stigbergsliden@telia.com; Drottninggatan 67; dm Skr120, s/d Skr250/350) In a renovated 19th-century seaman’s institute (tram 3, 9 or 11 to Stigbergstorget), this is a hostel with history. Staff are greatly helpful, and besides the usual stuff (big kitchen, laundry, TV room), there’s a sheltered yard/garden plus bikes for rent (Skr50 per day).

**Masthuggsterrassen Västra Hamngatan** (Tel 42 48 20; www.mastvandrarhem.com; Masthuggsterrassen 10; dm/d Skr160/400) If you’re looking for a good night’s sleep, try this clean, quiet, well-run place. It has good facilities – three lounges, three kitchens and a little library (mostly Swedish books) – and is handy if you’re catching an early ferry to Denmark. Take tram 3, 9 or 11 to Masthuggsterrassen and follow the signs.

**Göteborgs Västra Hamngatan** (Tel 40 10 50; www.goteborgsvandrarhem.se; Mölndalsvägen 23; dm Skr150-160, s/d Skr350/370) Nifty for those desperate to get to Liseberg as early as possible! Little extras include a sauna and big sunny terrace. Take tram 4 to Gåtebergsgång.

**Kvibergs Västra Hamngatan & Stugby** (Tel 43 50 55; www.kvibergsvandrarhem.se; Gullbergskaugen 1; dm Skr250-360, s/d Skr450-500) A flash backpackers. Take bus 23 from Lilla Parlsbacka to Kvibergs Sinn. To get there take bus 25 from near Centralstationen to Lilla-Vägen, then change to bus 23.

**HOTELS**

**Midrange**

**Vanilj Hotell, Café & Bar** (Tel 711 62 20; www.vanilj.hotell.enterosol.se; Kyrkogatan 18; s/d from Skr695/895, discounted to Skr595/955; ) This is an excellent choice. The owners have made a big effort to make their little hotel, located on a quiet central street, cozy and homelike. Individually decorated rooms (renovated in 2004) range from country checks to Scandinavian style. There are two double rooms in an older part of the hotel and are small but adequate, while rooms larger are better decorated, and there are extras like desks; all rooms have private bathrooms. Sauna and Jacuzzi are available to all.

**Hotel Barken Viking** (Tel 63 58 00; barken.vik ing@liseberg.se; Gullbergskaugen; crew quarters s/d Skr600/850; officer’s cabin s/d Skr1195/1495, discounted to Skr895/1095) The Barken Viking is a beautiful four-masted sailing ship, converted into a hotel and restaurant and moored near Lilla Bommen harbour. Crew quarters have shared bathrooms and bunks. If you pay extra, you can leave the salty sea dogs behind and promote yourself to an officer’s cabin, with proper beds, extra luxuries and private facilities.

**Hotel Eggers** (Tel 80 60 70; www.hotelleggers.se; Drottningtorget; s/d from Skr1425/1780, discounted to Skr1070/1380; ) Elegant Eggers was founded as a railway hotel in 1859. Its pleasant rooms are individually decorated, with nods to their Regency-era setting; a good few have fantastic balcony overlooking the hustle of the square. There’s also a handy valet parking service (Skr210).

**Hotel Vasa** (Tel 17 36 30; www.hotelvasa.se; Viktoriagatan 6; s/d from Skr45/995, discounted to Skr25/825; ) Hotel Vasa is an attractive, family-run place convenient for the cafés of Vasagatan. There’s a courtyard garden, two of the doubles have Jacuzzis, and a nice touch is that each room has a book about Göteborg to leaf through.

**Hotel Royal** (Tel 700 11 70; www.hotelroyal.nu; Drottningtorget 67; s/d from Skr1045/1295, discounted to Skr790/990; ) Göteborg’s oldest hotel (1852) has aged very well. The grand entrance has been retained, complete with painted glass ceiling and sweeping staircase, and the agreeable rooms make the necessary 21st-century concessions. It’s also blessed with very helpful staff.

**City Hotel** (Tel 708 40 00; www.cityhotelbg.se; Lörensbergsgatan 6; s/d without bathroom from Skr495/595, discounted to Skr445/545) The City represents excellent value for such a central hotel (within yards of Sweden’s ‘Champs Ellysées’), and all rooms have recently been renovated. For about Skr300 extra you can have a private bathroom. There’s no dining room, so breakfast is brought to your door.

**Hotel Opera** (Tel 80 50 80; www.hotelleopera.se; Norra Hamngatan 38; budget s/d Skr750/895, discounted to Skr690/795; standard s/d Skr1095/1295, discounted to Skr990/1195) Conveniently located by the train station and bus terminal. Budget rooms are in an older part of the hotel and are small but adequate, while rooms larger are better decorated, and there are extras like desks; all rooms have private bathrooms. Sauna and Jacuzzi are available to all.

**Hotel Flora** (Tel 13 86 16; www.hotelflora.se; Grön saksorgen 2; s/d Skr755/820, with bathroom Skr990/1195, discounted to Skr560/650) Handily central, not far from the tourist office. It’s an old building, slightly battened but comfortable, with a 24-hour reception. Four of the rooms have pleasing river views.

**Top-End**

**Hotel Odin Residence** (Tel 745 22 00; www.hotelodinhotels.com; Köpmansgatan 38; s/d Skr845/995, discounted to Skr625/825; ) Hotel Odin Residence is the latest addition to Göteborg’s top-end hotel scene, includes a hotel and restaurant and moored near the Qverna river. A good few have private bathrooms. There’s even a library (mostly English books). Breakfast is brought to your door.

**Hotel Gothia Towers** (Tel 750 88 80; info@gothia towers.com; Mässans Gata 24; s/d from Skr1690/2090, discounted to Skr1490/1740; ) Scandic’s largest hotel is the whopping 23-storey Gothia Towers (take tram 5). Its 704 rooms are stylish and modern, particularly the new ‘Design’ options; all sharp, clean lines and bathroom windows so you can admire the view from the bath! The Sky bar and restaurant Heaven 23, with superb panoramas over the city, are popular with nonguests too.

**Radisson SAS Scandinavia Hotel** (Tel 758 50 00; Södra Hamngatan 59-65; s/d from Skr1870/1970, discounted to Skr1290/1290; ) This is one of the most luxurious hotels in Göteborg. Rooms run around a vast atrium (containing shops, bar and restaurant); there’s something of a spaceship feel to those looking inwards. Snazzy rooms have beds with light-up Perspex headboards! There’s also a health club to help you relax. Breakfast isn’t included in the price.

The Scandic chain has several hotels in Göteborg, including:

**Scandic Hotel Europa** (Tel 751 65 60; europacascan dic-hotels.com; Kämpgatan 38; s/d Skr1500/1700, discounted to Skr1290/1290; ) With 6th-floor pool and sauna area.

**Scandic Hotel Rubinen** (Tel 751 54 00; rubinen@ scandinahotels.com; Kungsportsavenyn 24; s/d Skr1340, discounted to Skr950/1290; ) In the heart of the Avenyn action, with on-site restaurants and cocktail bar.

**Eating**

Göteborg is awash with sleek and fashionable restaurants. Kungsportsavenyn is lined with restaurant/bars and alfresco eating is the thing when the sun comes out; however, you pay for the privilege of dining on the Avenyn. Vasagatan and Linnehamnen have a good choice of restaurants too, but with less big-city pizzazz and often lower prices. Many dining places close on Sundays.

**RESTAURANTS**

**Budget**

**Andrum** (Tel 13 85 04; Östra Hamngatan 19; large/small mini plate Skr65/50; ) 11am-10pm Mon-Fri, noon-8pm Sat & Sun) One for the veggies, Andrum does an all-day lunch buffet which is excellent value for money. There’s a choice of restaurants too, but with less big-city pizzazz and often lower prices. Many dining places close on Sundays.
Bombay  
(☎ 12 00 39; www.restaurangbombay.com; 
Andra Långgatan 8; lunch Skr55, mains from Skr70) 
Bombay is quite a busy lunchtime spot. It does 
good-value Indian dishes to eat in or take 
out. It’s a slightly grungy studenty veggie place 
as well, with mashed potato and lingonberries. 
Finish off your meal with a cloudberry soufflé, 
then retire to the lively bar.

*Joe Farelis*  
(☎ 10 58 26; www.joefarelis.com; 
Kungsportsavenyn 12; pizzas 120-200, 
main Skr150-260; ☎ noon-1am, to 3am Fri & Sat) 
A casual Italian-American restaurant-bar, 
where you can slap ketchup on your US 
burgers ‘n’ steaks, or get misty-eyed about the old 
country with Sicilian-style bruschetta, pizza and 
pasta. Its Sunday brunch is perfect for soaking 
up Saturday night’s beer.

A *Hereof Beefstowu*  
(☎ 775 04 41; www.hereford-beef.com; Linnégatan 5; 
• lunch, 9pm; • Mon & in summer) 
If you’re feeling anaemic, this upmarket 
steakhouse is the answer, offering all manner of meat, 
including T-bone steaks, veal sirloin and 
rack of lamb. Solid meals are served 
on solid African oak tables, and you get a good 
view of busy Linnégatan as you eat.

*Sjöbaren*  
(☎ 711 97 80; Haga Nygata 25; mains Skr100-160; 
• 11am-11pm Mon-Thu, 11am-midnight Fri, 
noon-midnight Sat, 1-10pm Sun) 
This cozy place, in the Haga district, serves well-prepared 
Swedish seafood in a nautical setting (inside) or 
paint Gulf courtyard garden. Go for classic dishes like 
gavrilax, fish soup or seafood pasta.

*Von Lilla Tavernan*  
(☎ 12 88 05; Olivedalsgatan 17; 
mezes Skr30-70, mains around Skr100; 
• 4pm-Mon, from 1pm Sat & Sun) 
The Little Tavern is a 
charming and authentic spot with reasonably 
priced Greek favourites and a great array of 
mezes perfect for sharing. There’s also musical 
entertainment of a bazoku nature.

*Magnus & Magnus*  
(☎ 13 30 00; magnus@magnus 
magnus.com; Magnusgatan 8; mains Skr155-255; 
• from 6pm Mon-Sat) 
This modern restaurant draws 
fashionable crowds with its relaxed atmos-

phere. Low chairs and handsome tables make 
it feel more like someone’s (swanky) home 
than a business, and there’s a summer 
courtyard for alfresco dining. Meals are mainly 
meat and fish, with a tasty range of starters.

**Top End**  
(☎ 20 21 61; Göteborgsberg 28; mains Skr295- 
365; • 6-11pm Mon-Sat) 
This award-winning 
gourmet restaurant is a special-occasion 
place. Thoughtful and intriguing dishes are 
principally fishy, but there are 
meat mussels with pickled cucumber and baked 
ginger fish with cherry tomatoes and risotto. 
For a really exceptional blow-out, go for 
the seven-course *degustation* fish menu 
(Skr795). Awkwardly, the restaurant closes 
from mid-June to late August.

*Fiskekrogen*  
(☎ 10 10 05; www.fiskekrogen.com; 
Lilla Torget 1; mains Skr255-375; 
• lunch & dinner Mon-Sat) 
This is a magnificent fish and seafood 
restaurant in former East India Company 
buildings. It has an impressive circular din-
in room called Blåskajsa, and an equally 
inviting beer barrel of over 400 wines.

*Linnéa*  
(☎ 16 11 83; info@restauranglinnea.com; 
Södra Vägen 32; lunch Skr95, mains Skr220-300; 
• noon-2pm Mon-Fri, from 5.30pm Mon-Sat) 
Modern Swedish 
cuisine is served up at exclusive, intimate 
Linnéa. Fancy ingredients and some surpris-
ingly homely ones (gooseberries, nettles and 
leaves) are spun into sublime and succulent 
meals, beautifully presented on glass plates.

**CAFés**

All of Göteborg’s museums have excellent 
cafés.

*Brogyllens Konditori*  
(☎ 13 87 13; Västra Hammad 
gatan 2; snacks Skr25-50; • closed Sun) 
Splendid breads, pastries, coffee and cakes are served 
at this traditional konditori. It’s swimming 
in elegance, with grand chandeliers overhead 
and graceful sculptures scattered around.

*Eva’s Paleyl*  
(☎ 16 30 70; Kungsportsavenyn 39; dishes 
Skr90-60; • until 11pm Mon-Sat) 
Something of a Göteborg institution, this huge café 
and restaurant is open until late every evening 
and has plenty of outdoor seating in summer. 
It serves blackened potatoes, wraps, meat and veggie 
pancakes, and a rainbow of fresh muffins (buy them 
to take home from the bakery next door).

*Café Kosmos*  
(☎ 13 14 00; Västra Hammad 
gatan 20; • 10am-10pm Mon-Sat, 
11am-10pm Sun) 
Ten giant mass of tables (don’t expect 
any privacy), this slick place attracts 20-
something crowds, all of whom the use 
‘café snacks’ is served up, although one 
feels the social scene is more important.

Along the leafy Vasagatan boulevard, 
near the university, there are quite a few 
cafés. *Java Kaffebär* (Vasagatan 32) is a true 
student haunt, thick with dreadlocks, dyed hair 
and nipple rings. It offers cheap bagels 
and sandwiches to its customers.

*Café Garbo*  
(☎ 774 19 25; Vasagatan 40) 
and the very trendy 
*Espresso House* (☎ 397 50; Vasagatan 22) 
are two coffee 
houses in the same area, both with 
large windows and prime people-watching 
opportunities, plus fashionable café food 
(Skr30 to Skr60).

**QUICK EATS**

If you need something quick, the Nordstan 
shopping complex has loads of fast-food 
outlets.

*Aldardo*  
(☎ 13 23 00; Kungstorgatan 12) 
Pizza slice from 
Skr25, pasta from Skr40; 
• 10am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm 
Sat, closed mid-Jul–Aug) 
By the tourist 
office, this busy deli is a recommended spot to 
pick up authentic Italian fast food – homemade 
pizza al taglio (by the slice) and pasta to go.

*Crepe Van*  
(crepes from Skr20; • 4-9pm Mon-Thu, 
4pm-3am Fri & Sat) 
Those with a sweet tooth 
should head to this takeaway van near 
the McDonald’s branch on Linnégatan, also a 
favourite of ‘flushed and clumsy’ patrons late 
on Friday and Saturday.

*Sushi & Soda* (Prinsgatan 4; • until 9pm) 
A sushi takeaway 
with several branches in the city.

This outlet is closest to several of the 
hotels and serves excellent Japanese 
university, including 
miso soup and 11 pieces of sushi, 
for around Skr70.

*Kalaya*  
(☎ 12 39 98; Olivedalsgatan 13; dishes from 
Skr60; • 11am-10pm) 
Also near the hostel area, 
Kalaya has authentic Thai noodle and 
durian dishes.

*Alexandras* (Kungstorgatan; 
☎ 711 78 78) 
Located in the central Saluhallen, this place is 
reowned for its excellent hearty soups and 
steaks (around Skr40), particularly welcoming 
on a cold day.

**SELF-CATERING**

*Saluhall Bröd* (Nordhemsgatan 28; 
• 9am-6pm Mon-Fri, 9am-3pm Sat) 
This classic old central market hall 
is the perfect place to put together your 
picnic pack, with munchables from around 
the world. It is also full of excellent budget 
eateries and food stalls.

*Saluhall Bengt* (Nordhemsgatan 28; 
• 9am-6pm Mon-Fri, 9am-2pm Sat) 
Not as big or as busy as 
the central Saluhallen, this covered 
market nevertheless has an array of lunch stalls 
handy for the hostel district.

*Feskekorka*  
(☎ 711 35 09; Rosenlundsgatan; 
• 9am-6pm Mon-Fri, 8am-1pm Sat-Jun, 
closed Mon rest of yr) 
A market devoted to fresh fish 
and squamous things, the ‘Fish Church’ will 
delight seafood fans.

*Hemköp supermarket* (Nordstan complex; 
• 8am-10pm) 
Big supermarket in the thick of things.

*Systembolaget* (Kungsportsavenyn; 
• 16 85 24; Kungs-
portsavenyn 18) 
(Kungs 
(☎ 711 86 16; Kungs 
(☎ 711 86 16; Kungsgatan 6) 
There are various Systembolaget dotted
about the place, selling beer, wine and spirits. These are the two most conveniently located in Göteborg.

**Drinking**

Swedish licensing laws mean that bars must have a restaurant section, although in most cases, it’s vice versa – stroll down Kungsportsavenyn and see what takes your fancy. There are also several bars on Järntorget that are currently ‘in’ drinking spots.

Öhallen 7-an (☎ 13 60 79; Kungstorget 7) One place that you should check out is this little gem, a well-worn Swedish beerhall that hasn’t changed in about 100 years. There’s no food, wine or pretension, just beer, and plenty of choices.

Dubliner (☎ 13 90 20; www.dubliner.se; Östra Hamngatan 50B) As authentic an Irish pub as you’ll ever find on the continent, the Dubliner has its pints of Guinness, bar meals like beef-and-Guinness pie, and live Celtic music every night in summer.

L’O’Leary’s (☎ 71 55 19; Östra Hamngatan 36) Almost opposite is this American-style sports bar with sporting memorabilia plastering the walls, 30 TV screens and bar snacks of the chicken-wing-and-burger variety.

Rose & Crown (☎ 10 58 27; Kungsportsavenyn 6) This is an ‘English-style’ pub popular with tourists and locals. There’s more of a concentration on the restaurant and less on your-face drinking than at other bars.

Dancin’ Dingo (☎ 81 18 12; www.dancindingo.se; Kristinelunds gatan 16; ☺ until 2am or 3am) Just in case any nationalities are feeling left out, here’s an entertaining Australian pub not far off Kungsportsavenyn, with a great if raucous atmosphere.

**Entertainment**

**CLUBS**

Most clubs have an age limit of 25 or 27, and there may be an admission charge depending on the night.

Nivå (☎ 701 80 90; Kungsportsavenyn 9; admission free-Skr100; ☺ until 3am Wed & Thu, until 4am Fri & Sat) This bar/restaurant metamorphoses into a crowd-pleasing (and crowded) club as the week draws on, with several floors of action. Wednesday night is soul night; other nights are a mix of dance music, with mellower tunes in the Skybarren.

Valand (☎ 18 30 93; nattklubb@valand.nu; ☺ until 3am Wed, until 5am Thu-Sat) Vintage Valand, on the corner of Vasagatan and Kungsportsavenyn, draws a mixed, party-hard crowd. There are various nights – student, R&B, soul, mainstream dance – so check what’s on first.

Trädgår’n (☎ 10 20 90; Nya Allén; admission Skr100; ☺ until 5am Fri & Sat) With its crazy lasers, huge dance floor and outdoor terrace, this is one of the biggest clubs.

MataHarri (☎ 13 69 49; www.gretas.nu; Drottningsgatan 35; ☺ until 4am Fri & Sat) The nearest thing in Göteborg to a gay club, but welcoming to all, MataHarri (part of Gretas Bar & Kök) gets kitschy on Friday and Saturday nights. The minimum age is 20 years.

Nefertiti (☎ 711 15 33; Hvitfeldtsplatsen 6) Super-cool Nefertiti near the Fish Church, is a large and well-established venue for live jazz, blues and ethnic music; it also has a nightclub, restaurant and café.

Jazzhuset (☎ 13 35 44; info@jazzhuset.se; Erik Dahlbergs gatan 3) An old jazz club drawing a more mature crowd to its live music sessions, usually Fridays and Saturdays until 3am. In an attempt to snare a younger audience, it also hosts rock and pop bands on Thursdays.

**CINEMA, CONCERTS & THEATRE**

Check the local events listings for movies and shows, and check the tourist office for current schedules and prices.

Göteborgs Stadsteater (City Theatre; ☎ 61 50 50; www.stadsteatern.goteborg.se; Götaplatsen; tickets from Skr210; ☺ closed summer) Stages theatre productions in Swedish.

Göteborgs Konserthus (Concert Hall; ☎ 726 53 00; www.gso.se; Götaplatsen; ☺ closed summer) Home to the local symphony orchestra, with some interesting performances.

GöteborgsOperan (☎ 13 13 00; www.opera.se in Swedish; Christina Nilssons gata; tickets Skr100-500) At Lilla Bommen harbour, stages classical and modern ballet and opera and assorted musical performances.

Nya Ullevi (☎ 11 10 20; www.ullevi.se; Skärgatan) An outdoor stadium where huge pop and rock concerts are held.

Scandinavium (☎ 81 10 20; www.scandinavium.se; Vallhalla gatan 1) An indoor concert venue near Nya Ullevi and run by the same company. The two biggest cinemas in the centre are the 10-screen Biopalatset (☎ 17 45 00; Kungstorget) and Filmstaden (☎ 0856-26 00 00; Kungsplan 35), showing blockbuster movies.

**SPORT**

Göteborgs are avid sports fans. The city’s two biggest stadiums are the outdoor Nya Ullevi (see opposite) for football matches, and the indoor Scandinavium (see opposite) where the crowds go wild for ice hockey. In August 2006 the European Athletics Championships will be held at the Ullevi stadium.

**Shopping**

DesignTorget (☎ 774 00 17; Vallgatan 14) A great store showcasing the works (usually quite affordable) of established as well as up-and-coming designers.

Naturkompaniet (☎ 13 51 60; Stora Nygatan 33; ☺ Mon-Sat) Sells a wide range of camping and outdoor equipment.

Nordstan shopping complex (☎ 62 39 76) is Sweden’s largest mall, with around 150 shops. These include the upmarket department store NK (☎ 710 10 00; Östra Hamngatan 42) and cheaper Ahlens (☎ 333 4000; Östra Hamngatan 18), both stocking a good range of quality souvenirs.

Göteborg has over 30 art galleries, all with art for sale and free admission. Ask the tourist office for the handy leaflet Konst i Göteborg, which has a map showing the city’s galleries and design studios.

**Getting There & Away**

**AIR**

Twenty-five kilometres east of the city, Landvetter airport (☎ 94 10 00; www.landvetter.lu.se) has up to 30 daily flights to/from Stockholm Arlanda and Stockholm Bromma airports (with SAS and Malmö Aviation), as well as a daily service to Umeå and several services per week to Borlänge, Luleå and Sundsvall. See p323 for contact details.

There are also direct flights to European cities including Amsterdam (KLM), Brussels (SN Brussels), Copenhagen (SAS), Frankfurt (Lufthansa and SAS), Helsinki (Finnair, Blue and Cityline Air), London (SAS), Manchester (City Airline), Munich (Lufthansa), Oslo (Wideroe) and Paris (Air France).

**BOAT**

Göteborg is Scandinavia’s largest port and a major entry point for ferries. There are several car/passenger terminals, with ferries to Denmark, Germany, Norway and the UK; for more details see p328.

The nearest to the city centre, the Stena Line (☎ 704 00 40; www.stenaline.com) terminal near Mästahugstopet (tram 3, 9 or 11) has at least seven daily departures for Frederikshavn, with a 50% discount for railpass holders.

Further west is the Stena Line terminal for the daily car ferry to Kiel (Germany). Take tram 3 or 9 to Chapmans Torg.

**BUS**

The bus station, Nils Ericson Terminalen, is next to the train station. There’s a Tipptiden (☎ 0771-41 43 00; ☺ 7am-10am Mon-Fri, 9am-10pm Sat, 9am-5pm Sun) office here, giving information and selling tickets for all city and regional public transport within the Göteborg, Bohuslän and Västergötland area.

Eurolines (☎ 10 02 40; www.eurolines.com; Nils Ericsonplatsen) has its main Swedish office at the bus station in central Göteborg. See p326 for details on international bus services offered by the company.

Swebus Express (☎ 0200-21 82 18; www.swebusexpress.se) has an office at the bus terminal and operates frequent buses to most major towns. Services to Stockholm (Skr400, seven hours) run seven to 10 times daily. Other direct destinations include Copenhagen (Skr319, four hours), Halmstad (Skr120, 1¾ hours), Helsingborg (Skr233, three hours), Jönköping (Skr120, two hours), Oslo (Skr250, ¾ hours), Malmö (Skr281, three hours), and Örebro (Skr281, four hours).

Säffle busen (☎ 0771-15 15 15; www.safflebusen.se) runs services to Copenhagen (Skr280, 4½ hours, seven daily), Oslo (Skr220, 3½ hours, seven daily) and Stockholm (Skr320, seven hours, up to four times daily).

Less frequent (usually one to three on Friday and/or Saturday), Svenska Buss (☎ 0771-67 67 67; www.svenskabuss.se) runs buses to major towns such as Helsingborg (Skr200, 2½ hours) and Malmö (Skr281, 2½ hours), both stocking a good range of quality souvenirs.
CAR & MOTORCYCLE
The E6 motorway runs north–south from Oslo to Malmö just east of the city centre and there’s also a complex junction where the E20 motorway diverges east for Stockholm.

International car-hire companies Avis, Europcar and Hertz have desks at Landvetter and Göteborg City airports. For car hire in Sweden.

TRAIN
Centralstationen is the oldest railway station in Sweden and is now a listed building. It serves SJ and regional trains, with direct trains to Copenhagen (Sk250, four hours), Malmö (Sk390, four hours), as well as numerous other destinations in the southern half of Sweden.

Direct Intercity trains to Stockholm depart approximately every two hours (Sk290, five hours), with quicker but more expensive X2000 trains (Sk1110, three hours) also every two hours. Booking your ticket at least a week in advance will bring decent reductions to the prices quoted here.

Overnight trains to the far north of Sweden (via Stockholm) are operated by Tågkompaniet.

GETTING AROUND
TO/FROM THE AIRPORT
Landvetter airport, 25km east of the city, has a frequent Flygbuss service to/from Nils Ericson Terminalen (one-way Sk20, 30 minutes). A taxi from the city centre to the airport will cost around Sk290.

Buses from Göteborg City Airport to Nils Ericson Terminalen leave 50 minutes after flight arrivals. For the return journey, they leave the bus terminal around 2½ hours before flight departures (one-way Sk50, 30 minutes). A taxi should cost around Sk250.

BICYCLE
With the Göteborg Pass, you’re entitled to borrow a bike for free from Cykelverket (711 97 70; Parkgatan 29): bring some ID. Otherwise try Cykelkungen (18 43 00; Chalmersgatan 19; per day/wk Sk120/500).

PUBLIC TRANSPORT
Buses, trams and ferries run by Västrafik (0771-41 43 00) make up the city’s public transport system; there are Tidpunkten information booths selling tickets and giving out timetables inside Nils Ericson Terminalen (7am-10pm Mon-Fri, 9am-7pm Sat, 9am-7pm Sun), in front of the train station on Drottningorget (6am-8pm Mon-Fri, 8am-8pm Sat & Sun), and at Brunnsparken (7am-7pm Mon-Fri, 9am-6pm Sat).

TAXI
One of the larger companies is Taxi Göteborg (6 00 00). Taxis can be picked up outside Centralstationen, at Kungsportsplatsen, and on Kungsportsavenyn. Women travelling alone at night can expect a fare discount.

AROUND GÖTEBORG
Southern Archipelago
A car-free paradise, the southern archipelago is just a short hop from the busy city. It can get busy in summer, particularly the beaches, but wriggle around and you’ll always find a quiet stretch of sand or serene green corner.

There are nine major islands and numerous smaller ones. The largest island is Styrso, but even that’s less than 3km long. Due to previous military restrictions, most of the area was closed to foreigners until 1997; it’s now a favourite residential area for wealthy commuters.

Take tram 11 from Göteborg city centre to Saltholmen, from where an excellent 16-destination passenger-only ferry network runs round the islands. The Göteborg Pass is valid, or you can buy a ticket (one-way Sk20) that takes you all the way from central Göteborg to Vrångö; bikes (if there’s space available) cost an extra Sk10.

Boats run frequently to Asperö (nine minutes), Brännö (20 minutes) and Styrso (30 minutes) from around 5.30am to 1am hours), Malmö (Sk250, four hours) and Öskarshamn (Sk300, 4½ hours); departures for Stockholm (Sk360, 7½ hours) via Jönköping (Sk210, 2½ hours) are daily.

Prices can be considerably lower than those quoted here for advanced bookings or for travel from Monday to Thursday (especially for Swebus Express and Säfflebussen).
SOUTHWEST SWEDEN  ••  Bohuslän

THE BEST OF THE WEST COAST

SOUTHWEST SWEDEN
mid-Jun–mid-Aug, 11am-9pm Tue-Sun
May, 11am-7pm

Bohuslän

Island with a quaint village of white-painted houses and narrow streets. Transport on the island is even more basic than on Brännö: locals use individually named wheelbarrows, which you’ll see neatly parked by the quay!

In the central part of the archipelago, Styrsö has two village centres (Bratten and Tängen, both with ferry terminals), a mixture of old and modern houses, and a colourful history of smuggling. There’s a café and pizzeria at Tängen, and a supermarket. A bridge crosses from Styrsö to neighbourly densely populated Donsö, with a functioning fishing harbour.

The southern island of Vårö has a good beach for swimming on the west coast, about 10 minutes’ walk from the ferry. The northern and southern ends of the island are part of an extensive nature reserve.

Tiny Vinga, 8km west of Galterö, has impressive rock slabs and good swimming, and it has been home to a lighthouse since the 17th century. The writer, composer and painter, Evert Taube, was born on the island in 1890 – his father was the lighthouse-keeper. Borjessons (tel 60 96 70; www.borjessons.com) runs full-day tours (adult/6-12 years Skr69/39) from Lilla Bommen (Göteborg) to Vinga via Nya Älvsborg Fästning, daily from mid-July to mid-August.

Marstrand

0303 / pop 1300
Once a spa town and favourite of the Swedish royal family, Marstrand, with its wooden houses and picturesque island setting, still attracts affluent visitors. It contains Sweden’s most popular gåsthamn (guest harbour), and is the weekend destination for boatie types. The village fairly hums with people in summer, but if you don’t mind sharing it…well, it’s worth sharing.

After disembarking, turn left for the tourist office (tel 600 07; www.marstrand.se; Hamngatan 33; 9am-6pm Mon-Fri, 11am-5pm Sat, noon-4pm Sun mid-Jun–mid-Aug, 8am-noon Mon-Fri rest of yr). There’s no ATM or Systembolaget, so bring wealth and wine with you.

Looming over the village is daunting Carlstens Fästning (tel 602 65; www.carlsten.se; adult/7-15yr Skr60/20; 11am-6pm mid-Jun–mid-Aug, 11am-4pm Sat & Sun rest of yr), a fortress constructed in the 1660s after the Swedish takeover of Bohuslän; later building work was done by convicts sentenced to hard labour. Its impressive round tower reaches 96m above sea level, and there are smashing archipelago views from the top. Admission includes a guided tour (phone ahead for English-language times), although you can explore by yourself with an audio guide.

Pick up the English-language Discover Marstrand brochure (Skr10) from the tourist office and set off for an hour’s walk around the island. Buildings of interest include the town hall, which is the oldest stone building in the county, and Maria Kykra, dating from the 13th century.

Most of the accommodation on the island is upmarket.

Marstrands Varmbadhus Båletel (tel 600 10; marstrandsvarmbadhus@telia.com; Kungsplan; d/tr/q Skr675/855/1100) Marstrand’s most reasonably priced accommodation is this private hostel, continuing the town’s spa tradition with its associated pool and sauna. Turn right after disembarking from the ferry and follow the waterfront for 400m.

Hotell Nautic (tel 610 30; www.hotellnautic.com; Långgatan 6; B&B/t/q Skr850/1100) Located at the northern end of the harbour, the Nautic has bright and simple rooms decked out in blues and creams. A couple have balconies with great sea views.

There are numerous eating options in Marstrand, including cheap fast-food stalls along the harbour. A bridge crosses from Styrsö to neighbourly Vårö. Marstrandsvarmbadhus (tel 603 69; Hamngatan 23; noon-1am Easter-Sep) For fresh seafood in the open air, head for this crustacean restaurant by the harbour. There’s a big sunny terrace where you can sit with a G&T and watch the boats sail by.

Bergs Konditori (tel 600 96; Hamngatan 9; snacks Skr30-60; May-Aug) Follow your nose to this dockside konditori, selling fresh bread, cakes, quiches and sandwiches.

From Göteborg you can take bus 312 to Arvissvik (on Koon) then cross to Marstrand by frequent passenger-only ferry. The complete journey should take about an hour and cost Skr50.

Bohus Fästning

0303
Survivor of no fewer than 14 sieges, the hulking ruins of Bohus Fästning (tel 992 00; adult/6-16yr Skr10/15; 10am-7pm May-Aug, 11am-5pm Sep, 11am-4pm Sat & Sun Apr) stand on an island in the Nordre älv, near Kungälv. Construction of the fortress was ordered in 1308 by the Norwegian king, to protect Norway’s southern border. The building was enlarged over the centuries, becoming one of Sweden’s toys at the Peace of Roskilde in 1658. Nowadays, its substantial remains include a remarkable round tower. Tourist information for the area is available at the fortress.

STF Vardhems & Camping Kungälv (tel 1890; info@kungavardhems.se; Fjärbyvägen 2, Kungälv; sites Skr130, dm Skr150, 4-bed cabins Skr495; camp site May-mid-Sep). This hostel is in a pleasant riverside setting directly across the road from the fortress. There’s also a café here, and you can rent small boats.

The Grön Express bus runs at least every 30 minutes from Göteborg to Kungälv; get off at the Eriksdal stop (Skr40, 25 minutes) and walk the remaining 300m.

BOHUSLÄN

Bohuslän Coast

Some of the finest scenery in Sweden is found along the beautiful Bohuslän Coast. Craggy islands, picturesque fishing villages and the soft western light all create a dreamy magic. It does get very busy in summer with boat- and land-bound tourists, but you’ll always find a quiet corner somewhere.

If you’re heading north from Göteborg, stop at the tourist office (tel 0303-833 27; www.batikusten.se; Kulturhuset Fregatten; 9.30am-6pm Mon-Sat, 11am-3pm Sun mid-June–mid-Aug, 9am-5pm Mon-Fri rest of yr) in Stevningsund to pick up brochures and especially maps of the surrounding area.

Transport connections are good: the E6 motorway runs north from Göteborg to Oslo via the larger towns of Stevningsund, Ljungskile, Herrestad, Munkedal, Tعالم- shed and passing close to Strömstad before crossing the Norwegian border. There’s a local train service that runs frequently from Göteborg to Strömstad, via much the same towns as the E6 route. Bus connections from these towns to the outlying islands exist, although some aren’t terribly frequent. It’s an area suited for independent exploration – consider hiring a car or bike in Göteborg so you can enjoy things at your own pace.

TJÖRN & AROUND

0304 / pop 15,019
A large bridge swoops from Stevningsund (on the Swedish mainland) to the island of Tjörn (www.tjorn.se). It’s a magnet for artists, thanks to its general prettiness and spangling
new watercolour museum; and a fave for sailors, with one of Sweden’s biggest sailing competitions, the Tjörn Runt, taking place here in mid/late August.

Skärhamn and Rönning, in the southwest, are the main settlements on the island and have a few facilities, including a small tourist office (67 10 40; skarhamn@bastkusten.se; Södra Hamnen; ☏ 9.30am-6pm Mon-Sat, 11am-3pm mid-Jun–mid-Aug, noon-5pm Mon-Fri, 11am-3pm Sat rest of yr) at Skärhamn.

Skärhamn also contains the impress-ive Nordiska Akvarellmuseet (Nordic Watercolour Museum; 60 00 80; www.akvarellmuseet.org; Södra Hamnen; 6adult/7–10yr Skr70/10; 11am-6pm Jun-Sep, noon-5pm Tue, Wed & Fri-Sun, noon-8pm Thu Oct-May), a sleek and stylish waterside building housing changing exhibitions. There’s an award-winning gourmet café and restaurant Vatten (67 08 87) attached; its fish dishes are particularly recommended.

Up the hill is a working smithy, Smedja Vollen (67 17 55; info@vollen@swipnet.se; Gråskärsvägen 9; 11am-8pm mid-Jun–mid-Aug, noon-5pm Tue-Sun rest of yr), with a café and a studio displaying Bert himself is often hard at work in the forge.

The Tjörnexpressen bus runs up to eight times weekdays (twice Saturday and Sunday) from Göteborg’s bus terminal to Tjörn. There are also car ferries to Käringön (Skr30, roughly hourly between 6am and 11.30pm). For more details and a great view of Tjörn, see the story of the industry.

Rönning is a small fishing village, where the blacksmith’s unique ironwork; the man

There are a few facilities here, including buses in the south, which include the car-free Gullmar and Ekebo. The island to Rönnäng.

The main sights in the area are theangers and restaurants here, today reduced to a handful). Find

Sights & Activities

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The main sights in the area are theangers and restaurants here, today reduced to a handful). Find

Sights & Activities

Hamnen; Skärhamn also contains the impres-sive Nordiska Akvarellmuseet (Nordic Watercolour Museum; 60 00 80; www.akvarellmuseet.org; Södra Hamnen; 6adult/7–10yr Skr70/10; 11am-6pm Jun-Sep, noon-5pm Tue, Wed & Fri-Sun, noon-8pm Thu Oct-May), a sleek and stylish waterside building housing changing exhibitions. There’s an award-winning gourmet café and restaurant Vatten (67 08 87) attached; its fish dishes are particularly recommended.

Up the hill is a working smithy, Smedja Vollen (67 17 55; info@vollen@swipnet.se; Gråskärsvägen 9; 11am-8pm mid-Jun–mid-Aug, noon-5pm Tue-Sun rest of yr), with a café and a studio displaying Bert himself is often hard at work in the forge.

The Tjörnexpressen bus runs up to eight times weekdays (twice Saturday and Sunday) from Göteborg’s bus terminal to Tjörn. There are also car ferries to Käringön (Skr30, roughly hourly between 6am and 11.30pm). For more details and a great view of Tjörn, see the story of the industry.

Rönning is a small fishing village, where the blacksmith’s unique ironwork; the man
2km north of town, Siviks is the best camp site in the area, with ample swimming opportunities. Facilities include shop, restaurant, minigolf, dance floor and laundry.

Prämen (Södra Hamnen; lunch Skr95, mains Skr150-250; closed Sun) You can’t miss Prämen, an atmospheric floating restaurant and bar specialising, understandably, in fish and seafood with the odd meaty main. Crabs, mussels, prawns, halibut, salmon: if it swims, scuttles or sticks to rocks in the sea, it’s on the menu.

Café Kungsgatan (160 01; Kungsgatan 2; lunch and coffee only, Sat & Sun from 9am) Set back from the seafront, this pleasant café serves homemade teas and coffees. There’s a small playground, and canoes for hire.

Bryggens Gæstehus (703 97; Madenäven 2; per person Skr300) Another of Smögen’s cheaper options is this ‘guesthouse’ near the harbour, which has two- to six-bed hostel-style accommodation scattered over three different buildings. A few rooms have balconies with sea views.

Hotel Smögens Havsbad (668 450; www.smogenshavsbad.se; Hotelgatan 26; low-season Skr1045/1310, high-season Skr1200/1550; P) This hotel had radical surgery just after its 100th birthday: its hideous prosthetic extension is thankfully for guests) beautiful on the inside, with light Scandinavian-style rooms, many with sea views.

There are plenty of appetising cafés, grillbars and fish restaurants along Smögensbryggan.

Skärets Krog & Konditori (323 17; skaret@swipnet.se; Hamnen 1; mains Skr200-285; weekends from Easter, daily mid-June–mid-Aug) Near the Fiskshall, Skärets has a ground-floor konditori serving light meals and yummy cakes. For a quality seafood dinner in classy but cosy surroundings, head upstairs to the restaurant. The fish casserole, flavoured with saffron, is delicious – and there’s a fine view of the harbour.

Coffee Room (308 28; Sillgatan 10; breakfast from Skr39, mains Skr45–80; 8am at least 10pm summer, shorter hr winter) Anyone pining for an English breakfast will sing hallelujahs here over the egg, sausage, bacon, tomato and baked beans. There are also quick and simple lunchtime snacks (panini, pasta salads, stir-fries), and evening tapas or barbecues in the airy garden.

Bus 860 and 861 (SkömenExpressen) run regularly from Göteborg to Smögen (around three hours), via Uddevalla, Munkedal, Hunnebostrand and Kungshamn. A couple of the services are direct, otherwise change in one of the towns en route.

For Ingrid, it’s good enough for us (and half of Sweden). Despite the crowds, Fjällbacka is utterly charming, with its brightly coloured houses squared between steep cliffs and the rolling sea.

A very helpful tourist office (321 20; Ingrid Bergmanstor; 9.30am-7.30pm mid-June–mid-Aug) opens in the summer.

The main attraction is just pottering about, eating ice cream, browsing the trinket shops, or wandering up the cliff or along the Kungslyktan path. From July to mid-September there are more than 200 hours of daylight. Fjällbacka has a variety of activities, including: boat trips (321 25; info@fjallbackajokell.se; adult/child Skr100/50; noon & 3pm) and two-hour seal safaris (adult/child Skr150/75; 7pm Thu) departing from the harbour.

Stora Hotellet (310 03; www.storahotellet-fjallbacka.se; Galärbacken; Jun-Aug s/d from Skr1225/1550/2150, rest of yr Skr1150/1450/1900) One of the individualistic hotels ever, the incredible Stora Hotellet offers a trip ‘around the world in 23 rooms’. It was originally owned by a ship’s captain who decorated it with exotic souvenirs. Each room was named after each of the captain’s favourite ports and explorers (and girls!), and each tells its own story. The question is, how do you choose which room to book? There’s also a restaurant for fine dining.

Oscars II (322 10; info@fjallbackajokell.se; Ingrid Bergmanstor; low/high season d Skr850/995, ste Skr1495/1950; restaurant & until midnight) Another excellent place, Oscars II is a cozy café, bar and bistré. It has no shortage of rooms for rent upstairs, and a suite with its own sunny terrace, lounges and super harbour views.

NORDENS ARK
Snow leopards, wolves and lynx prowl.

Nordens Ark (0523-795 90; www.nordensark.se; Äby Säteri; adult/child/family Skr120/70/55; 10am-7pm mid-June–mid-Aug, 10am-4pm or 5pm rest of yr) a safari park 12km northeast of Smögen and one of the area’s big family attractions. It shows off animals and plants from countries with a similar climate to Sweden’s, and has breeding programmes for endangered species. Guided tours of the park are available daily in peak season and on weekends the rest of the year (included in entry price). Last admission is two hours before closing.

You may find yourself in Uddevalla, Bohuslän’s capital, while waiting for transport connections. It’s worth popping into the museum, and the old spa area at Gustafsfjord is nice for a swim, but Uddevalla is fairly modern and industrial and there’s little reason to linger long. The tourist office (997 20; www.uddevallaforum.se; Kungsstorget 4; 10am-6pm Mon, 10am-4pm Tue-Fri) can help with information.

Stora Hotellet

Uddevalla (0522 / pop 50,068)

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Bohuslän Museum (65 65 00; www.bohusmus.se; Museigatan 1; admission free; 10am-8pm Mon-Thur, 10am-4pm Fri-Sun May-Aug, closed Mon Sep-Apr), near the bus station, tells the history of the area from the Stone Age onwards, and has displays on traditional stone, boat-building and fish-preserving industries. There’s also an art gallery and restaurant.

STF Vandrarhem Gustafsfjord/Uddevalla (152 00; jan.gustafsberg@telia.com; dm Skr65; mid-Jun–mid-Aug) This hostel, based in an old bathing house, is in a wonderful waterside location at the old spa of Gustafsfjord, 4km from the centre. There are recreation areas and a café down this way too. The area can best be reached by boat (Skr20) six times daily from the jetty across the river from the museum, or by local bus.

Regional buses and trains run daily to Strömstad (Skr21.20, 1¼ hours) and Göteborg (Skr110, one hour). Sweus Bus Express (0200-21 8218; www.sweusbusexpress.se) runs to Oslo (Skr308, six hours) up to six times daily. Buses drop off and pick up from the bus station on the E6 motorway, rather than in the town centre.

Strömstad (0526 / pop 11,373)

Strömstad is a spacious seaside resort, fishing harbour and spa town, close to the Norwegian border and the old and brand-new Svinnesund Bridges. In summer Norwegian tourists pile across to take advantage of...
SOUTHWEST SWEDEN ••  Dalsland

SOUTHWEST SWEDEN ••  Bohuslän

SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES

Bohuslän’s Bronze Age rock carvings (hällristningar) are everywhere, a phenomenal 3000-year-old artistic record of religious beliefs, rites and everyday living. All the carvings are in the open and free to view. An excellent book, *The Rock Carving Tour* (Skr50, from tourist offices/museums in the region), contains thoughtful interpretations and detailed maps showing you how to find the best Bohuslän sites.

The Tanum plain is particularly rich in carvings, and the entire 45-sq-km area has been placed on the Unesco World Heritage List. Start your rocky odyssey at Vitlycke, within the Tanum area, where you’ll find ships, animals, humans and tiny footsteps scattered through the woods. The splendid 22m Vitlycke Rock forms a huge canvas for 500 carvings of ‘love, power and magic’. These range from simple cup marks to some of Sweden’s most famous rock-art images, including the Lovers, showing a sacred marriage.

If you’re bewildered by the long-armed men, blue whales, sexual imagery and goat-drawn chariots, cross the road to Vitlycke Museum (0 325-209 50; www.vitlyckemuseum.se; adult/under 20yr Skr50/free; 10am-6pm Apr-Sep), which has a determined go at explaining them. There are handheld computer guides for hire at extortionate prices, but it’s much better to catch the English tour (included in museum admission; 3pm), when a knowledgeable human being explains the carvings.

You’ll need your own transport to get to Vitlycke. By public transport, the nearest you can get is to Tanumshede, 2.5km north: regional buses on the Göteborg–Uddevalla–Strömstad route stop here. Tanumshede train station is further away still.

Swedish’s cheaper prices, lending a particularly lively air to the town’s bars.

There are several fantastic Iron Age remains in the area, including one of Sweden’s largest ship settings, and some fine sandy beaches at Capri and Selater. Boat trips run to the Koster islands, the most westerly isles in Bohuslän’s Bronze Age rock carvings (hällristningar) are everywhere, a phenomenal 3000-year-old artistic record of religious beliefs, rites and everyday living. All the carvings are in the open and free to view. An excellent book, *The Rock Carving Tour* (Skr50, from tourist offices/museums in the region), contains thoughtful interpretations and detailed maps showing you how to find the best Bohuslän sites.

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This is a good fish and seafood restaurant, based in an old paper mill with the chains still hanging from the ceiling, which also has chilled-out lockside tables. Sandwiches are served during the day, and there’s a deli-casser for self-caters. For transport details, see below.

Around Häverud
About 3km south of the aqueduct is Uppe-rud, where you’ll find the Dalslands Museum & Konsthall (☎ 0530-300 98; www.dalsladsmuseum.se; adult/under 12yr Skr40/free; 11am-6pm mid-Jun–mid-Aug, 11am-4pm Wed-Sun mid-Aug–Dec & mid-Mar–mid-Jun). There’s a compact permanent display of local art, furniture, ceramics, ironware and Ämåls silverware as well as temporary exhibitions. The small sculpture park in the grounds is worth visiting for its eire in-stallations, hidden amongst the shrubs and trees. Its Café Bonaparte (so-called because Napoleon’s niece Christine once lived there) is a good place for coffee and snacks.

Another few kilometres south at Skållerud is a beautiful 17th-century wooden church (☎ 0530-300 14; 8am-6pm Mon-Sat, 9am-6pm Sun May-Sep), with well-preserved paintings and biblical sculptures.

Atmospheric Högbyn Nature Reserve, about 8km north of Häverud near Tisselskog, has woodland walks and a shallow bathing place. Best of all are its impressive Bronze Age rock carvings (hallristningar): 50 overgrown slabs feature animals, boats, labyrinths, sun signs, and hand and foot marks. There’s a small museum (admission by donation; Jun-Aug), and a haunted café. You can get here from Häverud on a boat trip (☎ 0530-310 97, 0530-304 00; adult/7-14yr Skr140/60; 1pm Jul–mid-Aug) that gives you 45 minutes at the carvings.

Baldersnäs Herrgård (☎ 0531-412 13; admission free; s/d Skr85/125), 10km further north past the village of Dals Långed, is a lovely manor house and grounds, complete with English garden, swimming pools, restaurant and café, handicraft stalls and a small Naturum. Quality accommodation is offered here too.

Mellerud is on the main Göteborg to Karlstad train line, and Swebus Express buses between Göteborg and Karlstad stop here three times daily in either direction. Local bus 720 runs a circular route to/from Mellerud via Upperud, Häverud and Skållerud.

Amål (☎ 0532 / pop 12,823)
Amål, the main town in Dalsland, is situated on Lake Vänern. It became infamous after the 1999 release of the Swedish-language film Fucking Amål, which was actually filmed in Trollhättan and was given the very boring title Show Me Love for its release to the English-speaking world. The town’s biggest event is Ämåls Bluesfest, held over the second weekend in July, when Swedish and international artists play and the town drowns in visitors.

The tourist office (☎ 170 98; www.amal.se; 8am-7pm Mon-Fri, 9am-6am Sat, 11am-6pm Sun mid-Jun–mid-Aug; phone for hr rest of yr) is near the guest harbour, and the main street Kungsgatan has all services.

There are a few diversions in the town, but there’s no reason for an extended stay—the real attractions are out in the surrounding woodlands and forests. The Old Town, around the church Gamla Kyrkan (completed in 1669), is a stately collection of 18th-century buildings and worth a quick look. Ämåls Hembygdsmuseum (☎ 158 20; Hamngatan 7; adult/child Skr20/free; 1-6pm mid-Jun–Aug; 1-6pm Sat & Sun mid-May–mid-Jun), near the tourist office, is a particularly interesting local museum with three floors of stuff ranging from toys to witchcraft.

STF Vandrarhem Amål (☎ 102 05; lokrantz@home.se; Gerdinsgatan 7; dm Skr140; 1pm Jul–mid-Aug) This well-equipped hostel just north of the town centre has nice views over the lake and bikes for hire.

Stadshotellet (☎ 616 10; info@amalstadshotell.se; Kungsgatan 9; s/d Skr845/1190, discounted to Skr845/890; 8am-6pm Mon-Fri, 9am-6pm Sat, 10am-6pm Sun May-Sep) This huge, elegant, and the newly renovated oak-floored suites are particularly special. The hotel frequently has special rates and packages: contact them for details. If you feel like a gastronomic treat, the restaurant is one of the best in the region.

Långed Gård & Herrgård (☎ 612 20; Edskogatan 7; lunch Skr65, mains Skr90-170) Another few kilometres south at Skållerud, the main town, serving mainly Swedish specialities.

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Hooray for Trollywood

In recent years Trollhättan has become home to the Swedish film industry and has earned itself the inevitable nickname ‘Trollywood’. A number of Swedish and Scandinavian films have been filmed in and around the town, including Danish producer Lars von Trier’s award-winning Dancer in the Dark (1999), and Dogville (2002), starring Nicole Kidman and Swedish actor Stellan Skarsgård.

Film i Väst (www.filminvast.se) is Trollhättan’s large film production company. Check its website for more information, and also ask at the tourist office if you want to know what film sets (and stars) you might stumble across in town.

(Skr119, 1¼ hours) run about every hour (some require a change at Oxnered).

Trollhättan

0520 / pop 53,154

Trollhättan itself has the air of a surreal filmset: looming warehouses, foggy canals, crashing waterfalls, and a futuristic cable car all give it a bizarre and thrilling edge. The town has really made the most of its industrial heritage, and has plenty of unusual attractions. As well as a three-day film festival in mid-August, the town celebrates Waterfall Days (www.fallensdagare.se) in mid-July with live bands, fireworks and water-related happenings.

Information

The excellent tourist office (48 48 72; www.visitorolltown.se; Åkersjövägen 10; 10am-6pm mid-Jun–mid-Aug, 10am-4pm Mon-Fri mid-Aug–mid-Jun) is about 1.5km south of the town centre, near the Innovatum. If you want to visit all the attractions, ask for the two-day Innova

Kulturorte (1/2 people Skr130/200, under 16y free on adult ticket; available early Jun–mid-Aug), which includes cable-car trips and museum admissions. It also sells a handy Guidebook to Trollhättan’s Falls & Locks, which details walking routes in the maze-like industrial areas.

For Internet access, visit the library (49 76 50; Kungsgatan 25; 10am-7pm Mon-Thur, 10am-6pm Fri, 10am-3pm Sat late Aug–mid-Jun, 11am-6pm Mon-Fri mid-Jun–late Aug) or @Tonis Café (141 60; Kungsgatan 19; per 30/60min Skr15/25; noon-9pm).

Sights & Activities

Saab Bilmuseum (843 44; www.saab.com; Åkersjövägen 10; adult/7-17yr Skr60/30; 10am-2pm & 5-7pm mid-Jun–mid-Aug, phone for winter hr) is a must for car fanatics and fans of Swedish design. The shining white museum contains Saab car models from the first (a sensational 1947 prototype) to the futuristic (experimental designs running on biofuel that know if you’re drunk!). There are videos showing crash-test-dummy elk. You’re guided through the museum by electronic handsets (40-minutes’ playing time), which contain interesting information in between the irritating Saab advertisements.

Innovatum Kunskapens Hus (48 48 80; www.innovatum.se; adult/7-19yr/family Skr60/40/130; 10am-6pm mid-Jun–mid-Aug, 11am-4pm Sat & Sun mid-Apr–mid-Jun & mid-Aug–Sep) will sweep you over the canal to the hydroelectricity area. Once you’re on the far side of the canal, you can see the stairs down to the river, where you’ll find one of Sweden’s most unusual industrial buildings, the potent-looking Olidan power station, which supplied much of the country’s electricity in the early 20th century. There are three 30-minute tours daily in summer (ask the tourist office for details).

Take a wander southwest to Slussområde, a pleasant waterside area of parkland and ancient lock systems. Here you’ll find cafés and the Kanalmuseum (47 22 51; Åkersberg; adult/child Skr10/free; 11am-7pm Jun-Aug; noon-5pm Sat & Sun Apr, May & Sep), which describes the history of the canal and contains over 50 model ships.

Northeast near the Höjum power station, witness spectacular cascades when the waterfall (3pm Sat & Sun May-Aug, plus 3pm Wed Jul & Aug) is unleashed. Normally the water is diverted through the power stations, but at set times the sluice gates are opened and 300,000l per second thunder through. For an even more remarkable sight, wait for the night-time illuminated waterfall (11pm Fri Jul & Aug).

There are also two- to three-hour canal tours (per person from Skr180) in summer; enquire at the tourist office for times.

If you can stay awake until it gets dark enough, there’s an open-air cinema (11pm Thu Jul–mid-Aug) in summer at the Innovatum; most films shown are home-grown Swedish, but it’s worth checking the programme for English-language movies.

Sleeping & Eating

Gula Villan (129 60; trollhattanvandrarhem@telia.com; Tingvallavägen 12; dm Skr135; P) The cheery STF hostel, in a pretty old yellow villa, is about 200m from the train station. You can rent bikes here, and breakfast is available.

Hotell Bele (125 30; www.hotellbele.se; Kungsgatan 37; s/d Skr795/890, discounted to Skr590/690; P) Bele is a central, no-frills option on a pedestrianised street in the heart of town. Accommodation is basic but comfortable, and there’s a sauna and solarium for guest use.

Scandic Hotel Swania (890 00; swania@scandic-hotels.com; Storgatan 47; s/d from Skr1430/1630, discounted at the tourist office for times).

For more luxury, head to the upmarket Swania, situated in the old town hall by the canal. Its quality facilities include a restaurant and nightclub.

Grand Café (890 09; light meals Skr60-120, dinner mains Skr170-200) is on the canal. This café has a good menu offering light meals (stirfries, salads and mushrooms on toast) to hearty steaks, and prices are more reasonable than the swish décor might have you expect. The bar here is a bustling after-work spot, and the outdoor area is popular in good weather.

Strandgatan (837 17; Strandgatan; mains Skr55-180) One of the best – and busiest – places in town is this trendy bistro serving bagels, quiche, salads and baked potatoes. It’s in a fantastic location, with a large canalside seating area in summer.

Getting There & Around

See p225 for transport details. To reach the attractions in Trollhättan from the train station or the Drottningtorget bus station, walk south along Drottninggatan, then turn right into Åkerssjövägen, or take town bus 11 – it runs most of the way.

You can rent bikes from Innovatum Kunskapens Hus (adult/child/tandem per 3hr Skr40/20/80, per day Skr75/40/140).

Lidköping

0510 / pop 37,241

Lidköping, on Lake Vänern, is bright and cheery. However, many of its finest attractions (like the enchanting castle, Läckö Slott) lie some distance out of town.

The main square, Nya Stadens Torg, is dominated by the old courthouse and its tower (actually a replica – the original burnt down in 1938). A previous fire in 1849 destroyed most of the town, but the 17th-century houses around Lintorget still stand.

The tourist office (200 20; www.lackoimme.kultur.se; Bengatan 3; 9am-8pm Mon-Fri, 10am-8pm Sat, noon-6pm Sun mid-Jun–mid-Aug, noon-5pm Mon-Fri rest of yr) is at the train station, and the public library (77 00 15; Nya Stadens Torg 5) has free Internet access.

Sights in Town

Rörstrand Fabriksbod (823 46; Fiskaregatan 4; 10am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-3pm Sat, noon-4pm Sun) is the second-oldest porcelain factory (still in operation) in Europe. There’s a vast shop selling second-hand and end-of-lines, so you may snap up some bargains; you can even buy copies of the porcelain used at the Nobel banquets in Stockholm! There’s also a small museum (Skr20) containing everything from 18th-century faience to modern creations.

Vänernmuseet (77 00 65; Framnäsvägen 2; adult/7-18yr Skr40/20; 10am-5pm Tue-Fri, noon-5pm Sat & Sun) has geological exhibits, including an ancient meteorite and displays about Vänern (the third-largest lake in Europe at 5650 sq km). The most curious item is a 3m-long glass boat.

Läckö Slott

For a fairytale castle fix, get yourself to Läckö Slott (103 20; www.lackoslott.se; May-Sep), 23km north of Lidköping near Vänern. It’s an extraordinary example of 17th-century Swedish baroque architecture, with cupolas, towers, paintings and ornate plasterwork. The first castle on the site was constructed in 1298, but it was improved enormously by Count Magnus Gabriel de la Gardie after he acquired it in 1615.

The castle now has 240 rooms, with the most impressive being the King’s Hall, with 13 angels hanging from the ceiling and nine huge paintings depicting the Thirty Years War.
Guided tours (adult/7-15yr/family Skr70/20/160; on the hr 11am-5pm May-Aug, 11am-2pm Sep) lasting 45 minutes give you access to the most interesting rooms; there’s an English tour at 3.30pm daily. Otherwise you’re free to bumble about in the courtyards and lower floors, which contain a few shops and the castle restaurant, Fataburen (lunch Skr110; noon-3pm & 6-9pm mid-Jun–mid-Aug).

In the castle grounds, there’s a café (lunch Skr80; 11am-6.30pm May-Aug) serving cheaper snacks and a rental kiosk (24 98 13; bengtsson@kajak Fistid.se; noon-5.30pm mid-Jun–mid-Aug) where you can hire canoed-shaped boats (per hour 180) or canoes (per half day from Skr130) for exploring the lake.

Classical music and opera events are held in the courtyard several times a week in July (tickets around Skr320); enquire at Lidköping tourist office.

From mid-June to mid-August, bus 132 runs four to seven times a day from Lidköping to the castle. Car parking costs Skr30.

HUSABY KYRKA & ST SIGFRID’S WELL

Husaby (around 15km east of Lidköping) is inextricably linked to Sweden’s history. King Olof Skötkonung, the country’s first Christian king, was converted and baptised here by the English missionary Sigfrid in 1008. Olof’s royal dunking took place at St Sigfrids’ Well, near Husaby Kyrka (8am-4pm Apr, 8am-8pm May-Sep). A succession of Swedish kings has carved their names into the rocks here.

The church actually dates from the 12th century, but the base of the unusual three-tiered building was finished, and was mothballed in 1619. He also played with ingenuity: for example, silver hoards and Viking swords are set in cases alongside Lake Vättern some 80km east of Lidköping. Amazingly, this peaceful backwater was once intended to be Sweden’s capital in times of war, thanks to its beast of a bastion, Karlsborgs Fästning.

The tourist office (0173 50 info@karlsborgsturism.se; Ankarvägen 2; 9am-6pm Jul–mid-Aug, 10am-4pm Mon-Fri mid-Aug–Jun) is in an octagonal wooden house between the fort’s main entrance and the lake.

Karlsborgs Fästning was one of Europe’s largest construction projects. This enormous fortress has a circumference of around 5km, and is so huge that it took from 1820 to 1909 to complete; it was out of date even before it was finished, and was mothballed immediately! Most of the 30-old buildings inside are original: there’s a military museum (854 70, adult/child Skr40/70; 10am-4pm or 6pm mid-May–Aug, 10am-3pm Mon-Fri rest of yr) and a church, which has an extraordinary candelabra made from 2000 old swords.

The fortress area is always open. If you want smoke, cannon roar and scuttling rats, though, you’ll have to book a special-effect guided tour (adult/7-12yr Skr80/40; 1pm Jun-Aug) at the tourist office; from midsummer to August, there are up to 12 tours every day. The Lilj Blå tourist train (adult/under 12yr Skr80/40; 2pm mid-Jun–mid-Aug) also rides round the centre of the fortress.

Karlsborg is the start/end of the western section of the Göta Canal (see boxed text, p146, and p330 for further details).

STF Vandrarhem Karlsborg (446 00; Ankarvägen 2; dm/d Skr135/300; Jun-Aug; P). Right on the fortress’s doorstep, this is used as military accommodation for most of the year. If you can overlook the slightly brusque reception, a good option is to stay here and self-cater (there are supermarkets in the nearby town centre), although there are more sleeping and eating options in town, especially beside the Göta Canal about 2km northwest of the fortress (follow the main road).

A bus runs every hour or two to Skövde, connecting with SJ trains to Göteborg or Stockholm.

HALLAND

Halmstad 035 / pop 87,929

After roasting themselves on the 6km-long Blue-Flag beach at Tylösand (8km east of town), many holidaymakers return to Halmstad’s lively bars and clubs at night. Halmstad was actually Danish until 1645, and served as an important fortified border town. Its street plan was laid out by the Danish King Christian IV after a huge fire wiped out most of the buildings in 1619. He also awarded Halmstad its coat of arms: you’ll see the three crowns and three hearts motif dotted all over the place.

The tourist office (13 23 20; www.halmstad.se; 9am-7pm Mon-Sat, 11am-6pm Sun late Jun-mid-Aug, 9am-5pm Mon-Fri rest of yr) is inside Halmstads Slot (castle). Stora Torg and Storgatan have most of the facilities travelling will require, including banks and supermarkets. At the time of writing, a futuristic new library (www.huvudbiblioteket.se; Axel Olosgt 1) was being built by the river: once it opens in 2006, there should be plenty of free Internet access. Otherwise try Playground (12 10 90; Storgatan & per hr Skr25; 10am-midnight).

SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES

For a small county institution, Halmstads Museum (16 23 00; Tolfsgatan; adult/7-15yr Skr40/20; noon-4pm Tue & Thu-Sun, to 8pm Wed) manages to host some good art/design exhibitions. Its modest array of local treasures is displayed with ingenuity: for example, silver hoards and Viking swords are set in cases in the floor, as though just discovered on an archaeological dig.

Halmstad Äventyrslag (10 84 60; Gamla Tylösandsvägen 1; admission Skr150; 10am-8pm Jul-Aug, 10am-4pm late Aug–Oct; closed Mon–Wed) is a mini village, rides and waterslides. A free road train leaves Halmstad roughly every hour from near the corner of Stora Torg and Brogatan; a board tells you the exact departure times.

Another one for families, across the river and downstream from the tourist office, Tropikcenter (12 33 33; Strandgatan; adult/child
Halmstad

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SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES
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Sleeping
Grand Hotel Halmstad..............10 C4
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Eating
Frödis af Krogen......................14 B3
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IN TOWN
The tourist office can arrange private rooms in town from Skr150 per person (plus book-

ing fee). It’s a popular town, and many of the large hotel chains have branches here.

Halmstads Vandrhem ( 12 05 00; halmstad@ hallonsten.se; Skepparegatan 23; 2-/4-/6-bed rm Skr450/600/725/850;  D mid-Jun–mid-Aug) This SVF hostel becomes student digs outside summer. Rooms are slightly battier, with that drawing-pins-in-the-wall look that comes with college accommodation, but they’re decent enough and have sofas and desks. There’s a spacious garden for evening lounging.

Hotel Amadeus ( 16 60 00; www.amadeus .nu; Hvitfeldts gatan 20; s/d Skr850/1050, discounted to Skr640/840;  C ) At 65 rooms this isn’t a tiny hotel, yet it manages to retain a very personal and welcoming air. Rooms are comfortably mid-market – not old-fashioned but not state-of-the-art, either – and there are budget alternatives (around Skr200 less) if you’re counting the pennies.

There’s little difference in price or standards at the following two upmarket places, both with sauna, solarium, bar, restaurant and so on:

Grand Hotel Halmstad ( 280 81 00; www.grand hotel.nu; Stationsgatan 44; s/d Skr1200/1550, discounted to Skr790/990;  C ) Handy for the train station, with rooms decorated in a more traditional vein.

Scandin Hotel Hallandia.........( 295 86 00; hallandia@ scandin-hotels.com; Radhusgatan 4; rm/st Skr1320/1800, discounted to Skr900/1200) On the main square with more modern Scandinavian-style accommodation; some rooms have balconies overlooking the river.

IN TYLÖSAND
Hotel Tylösand ( 305 00; info@tylosand.se; Tylöhusvägen; d Skr2345, discounted to s/d Skr1925/1395) This is the place to try if you’re into the beach, nightclubbing and/or Roxette (it’s part-owned by Per Gessle, one half of the Swedish pop duo). It’s a large upmarket complex on the beach, with lots of eating options and summer entertainment happenings; check out the glamorous foyer full of art, and Leifs Lounge nightclub. This is one of the few Swedish hotels where prices go up at weekends, although packages are available.

Krono Camping ( 305 10; www.kronocamping .se; Kungsvägen 3; sites Skr130-240, cabins from Skr525) A huge and bustling camping ground near the beach, with lots of family-friendly facilities. Avoid holidays such as midsummer, when prices go stratospheric: a whopping Skr840 for three days!

Tylébäck ( 19 18 00; info@tyleback.se; Kungsvägen 1; sites Skr220, 1/2-/3-/4-bed rm Skr260/390/585/780, hotel s/d Skr795/995) Accommodation to suit all pockets – camping, hostel, hotel – is offered at Tylébäck, in a pleasantly rustic location.

EATING & DRINKING
Halmstad is jam-packed with dining spots, pubs and bars, mostly around pedestrianised Storgatan. Alternatively, summer nights head to the after-beach parties at Tylénsjö.

Klamedam ( 12 40 50; Klamerdammstorg 21; mains Skr255-265;  D 6-11pm Mon-Sat) Slide onto suede seats at this exclusive restaurant and prepare for a treat. Dishes are immaculately presented, with mains of mostly fish and meat, and the atmosphere is cultivated and quite romantic.

Pio & Co ( 21 06 69; Storgatan 37; mains Skr160-230;  D from 4pm) Pio’s is an award-winning upmarket brasserie. Its extensive menu of quality dishes contains Swedish favourites with a world-flavour twist, such as salmon with sugar-roasted summer veg on couscous.

Pios Bakficka ( Lilla Torg; meals under Skr100) Behind Pio & Co is this place, which literally means ‘Pio’s Backpocket’. It’s a more casual spot with outdoor seating and a good bar menu.

Frödis af Krogen ( 21 16 66; Broggadal 26; meals Skr75- 220;  D from 6pm) Less exclusive and with a wide menu, this is another pleasant place for a fine dinner. There are lower-priced pasta options, or more expensive, well-prepared meat and fish meals including bouillabaisse.

Skånska Hembageriet ( 21 24 07; Storgatan 40;  D closed Sun) This is a good old-fashioned bakery with café attached. Sandwiches cost from Skr29, and of course there are lots of freshly baked buns to choose from.

Lilla Hellvetet ( 21 04 20; Hamnsgatan 37;  D closed Sun) With its funky dancing devil symbol, you can half guess what awaits you in this great converted warehouse near the river. This super-cool restaurant, bar and cocktail lounge transforms into a nightclub on Friday and Saturday nights, when there’s partying until 3am.

For something quick, visit hole-in-the-wall Nudel Bar (Storgatan; meals incl drink Skr60) or the Pasta Huset (pasta Skr29) van on Stora Torg. There’s a Hemköp supermarket and a Systembolaget just off Stora Torg.

On the northern part of Storgatan and nearby Lilla Torg are some popular drinking

Skr70/40; 10am-6pm Jul, 10am-4pm Aug-Jun) is in the old customs house and shows off tropical birds, fish and reptiles. At both places, kids under 1m tall get in for free.

The museum ship Näjaden (admission free; 5-7pm Tue & Thu, 1am-3pm Sat Jul & Aug), berthed just outside the castle and built in 1897, was a training ship for the Swedish Royal Navy.

Christian IV built Halmstad slott (open irregularly to guided tours in summer: ask the tourist office for details) and the town walls. The latter were demolished in the 18th century, although fragments like the north tower and the former fort walls remain. Other medieval attractions include the lovely 14th-century church St Nikolai kyrka ( 8.30am-6pm Jun-Aug, 8.30am-3pm Sep-May), and the half-timbered Tre Hjärta (Three Hearts) building on Stora Torg. In the main square is Carl Milles’ sculptural fountain Europa and the Bull, and Picasso’s Woman’s Head) is down by the river.

Mjölby Konstgård ( 316 19; adult/under 20yr Skr50/free; 1-5pm Tue-Sun mid-Mar-Oct) is 5km from town but worth a trip if you’re into modern art – the museum here includes the permanent Halmstad Group exhibition of surrealist and cubist art (labelled in Swedish). Take the irregular bus 330 from the North Bus Station.

The large hotel chains have branches here.

Skiing

Tylösand ( 305 00; info@tylosand.se; Tylöhusvägen; d Skr2345, discounted to s/d Skr1925/1395) This is the place to try if you’re into the beach, nightclubbing and/or Roxette (it’s part-owned by Per Gessle, one half of the Swedish pop duo). It’s a large upmarket complex on the beach, with lots of eating options and summer entertainment happenings; check out the glamorous foyer full of art, and Leifs Lounge nightclub. This is one of the few Swedish hotels where prices go up at weekends, although packages are available.

Krono Camping ( 305 10; www.kronocamping .se; Kungsvägen 3; sites Skr130-240, cabins from Skr525) A huge and bustling camping ground near the beach, with lots of family-friendly facilities. Avoid holidays such as midsummer, when prices go stratospheric: a whopping Skr840 for three days!
**GETTING THERE & AWAY**

The airport (12 80 70) is only 2km west of the town centre. Skyways has regular connections to Stockholm’s Arlanda airport.

The train station is in the southeastern corner of the town centre, and the bus station is a few blocks away at Osterbro. Swebus Express (0200-21 82 18; www.swebusexpress.se) runs buses at least five to seven times daily to Malmö (Skr178, 2½ hours), Helsingborg (Skr90, one hour), Göteborg (Skr120, 1½ hours) and Lund. Svenska Buss (0771-67 67 67; www.svenskabus.se) runs the same routes, at a cheaper price but less frequently. Swebus Express also has a direct twice-weekly service to Jönköping (Skr178, 2½ hours).

The regular trains between Göteborg (Skr170, 1¼ hours) and Malmö (Skr160, two hours) stop in Halmstad, calling in at Helsingborg (Skr110, one hour) and Varberg (Skr81, 45 minutes).

**GETTING AROUND**

Local bus 10 runs at least half-hourly to the clubs and beaches at Tylösand (adult/child Skr20/10).

Try Taxi Halmstad (21 80 00) for assistance getting around. You can hire a bike from Cykel & Sport (21 22 51; Norra vägen 11; 10am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-1pm Sat) for Skr70/100 per half/full day.

**Varberg**

(0340) / pop 54,338

This attractive town lies by the side of a 60km stretch of beautiful white-sand beaches: its population consequently triples in the summer months. Varberg’s darker side includes its fortress, once used as a prison and now home to an excellently preserved bog body. The fortress is located in the centre of town, and most facilities are nearby.

**SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES**

The medieval fortress (828 30; adult/6-17yr Skr50/10; 10am-5pm mid-Jun–mid-Aug, 10am-4pm Mon-Fri, noon-4pm Sat & Sun rest of yr), with its superb museum, is the main attraction in Varberg. Unusual exhibits include the poor old Bocksten Man, dug out of a peat bog at Åkulle in 1936. His 14th-century costume is the most perfectly preserved medieval clothing in Europe.

Brave the brisk Nordic weather and swim in the striking Källbadhuset (173 96; adult/under 15yr Skr45/26; mid-Jun–mid-Aug, 1-8pm Wed & 9am-5pm Sat & Sun winter), a bizarre Moorish-style outdoor bathhouse built on stilts above the sea just north of the fortress.

Gettörs Nature Reserve is just 2km north of the town and has excellent bird life (mostly waders and geese). The reserve has a Naturum (visitors centre; 875 10; Lassavägen 1; 10am-4pm May–Aug; Fri, Sat & Sun Sep–Apr) with good exhibitions.

In 2004, the Varberg Radio Station (67 41 90; Grimeton), about 10km east of Varberg, was added to the Unesco World Heritage List. It was part of the interwar transatlantic communication network: today it’s the only such long-wave radio station left in the world. Admission is by guided tour (on the hour from 11am to 5pm Tuesday to Sunday, July to mid-August); phone ahead to let them know if you’d like an English tour.

Apelviken, just 2km south of Varberg, is Sweden’s best place for windsurfing and kitesurfing. Bring your own kit or rent from Surfer’s Paradise (67 70 55; info@surfersparadise.nu; per hr/day Skr80/300; Jun-Aug), which also offers courses: contact them for details.

**SLEEPING & EATING**

Fästningens Vandrarhem (168 85; www.getternors-camping.se; low/high season sites from Skr160/220, cabins & chalets from Skr410/675; May–Mid-Sep) This well-equipped place is right on a sandy beach on the Gettörs peninsula. There are plenty of tent spaces, but it does get busy in high season.

Lundquistska Huset (143 90; Brunnskatten; mains Skr120-180) When it comes to dining, this upmarket spot near the tourist office offers excellent cuisine, including vegetarian options.

Most cheap restaurants are along the pedestrianised Kungsgatan. Café FästningsTerrassen (105 81) at the fortress offers the best sea views in town.

**GETTING THERE & AROUND**

Buses depart from outside the train station; local buses run to Falkenberg, but regular trains are your best bet for places like Halmstad, Göteborg and Malmö.

Stena Line ferries operate between Varberg and the Danish town of Grenå (see p328); the ferry dock is next to the town centre.

Bike hire from Erlan Cykel (144 55; Västra Vallgatan 41) costs from Skr80/350 per day/week. For a taxi try Varbergs Taxi (165 00).
Central Sweden

Like a tastefully arranged towel in a sauna, Svealand drapes itself right across the middle of the country, from the northeastern shore to the western mountains. It’s an area strongly associated with Sweden’s heritage – it even gave the country its name (Svea Rike, or Sverige). Vikings set out on expeditions from Lake Mälaren, and built their most sacred temple at Gamla Uppsala; rune stones, burial mounds and forts still lie scattered over Uppland.

In the northwest, Dalarna (Dalecarlia) is rich in folk culture and is the home of Sweden’s most famous symbol, the brightly coloured wooden Dala häst (Dala horse). On Midsummer’s Day, happy hordes of people flock to the country’s biggest celebrations, in the town of Leksand.

Svealand is littered with old industrial villages, with perfectly intact 16th- and 17th-century furnaces and forges; they’re surprisingly picturesque places, and two of them are unique enough to appear on Unesco’s World Heritage List. If you’re more of a romantic, head of Leksand.

Svealand’s diversity – huge forests, balmy lakes, green meadows and high border mountains – is great news for outdoor types. Try your hand at rafting, canoeing, dogsledging, hiking, canyoning or rock-climbing. Sweden’s biggest and best ski resort, at Sälen, explodes with rosy-cheeked skiers once the snows begin to fall.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Watch roly-poly bear cubs wrestle at Grönklitt Björnpark (p268)
- Join the country’s biggest midsummer celebrations at Leksand (p262)
- Explore Sweden’s industrial heritage down the silver and copper mines at Sala (p249) and Falun (p260)
- Sample Scandinavia’s finest ice cream in the attractive wooden town of Nora (p251)
- Steal some great decorating ideas and revel in the humour and artistry on show at Carl Larsson’s house (p262)
- Hike or ski in the rugged mountains along the Norwegian border near Sälen (p268)
- Build your own raft and sail it down the peaceful Klarälven (p259)

AREA: 80,843 SQ KM  HIGHEST ELEVATION: STORVÄTTESHÅGNA (1204M)  POPULATION: 1,648,148

Orientation

Svealand consists of six regions (landskaps) and seven counties (län). In the east, there’s the regions of Upland and Södermanland (a.k.a Sörmland), in the middle of the country there’s Västmanland and Närke, while the west has Värmland and Dalarna. This book has dealt with the county of Stockholms län in a separate chapter.

Information

REGIONAL TOURIST OFFICES

Visitors can contact the following regional tourist offices for more detailed information on the area.

Sörmlands Turism (☎ 0155-24 59 00; www.sormland.se/turism; Box 58, SE-61122 Nyköping)

Getting Around

Express buses connect major towns in southern areas. For the west and north of the region, you’ll need to use länstrafiken (regional network) services.
The following companies provide regional transport links. If you’re planning to spend some time in any of these counties, it’s worth inquiring about discount cards, monthly passes or a sommarkort, offering cheaper travel in the peak summer period (midsummer to mid-August). Check also the respective websites for routes, schedules, fares and passes; these websites don’t always have information in English, but if you call the telephone numbers listed you’ll usually reach someone who can help you in English.

**Dalatrafik** ([0771-95 95 95](tel:0771-95 95 95); www.dalatrafik.se in Swedish)

**Länstrafiken Örebro** ([0771-22 40 00](tel:0771-22 40 00); www.lantrafiken.se in Swedish)

**Uppsala Länstrafik** ([0771-95 95 95](tel:0771-95 95 95); www.dalatrafik.se in Swedish)

**Västmanlands Lokaltrafik** ([0771-41 04 10](tel:0771-41 04 10); www.vm.se)

**Värmlandstrafik** ([0563-532 34](tel:0563-532 34); www.kollplatsen.com in Swedish)

**SJ** ([0771-75 75 75](tel:0771-75 75 75); www.sj.se) trains run along the Stockholm to Uppsala and Mora, and Karlstad and Oslo. There are good services from Stockholm to Uppsala and Mora, and Karlstad and Oslo. There are good services

**LIBRARIES**

**Library** ([727 17 00](tel:727 17 00); www.svarbäcksgatan 17; [09am-7pm](time:09am-7pm) Mon & Wed-Fri, 10am-8pm Tue, 12pm-3pm Sat year-round, also 1-4pm Sun Sep-Apr) Offers free Internet access, but bring ID and expect longish waits.

**MEDICAL SERVICES**

There’s an after-hours pharmacy at the hospital (see Emergency section). **Apoteket Kronan** (Svarbäcksgatan 8; [10am-7pm](time:10am-7pm) Mon-Sat)

**MONEY**

Head to Stora Torget for banks and ATMS.

**FOREX** ([09am-7pm](time:09am-7pm) Mon-Fri, 9am-3pm Sat)

**POST**

A number of central newsgagencies also provide postal services.

**POST office** (Båväns Gård 19; 8am-6pm Mon-Fri) Right next to the bus station.

**TOURIST INFORMATION**

Tourist office (talk:727 48 00; www.uppsalaturism.se; Fyrisborg 8; [10am-6pm](time:10am-6pm) Mon-Fri, 10am-3pm Sat, also noon-4pm Sun mid-Jun–mid-Aug) Pick up the good Walking Tour of Uppsala leaflet, and the listings guide What’s On Uppsala for the latest entertainment and events.
UPPSALA KORTET
This handy little three-day discount card (Skr125) gives free or discounted admission to many of the town’s attractions, plus free local bus travel and parking. There are also discounts at participating hotels, restaurants and shops. The card is valid from June to August, and can be bought from the tourist office.

TRAVEL AGENCIES
STA Travel (020-61 10 10; Sankt Olofsgatan 11)

UNIVERSITIES
Student union (480 31 00; www.uppsalastudentkar.nu; Övre Slottsgatan 7)

Sights
GAMLA UPPSALA
If you enjoy fresh green countryside but-tered thick with pagan history, don’t miss Gamla Uppsala, 4km north of the modern city. It’s one of Sweden’s largest and most important burial sites, containing around 300 mounds from the 6th to the 12th centuries. The earliest and most impressive are the three great grave mounds, Tingshögden (Court Mound), is Öd- insborg (© 32 35 25; buffet Skr150; 11am-6pm), a restaurant known for its horns of meat and Viking feasts (although daintier refreshments are offered at the downstairs summer café).

DOMKYRKAN
The Gothic Domkyrkan (cathedral; 18 72 01; www.uppsaldomkyrka.se; admission free; 8am-6pm Mon-Sat & 12.30-5pm Sun May-Sep, limited hr Oct-Apr) in the cathedral’s north tower, where there’s also a great display of medi- eval textiles. Particularly fine are the clothes worn by the three noblemen who were murdered in the castle (see above): they’re the only example of 16th-century Swedish high fashion still in existence.

BOTANICAL GARDENS
The excellent Botanical Gardens (471 28 38; www.botanischenamhuset.se in English; 7am-8.30pm May-Aug, 7am-7pm Sep-Apr), below the castle hill, show off over 10,000 different species, and are well worth a wander. Attractions include the 200-year-old Linnaeum Orangery (© 9am-3.30pm Mon-Thur, 9am-2.30pm Fri year-round) and a tropical greenhouse, currently undergoing restoration (due to reopen in 2007).

MUSEUMS
With its wonderfully eccentric halls, the Museum Gustavianum (471 75 71; www.gustavianum.uu.se; Akademigatan 3; adult/under 12yr Skr30/free; 11am-4pm Tue-Sun) is the most intriguing of Uppsala’s museums. It contains a reconstructed Viking ship burial, Egyptian mummi- mies and Carl von Linné’s notebooks, but the most wowing exhibit is the 17th-century Augsburg Art Cabinet, containing over a thousand ingenious tin- kets and the veriginous anatomical theatre where executed criminals were dissected. In the display hall of Carolina Rediviva (471 39 00; Dag Hammarskjölds väg 1; adult/under 12yr Skr20/ free; 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, 10am-5pm Sat & 11am-4pm Sun mid-Jun–mid-Aug, 9am-8pm Mon-Fri & 10am-5pm Sat mid-Aug–mid-Jun), the old university library, is the surviving hall of the Codex Argentus (AD 520), written in silver ink on purple vellum in Gothic.

EVDYDAY GODS
Some of the greatest gods of the Nordic world – Tyr, Odin, Thor and Frigg – live on in the English language as the days of the week: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, respectively.

Tyr was the god of justice, a deity who lost his hand to a giant wolf. The gods tried to trick the wolf, Fennir, into captivity by challenging him to break an indestructible chain. The wolf was suspicious, but accepted the challenge on condition that one of the gods place a hand in his mouth. Tyr agreed, the gods succeeded in fettering Fennir, but the furious wolf retaliated by biting off Tyr’s right hand.

The most prominent of the Nordic gods was one-eyed Odin, whose eight-legged flying horse, Sleipnir, had runes etched on its teeth. Odin gave up his eye in exchange for wisdom; he also gleaned information from his two ravens Hugin and Munin, who flew daily across the worlds in search of knowledge. As the god of war, Odin sent his 12 Valkyries (battle maidens) to select heroes killed in battle to join him at the palace of Valhalla. He was also the god of poets, a magician and master of runes.

Frigg was Odin’s wife, and she’s also known as a fertility goddess and the goddess of marriage. The thunder god, Thor, protected humankind from the malevolent ice giants with his magic hammer, Mjolnir (Thor’s-hammer talismans are frequently found in Viking graves). Immensely strong, he would hurl Mjolnir into the clouds to create vast thunderstorms before the hammer came boomeranging back again.
On the lawn by the main Uppsala University building (imposing enough to demand a glance inside) are nine typical Uppland rune stones.

On 30 April, students dressed in white gather to celebrate the Walpurgis Festival. Traditionally, this includes a student boat race on the river at 10am and a run down Carolinabacken at 3pm, as well as various processions and much singing.

Activities
You can ride the narrow-gauge steam train Lennakatten (① 13 05 00; www.lennakatten.se in Swedish; unlimited day-travel ticket adult/6-15yr/family Skr150/75/350; ⑧ year-round; ⑧). The train travels up to seven times on Sunday from June to August, and there are also tours on Thursday, Friday and Saturday in July. The trains depart from the main station. Uppsala Östra museum station, behind the university, is recommended for its sheer convenience – you can’t really stay anywhere more central for these prices. Rooms, all named after famous Uppland landmarks, are small but decent (although dorms suffer from traffic and level-crossing noise), and there are plenty of toilets and showers to go round.

STF Vandrarhem Sunnersta Herrgård (② 32 40 22; info@sunnerstaherrgard.se; Sunnerstavägen 24; dm Skr190, s/d from Skr340/380; ⑧ Jan–mid-Dec; bus 18 or 20) A pleasant, well-equipped hostel located in a manor house some 6km south of the city centre. It’s possible to rent bikes (per day/week Skr50/200), and there’s a boat that you can use for free.

STF Vandrarhem Vandraren (① 10 43 00; info@vandraren.se; Valtholmavägen 16C, dm Skr210-250, s/d from Skr250/440; ⑧ mid–Jun–mid-Aug; bus 2, 20, 24 or 54) A student residence for most of the year, this summer hostel 2km north of the city has excellent amenities, including a private bathroom for each room. You can also rent bikes.

Samariterhemmets Gästhem (① 10 34 00, fax ① 83 75; Samaritergården 2; w/without bathroom Skr570/490, w/without bathroom Skr340/740, prices discounted by around Skr80) Run by a Christian community, this is a clean, central and inviting guesthouse. Old-style rooms are simply decorated in cool creams, with antique furniture dotted here and there.

Families with water-loving children should head for Fyrishov (② 727 49 50; www.fyrishov.se in Swedish; Idrottsgatan 2; adult/3-15yr Skr75/60; ⑧ 9am–9pm), one of Sweden’s largest waterparks with the full complement of slides, Jacuzzis, waterfalls and wave machines.

Sleeping
Uppsala Vandrarhem City (① 10 00 08; www.uppsala.vandrarhem.se; Sankt Persgatan 16; dm/s/d Skr200/350/ ⑧ year-round; ⑧) The Vandrarhem City is recommended for its sheer convenience – you really can’t stay anywhere more central for these prices. Rooms, all named after famous Uppland landmarks, are small but decent (although dorms suffer from traffic and level-crossing noise), and there are plenty of toilets and showers to go round.

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Eating
RESTAURANTS & CAFÉS
Domtrappkällaren (② 13 09 55; info@domtrappkallaren.se; Sankt Eriksgatan 15; lunch from Skr80, dinner mains Skr200-290; ⑧ closed Sun) Previously a prison, this is now a top-notch restaurant set in an atmospheric cellar (lunch is served upstairs). It specialises in gamey dishes and Swedish cooking, such as venison, reindeer and cloudberry soufflé.

Tatziki (② 15 03 33; Fyristorg 4; meze Skr49, mains Skr100-140) Tatziki will supply all your moussaka and souvlaki needs. There’s cosy seating in the 16th-century interior, and in summer the outside tables by the riverside thrum with diners. Service is fast, the food tasty, and there are several veggie options.

Kung Král (② 12 50 90; www.kungkral.se in Swedish; Sankt Persgatan 4; lunch Skr80, mains Skr90-180) In the heart of town, this is perfect for summer lunchtimes, when the umbrella’s seating on Gamla Torget fills with hungry punters. The extensive menu includes burgers, pasta, reindeer, salads and seafood dishes.

Hambergs Fisk (② 71 00 50; Fyristorg 8; lunch from Skr80, à la carte mains Skr150-240; ⑧ Tue-Sat) Next to the tourist office is this excellent seafood restaurant, which is especially popular for lunch. Self-caters may be interested in the attached fresh fish shop.

Amazing Thai (② 13 50 10; Bergvägen 14; lunch buffet from Skr60, à la carte dishes Skr90-130) A popular lunch spot thanks to its great-value buffet. The evening menu features a good selection of fragrant stir-fries, noodle dishes and curries.

Ovdfandas (② 13 42 04; Sylsommarsgatan 3; cakes & snacks around Skr40) Something of an Uppsala institution, this classy konditori dates back to the 19th century and is a cut above your average coffee-and-bun shop. It’s endorsed by no less a personage than the king, and radiates old-world charm.

Eko Caffeet (② 12 18 45; Drottninggatan 5; snacks Skr50-70) This funky little place with retro and mismatched furniture serves some of the best coffee in town. It does Italian-style wholefood, turns into a tapas bar on Wednesday to Saturday evenings, and frequently hosts live jazz/folk. Things quieten down somewhat in the summer, when it just opens for lunch Monday to Friday.

QUICK EATS & SELF-CATERING
Saffet’s (② 12 41 25; Stora Torget 1; meals from Skr50) Cheap eats pour from the friers at this central fast-food outlet, serving Tex-Mex, burgers, spuds, kebabs and fish and chips.

Saluhallen (② 10am-6pm Mon–Fri, 10am-2pm Sat) Recently rebuit after a devastating fire, this must now be one of the world’s shiniest indoor markets. Stock up on meat, fresh fish, cheeses and fancy chocolates.

There’s a central Hemköp supermarket (Stora Torget, ② until 10pm) and a branch of the cheaper chain Netto’s (Klostergatan 3, ② until 9pm Mon–Fri, 6am & Sat). For alcohol, Systembolaget (Dagarbogransgatan 50) is inside the Svava shopping centre.
**Drinking & Entertainment**

In the evenings, local students converge on the university bars on Sankt Olofsgatan (difficult to get into if you’re not an Uppsala student, but worth a go). Or try the bar-restaurants in town.

*Svenssons Taverna* ([07 14 40 10; Syllosamsgatan 14]) This cool *taverna* has a winning combination of rustic interior and shady outdoor seating.

*Svenssons Åkanten* ([15 01 50; Sankt Erikstorg; May-Sep]) The Tavernas sister venue is equally popular for summer evening drinks, with a great riverside location near the indoor market.

O’Connor’s ([14 10 14 14; www.ul.se in Swedish]) runs traffic within the city and county.

**Getting Around**

Upplands Lokaltrafik ([07 11-14 14 14; www.ul.se in Swedish]) runs services on the S1 line, and on the S10 line, which runs through the central station for kids, has a fantastic rolling-ball machine guaranteed to hypnotise.

**Forssmark**

The beautiful surroundings of the Forssmarksbruks ironworks are ideal for photographers; it may be an old industrial estate, but its church, manor house, workshops and English gardens, all set around a central pond, are just staggeringly pretty. The *statue* of Neptune in the middle of the pond dates from 1792. There’s a seasonal *tourist office* ([05 10; 9am-4pm Jul–mid-Aug] which is staffed until 9pm for brochures. These days the main employer in the area is the nearby nuclear power station. An exhibition room adjoining Forssmark tourist office extols the virtues of the plant...with no mention of, for example, the radioactive waste it leaked into the Baltic Sea in June 2005. The bruksmuseum (adult/child Skr20/0 free; noon-4pm mid-Jun–mid-Aug), with old carriages, sleeping quarters and a factory office, is definitely worth a look, although its opening times can be erratic. *Eldorado* (free; 9am-4pm Mon-Fri, 10am Sat & Sun mid-Jun–mid-Aug), a tiny exhibition station for kids, has a fantastic rolling-ball machine guaranteed to hypnotise.

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cope admirably with the hungry crowd parties at this lovely old inn. As well as devouring lunch, you can stay in one of the charming rooms (prices include breakfast) overlooking the English park, and rent bicycles (per day Skr100).

**SÖDERMANLAND**

**NYKÖPING**

8055 / pop 49,575

You can easily spend a relaxing summer day or two in Nyköping, checking out its low-key attractions. There’s a **tourist office** (0248 20; tourism@nykoping.se; Stadshuset, Stora Torget; 8am-6pm Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm Sat mid-Jun–mid-Aug, 8am-5pm Mon-Fri rest of yr) inside the rather ugly wooden building on the main square. Banks, supermarkets and other services can be found on Västra Storgatan, running west from Stora Torget.

**Sights & Activities**

The scenic ruined castle Nyköpingshus (admission free; 2hr) was the setting for some violent sibling rivalry. In 1317 the king’s son, Birger, invited his two brothers, Erik and Valdemar, to a banquet there. When they arrived, he hurled them into the dungeon and threw away the key; they both eventually starved to death. Try to keep your mind free of such gruesome behaviour as you stroll by the tranquil riverside grounds.

You can also visit **Sörmlands Museum** (24 70 02; adult/under 20yr Skr20/00; 10am-5pm mid-Jun–mid-Aug, 11am-5pm Tue-Sun mid-Aug–mid-Jun) inside the castle. It’s made up of the **Kungstornet** (King’s Tower), the whitewashed four-storey castle tower; **Gamla Residenset**, the wonderland of 18th-century boathouses. Twelve kilometres southeast of town’s old industries. Twelve kilometres northeast of Nyköping is one of the most spectacular rock carvings in Sweden (see boxed text ‘Sigurdsröstningen’, below).

**The tourist office** (02 70 00; www.nykoping.se; Stadshuset, Stora Torget; 8am-8pm Mon-Thu, 8am-6pm Fri & 10am-3pm Sat) has free Internet access.

**Nyköping’s Skavsta airport** (28 04 00; www.skavsta-air.se), 8km northwest of town, has flights to/from the UK with Ryanair (see p323). Airport buses meet most flights and run to/from Stockholm (Skr130, 80 minutes). Local buses run every 10 minutes from Nyköping to Skavsta (Skr15, 20 minutes); alternatively, a taxi (21 75 00) costs about Skr140.

The bus and train stations are 800m apart on the western side of the central grid. Nyköping is on the regular **Svepub Express** (0200-21 82; www.svepubexpress.se) routes: Stockholm–Norrköping–Jönköping–Göteborg/Malmö, and Stockholm–Norrköping–Kalmar. To get to Eskilstuna, take local bus 701 or 801. SJ trains run every hour or two to Norrköping (Skr75, 40 minutes), Linköping (Skr145, 1 1/4 hours) and Stockholm (Skr120, one hour). Most X2000 services don’t stop in Nyköping.

The tourist office has bikes for rent (per day/week Skr40/200).

**ESKILSTUNA**

016 / pop 91,168

Once the murder capital of Sweden, Eskilstuna is now most famous for its zoo, which has had great success in breeding endangered white tigers. There are a number of other things to see, mostly linked to the town’s old industries. Twelve kilometres northeast of Eskilstuna is one of the most extraordinary rock carvings in Sweden (see boxed text ‘Sigurdsröstningen’, below).

The tourist office (07 10 00; www.eskilstuna.se; Nyköpingshus; admission free; 2hr) is on the regular Swebus Express service (day-ticket Skr135; noon-6pm Jul–mid-Aug, noon-4pm mid-May–Jun), which has kiddies’ rides and some larger whizzy things; the **reptile house** (adult/child Skr20/10); and the **swimming pool** (adult/ 7-14yr Skr30/20; 10am-6.30pm late May–mid-Aug).

Parken Zoo is located 1.5km west of the town centre. Bus 1 (Skr19, five minutes) leaves frequently from the train station.

**Other Sights**

The **Rademachersmedjorna** (Rademacher Forges; 07 10 13 71; Rademachergatan; admission free; 11am-4pm Tue-Sun) contain the carefully-conserved 17th-century remnants of Eskilstuna’s ironworking past. And the tradition continues: iron-, silver- and goldsmiths all have workshops here.

**Faktoriet** (07 23 75; faktoriet@eskilstuna.se; admission free; 11am-4pm Tue-Sun), on the island Strömsholmen, tells the story of Eskilstuna’s industrial and cultural heritage. Its mighty steam engines spring into life on the first Sunday of the month (February to November).

At the time of writing, **Konstmuseet**’s (07 10 13 69) extensive art collection was being relocated to the Munktell area; phone for further details.

In **Torshälla**, 6km north of the town centre, **Brandt Contemporary Glass** (07 52 30; brandtglass@telia.com; Klockberget; admission free; 11am-4pm Fri & Sat), just behind the church, is a contemporary glass workshop and gallery exhibiting vases and sculptures. The **Ebelingsmuseet** (07 73 05; Ebelinsvången 5; admission free; noon-4pm Wed-Sun) has bizarre steel sculptures by Allan and Marianne Ebling, and changing temporary exhibitions. The old wooden houses and pretty riverside areas

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**SIGURDSRÖSTNINGEN**

This exceptionally vivid 3m-long **Viking Age rock carving** (admission free; 2hr; bus 225) tells the story of Sigurd, the greatest hero in Germanic legend. It was the source for Wagner’s Ring Cycle, and **The Hobbit** and **Lord of the Rings**. Also borrow freely from it.

Carved into the bedrock around AD 1000, the carving shows Sigurd killing the snake-like dragon Fafnir (who guards a cursed golden ring). After tasting the dragon’s blood, Sigurd is able to understand the language of the birds. They warn of a murderous plot against him, so Sigurd attacks first, chopping off his enemy’s head. Also on the stone is Sigurd’s horse Grani, a gift from Odin. The runes in the dragon’s body are unrelated to the legend – they explain that a nearby bridge (the abutments can still be seen) was raised by Sigrid in memory of her husband Holger.

The carving is one of Sweden’s finest and widely detoured. It’s situated near Sundbyholms Slott and Mälaren lake, 12km northeast of Eskilstuna.
in Torshälla are also worth a look. Take bus 2 or 15 from Eskilstuna to Torshälla (Skr19, 40 minutes).

Sleeping & Eating
STF Hostel Eskilstuna (Skr 30 80; vilsta.sportshotell @swipnet.se; dm Skr150, s/d from Skr250/300; ☑️ yearround; bus 12 from Fristadstorget) Lying in the Vilsta nature reserve 2km south of this hostel is well provided for – all rooms have en-suite and TV. It’s part of the Vilsta sport complex, so there are gym, Jacuzzi and sports facilities conveniently to hand.

City Hotel ( ☏ 10 88 50; www.cityhotel.se; Drottninggatan 15; s/d from Skr899/1155, discounted to Skr575/750) Among the better priced hotels in town is this one, right opposite the train station. Rooms are comfortable, and a few are adorned with wonderful Swedish stoves, giving them a hint of the 19th century.

Sundbyholms Slott ( ☏ 016-42 84 00; www.sundbyholms-slott.se; s/d from Skr990/1390, ste Skr2520; ☑️) Near Sigurdsh Dustin, 12km northeast of Eskilstuna. Luxury suites, perfect for a romantic weekend, are available in the tasteful mansion here. If your budget doesn’t stretch that far, more prosaic rooms are available in the attached hotel. The castle, by Mälaren lake, not far from the Sigurd carvings, also adorns with wonderful Swedish stoves, giving them a hint of the 19th century. Among the better priced hotels in town such as Örebro (Skr102, one hour, every 12

Getting There & Away
Getting There & Away
Swebus Express ( ☏ 0208-21 82 18; www.swebusexpress.se) operates up to six buses daily on its Stockhold–Eskilstuna–Örebro route, but trains are best for destinations such as Örebro (Skr102, one hour, every two hours), Västerås (Skr65, 30 minutes, hourly) and Stockholm (Skr118, one hour, hourly).

VÄSTMANLAND

VÄSTERÅS

Västerås (Pop 131,014)

With its cobbled streets, higgledy-piggledy houses and flourishing flower gardens, Västerås’ old town is an utter delight. Sweden’s sixth-largest city is a place of two halves: head southeast and you’ll find modern shopping centres, large industries and sprawling suburbs that bear no resemblance to the teeny lanes and crafty shops you’ve left behind.

Västerås makes for a pleasant day trip, and is a handy base for exploring Lake Mälaren and important pagan sites nearby.

Information
The tourist office ( ☏ 39 01 00; http://turism.vastmanland.se; Kyrkogatan 6; meals Skr40-70) is opposite domkyrkan (the cathedral) and offers free Internet access. There’s also an internet café, Galaxies ( ☏ 12 54 40; Kopparsbergsvägen 27B; per hr Skr45; noon–9pm Sun–Thu, noon–10pm Fri & Sat).

Sights
MUSEUMS
The Konstmuseum ( ☏ 16 13 00; Fiskartorget 2; admission free; 11am–4pm Tue–Fri & noon–4pm Sat mid-Jun–mid-Aug, 10am–5pm Tue–Fri, 11am–4pm Sat & noon–4pm Sun rest of yr) is located in the stately old town hall, devotes its energies to exhibiting contemporary Swedish painters. The permanent collections, with works by artists such as Ivan Aguéli and Bror Hjorth, also get an occasional airing. In the cellar vaults is a decent café, which serves up homemade pies, soups and cakes, and migrates outdoors in summer.

Vallby Friluftsmuseum ( ☏ 39 80 70; www.vallbyfriluftsmuseum.se; admission free; 10am–5pm year-round; bus 10 or 12, off Vallbyleden near the E18 inter-

change, 2km northwest of the city, is home to an extensive open-air collection. Among the 40-odd buildings, there’s an interesting farmyard and craft workshops.

Västmanlands Länsmuseum ( ☏ 15 61 00; Slotts gatan), inside Västerås Slot (manor house), was closed at the time of writing; contact the tourist office for more information.

OTHER SIGHTS
The fine brick-built Domkyrkan (Cathedral; Biskops gatan; 8am–5pm Mon–Fri, 9:30am–5pm Sat & Sun) was begun in the 12th century, although most of what you see today is late-14th-century work. It contains carved floor slabs, six altar pieces and the marble sarcophagus of crazy King Erik XIV.

Library
Bibliotek
S o r t e r e d 1 2 3 4
CENTRAL SWEDEN

CENTRAL SWEDEN
ARTY ALTERNATIVE LODGINGS

In addition to Västerås’ normal, run-of-the-mill hotels, there are two unique accommodation possibilities in and around town. Both created by local artist Mikael Genberg, they are well worth investigating if you like your lodgings with a twist.

The Hotell Hackspett, or Woodpecker Hotel, is a fabulous tree house in the middle of Vasaparken, behind the Konstmuseum. The cabin sleeps only one person and is 13m above the ground in an old oak tree; guests (and breakfast) are hoisted up in a basket! The second of Genberg’s fascinating creations is the Utter Inn, a small, red, floating cabin in the middle of Mälaren lake, only accessible by boat. The bedrooms are 3m below the surface – and is complete with glass viewing panels to watch the marine life outside. There’s room for two people, and a canoe is provided.

Accommodation in the tree house or lake cabin costs Skr700 per person per night if you bring your own food and bed linen, or the ‘deluxe package’ (when linen is supplied and you will be delivered food in the evening and breakfast in the morning) is Skr1000 per person. For bookings, contact Mikael Genberg directly (83 00 23, info@mikaelgenberg.com) or call the Västerås tourist office. Genberg also has a website (www.mikaelgenberg.com); it’s in Swedish only, but the pictures will give you an idea of his creations.

Behind the cathedral is the quaint old-town area Kyrkbacken, once the student district it is now a wonderfully preserved portion of pre-18th-century Västerås, studied with artisans’ workshops.

The city is surrounded by ancient pre-Christian sites. The most interesting and extensive is Anundshög (admission free; 24h), the biggest tumulus in Sweden, 6km northeast of the city. It has a full complement of prehistoric curiosities, such as mounds, stone ship settings and a large 11th-century runestone. The two main stone ship settings date from around the 1st century. The area is part of the Badelunda Ridge, which includes the 13th-century Badelunda Church (1km north) and the 16m-wide Tibble Labyrinth (1km south). Ask the tourist office for the handy map Badelunda Forntids Bygd. Take bus 12 to the Bjuhrvoda terminus, then walk 2km east.

Sleeping

Budget travellers will struggle in the centre of Västerås, but there’s plenty of choice for middle-of-the-range and top-end spenders.

STF Vändrahem Västerås (30 38 00; info@vasteras.stf.se; Swärggatan 4A; d from Skr1269/1469, discounted to Skr956/1050; (P) (under construction at August) Bang in the centre of the modern city, this 25-storey skyscraper was built for gravity-defying lounge lizards; it boasts the highest cocktail bar in Sweden! Some rooms have views over Lake Mälaren, and all expected mod cons are here, including a spa with masseurs, sauna, gym and Mediterranean-inspired restaurant.

Johanni in Bergs Camping (84 02 79; site/cabins from Skr80/400; bus 25) The closest campsite is this place, 5km southwest of the city near Lake Mälaren. Facilities include a small swimming area and canoe hire.

Eating & Drinking

La Tapita (12 10 44; Stora Torget; tapas Skr25-65, mains Skr100-185; (closed Sun) This Spanish-themed tapas bar and restaurant has a molten atmosphere, enhanced by Latin music and piles of southern Mediterranean grub.

Nibble an array of tapas, tuck into pasta, fish and meat mains, or share a paella Valenciana (Skr166 per person) with a friend.

Stadskällaren (10 28 00; Stora Torget; mains Skr185-280) In the atmospheric cellar of the Stadshotellet, this restaurant is a great place to treat yourself. Its small but perfectly formed menu is fish- and meat-based, with dishes cooked to perfection in Swedish style.

Limone (41 56 50; Stora Gat 6; dishes Skr120-200; (closed lunch Jul & Sun year-round) Limone is an elegant, upmarket Italian restaurant, with stylish décor and impressive menu items like linguini with crayfish, or grilled veal wrapped in Parma ham.

Bill & Bobs (41 99 21; Stora Torget 5; meals Skr80-200) A diverse crowd settles down at this casual spot to drink and chatter at the outdoor tables on the main square. That chicken and hamburger with bacon bits are a couple of Bill & Bobs’ popular ‘classic’ dishes.

Asian Bar (18 60 68; Sverigetorget 10; lunch Skr60-100; (closed Sun) If your salvia starts streaming at words like tieryaku, ichiban and yakitori, head down to this simple central sushi bar.

Kalle på Spangen (12 91 29; Kungsgatan 2; meals Skr40-65) This is without doubt the best café in Västerås. It’s right by the river in the old part of town, and has several cozy, creaky-floored rooms filled with mismatched furniture and gold-edged grandfather clocks. Friendly staff serve up a wide selection of coffees, sandwhiches, salads, baked potatoes and cakes.

There’s a Hemköp supermarket (Punkt shopping centre, Stora Gatan) and Ericsson’s (13 55 12; Stora Torget 3) is an excellent delicatessen for stocking up on picnic supplies. For alcohol, visit Systembolaget (Stora Gatan 48).

Getting There & Around

The airport (80 56 00; www.vasterasflyplass.se) is 6km east of the city centre, and is connected by bus L941. Budget carrier Ryanair flies here from the UK (see p33 for more details), and SAS flies regularly to Copenhagen (mainly on weekdays).

The bus and train stations are adjacent, on the southern edge of Västerås. Regional buses 65 and 69 run to Sala (one hour, up to eight weekdays, two Saturday and Sunday) as do trains (Skr39, 25 minutes, every two hours). Swebus Express (0200 21 82 18; www.swebusexpress.se) runs to Uppsala (Skr70, 1½ hours, up to six daily), Stockholm (Skr90, one hour 40 minutes, up to nine daily) and Örebro (Skr95, 1½ hours, up to eight daily).

Svenska Buss (0771-67 67 67; www.svenskabuss.se in Swedish) also runs routes to Stockholm (Skr70, 1½ hours, one Friday) and Uppsala (Skr70, 1½ hours, two Friday and Sunday).

Västerås is accessible by hourly trains from Stockholm (Skr91, one hour). Trains to Örebro (Skr102, one hour), Uppsala (Skr100, 1½ hours) and Eskilstuna (Sk65, 30 minutes) are also frequent.

Taxi Västerås (18 50 00) to help you get around.

SALA

Sala’s silver mine was the source of Sweden’s wealth in the 16th and 17th centuries, and a descent into its dank tunnels is a true high (or should that be low?) point of anyone’s holiday. The mine quite literally changed the face of the near town centre; channels and ponds, the source of power for the mines, now weave through and around it, giving a pleasantly watery feel.

The tourist office (552 02; www.sala.se/turism; Stora Torget; (8-5am Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat May-Sep) is inside the town hall. The free town map is useful if you want to use the walking paths.

Sights & Activities

Sala Silvergruva (195 41; www.sala.se/salasilvergruva; (11am-5pm May-Aug, noon-4pm Sat & Sun Sep-Apr), about 2km south of the town centre, is the old silver mine area. Above ground, there’s a whole weird landscape to explore, made up of chimneys, holes, explosives stores, spoil heaps and engine houses. The listed buildings in the museum village contain artists’ workshops, a café, a mine museum (under construction at the time of writing) and a small Swedish-only police museum (adult/child Skr20/10; (noon-4pm Jun-Aug), full of rusty knock knock jesters.

Under the surface are 20km of galleries, caverns and shafts, into which you can descend on one of several different mine tours. The most frequent of these is the informative one-hour 60 Metersturen (adult/child Skr100/50). There are no set times for English tours – to be certain of catching one, book ahead.

Both village and mine are off the Västerås road. It’s a pretty walk along the Gröna Gången (Green Walk), which takes you southwest via the parks and the Mellandammen pond at Sofielund. Public transport connections
aren’t good; take the Silverlinjen bus from the train station to Styrs, then walk the remaining 7km.

In the main park in town is Väsby Kungs-
går (1106 37; vasybkgungsgard@globalnet.net; adult/ child Skr20/10; 11am-4pm Mon-Fri year-round). Boating on the lake or walking along the path that leads to the castle, are crammed into converted 1930s’ railway carriages. All compartments have great views over the lake, and there’s a café here which does breakfast, and sandwiches and snacks and even a little lake, clearly confident in its ability to enchant the pants off anyone. Slow your pace and succumb to its cobbled streets and steam trains, mellow boat rides and perfect creme-ice cream.

The helpful tourist office (811 20; nora.turist byra@mora.se; Stationhuset; 9am-7pm Mon-Sat & 10am-5pm Sun Jul; 10am-6pm Mon-Sat & 10am-5pm Sun Jun & Aug, 9am-noon & 1pm Mon-Fri rest of yr) is at the train station, by the lake. It takes bookins for 11 guided tours (June to August), which either have different themes or take place at a particular attraction. The guided town walk (adult/child return Skr70/35) is available in Eng-

Getting There & Around
For transport to and from Västerås, see p249. Going to or from Uppsala, take regional bus 848 (1 1/2 hours, hourly Monday to Friday, nine buses Saturday and Sunday). Sala is on the main Stockholm to Mora rail line (via Uppsala), with daily trains roughly every two hours (Skru6, 40 minutes). Ask about bike hire at the tourist office.

ÅNGELBORG 0223
Engelsburg Bruk, a Unesco World Heritage site in the tiny village of Ängelsborg, was once one of the most important early-industrial ironworks in Europe. During the 17th and 18th centuries, its rare timber-clad blast furnace and forge (still in working order) were state-of-the-art technology, and a whole town sprang up around them. Today you can wander round the perfectly preserved estate, made up of a mansion and park, workers’ homes and industrial buildings. Guided tours (Skru50) run daily from mid-June to mid-August, and less frequently from May to mid-June and mid-August to mid-September; contact 131 00 for details.

Ängelsborg is around 60km northwest of Västerås, from where regional trains run every hour or two (Skru98, 45 minutes); from Ängelsborg train station it’s a 1.5km walk north to the site.

NyaServering (300 18) is not far from Ängelsborg train station and serves food from 11am to 8pm daily. There’s a good view from here across to the island Bar-
rön on Ämänningen lake, where the world’s oldest-surviving oil refinery is located – it was opened in 1875 and closed in 1902.

NORA 0587 / pop 10,523
One of Sweden’s most seductive old wooden towns, Nora sits snugly on the shores of a little lake, clearly confident in its ability to enchant the pants off anyone. Slow your pace and succumb to its cobbled streets and steam trains, mellow boat rides and perfect crème-ice cream.

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**Sights & Activities**

The once-powerful **Slottet** (☎ 21 21 21; admission via tours, adult/6-15yr Skr60/20; ☎ Late Jun–mid-Aug) is a magnificent edifice, now used as the county governor’s headquarters. Although originally constructed in the late 13th century, most of what you see today is from 300 years later.

The city centre is dominated by Örebro Castle. East of the castle, Örebro is blessed with the **Stadsträdgården**, voted Sweden’s most beautiful park and great for kids. It stretches alongside the Svartan (the Black River) and merges into the excellent Wadköping museum village. The village contains craft workshops, a bakery and period buildings – including Kungstugan (the King’s Lodgings, a medieval house with 16th-century ceiling paintings) and Caja Warg’s house (home of an 18th-century celebrity chef). You can wander round the village at any time, but the shops, café, exhibitions and museums are open roughly 11am to 4pm (sometimes 5pm) Tuesday to Sunday year-round.

The **Länsmuseum & Konsthall** ([☎](/phone-number) 0287/00; info@orebolandsmuseum.se; Engelbreksgatan 3; admission fee; ☎ 11am-5pm Thu-Tue, 11am-9pm Wed) has permanent artwork grouped into themed rooms, and historical displays about the region (mostly in Swedish).

Many Swedish schools once had private natural history collections, but most were binned in the 1960s. Örebro’s **Biologiska Museet** ([☎](/phone-number) 016252710; 11am-2pm Mon-Frid-Jun–mid-Aug, in Karolinska Skolan off Fredsgatan) is a survivor, and is worth a glance for its tier upon tier of stuffed birds.

The 13th-century church **St Nikolai Kyrka** ([☎](/phone-number) 10 57 91; info@algebolke.com) offers a number of cruises. Their evening trips on Lake Hjälmaren (Skr240; 7pm Wednesday to Friday mid-May to September, plus Saturday in July) are popular, and include an onboard shrimp supper.

**Sleeping**

**STF Vandrarmem Örebro** ([☎](/phone-number) 31 02 40; hepa@hepa.se; Kaptensgatan 1; dm from Skr130; bus 16 or 31; ☎) This good, but quite well hidden, place lies 1.6km northeast of the train station.

**Livin’ Lägenhetshotellet** ([bokning](/phone-number)@livin.nu; per night Skr500). The STF hostel also owns this apartment complex next door. Each well-designed flatlet fits up to four people and has a fully equipped kitchen, bathroom and living area. The hostel rents bikes and inline skates.

**Hotel Storgården** ([☎](/phone-number) 120020; [www.hotelstorgarden.se](http://www.hotelstorgarden.se); Fredsgatan 11; s/d from Skr600/780, discounted to Skr450/560). It could do with a lick of paint, but this 1st-floor budget hotel is handily central. Rooms, with shuttered windows, are large, airy and have private facilities; the effort stretches to yellowing pads of paper in the desk drawers!

**First Hotel Örebro** ([☎](/phone-number) 611 73 00; [www.firsthotels.se](http://www.firsthotels.se); Storgatan 24; s/d Skr1095/1495, discounted to Skr795/975; ☎). Most of the spacious rooms at this more conventional establishment overlook a quiet, sunny terrace; those on the higher floors have small balconies. Bathrooms have all recently been refurbished and there’s a bar selling boozes and light meals. Camping is next door. Each well-designed flatlet fits up to four people and has a fully equipped kitchen, bathroom and living area. The hostel rents bikes and inline skates.

**Behrn Hotel** ([☎](/phone-number) 12 00 95; www.behnhotel.se; Stortorget 12; s/d Skr959/1295, discounted to Skr645/845; ☎). Excellently situated on the main square, you get the feeling that the Behrn Hotel goes that extra mile. Rooms are individually decorated and range from medieval-like fittings to clean-cut modern Scandinavian. If you’re showering out, go for a luscious suite, with old wooden beams, chandeliers and Jacuzzi. There’s also spa, and a restaurant which does dinner Tuesday to Friday.

**Elite Stora Hotellet** ([☎](/phone-number) 15 69 00; info@elitehotel-orebro.se; Drottninggatan 1; s/d Skr1195/1665; discounted to Skr855/975; ☎). This is the pick of the town’s hotels. Many of the sumptuous, newly spruced-up rooms have stunning views of the castle, and all offer all the mod cons you’d expect from this upmarket chain.

**Gustavsvik Camping** ([☎](/phone-number) 19 69 50; [www.gustavsvik.camping.se](http://www.gustavsvik.camping.se); Semmarövägen; sites Skr130–295, cabins from Skr770; ☎). This camping facility is 2km south of the city centre. It’s huge and family-oriented, with pools, minigolf, a café, and bike rental (Skr60 per day).

**Eating**

**Slottskällaren** ([☎](/phone-number) 15 69 60; Drottninggatan 1; mains Skr190–220; ☎ from 5pm Tue-Sat year-round, plus lunch Mon-Fri Sep-Jun) This upmarket eatery, at the Elite Stora Hotellet, offers fine dining and a good wine cellar. You can nibble beautifully presented meat, fish and veggie dishes in the atmospheric 14th-century vaults, or sit out on the terrace and drink in the glorious castle views.

**Brederås** ([☎](/phone-number) 31 50 20; Kungsgatan 1; dishes from Skr60). In summer, Brederås is an ultrapopular place for lunch, thanks to its outdoor seats in a courtyard suntrap. A constant dance of customers swirls in and out for ciabattas, huge bowls of salad and pasta, or hotplate dishes (mostly pasta-based).

**Pacos** ([☎](/phone-number) 10 10 46; Olgatan 13A; lunch from Skr55, dinner mains Skr100–150; ☎ closed Sun) Bright colours, chirpy music and an assortment of...
well-priced lunchtime specials bring in the diners. Dishes are mainly Tex-Mex food, but pizza and pasta are served, too.

Hälls Konditori Stallbacken (611 07 66; Engelbrektsgatan 12; meals Skr60) Backing onto the same appealing cobbled courtyard as Bredbar, is this classic old-style café. Sensible light meals (salads, quiche, sandwiches) are on offer, plus there’s teetering piles of lurid-coloured creamy cakes and patisseries.

Farbro Melkers (611 81 99; Stortorget 6; meals around Skr50) If you’re more of a modern sort, head instead for this stylish alternative, with good coffee, light meals (sandwiches, baked potatoes), and a large picture window so you can stare out onto the square.

For cheap eats head to Café Aladdin (18 35 30; Klostergatan 11), on slightly grungy Järntorget, which offers pizza, pasta and baked spuds for under Skr40. There’s a supermarket in the Kompassen centre on Stortorget.

Drinking & Entertainment

Babar (10 19 00; Kungsplan 4; mains Skr130-170) Trendy Babar is a restaurant and bar, fashionable with young, hip student types. It delivers international cuisine, moody lighting and dance tunes to its customers, and stays open until 2am Wednesday to Saturday for drinking and boogieting (Saturday is four times on weekdays to Örebro (841

Bishops Arms (15 69 20; until at least midnight) Whether or not you’re convinced by the ’authentic English pub’ schtick, the bar’s outdoor drinking area, with super view castles, is a swinging spot on a summer evening. There are also pub meals here for under Skr100.

Harrys (10 89 89; Hamnplan; mains Skr80-180; from 5pm) Another popular nightspot, Harrys is in a good location down by the river. There’s a comprehensive menu of pub meals, live music on a Thursday, and a nightclub on Friday and Saturday.

For take away alcohol head to Systembolaget (Stortorget 10). Orebros’ cinemas, both showing mainstream films, are Filmmatden (611 8400; www.sf.se; Drottninggatan 6) and Sandrews (10 44 24; sandrewmetronome.com; Storgatan 19).

Getting There & Away

Long-distance buses, which leave from opposite the train station, run almost everywhere in southern Sweden. From here, Swebus Express (0200-21 82 18; www.swebusexpress.se) has connections to Norrköping, Karlstad and Oslo, Mariestad and Göteborg, Västerås and Uppsala, and Eskilstuna and Stockholm.

Train connections are also good. Direct SJ trains run to/from Stockholm (SkR220, two hours) every hour, some via Västerås (SkR102, one hour); and Göteborg (SkR270, three hours). Other trains run daily to Gävle (SkR242, four hours) and Borlänge (SkR156, 2½ hours), where you can change for Falun and Mora.

Getting Around

Town buses leave from Järntorget and cost SkR15. Cykeluthyrning (21 1909), at the Hamn plan boat terminal, rents bikes from May to September from SkR90 per day. For a cab, call Taxi Kurir (12 30 30).

ASKERSUND & AROUND

0583 / pop 11,477

Askersund, with its quaint little harbour, crooked wooden houses and cobbled square, is often overlooked by travellers, but it’s a good place to relax.

The tourist office (810 88; turistbyran@askersund.se; Lilla Bergsgatan 12A; 10am-7pm mid-Jun–Mid-Aug, 10am-12.30pm & 1-4pm Mon-Fri rest of yr), on the main square, has free Internet access (30-minute slots). Ask for information on walking and cycling routes around the lake, and guided tours. Askersund has banks and most other tourism facilities.

Sights

TIVEDEN NATIONAL PARK

Carved by glaciers, this trolls’ home and former highwayman’s haunt (about 33km south of Askersund) makes for wonderful wild walking. The park is noted for its ancient virgin forests, which are very rare in southern Sweden, and has lots of dramatic bare bedrock, extensive boulderfields and a scattering of lakes. There’s an information centre in the southeastern part of the park (2km from the entrance). The entrance is 5km off the main road (the turn-off is at Bocksjö, on road No 49). There’s no public transport to the park.

OTHER SIGHTS

Cool, classical and refined, lakeside Stjernsund Manor (100 04; entry by tour, adult/under 12yr SkR50/free; 11am, noon, 2pm, 3pm & 4pm mid-May-Aug) contains one of the best-preserved 19th-century interiors in Sweden, with elegant furniture and gilt, glass and velvet fixtures and fittings. There’s also an appealing café in the nearby estate manager’s old house. The manor is 5km south of town; see the information on M/S Wettervik, below, for how to get there.

Hembygdsgården (Hagaavägen; admission free; exhibitions noon-3pm Mon-Fri mid-Jun–mid-Aug) has a collection of old wooden farm buildings, and a children’s zoo with rabbits, goats and ducks.

‘Boat Harry’ runs the small boat museum (Hamnagatan; adult/child SkR10/free; 1-6pm Mon-Fri, noon-4pm Sat & Sun Jul–mid-Aug) at the harbour, with old sailing vessels, motors and model ships.

In July and early August, the M/S Wettervik (www.wettervik.se) makes various trips from the harbour, including an excursion to Stjernsund Manor (adult/12-15yr SkR80/45 at 1.30pm and 3pm. To fit in a tour of the house, take the first boat and return on the second (which departs Stjernsund at 3.15pm). Book tours at the tourist office.

Sleeping & Eating

The tourist office can arrange private rooms at the harbour, as well as self-catering accommodation in an 18th-century house, with its low ceilings, warped old wooden beams and tiled floors. There’s also an appealing café, with its low ceilings, warped old wooden beams and tiled floors. The tourist office can arrange private rooms at the harbour, as well as self-catering accommodation in an 18th-century house, with its low ceilings, warped old wooden beams and tiled floors. The tourist office can arrange private rooms at the harbour, as well as self-catering accommodation in an 18th-century house, with its low ceilings, warped old wooden beams and tiled floors.
Sights & Activities

Voted Member of the Year in 2005, the imaginative Värmlands Museum ( 14 31 10; www.varmlands museum.se; adult/under 20yr Skr40/fee; 10am-5pm end Jun-end Aug, 10am-5pm Tue & Thu & Sun, 10am-9pm Wed rest of yr) is out on point Sandgrundssudden. Its sensory displays cover local history and culture from the Stone Age to current times, including music, the river, forest and town. For green space and picnics, seek out Mariebergsgraven ( 29 66 90; mariebergsgraven@karlstad.se; admission free; 7am-10pm year-round; bus 1 or 31), a leisure park/open-air museum/animal park in the southwestern part of town (about 1km from the centre).

It’s worth popping your head round the door of the 18th-century cathedral ( 10am-7pm Mon-Fri, 10am-4pm Sat, 10am-6pm Sun Jun-Aug, h) to guess the building’s history. The added cells have been converted into large, bright seating.

From Tuesday to Saturday late June to mid-August, the town’s old jail (Mårbacka; Skr45, mains Skr150-220) is out on point Sandgrundssudden. Here has been converted into large, bright seating.
a restaurant, beach and assorted summer activities, plus bikes, boats and canoes for rent.

Lånsmansgården (140 10; info@lansman.com; s/d from Skr645/820; lunch Skr95, à la carte mains Skr135-240) Once a grocer’s shop, this is items and excellent ice cream.

Torsby & Around

Getting There & Away

Bus 302 runs to Torsby (Skr47, 45 minutes, 1-2 per week), and bus 310 runs to Torsby Ski Tunnel (twice daily on weekdays), and bus 310 runs to Ritamäki. Ritamäki Finngård. There’s a guide book (available from tourist offices, Skr125) that has text in Swedish only, but all the topographic maps you’ll need. The best section, Övermogen to Röjden (or vice versa), requires one or two overnight stops. Bus 311 runs from Torsby to near the border at Röjden (twice daily on weekdays), and bus 310 runs to Vittjärn (twice daily on weekdays), 6km from the border on road No 45.

Sights

Torsby Finnkulturcentrum (162 93; www.finnkulturcentrum.com; Gräsmarksvägen 8; admission Skr20; 11am-4pm mid-Jun–mid-Aug; noon-4pm Tue-Fri rest of yr) has displays describing the 17th-century Finnish settlement of the area, covering smoke-houses, hunting, music and witchcraft. The best bit is the terrace café, with seats overlooking a lulling lake.

The excellent neighbouring Fordonsmuseum (712 10; Gräsmarksvägen 8; adult/under 15yr Skr40/20; 10am-5.30pm mid-Jun–mid-Aug) will appeal to motorheads, with its collection of vintage cars, motorcycles and fire engines.

Henbysgården Kollsberg (718 61; Levgrens vägen 36; adult/child Skr20/10; noon-5pm Jun & Aug, noon-6pm Jul) is a dinky homestead museum with a number of old houses, including a Finnish cabin.

One of the best preserved ‘Finnish homesteads’ in the area is Ritamåki Finngården (502 25; 11am-6pm Jun-Aug), 25km west of Torsby and 5km from Lekvattnet. It was probably built in the late 17th century and was inhabited until 1964, making it the last permanently inhabited Finnish homestead in Sweden. It is surrounded by a nature reserve. Bus 310 goes to Lekvattnet but there is no public transport to Ritamåki.

Activities

There are a number of summer activities and tours in the area, including fishing, canoeing, white-water rafting, rock-climbing, mountain biking, and beaver and elk safaris. Contact the tourist office for information.

Torsby Camping (710 95; info@torsbycamping.se; Bredviken; sites Skr120, cabins from Skr50; May–mid-Sep) With its child-friendly beach, playgrounds and mini-golf, this large, well-equipped lakeside ground (4km south of town) is a popular family spot.

There’s no shortage of fast-food outlets and pizzerias in the centre. Finer options lie out of town.

Vägjsjörs Herrgård (313 30; info@vägjsjörs herrgård.com; B&B from Skr310 per person, dm Skr180) Twenty kilometres north of Torsby, by a stunning lake, is this large manor house.

You can catch boat trips on the Freya af Fryken from Torsby (see p257).

Looking like something you might use to smash atoms, the world’s longest ski tunnel (1.3km) is due to open here in spring 2006. The Torsby Ski Tunnel (Valberget; £50-60; May–Dec) arena will also contain the world’s only indoor biathlon shooting range. Details have not been finalised at the time of writing; contact the tourist office for further information.

Skiing outdoors is possible from December to Easter, 20km north of Torsby at Hofsjalllet (313 00; www.hofsjalllet.se). There are several ski lifts (up to 542m above sea level) and a variety of runs. Days pass start at Skr215 for adults and Skr180 for 8-15-year-olds. Alpine ski hire (312 55) costs Skr205 per day.

Sleeping & Eating

Hotel Örnen (146 64; hoteln-ornen@telia.com; Östmarksvägen 4; s/d Skr740/890, 1-/2-/3-/4-bed apt Skr890/980/1460/1620; May–mid-Aug) With its child-friendly beach, playgrounds and mini-golf, this large, well-equipped lakeside ground (4km south of town) is a popular family spot.

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B&B rooms are individually decorated so it’s a little hard to say what you’ll get, but the décor is genteel, and there are hostel beds too. They also serve food, though lunch only (Skr70, noon to 3pm).

Faktori (149 80; Båthamnen; meals around Skr100; noon-6pm Mon-Fri) By far the most appealing eatery in Torsby is down at the harbour (at the far end of Sjögatan). The view of the harbour is not at all attractive, but this is a cool restaurant with light meals (pasta, baked potatoes, fajitas) and a popular bar.

Heidruns Bok- & Bildcafé (421 26; www.heidruns.se; 11am-6pm mid-Jun–mid-Aug) In summer there’s live music, poetry and other entertainment at this charming café, run by local poet Kent Berg. You can feast on books and artwork, or on excellent home-baked cakes! Heidrun is 10km north of Torsby, at Fensbol on road No 45.

Getting There & Away

See opposite for travel information. There are a few buses that run north of Torsby, but generally on weekdays only.

DACARNA
You can go on a one-hour tour of the disused mine (adult/7-18yr Skr90/45) – bring warm clothing. Prices include museum entry and in high season you shouldn’t have to wait more than an hour for an English tour. Between October and April, tours must be booked in advance.

If you get peckish, the pretty café Gjuthuset (132 12), serving coffee, sandwiches and drinks, is a comfortable spot on the edge of the Great Pit. Opposite the main reception is Geschwornärgarden Vårhus (78 26 16; lunch Skr70), a more stately affair which does excellent hot lunches.

OTHER SIGHTS
The World Heritage listing actually encompasses a much larger area than just the Koppargruva. You can pick up a free brochure, Discover the Falun World Heritage Site, which pinpoints all the smelteries, slag heaps and mine estates within a 10km radius of Falun.

Dalarnas Museum (76 55 00; www.dalarnasmuseum.se; Stigaregatan 2-4; adult/child Skr40/20; 10am-5pm Mon-Fri, noon-5pm Sat & Sun) is a super introduction to Swedish folk art, music and costumes. Selma Lagerlöf’s study is preserved here, and there are ever-changing art and craft exhibitions.

If you’re feeling blue-and-gold hits you at Kristine Kyrka (545 70; Stora Torget; 10am-6pm Jun-Aug, 10am-4pm Sep-May), which shows off the riches brought to town by the 17th-century copper trade. Also worth a gander is Falun’s oldest building, the late-14th-century Stora Koppargruva Kyrka (546 00; Kyrkbacksvägen 8; 10am-6pm Jun-Aug, 10am-4pm Sep-May), with brick vaulting and folk-art flowers running round the walls.

If you’re feeling energetic, walk up to Hopptornet (835 61; 10am-6pm Sun-Thu, 10am-11pm Fri & Sat mid-May–mid-Aug), the tower and ski jump in the hills behind the town. You can take a lift to the top (Skr20) for a great view.

The Lugnet area in Falun, and the Bjursås area to the northwest, are both winter-sports centres with ski runs, Nordic courses and toboggan runs. Also in Lugnet is the Idrottsmuseum (138 24; admission Skr20; 10am-3pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat; bus 705 or 713), showcasing local sports.

There are several beautiful old buildings scattered some distance from Falun; if you have time and transport, ask the tourist office for information on Korså Bruk (an excellenly preserved former industrial settlement), Svärdsjö Gammelgårds (an 18th-century homestead with lots of summer entertainment), Stadstugan (a house decorated with folk-art Biblical scenes), and Vika Kyrra (with magnificent 16th-century wall paintings and medieval sculptures).

Sleeping
Falu Föngelse Vandrarhem (79 55 75; info@falufollegelse.se; Villavägen 17; dm Skr200) is the friendly SVIF hostel is the most central budget option. Accommodation is in the converted cells of an old prison, used for its original purposes up until the mid-1990s.

Hotel Falun (291 80; Trotzgatan 16; s/d Skr540/740, discounted to Skr490/590; 1) Here are some more hotel choices right by the tourist office, including this place which has comfortable modern rooms with private toilet and shared shower (or you can pay extra for rooms with full private bathroom).

Park Inn (70 17 00; www.falun.parkinn.se; Bergskogsgatan 7; s/d from Skr1120/1390, discounted to Skr70/790; 1) Also located near the tourist office, the Park Inn offers congenial rooms decorated in creams and pale greens. Beds are brand new, and all the bathrooms are due to be renovated in 2005/06. There’s a large swimming pool room, plus a bar, sauna and exercise room.

Scandic Hotel Lugnet Falun (669 22 00; falun@scandic-hotels.com; Svärdsgatan 51; s/d Skr1295/1595, discounted to Skr840/840; 1) This large, modern building stands out a mile with its ski-jump design. It has heaps of facilities, including a restaurant, bar and even a bowling hall in the basement! The hotel is just east of the centre on road No 80, close to Lugnet.

Lilla Pizzarian (288 34; Sälgatan 19) For cheap eats, this pizzeria does takeaway and eat-in pizzas and kebabs, with nothing on the menu over Skr55.

Harrys (79 48 87; Trotzgatan 9-11; 1) Closed Sun) This pub is entered off Åsgatan, and has everything – pub, restaurant, outdoor area and disco.

For self-caterers, there’s a centrally located ICA supermarket (Falugatan 1) as well as a Systembolaget (Åsgatan 19).

Getting There & Around
Falun isn’t on the main train lines – change at Borlänge when coming from Stockholm or Mora – but there are direct trains to and from Gävle (skr121, 1¼ hours, roughly every two hours).

Swebus Express (0200-21 82 18; www.swebux.se) has buses to the Göteborg–Karlstad–Falun–Gävle route, and connections to buses on the Stockholm–Borlänge–Mora route.

Regional transport is run by Dalatrafik (0771-95 95 95; www.dalatrafik.se in Swedish), which the likes of burgers and pasta – plus more upmarket ‘world cuisine’ options.

Två Rum & Kök (260 25; Stadshusgränd 2; mains Skr190-250; 1) open Sun) This gourmet shows the same kitchen as Banken, but it’s more exclusive. It’s won awards for its gourmet food (dinner only), served in an Art Nouveau interior.

Rådhus Källaren (254 00; Stora Torget; mains Skr170-250; 1) Sun) The town hall’s atmospheric 17th-century ceilings are another good spot for fine (if somewhat overpriced) dining. Dishes are a Swedish-world fusion, focusing on meaty-steaky mains. The bar next door is the place to be seen, and stays open until 2am on Friday and Saturday.

Kopparrattan Café & Restaurant (191 69; Stigaregatan 2; lunch buffet Skr80, even mains Skr100-150) An excellent choice is this funky, arty café-restaurant, attached to Dalarnas Museum. Choose from upmarket sandwiches (seed bread, brie, roast peppers), soup or a good vegetarian buffet for lunch, and light veggie, fish and meat evening mains. There’s an outside terrace overlooking the river, and live music on Friday nights in summer.

Bryggcafet (233 20; Fisktorget) Another fab café, Bryggcafet is a dinky little building which was once the fire station. It serves good coffee and cakes, and has a large deck area over the river with some good atmospheric views.

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‘LOVE EACH OTHER, CHILDREN, FOR LOVE IS ALL’

Whatever you do, don’t miss the ravishing Carl Larsson-gården (☎ 600 53; www.carl larsson.se; Sundborn; Admission by guided tour only, adult/7-17yr Skr90/40; ☑ 10am-5pm May-Sep, 1pm Mon-Fri Oct-Apr), home of artist Carl Larsson and his wife Karin, in the picturesque village of Sundborn. After the couple’s deaths, their early-20th-century home was preserved in its entirety by their children, but it’s no gloomy memorial. Lilla Hyttñas is a work of art, full of brightness, humour and love.

Superb colour schemes, decorations and furniture fill the house: Carl painted portraits of his wife and children everywhere, and Karin’s tapestries and embroidery reveal she was as skilled an artist as her husband. Even today, the modern styles in most of the house (especially the dining room) will inspire interior decorators. The mine master’s room has a beautiful painted ceiling (from 1742) and there’s a display of Larsson’s collection of Sami handicraft in the long passage.

Tours (45 minutes) run almost continually, but call in advance for times of English tours (alternatively, follow a Swedish tour with an English handbook costing Skr20).

If you like Larsson’s work, you can see more at the Carl Larssons Porträttsamling (☎ 600 53; Kyrkvägen 18, Sundborn; adult/under 12yr Skr25/free; ☑ 11am-5pm mid-Jun–mid-Aug), where there are 12 portraits of local worthies.

Bus 64 (Skr34) runs from Falun to Sundborn village (13km); covers all corners of the county of Dalarna. Tickets cost Skr17 for trips within a zone, and Skr17 extra for each new zone. A 31-day regional bus pass costs Skr900 and allows you to travel throughout the county. Regional bus 70 goes approximately hourly to Rättvik (Skr51, one hour) and Mora (Skr85, 1¾ hours).

LAKE SILJAN REGION

KABOOOM!! Not a word that would instantly spring to mind as you rest your eyes on the soft forest-and-lake scenery here. But, 360 million years ago, Lake Siljan was the site of Europe’s largest meteoric impact. Crashing through the Earth’s atmosphere, the giant lump of rock hit Siljan with the force of 500 million atomic bombs, obliterating all life and creating a 75km ring-shaped crater...where you can now paddle canoes in the utmost peace and tranquillity. It’s a funny old world.

The area is a very popular summer destination, with numerous outdoor festivals and attractions. Maps of Siljansleden, an excellent network of walking and cycling paths extending for more than 300km around Lake Siljan, are available from tourist offices. Another way to enjoy the lake is by boat: in summer, M/S Gustaf Wasa (☎ 670 542 10 25; www.wasanet.nu) runs a complex range of lunch, dinner and sightseeing cruises from the main towns of Mora, Rättvik and Leksand. Enquire at any of the area’s tourist offices for a schedule.

The big midsummer festival Musik vid Siljan (www.musikvidsiljan.se) takes place in venues around the lakeside towns in early July.

Check out the Siljan area website (www.siljan.se) for lots of good information. All the tourist offices in the area have brochures and maps for visitors, and all can help organise accommodation in the region.

Leksand

0247 / pop 15,504

Leksand’s Midsummer Festival is the most popular in Sweden and up to 20,000 spectators watch the maypole being set up on the first Friday evening after 21 June.

The town has a tourist office (☎ 79 61 30; leksand@siljan.se; Norsgatan 40; ☑ 9am-7pm Mon-Fri, 10am-5pm Sat & Sun mid-Jun–mid-Aug, 10am-5pm Mon-Fri rest of yr); and banks and supermarkets, primarily on Sparbankgatan. The library (☎ 0472 45; Kulturhuset, Kyrkallén) has Internet access.

SIGNS & ACTIVITIES

Built by a doctor for his young English wife, Munthe’s Hildasholm (☎ 100 62; www.hildasholm.org; Klockaregatan 5; entry by guided tour, adult/12-16yr Skr70/30, hourly 11am-5pm Mon-Sat 1-5pm Sun Jun–mid-Sep) is a sumptuously decorated early-20th-century mansion, set in beautiful gardens by the lake. Phone ahead for guided tours in English.

Leksands Kyrka (☎ 087 60; ☑ 9.30am-3pm Jun–mid-Aug, 9.30am-3pm rest of yr), with its distinctive onion dome, dates from the early 13th century, but has been extensively renovated and enlarged. The church contains extravagant baroque furnishings.

Families should pick a sunny day and head for Äventyret Sommarland (☎ 139 39; admission Skr195, family ticket Skr735; ☑ 10am-5pm Jun & Aug, 10am-6pm Jul; bus 58), a huge waterpark with pools, slides, rides and other amusements, 2km north of Leksand.

Siljansnäs Naturum (☎ 233 00; Siljansnäs; admission free; ☑ 11am-4pm mid-May–Jun, 11am-8pm Jul, 11am-6pm Aug), 14km northwest of Leksand, has information about the meteor and local flora and fauna, with a slightly moth-eaten collection of 50 stuffed animals. The highlight is the 22m-high viewing tower, from where you get stunning 360° views around the lake. Bus 84 runs from Leksand to Siljansnäs, from where it’s a 300m walk to the Naturum.

SLEEPING & EATING

STF Vandrarhem Leksand (☎ 152 50; info@vandrarhem. leksand.se; Parkgården, Källberget; dm Skr130; ☑ P) It’s a little out of the way (2km south of town), but this is a lovely wee hostel, and Dalarna’s oldest, with ultracute wooden huts built around a flowery courtyard. Bikes are available for rent (per day Skr70).

Hotel Leksand (☎ 145 70; info@hotelleksand.com; Leklandsvägen 7; s/d Skr470/940; ☑ P) This is a small, modern and very conveniently situated hotel in the heart of town. Rooms are fairly nondescript, but the folk are friendly and it’s not a bad place to lay your head.
Phone first, as the reception doesn’t open all day.

Leksands Camping & Stugby (560 03 13; leksands .camping@leksand.se; tel & tent low/high season Skr100/115, cabins & chalets from Skr340; bus 58; ) This big lakeside campsite has all the facilities you could require – including a restaurant, small beach and neighbouring waterpark – and lies 2km north of town. In high season it’s less crowded than the camping grounds at either Mora or Rättvik.

Bygatan 16 (155 05; Bygatan 16; meals Skr90- 190; ) Bygatan is a smart establishment with a menu of light and main meals, including creative pasta, beef and fish dishes. The restaurant is closely linked to the local hockey team, and has a special ‘hockey menu’ during the playing season.

Sights & Activities

The 725m-long SommarRodel (561 33; info@ rattviksbacken.nu; one/three rides Skr45/120; 11am-6pm or 7pm Jun-Aug, closed when raining), a sort of bobsled chute, is lots of fun. You get to hurtle downhill at 35mph, which feels fairly fast so close to the ground.

An enterprising 17-year-old built Vid ablick Utsiktstorn (adult/5-12yr Skr20/5; 10am-7pm Jun-Aug), a viewing tower about 5km southeast of town, from where there are great panoramas of the lake, a good café and a youth hostel (but unfortunately no public transport).

Scandinavia’s longest wooden pier, the impressive 628m Långbyggen, runs out into the lake. Other interesting buildings include the 13th-century church and its 87 well-preserved church stables, the oldest dating from 1470. The pseudo-rune memorial beside the church commemorates the 1520s rising of the Rättviks’s band against the Danes – the rebellion that created modern Sweden.

The Swedes are mad for them! Get your open-air-museum fix at Gammelgården (571 45; admission free; 11am-5pm mid-Jun–mid-Aug), 500m north of the church, which has a good collection of furniture painted in the local style.

Central Kulturhuset (701 95; Storgatan 2; admission free; 11am-7pm Mon-Thu, 11am-3pm Fri, 11am-2pm Sat, 1-5pm Sun) houses the library, art exhibitions, and a display describing the Siljan meteor impact 360 million years ago.

The easy ski slopes are excellent; there are four lifts and a day pass is Skr200.

Dalhalla (79 79 50; www.dalhalla.se), an old limestone quarry 7.5km north of Rättvik, is used as an open-air theatre and concert venue in summer; the acoustics are incredible and the setting is stunning. Tickets usually start at around Skr165 and it’s well worth going to see a performance; ask the tourist office for a programme.

Sleeping

Summer accommodation in Rättvik disappears fast, so it’s worth booking ahead – even for campsites. Central places to stay are few and far between.

Tällberg

Tiny Tällberg has a mere 200 residents, yet its eight upmarket hotels and several chic boutiques hint that it’s a tourist hotspot. It’s certainly an appealing place for lunch and a walk, but unless you’re after a romantic countryside escape, it’s perhaps better to stay in Rättvik or Leksand and visit for the afternoon. The town’s website (www.infotällberg. nu) is in Swedish, but has links to all the hotels.

Klockargården (502 60; www.klockargarden.com; Siljansvägen 6; s/d from Skr695/1200; ) Charm personified, Klockargården is a collection of old timber buildings set around a grassy green courtyard, plus a new wing built in 2004. Each unique room is decorated in a tasteful country style, all the suites have Jacuzzis, and several have triv wooden balconies too. Staff are very helpful, and there are frequent summer craft fairs and folk concerts in the grounds. The restaurant has a daily lunch buffet for Skr95 and à la carte meals are around Skr200.

Good-value packages are available.

Åkerblads (500 08; info@akerblads-tallback.se; Silj ongattu 2; s/d Skr695/1290, lunch Skr125, eve mains Skr195- 345; ) Tällberg’s oldest hotel is this elegant affair, arranged inside a beautiful collection of buildings dating from the 15th century onwards. There’s a relaxation suite, garden tennis and ping-pong for entertainment, and the restaurant is considered one of the region’s finest, with a lunch buffet and à la carte main courses nightly. Weekend and half-board packages are available.

Bus 58 between Rättvik and Leksand stops in the village regularly (two to six times daily). Tällberg is also on the train line that travels around Lake Siljan; the train station is about 2km from the village proper.
THE DALA HORSE

What do Bill Clinton, Elvis Presley and Bob Hope have in common? Answer: they were all given the gift of a Swedish Dalahäst. These carved wooden horses are painted in bright colours, and decorated with folk-art flowers. To many people they represent the genuine Swedish, and are a far more powerful symbol than the Swedish flag.

The exact origin of these cheerful ornaments is uncertain. The first written reference comes from the 17th century, when the bishop of Västerås denounced such horrors as ‘decks of cards, dice, flutes, dolls, wooden horses, lovers’ ballads, impudent paintings’, but it’s quite likely that they were being carved much earlier. Sitting by the fireside and whittling wood was a common pastime, and the horse was a natural subject – a workmate, friend, and symbol of strength. The painted form that is so common today appeared at the World Exhibition in New York in 1939, and has been a favourite souvenir for tourists to Sweden ever since.

The best known Dala horses come from Nusnäs, 10km southeast of Mora. The two biggest workshops are Nils Olsson Hemsjöd ( 372 00; www.nohemsjoed.se; 8am-6pm Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm Sat & Sun mid-Jun–mid-Aug, shorter hr & closed Sun rest of yr) and Grananas A Olsson Hemsjöd ( 372 50; www.grananas.com; 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, 9am-4pm Sat & Sun mid-Jun–mid-Aug, shorter hr & closed Sun rest of yr), where you can watch the carving and painting, then buy up big at the massive souvenir outlets. Wooden horse sizes stretch from 3cm-high (Skr60) to 50cm-high (Skr2500).

Public transport to Nusnäs isn’t great: there are three buses from Mora Monday to Friday only.

Mälkull Ann’s ( 381 90; Vasagatan; mains Skr145-185) This is a cozy restaurant and café in a smart wooden 19th-century building opposite Vasaloppsmuseum. In summer, light lunches and heartier selections are served on the large balcony, overlooking the lake.

Claras Restaurang ( 158 98; Vasagatan 38; lunch Skr75, mains Skr110-190) In the picturesque old town you’ll find convivial Claras, with excellent service and a menu of filling staples. Try the wonderful dessert of deep-fried cinnamon barmbrac with warm cloudberries.

Mora Kaffestuga ( 100 82; morakaffestuga@telia.com; Kyrkogatan 8; meals Skr35-50) For a quick lunch, this spot has a restful grassy garden out the back. On offer are the standard salads, quiches, baguettes etc.

Helmers Konditori ( 100 11; Kyrkogatan 10) Next door is another good café-bakery, with homemade bread, sandwiches and cakes.

There are fast-food joints and supermarkets on Kyrkogatan.

GETTING THERE & AROUND

The Mora-Siljan airport is 6km southwest of town on the Malung road. Skytways ( 0771-95 95 00; www.skyways.se) has three flights to Stockholm Arlanda on weekdays and one on Sunday.

All Dalatrafik buses use the bus station at Moragatan 23. Bus 70 runs to Rättvik and Falun, and buses 103, 104, 105 and 245 run to Orsa. Once or twice daily, bus 170 goes to...
Idre & Grövelsjön

Idre lies close to the Norwegian border, and is the heart of Sweden’s largest ski area. The main train station is about 1km east of town. The more central Mora Strand is a platform station in town, but not all trains stop; be sure to check the timetable. When travelling to Östersund, you can choose between Inlandsbanan (Skr347, 6¼ hours, one stop there, so check the timetable. When arriving in Mora, it’s 27km north of Sälen – but if you have your own transport and want to get away from it all, this is the hostel. It’s based in a peaceful nature reserve at Gräsheaded (near Näsfläktet), with some great walks nearby and Kungsleden (see p49) passing 1.5km from the hostel.

Sälen is a tiny spot, way up in the wilds of Dalarna. In summer, the ghost-village offers chilled-out bear safaris, canoe trips, fishing and horse riding (inquire at the tourist office). As soon as the first snowflakes flutter, though, an amazing transformation occurs: the whole area turns into Sweden’s largest and swishest ski resort.

Head first to the Centrumhuset complex, where you’ll find a bank, doctor, pharmacy, Systembolaget and other essential facilities, including the tourist office (018 00; info@salen.se; 9am–6pm Mon–Fri, 9am–3pm Sat & Sun Jun-Aug & Dec-Apr, 9am–6pm Mon–Fri, 10am–2pm Sat rest of y). Opposite the complex are supermarkets and stores where you can rent ski gear in winter, and inline skates, boats and canoes in summer.

Activities
The ski areas, with chalets, pubs and nightclubs, are strung out for 20km along the road running through the steep-flanked mountains west of Sälen. There are over 100 lifts, pistes of all degrees, and guaranteed snow from 15 November to April. Gustav Backen at Lindvallen is the busiest ski run in Europe; for skiing information visit www.skiStar.com. North of Sälen, cheaper and quieter skiing is available at Näsfläktet.

There’s some good hiking in the area in summer, mainly north of the road.

Sleeping & Eating
Winter visitors should contact their travel agent or the tourist office for accommodation packages.

STF Vandrarehm Sälen (820 40; info@salensvandrarhem.dnr.se; dm Skr160) The name’s misleading – it’s 27km north of Sälen – but if you have your own transport and want to get away from it all, this is the hostel. It’s based in a peaceful nature reserve at Gräsheaded (near Näsfläktet), with some great walks nearby and Kungsleden (see p49) passing 1.5km from the hostel.

Sälens Gästgivare (020 85; info@gastis.com; s with/without bathroom Skr550/450 d with/without bathroom Skr650/550; mains Skr110-180) In the village, this place has fairly basic accommodation (you get the idea that the restaurant is more important than the lodgings). Prices given here are for the summer season, winter prices are higher by Skr50 to Skr200 per room. The restaurant is a popular summer choice with a wooden terrace, a well-stocked bar, and a menu ranging from bar snacks and pizzas to substantial steak, pasta and salmon mains.

Inside the Centrumhuset complex there’s a delicatessen selling fresh local produce, and an excellent bakery.

Getting There & Around
Bus 95 runs from the ski area to Mora via Sälen, once daily in the ski season (otherwise you have to change buses at Lima). A ski bus tours around the ski area in winter.

Idre & Grövelsjön

Idre is a small town of 462 people. There’s also a sauna for guests.

STF Fjällstation Grövelsjön (059 68 80; grovelsjon@stfjellstation.se; dm/d from Skr240/360/500; Feb–Apr & mid-Jun–Sep) This excellent mountain lodge in Grövelsjön has a wide array of facilities, including a kitchen, spa, shop and outdoor gear hire. The rather good restaurant serves breakfast, lunch and dinner; enquire for half-board and full-board arrangements. This is a big and busy place, with a huge range of tours and activities available.

Sörälven Bear Watching (0117; www.soraleven -camping.com; sites Skr125, cabins Skr480) Störlaven offers rather shadeless camping areas but good cabins, and is popular with the fishing crowd. The campsite is just out of Idre, 2.5km towards Grövelsjön.

There’s a supermarket in Idre, and several grills and pizzerias.

Getting There & Away
Dalatåbus 170 travels on a route between Mora, Idre and Grövelsjön (2½ hours from Mora to Idre, 3½ hours to Grövelsjön). There are three services to Grövelsjön on weekdays, and one or two on weekends.

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Northern Sweden & Lappland

It’s almost criminal that so few visitors to Sweden make it up to Norrland. Remote wilderness, impenetrable forests and the opportunity for long quiet hikes – the northern part of Sweden is a completely separate experience from the rest of the country. This is the home of the Sami people, northern Scandinavia’s indigenous population, whose traditional culture revolves around their herds of domesticated reindeer. You won’t have to wait long for a glimpse of the creatures either – on any long stretch of road in the north, you’re likely to meet five times as many reindeer as cars.

In Northern Sweden you’ll also find Laponia, one of the last great wilderness expanses in Western Europe and a World Heritage–listed site. Its swooping peaks and broad, roadless plains make it heaven for geologists, photographers, hikers and anyone else who loves the idea of standing atop one mountain range to gaze at another across a mighty bog.

All this untamed wilderness makes Norrland and Lappland the places to find Sweden’s best outdoor sporting adventures, from dogsledding and nearly year-round skiing, to hiking, camping and canoeing. But it’s for the most part, blissfully empty of tourist hordes. It might be a trek to get up here, but it’s well worth the effort.

HIGHLIGHTS
- Follow in the footsteps of royalty on the accessible Kungsleden hiking trail (p301)
- Go wild in the remote and rugged Sarek National Park (p305)
- Get cozy in the astounding Ice Hotel (p301) at Jukkasjärvi
- See the north from the window of a train on the great Inlandsbanan railway (p273)
- Climb or drive to dizzying heights above the Gulf of Bothnia, along the Höga Kusten (p282)
- Learn about Sami culture and traditions at the Ájtte museum (p304) in Jokkmokk
Orientation

There are six regions (landskaps) along the Bothnian coast, and three along the Norwegian border. In northern areas, the region and county (län) boundaries don’t always correspond.

From the north to south, the regions of Gästrikland and Hälingsland make up Gävleborgs län, and Medelpad with most of Angermanland and Västerbottens län. Västerbotten and the southern third of Lappland create Västerbottens län, and Norrbotten combines with the rest of Lappland to make Norrbottens län. In the southwest, Härjedalen and Jämtland form Jämtlands län.

Almost all of the population lives in the major towns and cities on the Bothnian coast, with another concentration in central Jämtland as well, around the Storsjön lake. The scenery here is dominated by coniferous forest, but the western mountains rise well above the tree line and there are many small glaciers, especially north of the Arctic Circle. Large tracts of Lappland are protected with either nature reserve or national park status. The rivers tend to be large and slow-moving, with long narrow lakes a common feature away from the coast. Coastal islands tend to be small, though they are often located in substantial archipelagos. In summer, sandy beaches, long hours of sunshine and reasonably high water temperatures attract crowds of tourists. The far north has the legendary midnight sun during summer, and the extraordinary northern lights (aurora borealis) in winter.

Information

Visitors can contact the following agencies for more detailed information on the area:

Gästrikland Turism (026-14 74 37; www.gastrikland.com; Box 1175, SE-80135 Gävle) This is one of two regional tourist offices in Gävleborgs län.

Hälsingetur (020-766 60; www.halsingland.com; Box 130, SE-82023 Söderhamn) This is the second office within Gävleborgs län.

Jämtland Härjedalen Turism (063-14 40 22; www.jamtland.info; Rådhusgatan 14, SE-83182 Östersund) This office covers Jämtlands län.

Mitt Sverige Turism (0611-55 77 50; www.mittsveturism.se; Norra Kyrkogatan 15, SE-87132 Härnösand) This office covers Västerbottens län.

Turism i Norrbotten/Lappland (0920-29 35 00; http://turism.norrbotten.se)

VästerbottenTurism (090-785 71 76; www.vasterbotten.net; Kåksvägen 11, SE-90189 Umeå)

Getting Around

BUS

You’ll probably find yourself relying more on buses than trains if you’re spending any length of time in Norrland. The following companies provide regional transport links, and if you’re planning to spend much time in any of these counties, it’s worth inquiring about monthly passes (or a sommarkort, offering discount travel in the peak summer period) (from midsomer to mid-August). Check also the respective websites for routes, schedules, fares and passes; these sites don’t always have information in English, but if you call the telephone numbers listed you’ll usually reach someone who can help you in English.

Länstrafiken i Jämtlands Län (063-16 84 00; www.länstrafiken-jämtland.se in Swedish)

Länstrafiken i Norrbotten (020-47 00 47; www.inlandsbanen.se in Swedish)

Länstrafiken i Västerbotten (020-91 00 19, 0950-103 57; www.länstrafiken-vasbo.se in Swedish)

Länstrafiken i Västernorrland (020-51 15 13; www.dirtur.se in Swedish) Also commonly known as Din Tur.

X-Trafik i Gävleborgs län (020-91 01 09; www.x-trafik.se in Swedish)

Ybuss (0771-34 44 44; www.ybuss.se in Swedish) Runs express buses daily between Stockholm and Sundsvall, Östersund and Umeå.

Other handy regional services include Länstrafiken i Västerbotten bus 100, which runs several times daily between Sundsvall and Luleå via the major towns along the E4; bus 45, which runs daily between Östersund and Gällivare; and bus 31, which connects Umeå and Mo i Rana (Norway) once daily via Storuman and Tärnaby.

Länstrafiken i Jämtlands län bus 45 runs twice daily between Mora (Dalarna) and Östersund.

Länstrafiken i Norrbotten runs two daily buses connecting Luleå and Kiruna – its bus network covers 100,000 sq km (one-quarter of Sweden), and it will carry bikes for Skr50 extra.

TRAIN

A historic railway, Inlandsbanan (063-10 44 09; www.inlandsbanan.se) runs for 1067 km through Sweden’s interior from Mora to Gällivare via Östersund, Storuman, Arvidsjaur and Jokkmokk (see above). Today it can be covered in either direction by a combination of rälsbuss (railcar) and – with some planning – steam train. The journey is popular with tourists and can be done only from late June (just after midsummer) to early August. Travel on the line is slow (the average speed is 60 km/h) – it takes seven hours from Mora to Östersund (Skr347) and 15 hours from Östersund to Gällivare (Skr697) – but you can break your journey in any of the small towns on route. Prices are based on a rate of Skr.08 per km. You can buy tickets for certain legs of the journey, or a special card that will allow you two weeks’ unlimited travel on the route (Skr195); ScanRail cardholders get a 25% discount on this ticket, but not on individual tickets. Interrail pass holders under 26 can ride on the Inlandsbanan for free. Children under the age of 15 pay half the adult fare; up to two children age 15 and under can ride free with a paying adult.

SJ (0771-75 75 75; www.sj.se) trains also run as far north as Härnösand; beyond there, you’ll need to use trains operated by a different company, Tågkompaniet (020-44 41 11; www.tagkompaniet.se in Swedish).

The Skr13.2 billion, 190km Botnia Banan (www.botniabanan.se), a single-track railway being laid from the bridge over Ångermanälven north of Kramfors, via Örnsköldsvik, Husum and Nordmaling to Umeå, will speed travelers along at up to 250km/h and is due to be completed in 2010.

INLANDSPLAN

Until the early 20th century, Norrland’s rich natural resources had been left largely unexploited. The Inlandsbanan (Inland Railway) was intended to change this, by opening up the northern forests and mountains for colonisation and development.

Digging ditches, excavating gravel, blasting mountains and laying sleepers and rails in an area where there were no roads was no mean feat. For over 30 years, the sleepers continued their inexorable progress northwards, from Kristinehamn in the south to Gällivare in the north – a distance of over 1300km. The Inlandsbanan was the last major undertaking of the Swedish navvies; construction began in 1907 and the project was completed in 1937.

However, by the time the Inlandsbanan was inaugurated, a serious competitor to the train, the car, was already making an impact on Sweden, and soon railway lines were closed in many parts of the country. When it was proposed that even larger stretches of the Inlandsbanan should be closed down, strong protests were heard not only from the regions directly affected, but from all over Sweden. The Inlandsbanan north of Mora is still operating today largely as a result of the wide popular support it received in the face of closure.

If you’d like to know more about the history of the Inlandsbanan and the people who made it happen, visit the Inlandsbanan Museum in Sorsele. A new railway museum with links to the Inland Railway has also been inaugurated in Jamtli in Östersund.

GÄSTRIKLAND

GÄVLE (026 / pop 92,000)

One of Norrland’s nicest cities simply to wander around in, Gävle is known as the gateway to the region. It has a distinctly youthful feel, with several parks and plazas thronged with relaxing locals.

There’s an old town, with well-preserved wooden buildings and a slightly funkier feel than the centre. To get an idea of the city’s character, be sure to stop on along Drottninggatan and on, or around, the large Stortorget. The public library (Slottsgatan 1), near the castle, offers free Internet access. For English-language newspapers and magazines go to International Press (Södra Kungsgatan 11).
GÄVLE

Sights & Activities

The wooden old town of Gamlagefle, south of the city centre, shows what Gävle was like before it was almost completely destroyed by fire in 1869. One of the houses, Joe Hill-gården (61 34 25; Nedre Bergsgatan 28; admission free; 11am-3pm Tue-Sat Jun-Aug), was the birthplace of the US union organiser who was executed for a murder he didn’t commit in Utah, 1915. Some of his poetry forms part of the memorial here.

Berggrenska gården (Kyrkogatan) is the only remaining early-19th-century commercial courtyard in Gävle, and it was lucky to survive the 1869 fire. The nearby rådhus (town hall) wasn’t so lucky – its present appearance is post-1869, but a town hall has stood on the site since 1628.

The regional Länsmuseum (65 56 00; Södra Strandgatan 20; adult/child Skr40/free; noon-4pm Tue-Sun) has an excellent art collection from the 17th century to today, plus displays of local silver and glassware, and historical exhibitions.

You’ll find a practical demonstration of forestry and conservation techniques around the parks of Stadsträdgården and Boulognerskogen (used for open-air music and summer theatre), near the Gävle University campus on Kungshagsvagen.

The oldest of the churches in Gävle is Heliga Trafikskillingskyrka at the western end of Drottninggatan; it has an 11th-century stone inside. The buildings of the castle on the southern bank of Gävleån are now in administrative use, but there are temporary art exhibitions here and a small prison museum (tours noon-2pm Sun).

From June to August daily boat tours (Sk45 each way) run from Södra Skeppsbron to the island of Limön, part of the surrounding archipelago. The island has a nature trail, a memorial to the sailors of a ship that was here lost in the early 1800s.

Bönkan, 13km northeast of town, is a pretty waterside settlement that’s also worth a look; attractions include a fish smokehouse and restaurant. Bus 95 runs out here.

Railway buffs will enjoy the preserved steam locomotives and carriages of the Järnvägsmuseum (14 46 15; Rågsgatan; adult/child Skr40/free; 10am-4pm Jun-Aug, Tue-Sun rest of yr), the national rail museum, 2km south of the town centre, off Österbägen.

The leisure park and zoo named Furuvik (17 73 00; www.furuvik.se; adult/child Skr120/90, rides Skr10-40, armband Skr150; mid-May–Aug), about 12km southeast of Gävle, aims to provide a little of everything; you can behave like a monkey on the amusement rides and then see the real thing at the ape enclosure. From the train station, take frequent bus 838.

A slightly more adult-friendly attraction is the distillery of Mackmyra Svensk Whisky (13 29 79; Bruksgatan 4, Valbo, tours Skr130, whisky tasting from Skr120), established in 1999 as the first Scandinavian malt whisky distillery. It’s about 10km west of Gävle and offers regular tours of the distillery (only once a week outside the peak time of late June–August). Inquire at the tourist office for details.

Sleeping

STF Vandrareh Gamla Gelfe (62 17 45; www.stf.se; adult/child Skr135, s/d from Skr250/330; dm Skr150, s/d from Skr250/385; Bönavägen 118) is in a lovely park setting by the sea, about 6km northeast of the city. Golf and fishing facilities are nearby.

This nearby place of interest is the Stadsträdgården (14 46 15; Rälsgatan; adult/child Skr40/free; 10am-4pm Jun-Aug, Tue-Sun rest of yr), the produce market (Södra Kungsgatan 11; lunches Skr40-75), Brända Bocken (12 45 45; Stortorget; meals Skr64-149) This fashionable place is right in the heart of the action on the main square. Its outdoor area is a good spot to enjoy a drink with a light meal and do a spot of people-watching.

Helt Enkelt Bar & Kök (12 06 04; Norra Kungsgatan 3; snacks Skr30-65, meals Skr55-100; 4pm-midnight Mon-Thu, 4pm-1am Fri, noon-1pm Sat, 5-11pm Sun) This is a favourite with the locals for its good atmosphere, friendly service and well-priced, unpretentious fare. It has sleek decor but not the prices to match – all but one dish on the menu is under Skr100.

The Church Street Saloon (Kyrkogatan) has a 17th-century hall (was the birthplace of the famous art collector) and it was lucky to survive the 1869 fire. The nearby rådhus (town hall) wasn’t so lucky – its present appearance is post-1869, but a town hall has stood on the site since 1628.

There’s a daily produce market (Stortorget) and you’ll find a Konsum supermarket (9am shopping centre). There’s a Systembolaget (9am shopping centre) as well.

Getting There & Away

Numerous long-distance bus services leave from behind the train station (connected by underpass). Ybuss (0200-33 44 44) runs daily to Sundsvall, Umeå and Österbärge; SBS Bussen (13 30 30) has two to four daily services to Stockholm. Swebus Express (0200-21 82 18; www.swebusexpress.se) runs to both Uppsala and Stockholm once or twice daily.

SJ trains (0771-75 75 75) run to Stockholm via Uppsala, and northwards to Sundsvall and beyond; there are up to six X2000 services and several slower trains daily. Other useful direct trains include Gävle to Falun and Örebro.

Local buses leave mainly from around Rådhustorget. Europarc (Södra Kungsgatan 62) has car rental. Ask the tourist office about bike hire.
**GYSINGE**

Gysinge, 55km south of Gävle and on the border with Uppland, is known for the fine Gysinge Bruk ironworks that operated from 1668 to the early 20th century, and it’s a pleasant place for a wander.

There’s a small *tourist office* (0210 00; touris@gysingebuchsandviken.se; Granövägen 6; 10am-5pm May-Sep, 10am-5pm Mon-Fri Oct-Apr) where you can rent boats and canoes.

Try your hand at forging at Krokiga Smedjman (Crooked Forge; admission free; 10am-6pm Jun-Aug; noon-5pm Tue-Sun rest of yr), which began operations in 1764; there’s also a good *handicraft exhibition*. The traditional Bagarstugan still bakes unleavened bread, and is a good place for a coffee and a sandwich. In Smedsbostaden (Smith’s Cottage; admission free; 8am-5pm May-Sep) you can experience what local living conditions were like in the late 19th century. Dalälvarnas Flottningsmuseum (Museum of River Driving; adult/child Skr20/10; noon-5pm May-Sep) covers the once crucial, now but defunct, occupation of guiding logs downstream to the sawmills.

Gysinge Wärdshus (0212 00; pingse@swipnet.se; s/d from Skr550/1250), in the middle of the ironworks area at Gysinge, has very comfortable accommodation plus an excellent restaurant (meals from Skr753), a museum (4th Sun of month), café (Albertina, see below). There’s also a fish shop. Take bus 65 (weekdays only).

**SÖDERHAMN & AROUND**

**270** / pop 26,731

A small town with a couple of streets of shops and restaurants, and some worthwhile attractions, Söderhamn is known as the town of parks. It was founded in 1620 by Gustav II Adolph.

The *tourist office* (0263 53; info@turism.soderhamn.se; 8.30am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat & Sun) is at the train station, just off the E4 motorway and 1.5km west of the town centre. The town centre has all the main facilities, including banks and supermarkets, mostly along Köpmangatan.

**Sights**

The history of the town is covered by Söderhamns Museum (026 179; Oxtorgsgatan 5; adult/child Skr25/10; noon-5pm Tue-Sun mid-Jun–Aug). Östra Berget hill lies south of the town centre, with the odd 23m-high tower Oscarsborg (admission free; 11am-5pm Jun-Aug), with a café on top. Reach it by climbing the stairs behind the railroad tracks. Keep a close eye on the clock, too – a sign on the door says anyone left inside when the tower is closed will be locked in!

Ulrika Eleonora Kyrka (026 84-4pm Mon-Fri), just north of the town hall, was designed by Nicodemus Tessin the Younger, and was completed in 1693. Söderhamns F15 Flygmuseum (026 142 84; adult/child Skr40/20; bus 59; 10am-5pm Jun-Aug, 11am-5pm Sun Sep-May), located by the airfield, 5km southeast of town, has a collection of old military aircraft.

About 15km northwest of town, Trönö Gamla Kyrka (026 May-Sep) is a small, well-preserved church of cool grey stone with a wooden belltower that dates from the 12th century. Take bus 67 (two to 11 daily).

Bergviks Industri museum (026 42 32 80; admission free; Tue-Sun), around 16km west of Söderhamn, is a pretty spot with an outdoor café as well as displays about the history of the world’s first sulphate factory, opened in 1874. Bus 64 runs to Bergvik every two hours or so.

Skärså, an ideal cycling destination 12km north of Söderhamn, is one of the most beautiful fishing villages in the area. The picturesque red-painted buildings include old boat sheds, houses, summer houses, a restaurant, museum (10am–9pm daily in summer) and a good café (Albertina, see below). There’s also a fish shop. Take bus 65 (weekdays only).

**Sleeping & Eating**

**First Hotel Satt** (026 735 70; Oxtorgsgatan 17; s/d from Skr1400) Room 104 at this elegant hotel is supposedly haunted by an old 1800s barman named Karl-Emil; it was the only room left alone during the hotel’s otherwise thorough renovation in the late–90s.

**Scandin Hotel Söderhamn** (026 52 00; soderhamn@scandinhotels.com; Montörbacken 4; s/d from Skr1200/1500) This is only 300m from the train station and offers goodwill discounted rates, as well as its usual high standard of accommodation.

**Möheds Natura Camping** (026 42 52 33; mohedscamping@localnet.net; Mohedsvägen 59; camping per person from Skr100, dm Skr130, cabins from Skr250) This is at the train station, just off the E4 motorway and 1.5km west of the town centre. There’s a *tourist office* (043 06; Turistvägen 29; mid-Jun–mid-Aug, shorter hr rest of yr) on the main road through town, as well as banks and supermarkets.

**JÄRVSÖ & AROUND**

**0651 / pop 1907**

Järvsö is best known for the Hälsinge Hambo (www.halsingehambo.x.se), an annual folk dancing contest (with up to 1000 competitors), the final event of which takes place here in early July; look for the statue of Olof Skötkonung. The hill, Öjeberget, has great views – there’s a restaurant on top and you can ski down in winter. Just across the bridge from the church (on the eastern bank of the river), Stenenig (0617 00; May-Sep; Sat & Sun rest of yr) is an old manor and farm with good handicraft stalls, a café, restaurant and a theatre in an old barn.

**Sleeping & Eating**

Järsvsöbaden (0404 00; info@jarsvbaden.se; s/d from Skr600/800) This friendly hotel, founded as a health farm in 1905, is the best place to stay in town. It’s a charming old spread, set in...
pretty grounds that include a nine-hole golf course, and it has a variety of rooms (some with shared facilities). The restaurant here has a superb lounge smörgåsbord that has to be seen to be believed.

Gästgivars (tel 416 90; Jon Persvägen 7; dm/s Skr165/215) This small and homely place is near the bridge (follow the signs) and offers very inviting hotel accommodation, plus breakfast for an additional Skr35.

Järsvö Camping (tel 403 39; sites Skr80, cabins from Skr220) This place is on the main road through the town and offers good facilities.

Järsvö Café & Konditori (tel 411 11) This is a basic little café down by the train station.

Getting There & Away

Bus 51 runs regularly between Bollnäs and Ljusdal, via Arbrå and Järsvö. Trains run north from Järsvö to Östersund, and south to Gävle and Stockholm.

Sights & Activities

The Hälssingsläns Museum (tel 196 00; Storgatan 31; admission free; mid-Jun–mid-Aug, Mon-Sat rest of yr) covers local history, culture and art, including the Malsta Stone with unusual runic inscriptions. Just southwest of the centre, Jakobs kyrka dates from 1672. Parts of Hälssingtuna Church, 4km north, were built around 1150, but more extraordinary is the 15th-century Bergöns Kapell, 18km due northeast, the oldest fisherman’s church in the district.

Attractive Kuggögarna is about 30km east of Hudiksvall and is an excellent example of a fishing village (take bus 37, twice daily). The coast shows raised beaches caused by post-glacial uplift (still underway) and the forests are growing in boulder-fields. Mellanfjärden, 30km north of Hudiksvall, isn’t the most photogenic village, but there is a gallery there with displays of local crafts, a summer theatre, a good restaurant and several nature reserves. Sörfjärden, 10km north of Mellanfjärden, has an unusual harbour in the river Gnarpsån, and a good sandy beach nearby.

There is a lovely driving route through the fields and farmsteads between lakes Norr Helen and Sördellen, just west of Hudiksvall. Around the neoclassical Norra Kroka there are nine Iron Age graves, church stables from the 1920s and also a mid-18th-century bell tower. Avholmerget, just north of Frijgesund, is the best viewpoint – you can drive or cycle up it.

Sleeping & Eating

First Hotel Statt (tel 150 60; Storgatan 36; s/d from Skr200/150; ) This is the pick of the town’s hotels, with central, upmarket lodgings and facilities.

Hotel Temperance (tel 311 07; Hästgatan 16; dm from Skr150, s/d from Skr550/700) This small, family-run place is between the train station and Jakobs Kyrka and offers simple, comfortable accommodation at reasonable prices.

Malnbadens Camping & STF Hudiksvall (tel 132 60; info@malnbadenscamping.com; sites Skr75, dm Skr135, cabins Skr400) Four kilometres east of the centre of Hudiksvall, this is a large wooded campsite, with the large island just east of Sundsvall, Alnö, which is about 46km northwest of Sundsvall on road No 86.

Getting There & Away

For a pleasant excursion, head to Lörud, a picturesque fishing village about 30km southeast of town, with a tiny café and fish smokehouse. There’s a beach of flat rocks here, which is perfect for warming up in the sun after a dive into the sea. Take bus 20 south to Njurundabommen, then change to bus 126.

Liden, by the ribbon lake on Indalsälven, is about 45km northwest of Sundsvall on road No 86. Liden Gamla Kyrka, completed in 1510, has a lovely location and contains excellent medieval sculptures from the 13th, 15th and 16th centuries. It is the pick of the town’s sights, but more extraordinary is the 15th-century Kulturmagaset, Sjögatan; (10am-7pm Mon-Thu, 10am-6pm Fri, 11am-4pm Sat, closed Sun) Free Internet access.

Tourist office (tel 61 04 50; www.sundsvallturism.com; Stora Torget; (10am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat yr-round) Staff have information on activities in the area, plus summer boat tours, and can map out details including historical galleries in town, or a self-guided pub crawl.

Sights

Kulturmagasinet, on Sjögatan, has a magnificent restoration of some old warehouses. The buildings now contain the town library and Sundsvall Museum (from 19 18 03; adult/child Skr20/free; (11am-7pm Mon-Thu, 10am-6pm Fri, 11am-4pm Sat & Sun), which has exhibits of local and natural history, local Iron Age archaeology and geology.

The central church, Gustav Adolfs kyrka, is worth a look. There’s music here every Wednesday evening in summer.

Up on the hill Norra Stadsberget (150m), there is a viewing tower as well as a typical friluftsmuseum (open air museum; admission free), with a collection of local houses. The southern hill, Södra Stadsberget (250m), has an extensive plateau that is good for hiking, with trails up to 12km long. There’s also free fishing on the Sidsjön and several downhill ski runs (nordic skiing is also popular). Buses run to either hill once every two hours in summer.

The large island just east of Sundsvall, Alnö, has the magnificent Alnö Gamla Kyrka (admission free). From the bridge (at Vi), the old church, below the road, is a mixture of 12th- and 15th-century styles. The lower parts of the wall paintings were badly damaged by whitewashing in the 18th century, but the upper wall and ceiling paintings are in perfect condition (apart from removal of certain faces by Protestant vandalism) and show various biblical scenes. The painting was probably done by one of Albertus Pictor’s pupils. Even better is the late 11th-century carved wooden font, which was probably done by one of Albertus Pictor’s pupils. Even better is the late 11th-century carved wooden font, which is about to be restored. The very good STF Vandrhem is about 20km north of Hudiksvall. The valley is quite narrow. There’s a beach of flat rocks here, which is perfect for warming up in the sun after a dive into the sea. Take bus 20 south to Njurundabommen, then change to bus 126.

Liden, by the ribbon lake on Indalsälven, is about 46km northwest of Sundsvall on road No 86. Liden Gamla Kyrka, completed in 1510, has a lovely location and contains excellent medieval sculptures from the 13th, 15th and 16th centuries. There are rather faded wall paintings from 1561, and also a 13th-century crucifix. Even better is the late 11th-century carved wooden font, which was probably done by one of Albertus Pictor’s pupils. Even better is the late 11th-century carved wooden font, which is about to be restored. The very good STF Vandrhem is about 20km north of Hudiksvall. The valley is quite narrow. There’s a beach of flat rocks here, which is perfect for warming up in the sun after a dive into the sea. Take bus 20 south to Njurundabommen, then change to bus 126.

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The 20-minute walk to the hostel from the city centre is pleasant, but not much fun with heavy bags – a bus runs up here in summer from both the train and the bus stations.

Baltic Hotel (14 04 40; info.baltic@swedenhotels.se; Sjögatan 5; s/d from Skr1100/1250) Toward the upper end of the accommodation scale is the attractive Baltic, near Kulturmagasinet. It has excellent discounted rates for its bright, modern rooms.

Scandic Hotel Sundsvall City (785 62 00; sundsvallcity@scandic-hotels.com; Esplanaden 29; s/d from Skr1200/1500) The large and upmarket Sundsvall City has very comfortable rooms, plus lots of facilities on the premises, including a cinema, restaurant and popular pub.

**Eating & Drinking**

Il Barone (17 66 04; Kyrkogatan 14; mains Skr180-230, pastas Skr120-150; _lunch & dinner_) Exclusive and sophisticated, Il Barone is a highly regarded restaurant serving authentic Italian cuisine, with risotto and pasta dishes at the lower end of the price scale, plus well-prepared meat and fish dishes.

Kajplats 1 (15 06 00; Hammplan 1; meals Skr89-225) This place has a hotchpotch of interior styles (nautical meets opulent Oriental) but it all comes together in a great harbour restaurant-bar, where the emphasis is on fresh fish. Soups and salads are offered for under Skr100, plus there’s a selection of tapas plates (around Skr50).

**Getting There & Away**

The airport (197600) is 22km north of Sundsvall; buses run from the Scandic Hotel and the bus station three to nine times daily (Skr65) to connect with SAS and Skyways flights to Göteborg, Luleå and Stockholm.

All buses depart from the Sundsvall bus station, known as Navet, in the northern part of town near Kulturmagasinet. Ybuss runs daily to Östersund (Skr140, 2½ hours, twice daily), Gävle (Skr190, 3½ hours, twice daily) and Stockholm (Skr220, six hours, three to four daily). Länstrafiken Västerbotten bus 100 runs several times daily to Umeå (3½ hours), Luleå (eight hours) and most other coastal towns. Prices are set by distance at Skr18 per 7km.

Trains run west to Östersund and south to Söderhamn, Gävle and Stockholm. The station is just east of the town centre, on Karlbergsgatan.

**Statoil** (15 20 70; Normalmatsgatan 1) offers inexpensive car hire. Taxi Sundsvall (19 90 00) can help you get around.

The new regional library, Härnösand Samfundshus (101 11 21; vhemmet@harnosand.se; Franzengatan 14; _lunch & dinner_), is in a restored old building (dating from 1844), directly across the street from the cathedral.

**Hotel City** (17 24 21; www.herranosand.se; Sjögatan 6) The unique Hotel City is in a restored old building (dating from 1844), directly across the street from the cathedral.

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The family-run **Mykonos** (51 18 44; Storgatan; mains from Skr156; 2-21pm Tue-Sat) bills itself as a Greek taverna. It looks the part, with fishing nets and maritime knick-knacks everywhere, but the cooking is all gourmet French bistro, and downright spectacular.

The classy restaurant-bar **Apotequet** (51 17 17; Nybrogatan 3) has its bar area in an old pharmacy, and boasts an attractive patio which is open in summer. It’s one of several bars on this street, all of which offer rare bargains on happy-hour drinks.

For souvenirs, pick up some authentic Swedish handicraft at the classy **Svensk Slöjd** (Storgatan 25; 10am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-3pm Sat), across from Hemköp supermarktet.

Länstrafiken Västerbotten bus 100 runs several times daily to Sundsvall, Luleå and points in between. Ybuss runs daily to Gävle (Skr200, 9½ hours, twice daily) and Stockholm (Skr250, six to seven hours, several times daily). Local buses service Sundsvall for train connections to Gävle and Stockholm.

### Höga Kusten

**0613**

Some of the most dramatic scenery on the entire Swedish coastline is found here, on the Höga Kusten (meaning the ‘High Coast’). The secret to its spectacular beauty is elsewhere on the coast. If you do find such a mountainous landscape, with sheer rocky cliffs plunging straight down to the sea, as well as lakes, fjords and islands. The region was recently recognised as a unique area and listed as a Unesco World Heritage site. It has largely been shaped by the combined processes of glaciation, glacial retreat and the emergence of new land from the sea (which continues today at a rate of 3–4m per century). This is a wonderful place for scenic drives, but the narrow twisty roads can make it difficult for whoever’s stuck behind the wheel.

Höga Kusten stretches from north of Härnösand to Örnsköldsvik, and either place makes a handy base for exploration. Tourist offices in both towns can help you with information on exploring the region by bus, car or on an organised tour. There is also a regional **tourist office** (504 80; www.hogakusten.com) serving the area; it’s located inside Hotel Höga Kusten, just north of the spectacular E4 suspension bridge over Storfrån. Here you can pick up information on attractions and accommodation options in the tiny villages along the coast. The information area is crowded with brochures and open all year, and the desk is staffed from 10am to 6pm June to August. There’s also useful information on the Internet at www.turistinfo.kramfors.se.

Unfortunately, there’s little public transport in the area. Buses cruise along the E4 (which you can ask about hiking routes, the chairlift (Skr60/40) on the other side, and rock-climbing routes (grades II to III).

**Skuleskogen National Park**, a few kilometres northeast, contains varied and magnificent scenery, including Slätterdalskrevan, a 200m-deep canyon. The park is signposted from the E4, and the Höga Kustenleden walking trail passes through it.

### Sleeping & Eating

**Hotell Höga Kusten** (72 22 70; s/d Skr845/1095, from Skr800/950; 10am-10pm)

This is a relaxing get-away on the island of Böhamn, reached by boat from Bönhamn and Barsta. There’s a kitchen here, and a café open in summer. You’ll need to book well in advance.

**STF Vandrhem Docksta** (130 64; kusttala@telia.com; sites Skr100, dm/cabins from Skr120/300; yr-round; 11)

This attractive and busy hostel is actually 3km south of Docksta at Skøved, right along the Höga Kustenleden (High Coast Trail). It has a party atmosphere and good facilities, including a restaurant and an outdoor stage for summer concerts.

**Mannaminne** (202 90; info@mannaminne.se; s/d from Skr150/200)

The aforementioned eccentric open-air museum, near tiny Häggvik, also offers B&B accommodation and cottages.

**Kustgärdens Vandrhem** (212 55; dm Skr130), in Norrfällsviken, is operated by the nearby **Brittas Restaurang** (212 55; low/high season cabins from Skr800/950; ), a popular summer complex consisting of a restaurant and pub, plus self-contained cabins.

Delightful Mannaminne has a very good **camping ground** (213 82; sites Skr120, cabins from Skr350). The area surrounding the Naturum at Skuleberget is well set up for outdoor enthusiasts, with a **camping ground** (130 64; sites Skr90, cabins from Skr295, rooms from Skr200), a restaurant, and shops selling outdoor gear.

There are supermarkets in Ullanger, Nord-ingräd, Docksta and Mjällom.

### Getting There & Around

Bus 217 runs one to six times daily between Nordingräd, the bridge and Kramfors. Other than that, you’ll need to walk, cycle or drive yourself around the area. Länstrafiken Västerbotten bus 100 runs along the E4.

**Ferries to Högbonden** (0706–81 82 82; adult return Skr80/40) go from Barsta (every two hours 9.30am–5.30pm, returning 45 minutes later, mid-June–mid-August) and from Bönhamn (every two hours 9.45am–5.45pm mid-June–mid-August). **Ferries to Ulvön** (0613–105 50, 1300; adult/child return Skr70 (Jun-Aug); 9am) leave from Ullanger (9.30am), Docksta (10.15am) and Mjällomslandel (10.45am), arriving at 11.30am and returning at 3pm from Ulvohamn.

### Örnsköldsvik

**0660 / pop 54,945**

Most famous within Sweden for being the town that produced the handsome ice hockey star Peter ‘Foppa’ Forsberg, Örnsköldsvik is the largest town in northernmost Sweden and the county seat of Norrbotten County. It’s a fine base for exploring the High Coast, but otherwise doesn’t demand a lengthy stay.

There’s a helpful **tourist office** (881 00; www.ornskoldsvik.se; inside Paradisbadet; 9am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat & Sun Jun-Aug). There are banks around Storatorget, and the library (Lasarettsgatan 5) offers Internet access.

**Walk up Varvsberget** (80m) for a good view of the town; it’s south of the centre – some 275 steps lead up from Modovägen.

**Ornsköldsviks Museum** (886 01; Läroverksgatan 1; adult/child Skr20/free; 9am-4pm Mon-Fri, 10am-4pm Sat & Sun Jun-Aug; 1 Nov–26 Dec) has displays of local history and contains a section on the Sami. The impressive-looking **Rådhuset Konstshall** (886 08; Rådhusgatan 1; adult/child Skr20/free; 10am-6pm Tue-Sun) features local art exhibitions.

**Götebygds Folkhuvud** (53710; adult/child Skr10/free; 10am-6pm Jul-Aug; 20m) is an interesting town in reconstruction of an Iron Age farm, complete with actors and a wide range of activities, from baking to iron working. Guided tours run at...
12.30pm, 2pm and 3.30pm. Take bus 21 to Genäsängen, then walk to the farm, or ask at the tourist office about the regular direct bus service from town.

**Sleeping & Eating**

STF Vandrarhem (207 04; Hügnsängarden, Hügnäs 99; dm/cabins from Skr130/230; (yr-round) This place is in a lovely setting 9km west of town, just off the E4. Take bus 480 or 412.

**Strand City Hotell** (206 16; Nygatan 2; s/d from Skr595/850, discounted to Skr450/550) In the town centre, this place offers decent midrange accommodation.

**First Hotel Statt** (265 55; Lasaretgsstgatan 2; s/d from Skr720/1402, discounted to Skr702/852) The First Hotel Statt is a more upmarket option, with facilities typical of a high-end chain hotel.

**Café Galleri M** (168 60; Storgatan 8; lunch Skr59; lunch & dinner Mon-Fri, lunch Sat, closed Sun) This is a pleasant little café and a good spot for lunch, with a small adjacent art gallery.

**Mamma Mia** (147 00; Storgatan 6; meals Skr60-200) Nearby Mamma Mia has an extensive menu of Italian food, including pizza and pasta dishes under Skr100.

**Restaurang Varverget** (844 88; lunch Skr65) On top of Varverget, this place does typically Swedish food and a good weekday lunch special, which you can enjoy along with great views.

Down by the harbour you’ll find some good dining options, including the excellent **Fina Fiskén** (150 05; meals Skr85-170), serving local fish dishes in a fine atmosphere.

**Getting There & Away**

Länstrafiken Västerbotten runs bus 100 along the E4 several times daily — south to Sundsvall (2½ hours), north to Umeå (three hours) and Luleå (six hours).

**VÄSTERBOTTEN**

**UMEÅ**

**INFORMATION**

**Forex** (Remarkstorg) Near the tourist office.

**Library** (Rådhusesplanaden 6A) Internet access.

**Naturkompaniet** (Rådhusesplanaden 7) Outdoor gear is sold here.

**Press Stop** (Victoria Gallerian shopping centre) International magazines sold.

Tourist office (16 16 16; umetourist@umea.se, www.umea.se/turism; Remarkstorg 15; 8am-7pm Mon-Fri, 10am-4pm Sat, noon-4pm Sun mid-Jun-mid-Aug; Mon-Fri rest of yr) A central place that can help you with varying inquiries.

**Sights & Activities**

Gammia, 1km east of the town centre, has several museums and shouldn’t be missed. Attractions include the cultural/historical exhibits and Sami collections of the regional Västerbottens Museum (17 18 18; admission free), the modern art museum, Bildmuseet, and the Maritime Museum. The surrounding Friluftsmuseet, featuring old houses and staff wearing period clothes, is also worth a look. The museums are open daily June to August (closed Monday for the rest of the year).

Holmön, which calls itself the sunniest place in Sweden, is a 15km-long offshore island with a boat museum (adult/child Skr20/free; Jun-Aug) and a collection of traditional craft, plus a good quayside restaurant and swimming beaches. In July there’s a rowboat race to Finland, which is only 36km away. Free ferries depart two to three times daily from Norrfjärden, 26km northeast of Umeå (bus 118 or 119, Skr32).

The island of Norrbyskär, 40km south of Umeå, is another worthwhile destination. It has an interesting history – a sawmill community was built up here from nothing in less than 10 years, only to disappear just as suddenly 10 years later. There is a museum as well as other attractions; buses run to and from Umeå to Norrbyskär, to connect with ferries – inquire at the tourist office for times.

There are a number of activities in the surrounding area, many of them based at Vänderhem, 54km northwest of Umeå. Adventures on offer include fishing, white-water rafting, jet-boating and canoeing on the local rivers, plus horse riding and a variety of walking trails (from two hours to three days). The tourist office can help you to organise these. Bus 16 connects Vänders and Umeå.

**Sleeping & Eating**

STF Vandrarhem Umeå (77 16 50; info@vandrarhem.net; Västra Esplanaden 18; dm from Skr130) This busy and efficient (if rather Dickensian) youth hostel is one of the few in the region that’s actually occupied by youths. It’s in a great location, a residential neighbourhood mere steps from the town centre.

First Hotel Grand (77 88 70; umea.grand@firsthotels.se; Storgatan 46; s/d from Skr900/1100) This is the oldest hotel in Umeå, and it has good service and friendly staff.

Hotel Pilön (14 14 60; Pilgatan 5; s/d Skr550/750) This is a comfortable, family-run place in a quiet area some 600m from the town centre.

**Royal Hotel** (10 07 30; hotelroyal@telia.com; Skolgatan 62; s/d from Skr850/1200) The Royal Hotel offers good accommodation in the heart of town and has an excellent restaurant.

**Uméå Camping** (70 26 00; umea.camping@umea.se; sites Skr125, basic huts from Skr200, cabins & chalets from Skr260) This well-equipped camping ground is 5km northeast of the town centre and just off the E4; take bus 2, 6 or 9 (Skr16).

**Eating & Drinking**

Greta (10 07 35; Skolgatan 62; mains Skr130-250) Upmarket, stylish Greta at the Royal Hotel offers well-prepared Swedish and international dishes, with especially good fish and seafood.

**Blå** (12 60 50; Rådhustorget; mains Skr100-200) This place, at the back of the town hall, offers an excellent cocktail list and a menu of favourites served up bright and breezy surrounds.

Sushi & Wok (14 19 00; Vasaplan; lunch Skr65, meals Skr100-150) This is a sleek restaurant and bar serving good Asian dishes, including sushi.

**Lottas Krog** (12 95 51; Nygatan 22; mains Skr85-225) This is a friendly pub-restaurant with an extensive menu featuring something for everyone – from fish and chips or a veggie burger to chicken tandouri or even a fillet of wild boar.

Blå (12 22 00; Rådhusesplanaden 14; meals Skr75-130) This is a large, shiny, trendy place, with a nightly all-you-can-eat Thai buffet in winter and a regular menu of fashionable fare like risotto, gnocchi and baked salmon.
Getting There & Away

AIR

The airport (071 61 00) is 4km south of the city centre. SAS and Malmö Aviation each fly to Stockholm up to seven times daily; there are also direct flights to Luleå, Kiruna and Östersund.

BOAT

There are two companies operating ferries between Umeå and Vaasa (Finland); RG Line is more passenger-oriented than Botnia Link, which is used primarily by freight trucks. A bus to the port leaves from near the airport an hour before RG Line’s departures; see p328 for contact information.

BUS

The long-distance bus station is directly opposite the train station. Ybuss runs services south daily to Gäve and Stockholm, via the coastal towns of Sundsvall, Örnsköldsvik, Härnösand, Hudiksvall and Söderhamn.

TRAIN

Tågkompaniet trains leave daily from Umeå, to connect at Vännäs with the north-south trains between Stockholm and Boden and Luleå; from Boden there are connections to Kiruna and Narvik (Norway).

Getting Around

Local buses leave from Vasaplan on Skogsgatan. The No 80 Flybuss (141190) departs regularly from Vasaplan, or call Umeå Taxi (77 00 00) – it’s about Skr125 to the airport.

SKELLEFTEÅ & AROUND

0910 / pop 73,000

Skellefteå is a pretty medieval church – it’s about Skr125 to the airport.

Maxim (13 82 83; Kungs gates 47; meals Skr35-65) is a budget-friendly café serving simple kebabs, burgers and kebabs on busy Rådhustorget.

Self-caterers should go to the Gourmet supermarket (Rennmarkstorget SA) and you can buy alcohol from Systembolaget (Kungs gates 50A).

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The long-distance bus station is directly opposite the train station. Ybuss runs services south daily to Gäve and Stockholm, via the coastal towns of Sundsvall, Örnsköldsvik, Härnösand, Hudiksvall and Söderhamn.

TRAIN

Tågkompaniet trains leave daily from Umeå, to connect at Vännäs with the north-south trains between Stockholm and Boden and Luleå; from Boden there are connections to Kiruna and Narvik (Norway).

Getting Around

Local buses leave from Vasaplan on Skogsgatan. The No 80 Flybuss (141190) departs regularly from Vasaplan, or call Umeå Taxi (77 00 00) – it’s about Skr125 to the airport.

SKELLEFTEÅ & AROUND

0910 / pop 73,000

Skellefteå is a pretty medieval church – it’s about Skr125 to the airport.

Maxim (13 82 83; Kungs gates 47; meals Skr35-65) is a budget-friendly café serving simple kebabs, burgers and kebabs on busy Rådhustorget.

Self-caterers should go to the Gourmet supermarket (Rennmarkstorget SA) and you can buy alcohol from Systembolaget (Kungs gates 50A).

Getting There & Away

AIR

The airport (071 61 00) is 4km south of the city centre. SAS and Malmö Aviation each fly to Stockholm up to seven times daily; there are also direct flights to Luleå, Kiruna and Östersund.

BOAT

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summer concerts and events – all behind a prison-like fence with a discouraging front gate.

If that doesn’t sound like your cup of tea, you may be better off in town at the central STF Vandrarhem Piteå (tel 158 80; Storgatan 3; dm Skr200), in an old hospital set in a pretty park, or the more upmarket Piteå Stadshotell (tel 197 00; info@pitestadshotell.com; Olaf Palmesgata 1; s/d from Skr120/1400), an elegant old hotel with lots of good facilities.

At the Stadshotell, you’ll find both Restaurang Röda Rummel (main s/d Skr165-250), probably the finest restaurant in town (how does gin-flambéed reindeer fillet sound?), and the Cockney Menu, with a more casual atmosphere and menu to match (pasta, baked potatoes etc for less than Skr100).

Bus 100 runs between Umeå and Luleå via Piteå every one to three hours.

LULEÅ

The area around the marina is attractively sculpted, with parks and fountains here and there. The capital of Norrbotten, the town was granted its charter in 1621, but was later moved to its present location in 1649 because of the falling sea level (9mm per year) which is due to postglacial uplift of the land. An extensive offshore archipelago contains some 1700 large and small islands, many decorated with classic red and white Swedish summer cottages.

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Information
Forex (Storgatan 46) Currency exchange.
Interpress (Storgatan 17) For newspapers and magazines.
Library (Kyrkogatan) Internet access is available free of charge in this awesome old stone building.
Naturkompaniet (Kungs gating 17) Sells all sorts of outdoor equipment.
Tourist office (tel 29 35 00; www.lulea.se; Storgatan 42; Mon-Sat) Can help with inquiries (there is also a small office at Gammelstad).

Sights & Activities
Norrbottens Museum (tel 24 35 00; Storgatan 17) Sells all sorts of outdoor equipment.

Archipelago Boat Tours (tel 24 35 00; Storgatan 17) Sells all sorts of outdoor equipment.

Domkyrka (tel 22 34 50; Domkyrkan) Sells all sorts of outdoor equipment.

Tourist office (tel 29 35 00; www.lulea.se; Storgatan 42; Mon-Sat) Can help with inquiries (there is also a small office at Gammelstad).

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GAMMELSTAD

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During the 13th century the pope increased the number of fast days, during which only fish could be eaten. This resulted in the rich Gulf of Bothnia fishing grounds becoming of great interest to the rest of Europe, and meant profit for whoever controlled the area.

With the northern border between Sweden and Russia insecure after the Treaty of Nöteborg in 1323, the Swedish crown secured control of northern Bothnia by handing over its river valleys as fiefs to noblemen from central Sweden. In 1327, Luleå was named for the first time in connection with such an enfeoffment and, in the 1430s, the region became a parish of its own, with separate chapels in Piteå and Torneå.

By the end of the 14th century, Luleå Old Town (today’s Gammelstad) was the centre of a parish stretching from the coast to the mountains along the Lule and Råne rivers. The Luleå farmers prospered during the economic boom of the Middle Ages and a stone church was built in the 15th century.

In 1621, Luleå was granted a town charter, but its development progressed very slowly. This proved to be rather fortunate because by 1649 the previously navigable channel from the archipelago had become too shallow and it was necessary to move the whole city to a better harbour, the present northern harbour of the current Luleå City. The church, the church village and the surrounding buildings became Luleå Old Town (Gammelstad).

Gammelstad church is the largest medieval church in Norrland and the only one with a reredos worthy of a cathedral and choir stalls for a whole consistory.

The church village developed because parishioners had to travel considerable distances to attend church, and required overnight accommodation. Today, Gammelstad is the largest church village in Sweden.

There are two historical walks around Gammelstad – the church walk and the town walk – which can each be done in approximately one hour.

and six church stalls remain. Many of the buildings are still in use, but some are open to the public. Guided tours (Skr30) of the site leave from the Gammelstad tourist office (tel 25 43 10; www.ferieoffice.gammelstad@lulea.se; Mon-Sat, 9am-6pm mid-Jun–mid-Aug, 10am-4pm Tue–Thu rest of yr) frequently between 10am and 4pm, mid-June to mid-August. The open-air museum, Hägnan, the old shop, Lanthandeln, and a nature reserve are nearby, and there are craft shops and a number of cafés in the area to rest weary sightseeing legs. Take bus 32 (hourly) from Luleå to the area.

A programme of boat tours of the archipelago with MS Laponia and MS Favori depart from Norra Hamnen daily between June and August; typical prices are around

the Swedish settlers. Konstens Hus (tel 29 40 80; Skedevidegatan 2; admission free; Tue-Sun) is a modern art gallery. The neo-Gothic Domkyrka (Mon-Sat) dates from 1893 and has an unusual altarpiece.

Teknikens Hus (tel 492201; adult/child Skr50/30; mid-Jun–Aug, Tue-Sat rest of yr), within the university campus 4km north, is a museum with hands-on exhibitions of technological phenomena (take bus 17 or 35).

The most famous sight in Luleå is the Unesco World Heritage-listed Gammelstad (tel 0920 29 35 00; www.lulea.se/gammelstad), or ‘Old Town’, which was the medieval centre of northern Sweden. The stone church (from 1492), 424 wooden houses (where the pioneers stayed overnight on their weekend pilgrimages)
Skrå150. Evening cruises are also popular; inquire at the tourist office.

**Sleeping**
The town’s two finest hotels are neighbours at the eastern end of Storgatan – both have upmarket facilities, restaurants and bars, as well as nightclubs, and prices are identical: singles/doubles from Skr1200/1500, with the usual hefty seasonal discounts.

**Elite Stadshotellet** (☎ 670 00; stadshotellet@lulea .elite.se; Storgatan 15) This hotel has old-world class and elegance, and a charming glassed-in restaurant-pub called Tallkatten.

**Quality Hotel Luleå** (☎ 20 10 00; lulea@quality .choicshotels.com; Storgatan 17) A more modern place with business-grade rooms and a pool.

**Park Hotell** (☎ 21 11 49; hotell@parkhotel.se; Kungs gatan 10; s/d from Skr490/690) One of a number of midrange options near the train station, Park Hotell offers pleasant rooms (some have private bathrooms and cost a little extra).

**Amber Hotel** (☎ 102 00; hotel.amber@telia.com; www.amberhotel.nu; Stationsgatan 67; s/d Skr790/950) Similar to the Hotell Aveny, but a step up, is the Amber Hotel, with rooms in a pretty, wooden guesthouse.

**Hotel Äveny** (☎ 22 18 20; www.hotellaveny.com; Her melinogatan 10; s/d Skr795/950) This hotel offers comfortable rooms at about the same price level as the Amber Hotel.

**SVIF Vandrhem Kronan/Luleå** (☎ 43 40 50; www.svifvandrehemkronan.se in Swedish; Kronan H7; dm Skr160) A bit out of the way, this year-round hostel is nevertheless the best budget option in the area, with good facilities set in a forested location. To get here, take any bus heading toward Kronanområdet.

**Arcus Camping** (☎ 43 54 00; camping@lulea.se; low/high season sites Skr110/140, chalets from Skr480/540) This place is 7km west of town, in a wooded, waterside setting not far from the E4 (take bus 6).

**Eating & Drinking**

**Fiskekyrkan** (☎ 22 02 01; Södra Hamnen; meals Skr50-170) In an old warehouse at the south harbour, atmospheric Fiskekyrkan is a favourite with the locals, and its not hard to see why – there’s live music Wednesday to Saturday, plus an affordable lunch buffet (around Skr70) and a range of meals on offer, from fast-food cheapies (kebabs and pizzas) to more ‘gourmet’ offerings. This is a very popular late-night drinking spot.

**Cook’s Krog** (☎ 21 18 00; Storgatan 17; meals Skr80- 250) At the Quality Hotel, this is a cosy place specialising in steaks and other meat and fish from the charcoal grill.

**Restaurang Waldorf** (☎ 22 26 16; Storgatan; lunch Skr65, meals Skr85-175) Inside the Vasacity shopping centre, this is a busy place, especially at lunchtime. It has a bizarre menu featuring almost every known cuisine, from Italian to Chinese, and including Japanese and Swedish dishes.

**Matstället** (cnr Nygatan & Storgatan; meals Skr40-60) This bright, modern place is a cut above most fast-food outlets, with an appealing interior and a great selection of food (pizzas, kebabs, burgers, pasta, Tex-Mex and Asian dishes) at kiosk prices.

**Roasters** (☎ 888 40; Storgatan 43; lunch from Skr65) A good café with great coffee and an interesting menu of trendy café fare. It shares an entrance with the tourist office.

There’s a **Hemköp supermarket** (Vasacity shopping centre, Storgatan); to purchase alcohol, visit nearby **Systembolaget** (Storgatan 25).

**Getting There & Around**

**AIR**
The airport (☎ 24 49 00) is 9km southwest of the town centre. SAS/Skyways fly regularly to Stockholm, Sundsvall and Umeå, and J-Falmo Aviation flies daily to Stockholm. Other airlines serve smaller destinations, including Gällivare and Kiruna. Take the airport bus (Skr45) outside the Elite and Comfort Hotels on Storgatan.

**BUS**
Bus 100 is one of the most useful for travellers – it runs between Harapanda, Luleå, Skellefteå, Umeå and Sundsvall at least four times daily. Bus 28 runs frequently to Boden, bus 21 goes to Arvidsjaur (via Boden and Alsvbyn), and bus 44 to Jokkmokk and on to Gällivare (via Boden and Vuollerim).

**CAR & TAXI**
For car rental you should call **Statoil** (☎ 186 22; Stationsgatan 30). If you need a cab, call **Luleå Taxi** (☎ 100 00).

**TRAIN**
Direct Tågkompaniet trains from Stockholm and Göteborg run at night only. Most trains from Narvik and Kiruna via Boden terminate at Luleå.

**BODEN**

**0921** / pop 20 000

Until quite recently closed to foreigners, Boden is Sweden’s largest military town. It’s surrounded by forts, built between 1901 and 1998 to defend the country from the Russians. It has a surprisingly inviting (if small) city centre that is good for strolling.

Boden has all facilities, including a friendly, well-placed tourist office (☎ 624 10; www.upploboden.nu; Kungsgatan 40; Jun-Aug, Mon-Sat rest of yr), in the middle of the town centre.

**Rödbergsfjorten** (☎ 48 30 60; tours adult/child Skr90/ 60; **late-mid-Aug**), south of the centre, is the only fort remaining from Boden’s old defences. It’s open to guided tours only – these run every half-hour from 10am to 4pm.

**Garnisonsmuseum** (☎ 683 99; Sveavägen; admission free; **11am-4pm Mon-Fri, noon-4pm Sat & Sun mid-Jul–mid-Aug**), 3km towards Jokkmokk, is a museum of tanks and armoured cars. On the southwestern edge of town, **Gaminsonsmuseet** (☎ 683 99; Sveavägen; admission free; **11am-4pm Mon-Fri, noon-4pm Sat & Sun mid-Jul–mid-Aug**), is in a former warehouse and offers a great range of reasonably priced meals (from Skr65).

**HAPARANDA**

**0922** / pop 4 700

Haparanda was founded in 1821 as a trading town to replace Sweden’s loss of Tornio (which is now in Finland) to Russia. These days the two border towns almost function as one entity (both the krona and euro are accepted at most places in both towns; Tornio is an hour’s drive from Tornio).

Haparanda’s main **tourist office** (☎ 120 10; www.haparanda.se/turism; Torget 7; **8am-4pm Mon- Fri**) is in Stadshotellet. There is another, joint, Haparanda–Tornio tourist office located on the ‘green line’.

There are few sights in Haparanda, and the ugly church looks exactly like a grain silo, but one noteworthy attraction is the unique golf course. The **Green Zone Golf Course** (☎ 106 60) lies right on the border of the two countries, and during a full round of golf the border is crossed exactly four times. You need to book in advance if you want to play under the midnight sun.

Full-day **boat tours** (☎ 133 95) of the archipelago sail on Wednesday and Thursday in July (adult/child Skr450/350), and include a visit to **Sandskär**, the largest island in Haparanda Skärgård National Park. Inquire at the tourist office about white-water rafting trips on the Kukkolaforsen rapids.

The scenic **Kukkolaforsen rapids**, on the Torneälven 15km north of Haparanda, run by at three million litres per second. In summer, you can watch local fishing for whitefish using medicinal dip nets. Also well worth a visit is the excellent tourist village here, which includes a **camping ground and cabins** (☎ 310 00; sites Skr150, 4-bed cabins from Skr500), plus a restaurant, café, fish smokehouse, saunas and a museum.

The comfortable, waterfront STF Vandr-hemHaparanda (☎ 61771;info@haparandavandrhem .com; Strömgatan 21; dm from Skr120; **Svapå) is nicely placed at the edge of a park close to the town centre. There’s a kitchen, but meals are also available in the attached café-bar, which has a great patio open in summer.

The large, once-grand **Stadshotellet** (☎ 614 90; Torget 7; s/d from Skr1100/1400; summer budget beds Skr200) is the architectural focus of the town, and its pub-restaurant, **Gulasch Baronen**, offers a great range of reasonably priced meals (from Skr65).

**Tapanis Buss** (www.tapanis.se in Swedish; ☎ 129 55) runs express coaches from Tornio to Stockholm twice a week (Skr480, 15 hours). A regular local bus service connects Haparanda and Tornio. There are regional buses from Luleå (Skr121, 2½ hours, three daily) and towns further south. Daily bus 53 travels north along the border via the scenic Kukkolaforsen rapids. **Overtorneå (Skr160** , one to 1½ hours, three daily) and **Pajala** (Skr166, 3½ hours to 4 hours, three daily), then continues west to Kiruna (Skr280, six hours, three daily).
THE INTERIOR
The northern parts of Norrbotten are dominated by forest and wandering reindeer, and there are numerous small towns to use as pit stops for further exploration.

The first major town you’ll encounter if you head north from Harapanda, following the Torneälven river that marks the border with Finland, is the rather unremarkable Övertorneå. There’s a bridge across the river to Finland here, and a tourist office by the bridge.

West of Övertorneå is Överkalix, a much better option. It’s located at a scenic river junction on the Kalixälven, and has little hills nearby. The area is popular for angling; ask for permits at the small but very accommodating tourist office ((tm) 0926-103 92; www.overkalix.se in Swedish; Storgatan 27). Take the winding road up to the top of the nearby hill, Bränna berget, for a fine view; there’s a kiosk and little café here, as well as an amphitheatre for live music and stage productions. Sturillus, about a kilometre from the western end of the bridge, is a beautiful Russian Orthodox church with an octagonal tower. Martingårdet, 5km north on road No 392, is a 17th-century farm museum with ‘Överkalix paintings’ on a cupboard and bed. There are a couple of eateries in the town, mostly grill bars.

There’s a sign for the crossing of the Arctic Circle on road No 392. About 12km north of here is Jockfall, an impressive waterfall with a nearby camping ground (tm) 0926-600 33; sites from Skr65; cabins from Skr350), shop and a café-restaurant (meals from Skr45) serving locally caught salmon. This scenic area is a paradise for fishing folk.

Pressing on further north, Pajala (population 7300) has the world’s largest circular sundial and a helpful tourist office (tm) 0978-100 15; www.pajalaturism.bj.se) located near the bus station. Other things worth a look are Laestadius pörtet, the mid-19th-century home of Lars Levi Laestadius, a local vicar and founder of a religious movement, and Kengis Järnbruk, a 17th-century iron foundry.

Byrkojen (tm) 0978-712 00; Soukolovägen 2; s/d Skr380/450) offers comfortable and newly renovated hotel rooms in Pajala. There’s a wide range of food available at the attached restaurant, Linkarn (meals Skr40-200), and an attractive dining room done up in chic modern design, with a hopping evening beer garden in summer. There are a couple of other eateries in town, as well as a camping ground that doubles as a youth hostel and two more hotels. At the camping ground you can rent bikes, canoes and boats.

Bus 55 runs from Luleå to Pajala via Överkalix (Skr260, five hours, twice daily direct), while bus 53 runs between Haparanda and Kiruna (Skr280, six hours, three daily) via Övertorneå and Pajala. From Pajala, you can press on southwest to Gällivare (bus 46, Skr139, two hours, three daily), or northwest to Vittangi (bus 51 or 53, Skr106, two hours, twice daily direct), and from Vittangi you can journey through the wilderness, north to Karesuando (bus 50), or west to Kiruna (bus 53, Skr80, one hour, three daily).

JÄMTLAND
ÖSTERSUND

If you’re lucky you’ll catch a glimpse of Östersund’s favourite tourist attraction, the monster called Storsjödjuret, which usually stays hidden in the waters of Storsjön lake. Even if you’re not that lucky, the town is a worth a day or two of exploration. Many of its attractions lie on the adjacent island of Frösön, which also has a winter sports centre. Östersund is also noteworthy as the starting point of the St Olavsladen pilgrimage route to Trondheim in Norway.

A huge four-day music festival, Storsjöyran, is usually held over the last weekend in July, when the town centre gets sealed off in the evenings. Some 50,000 people attend the festival, but it’s very expensive, with admission costing up to Skr350 per evening. Accommodation prices also shoot up at this time.

Information
The tourist office (tm) 1440 01; www.turist.ostersund.se; Rådhusgatan 44; mid-Jun–Aug, 9am-5pm Mon-Fri rest of yr) is opposite the town hall; ask about the Östersund Card (adult/child Skr140/55), which gives discounts or free entry to many local attractions between June and mid-August.

The large library, opposite the bus station, has free Internet access. The town has all facilities, including banks, supermarkets and shops selling outdoor gear, primarily on Prästgatan.

Sights & Activities
Don’t miss Jami l (tm) 15 01 00; adult/child Jun-Aug Skr90/25, rest of yr Skr60/20; Jun-Aug, Tue-Sun rest of yr), a kilometre north of the town centre. This museum is the highlight of Östersund, combining the lively exhibitions of the regional museum and a large museum village with staff wearing period clothing in summer. The regional museum exhibits the curious Överhogdal Tapestry, a Christian Viking relic from around 1100 which features lots of animals, people, ships and buildings (including churches). It’s one of the oldest of its kind in Europe and may even predate the famous Bayeux tapestry.

The Stadsmuseum (tm) 12 13 24; adult/child Skr30/15; mid-Jun- Aug, Tue-Sun rest of yr) has the world’s largest sundial, called the Östersund Card (adult/child Skr140/55), which gives discounts or free entry to many local attractions between June and mid-August.

The large library, opposite the bus station, has free Internet access. The town has all facilities, including banks, supermarkets and shops selling outdoor gear, primarily on Prästgatan.

from the tourist office, contains items of local historical, cultural and topographical interest. The adjacent Gamla Kyrkan is the old town church, completed in 1846. The impressive brick building with a cupola and tiled roof is the rådhus (town hall).

Activities include lake cruises (Skr65-95; Jun–early Sep) on the old S/S Thonée steamship. There are also sightseeing coach trips (adult/child Skr100/50), town walks (Skr45) and elk-spotting safaris (from Skr185) at least once weekly from June to August. Book any of these at the tourist office. Canoes and fishing gear can be rented from Badhusparkens Uthyrdningscenter (tm) 13 38 38; Storgatan) which also rents bikes (for about Skr250 per day/week).

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FRÖSÖN
This island is reached by road or footbridge from the middle of Östersund (the footbridge is from the pleasant Badhusparken – nearby you can rent bikes, inline skates and canoes). Just across the footbridge, outside Landstingshuset and near the Konsum supermarket, there’s Sweden’s northernmost rune stone, which commemorates the arrival of Christianity in 1050.

Also featured on the island are the animals at Frösöns Djurpark (15 47 43; adult/child/senior Skr140/70/100; mid-jun–mid-Aug; bus 5) as well as the restored, late-12th-century Frösöns kyrrka (8am-8pm in summer, Mon-Fri rest of yr; bus 3), with its distinctive separate bell tower. If you are a skier there are both slalom and nordic ski runs on the island at Österberg, where there is also a viewing tower (Sk10; mid-May–mid-Sep) with fine views.

GLÖSA ROCK CARVINGS
Glösa, 40km northwest of Östersund and by the Alsensjön lake, has some of the finest Stone Age rock carvings (admission free; 24hr) in Sweden. The carvings, on rock slabs beside a stream, feature large numbers of elk and date from 4000 BC. There’s also an excellent reconstruction of a Stone Age hut and replicas of skis, snowshoes, a sledge and an elk-skin skibol.

Nearby, there are some displays about elk-hunting using traps (prohibited since 1864) and more modern methods. There are roughly 13,000 fångstgrupper (pit traps) in Jämtland, set in lines across migration routes; a short walk through the woods (follow the sign saying Forminnne) will take you to four of them.

Take bus 533 from Östersund (two or three daily), then follow the sign from the public road (500m walk).

Sleeping
STF Vandrarhemmet Jamtli (12 20 60; dm Skr140-160) You can spend the night in the middle of Östersund’s big attraction at this quaint hostel, inside the Jamtli museum precinct.

STF Vandrarhem (13 91 00; Södra Gröngatan 36; dm from Skr165; late June–early Aug) A second, summer-only option is this clean and central hostel.

Östersunds Vandrarhem (10 10 27; Postgränd 4; dm Skr145) A conveniently located hostel in the centre of town.

Vandrarhemmet Rallaren (13 22 32; Bangårds-gatan 6; dm Skr140) This is next to the train station.

Frostsornets Häröngården (51 57 67; Utstikutsvägen 10; dm from Skr130; May-Oct) This place has hostel beds in wonderful turf-roofed huts at the viewing tower on Frösön.

Pensionat Svea (51 29 01; pensionat svea@spray.se; Storgatan 49; s/d from Skr450/550) A cozy place close to the heart of town; prices include breakfast.

First Hotel Gamla Teatern (51 16 00; bokningar@ gamlateatern.se; Thömmegråd 20; s/d from Skr900/1200) An elegant place in an old theatre. The budget rooms are reasonably priced in summer; better standard rooms cost Skr200 to Skr250 more.

Östersunds Camping (14 46 15; östersunds camp ing@ostersund.se; sites from Skr100, hostel d from Skr280, cabins from Skr300; bus 2, 6 or 9). Off Kronlidsvägen, this large and well-equipped place is 2km southeast of the town centre and right beside a large adventure swimming pool.

Eating & Drinking
Restaurants line Prästgatan, the main pedestrian street.

Volos (51 66 89; Prästgatan 38; meals Skr60-170) With something for everyone’s tastes – pizzas, pasta, nachos, salads, kebabs, Greek dishes, elk-skin sandwiches. Popular and classy, this place has a great late-19th-century atmosphere. There’s an appealing menu, with gourmet pasta dishes, fish, steak and other classic dishes on offer, which can be enjoyed in the outdoor courtyard. The lunch buffet is excellent value at Skr70.

Café Artist (55 60 10; Prästgatan 16; mains Skr100-215) At the Radisson hotel, this is a lovely restaurant offering predominantly Italian fare, including pasta dishes priced from Skr100 to Skr140.

Brunkullans (10 14 54; Postgränd 5; mains Skr100-200). Popular and classy, this place has a great late-19th-century atmosphere. There’s an appealing menu, with gourmet pasta dishes, fish, steak and other classic dishes on offer, which can be enjoyed in the outdoor courtyard. The lunch buffet is excellent value at Skr70.

News (10 11 31; Samuel Permans gata 9; mains Skr110-280) News is a slick – and somewhat pricey – bar and bistro, frequented by the fashionable set who like to be watched while they eat. There’s trendy décor, good service and a pleasant outdoor terrace. Mains include salads, burgers, steak and rack of lamb, plus vegetarian options. Lunch is a more casual affair, with bagels and ciabatta sandwiches from Skr45.

Paviljong Thai (13 00 99; Prästgatan 508; lunch from Skr60, dishes Skr60-150) This place serves good-sized portions of great Thai cuisine, with all the favourite noodle, curry and seafood dishes on the menu.

Captain Cook (12 60 90; Hamngatan 9; meals Skr150-210) This is an Australian-themed pub with a good menu of bar food, ranging from light snacks to more hearty fare, and a selection of imported and local beer to wash it down.

Kebab City (13 70 22; Storgatan 31) Kebab City serves burger, kebab and falafel meals for around Skr50. It’s one of many interchangeable kebab houses in town.

For alcohol, head to Systembolaget (Kyrkga tan 66; 10am-7pm Mon-Fri, 10am-3pm Sat).

Getting There & Around
The airport (19 3000) is on Frösön, 1km west of the town centre, and the airport bus leaves regularly from the bus terminal (Skr50). SAS flies several times daily to Stockholm.

The train station is a short walk south from the town centre, but the main regional bus station is central on Gustav III Torg: local buses usually run to both. Local buses 1, 3, 4, 5 and 9 go to Frösön (Skr15, or free with the Östersund Card).

For premium red-decked Mora twice a day; in summer the Inlandsbanan train runs once daily, to Gällivare or Mora. Bus 156 runs west to Åre; bus 63 runs twice daily northeast to Umeå.

Direct trains run from Stockholm via Gävle, and some continue to Storlien (from where you can catch trains to Norway). You can also catch a train east to Sundsvall.

For car hire, contact Statsol (12 39 75; Kron dikvägen 97). Bikes and inline skates can be hired from Badhusparkens Uthyrningscenter, s.293. There are also taxis (51 72 00).

ARÅDALEN & PERSÅSEN
This seldom-visited part of Jämtland is a favourite spot for trekkers. Its lonely landscapes make you feel like you’re really in the middle of absolutely nowhere – and pretty happy to be there. In spring, keep your eyes trained on the marshy ground for signs of reddish-yellow cloudberry (hjortron) – the rest of the year your only company may be reindeer and a few wild birds.

The rustic, 18-bed STF Vandrarhem Åråde (0687-140 54; dm Skr130; mid-Jun–Aug) is an excellent hiking base and probably the best place in the area to get regional information. Ask the helpful staff about a 5km hike to Östra Arådalens fäbod, a well-preserved Sami farm that once produced cheese and is still in use for part of the year.

The barely-there village of Persåsen, now essentially continued to the large and modern museum/shop/hotel/restaurant that is the Persåsen Hotell & STF Vandrarhem (0643-44 55 50; www.persasen.se; Persåsen 3370, Övikens; dm from Skr130, cabins from Skr390, hotel s/d from Skr795/1195), was home to inventor John Ericsson (1803–89) for several years while he served in the military. Ericsson invented the caloric engine and the propeller while here, and the museum displays an intriguingly conflicted exhibit about his life. The shop acts as more of a crafts museum, with an astounding array of fine woodwork, textiles and other traditional handicrafts gifted from the region.

ÅRE & AROUND
Arguably Sweden’s top mountain-sports destination, the Åre area (www.skistar.com/are) has 45 ski lifts that serve some 100 pistes and 1000km of skilift slopes. The area west of Åre is popular among fell-walkers and there is a network of STF wilderness huts and lodges here for enthusiasts.

The Åre tourist office (177 20) is in the train station. Most facilities are around the main square, which you reach by walking through the park opposite the station.

There are also excellent cross-country tracks in the area, and other winter activities, such as dogsledging, snowmobile safaris and sleigh rides (which are horse- or reindeer-drawn!) are available too. Åre also offers great summer outdoor recreation, including hiking, kayaking, rafting and fishing, as well as good mountain biking. The area west of Åre is popular among fell-walkers and there is a network of STF wilderness huts and lodges here for enthusiasts.
Sleeping & Eating
Things fill up quickly in winter, so it’s best to book accommodation and skiing packages with Åre Resort (017 00; reservations@areerort.se).
Åre Camping (060 50; sites from Skr150) is a good summer option. Park Villan (017 73; Parkvägen 6; dm Skr170), the yellow house in the park opposite the train station, offers good backpacker accommodation outside of the ski season. The hotel (010 38; brattlandsgarden@spray.se; dm Skr330) is 8km east of Åre; daily buses connect it to town.

Not all hotels stay open in summer, but those that do offer great bargains. The huge ski lodge and resort Åre Fjällby (013 60; reception@areajallby.com; summer self-contained apt from Skr550), for example, often has off-season specials and discounts.

Like the hotels, the majority of restaurants are closed in summer, but there are still some very good choices, primarily on the main square. Typical Swedish fast food is available at Åre Kiosk & Grill, but nearby Liten Krog (dishes around Skr70) and Wersens (dishes around Skr70) have more style. Villa Tottebo (mains from Skr145), opposite the train station, is a classy establishment open year-round, and there’s an inviting bar upstairs with a stellar view. There’s a Konsum supermarket on the square.

Getting There & Away
Regional bus 156 runs from Östersund and connects Åre to the nearby winter-sports centre of Duved (much quieter and more family-oriented than Åre). Regular trains between Stockholm and Storlien, via Östersund, stop at Åre. Storlien is the terminus for SJ trains; change here for Norwegian trains to Hell and Trondheim. A regional bus 156 runs from Östersund and connects Åre to the nearby winter-sports centre of Duved (quieter and more family-oriented than Åre). Regular trains between Stockholm and Storlien, via Östersund, stop at Åre. Storlien is the terminus for SJ trains; change here for Norwegian trains to Hell and Trondheim.

STORLIEN & AROUND
0647
The area west of Åre is justly popular among fell-walkers, particularly around Sylarna, one of the finest mountains for trekking and climbing in Sweden. There’s a very good network of STF wilderness huts and lodges along the trails, with meals available in most of them. Reservations aren’t possible, but you’re guaranteed a place to sleep (though it may be on the floor). Most hikers in this area seek out the Jämtland Triangle just north of Sylarna; ask at the Storlien tourist office or any STF lodge for details.

Storlien, near the Norwegian border, has a popular downhill skiing area (the Swedish king himself has a winter chalet here), as well as a supermarket and a tourist office (070 70; www.storlienfallen.com in Swedish; summer) at the train station.

The excellent STF Vandrarhem Storvallen/Storlien (0700 50; dm Skr150-170), 600m off the E14 and about 5km east of Storlien, offers top-quality accommodation, good meals, friendly service and good hiking advice.

Le Ski (mains Skr50-150), in the village at Hotel Storlien, has a daily buffet, plus a good menu of reasonably priced meals like pizza, meatballs, salmon and steak.

HÄRJEDALEN
This is the least populated of Sweden’s counties, but that just means fewer people to get in the way of its spectacular views. Härjedalen is a wilderness of forest, lake and mountain in the west, and forest, lake and marsh in the east. The rugged mountain scenery in the far northwest is breathtaking. There aren’t many towns in the region worth visiting, but, after all, the reason you come to a place like this is to get far away from city life.

FUNÄSDALEN & AROUND
0684 / pop 2000
Dominated by the impressive peak Funäsdalsberget, Funäsdalen and the surrounding area is a favourite among hikers, skiers and other outdoor sports enthusiasts.

The tourist office (0164 10; www.funadsalsjall.se; Rörovsägen 30; mid-Jun–mid-Aug, Mon–Fri rest of yr) is at the Fjällmuseum, and all the main tourist facilities are on Rörovsägen, the main road through town.

Sights & Activities
Härjedalsfjällmuseum (0164 10; adult/child Skr60/ free) has displays covering the Sami, local farmers and miners, and includes the Fornminnesparken outdoor section. A golf course, one of Sweden’s finest, can be found in Ljungdal, just east of town.

There’s an office of the forest agency Naturum (0122 42 00; Jun-Aug & Dec-Apr) 15km south at Tännäs Fiskecentrum, with information on the Rogen Nature Reserve, including details about the moraine ridges and the local musk ox. Excellent hiking can be found in the reserve, but it’s better accessed from Grövelsjön in Dalarna. Högvallen, about 30km south of Tännäs on road No 311, is Sweden’s highest village (830m).

Ramundberget, over 20km north of Funäsdalen, and Tändalen (12km west), have excellent downhill and nordic ski areas. There are 24 ski lifts and 75 runs, and the 300km of cross-country trails constitute the longest ski area in the world. The profile of the mountain Stor-Mittakläppen (1212m), as seen from Högvallen (4km east of Ramundberget), is most impressive.

Ljungdalen, about 40km north of Funäsdalen, is close to Helagsfjället (1797m), the highest peak in the area. There’s good hiking and skiing here; the 12km one-way hike from Kläppen (north of Ljungdalen) to the STF cabin at Helags goes via some old summer farms and is reasonably easy. There is also a small ski area as well as a tourist office (0687-200 79).

Sleeping & Eating
There are a few STF hostels in the area, including one at Ljungdal (0687-203 64; Dunsjögården; dm Skr120) and Tännadal/Skarvruet (0684-221 1; Skarvruet Fjällhotel; dm Skr145-175). Both are open year-round.

Hotel Funäsdalen (214 30; info@hotell-funasedalen.se; summer hotel beds Skr175, s/d Skr500/800). Off the main road in Funäsdalen is this large, well-equipped hotel, with a range of accommodation options plus a good restaurant.

Wärdhuset Gyllene Bocken (0130 90; info@gyllenebocken.se; summer s/d from Skr450/700). This is a lovely old inn opposite the fine golf course in Ljusnadal, with a good restaurant attached. Rooms with private facilities are also available. The staff can organise guided tours for guests, plus other activities in the area.

Veras Stekhus & Pub (0215 30; lunch around Skr85, mains Skr145-215). In the heart of Funäsdalen, near the tourist office, this is a relatively upmarket steakhouse with a great view from its outdoor terrace and a comprehensive menu of steak, reindeer and other meats (though there’s not much to please vegetarians).

Not far away is Café Loftet (0291 49; lunch with good café fare such as baguettes, quiches and salads from Skr30, plus more of that scenic panorama from its veranda.

Getting There & Away
Härjedalen (www.harjedalen.se in Swedish) runs buses between Stockholm and Funäsdalen (Skr380), via Gäve and Järvsö, several days a week; on Saturday buses also connect with Tännadal and Ramundberget (Skr400). Contact the tourist office for information and bookings.

Local bus 622 and 623 run from Funäsdalen to Ramundberget and Tännadal, respectively; there are also daily ski buses during winter. There is not a direct connection with Ljungdalen; take the once-daily bus 613 from Åsarna (which has an Inlandsbanan train station), about 100km east. Bus 164 runs from Funäsdalen via Åsarna to Östersund once or twice daily.

KARESUANDO (GÅRRASSAVON)
0981 / pop 350
This is the northernmost village in Sweden, and it feels that way. Directly across the bridge from the Finnish town of Kaareusanto, the tiny village is more interesting for what it takes to get there than for anything you can find in it. The main attractions here are natural ones: from late May to mid-July, there’s 20-30% chance of seeing the midnight sun, while in winter temperatures drop to −50°C.

There’s a fairly professional tourist office (0202 05; www.karesuando.com in Swedish; May–Sep) on the bridge to Finland. Inside there’s regional information, souvenirs and a café serving drinks and cakes. There are no banks in the village, but there are a couple of convenience shops and fuel stations; eating options are very limited.

Items of interest in Karesuando are an octagonal school (1993); Vita Huset (08 4am–pm), a folk museum with mainly Norwegian items from WWII; and Sami Viessu, a Sami art and handicraft exhibition and museum.

Treiriksröset, about 100km northwest of the village, is the point where Norway, Sweden and Finland meet; ask the tourist office for details of boats leaving from Kilpisjärvi (on the Finnish side of the border) to visit this hard-to-access area.

There’s a small STF Vandrarhem (0203 30; dm Skr140; mid-May–mid-Sep) up here, about a kilometre before you reach the bridge
ARCTIC PHENOMENA

Aurora Borealis

There are few sights as mesmerising as an undulating aurora. Although these appear in many forms – pillars, streaks, wisps and haloes of vibrating light – they’re most memorable when they take the form of pale curtains, apparently wafting on a gentle breeze. Most often, the aurora appears faint green, light yellow or rose-coloured, but in periods of extreme activity it can change to bright yellow or crimson.

The visible aurora borealis, or northern lights (norsken), are caused by streams of charged particles from the sun and the solar winds, which are diverted by the earth’s magnetic field towards the polar regions. Because the field curves downward in a halo surrounding the magnetic poles, the charged particles are drawn earthward here. Their interaction with atoms in the upper atmosphere (about 160km above the surface) releases the energy creating the visible aurora (in the southern hemisphere, the corresponding phenomenon is called the aurora australis). During periods of high activity, a single auroral storm can produce trillions of watts of electricity with a current of one million amps.

Although science dismisses it as imagination, most people report that the aurora is often accompanied by a crackling or whirring sound. Don’t feel unbalanced if you hear it – that’s the sort of sound you’d expect to hear from such a dramatic display, and if it’s an illusion, it’s a very convincing one. The best time of year to catch the northern lights in Sweden is from October to March, although you may well see them as early as August in the far north.

Midnight Sun & Polar Night

Because the earth is tilted on its axis, the polar regions are constantly facing the sun at their respective summer solstices, and are tilted away from it in the winter. The Arctic and Antarctic Circles, at latitudes 66°32’N and 66°32’S respectively, are the southern and northern limits of constant daylight on the longest day of the year.

The northern one-seventh of Sweden lies north of the Arctic Circle, but even in central Sweden, the summer sun is never far below the horizon. Between late May and mid-August, nowhere north of Stockholm experiences true darkness; in Umeå, for example, the first stars aren’t visible until mid-August. Although many visitors initially find it difficult to sleep while the sun is shining brightly outside, most people get used to it.

Conversely, winters in the far north are dark and bitterly cold, with only a few hours of twilight to break the long polar nights. During this period, some people suffer from SAD (seasonal affective disorder) syndrome, which occurs when they’re deprived of the vitamin D provided by sunlight. Its effects may be minimised by taking supplements of vitamin D (as found in cod liver oil) or with special solar spectrum light bulbs.

and tourist office. It’s operated jointly with the Hotel Karesuando (203 30; s/d Skr550/850), across the road, with en suite rooms and a restaurant serving good, simple meals.

KIRUNA (GIRON)

0980 / pop 23,407

There’s not much to Kiruna, but it’s the major town this far north – in fact it’s the northernmost town in Sweden. The surrounding district includes Sweden’s highest peak, Kebnekaise (2111m), and some of the country’s best national parks and hiking routes; see p301 for suggestions on tackling them.

This far north, the midnight sun lasts from 31 May to 14 July, and there’s a bluish darkness throughout December and the New Year period. Many people speak Finnish, and Samis are a small minority – there are local radio stations that broadcast in both languages.

The helpful and efficient tourist office (188 80; www.kiruna.se, www.lappland.se; Lars Janssonsgatan 17; 8am-8pm Mon-Fri, 9:30am-7pm Sat & Sun) is next to the Scandic Hotel and has loads of excellent brochures, as well as a row of computers for Internet access. Staff can arrange various activities, including rafting, dogsledding and snow scooter trips, although these can be quite expensive.

Banks and other facilities can be found along Lars Janssonsgatan, and the library, behind the bus station, offers free Internet access.

Sights & Activities

A visit to the depths of the LKAB iron-ore mine, 540m underground, is recommended – many of the facts about this place are mind-boggling. Tours depart from the tourist office regularly from mid-June to mid-August (adult/child Skr220/50), though tours in English happen only a few times a week; make bookings through the tourist office.

Kiruna kyrka (Gárdi; 10am-9pm summer) looks like a huge Sami kása (but), and it’s particularly pretty against a snowy backdrop. Another landmark, firmly at the opposite end of the aesthetics spectrum, is the Stadshus (town hall; 705 21; Hjalmar Lundboghvägen; 9am-6pm), which, despite its grim façade, is actually very nice inside and has a free slide show on the hour, and free guided tours.

Hjalmar Lundboghsgården (701 10; Ingenjörsgatan 1; adult/child Skr30/10; 8am or 10am-6pm Mon-Fri summer) is the former home of the first LKAB director and is now a museum.

Samegården (7 170 29; Bryggregatan 14; adult/child Skr20/free; 10am-5pm Mon-Fri summer) has displays about Sami culture and an expensive handicrafts shop.

As well as the famous Ice Hotel, tiny Jukkasjärvi, 18km east of Kiruna, is home to a church (8am-10pm summer), which has a modern Sami painting behind the altar. Near the church is Gárdi (adult/child Skr60/30; tours 10am-6pm.
Northern Sweden & Lappland

mid-Jun–mid-Aug), a reindeer yard that you can tour with a Sami guide to learn about reindeer farming and Sami culture. Also in this area is the Herbyggsdår, a typical open-air homestead museum. Regular bus 501 runs between Kiruna and Jukkásjärvi (SkR26, 30 minutes, several daily).

Some 23km further out is the space base Esrange, which researches the northern lights (norrsken) – see p298. Detailed four-hour tours (adult/child SkR90/200) of the facility are offered to enthusiasts in summer, but must be arranged in advance; inquire at the Kiruna tourist office.

Held in the last week of January, the Kiruna Snow Festival (www.kiruna.com/snowfestival) is based around a snow-sculpture competition. The tradition started in 1985 as a space-themed snow-sculpture contest to celebrate the launching of a rocket (Viking) from Esrange.

Sleeping

Rådhushbyn Ripan Hotel & Camping (630 00; ripan@kiruna.se; Campingvägen 5; sites SkR100, hotel s/d from SkR650/750, 4-bed cabins from SkR650; ). In the northern part of town, this is a large and well-equipped camping ground with a good restaurant-pub. It has hotel-standard chalets in addition to its caravan and tent sites.

STF Vandrarhem Kiruna (171 95; Bergmästargatan 7; dm SkR150-180, s/d from SkR290/380; yr-round) This central hostel has good facilities and an adjacent Chinese restaurant.

SVIF Yellow House (137 50; yellowhouse@inbox 301.swipnet.se; Hanterkargatan 25; dm SkR150, s/d SkR300/400) There are more excellent facilities here, including a sauna, kitchen and laundry, a TV in each room, and a nice, quiet enclosed garden.

Kiruna Rumservice (195 60; krrs@kiruna.se; Hjalmar Lundbohm vägen 53; d from SkR350) Another good option, especially for small groups. It offers rooms and apartments with a varying number of beds. Breakfast is additional.

Scandic Hotel Ferrum (39 86 00; ferrum@scandic-hotels.com; Lars Janssons gatan 15; s/d SkR121/141, dis- counted to SkR690/840) Near the tourist office, this is a town landmark. It offers the finest rooms in town and has excellent facilities, including a wine restaurant and nightclub on the premises.

Hotel Vinterpalatset (677 70; vinter@kiruna.se; Järvägs gatan 18; s/d from SkR750/900) This pretty hotel is near Hotel Kebne and has pleasant upmarket rooms.

Hotell Kebne (681 80; info@hotellkebne.com; Konduktörgatan 7; s/d from SkR950/1200) Ask about seasonal and weekend specials at this place, which has comfortable rooms and a good central location.

Eating & Drinking

M&M’s Restaurant (Campingvägen; meals SkR95-225). This restaurant at the camping ground (of all places) has an interesting and creative menu, which includes tortillas, beef fillets, reindeer, salmon, veggie dishes and burgers. The lunch buffet is SkR75.

3nd Baren (Föreningsgatan 11; meals SkR85-240) This is a popular, moderately priced restaurant and lively drinking spot of an evening. Try local specialities, such as reindeer or arctic fish (fish); there are also vegetarian selections.

Restaurang Winter City (109 00; Bergmästargatan 7; lunch SkR65, meals SkR55-140) This eatery, at the STF hostel, offers a lunch special, plus a range of pizzas, as well as classic Chinese and other Asian dishes.

Cafe Safari (174 60; Geologsgatan 4) This is the nicest café in town with good coffee, cakes and light meals, such as sandwiches, quiche and baked potatoes.

Caffephon (613 17; Bergmästargatan; meals SkR75-185) This is an unremarkable restaurant with a comprehensive menu, but the cosy bar is an inviting place, and there’s an outdoor terrace where you can take advantage of good weather.

There’s a Rimi supermarket (Föreningsgatan) near 3nd Baren, and the Systembolaget (Geologsgatan 7) is also central.

Getting There & Around

The small airport (600 00), 7km east of the town, has two to three daily nonstop flights to Stockholm with SAS, and to Umeå (weekdays only) with Skyways. The airport bus (156 90) connects with most flights (SkR45).

Regional buses to and from the bus station (Hjalmar Lundbohm vägen), opposite the Stadshus, serve all major settlements around Norrbotten. Bus 10 runs twice daily to Gällivare (SkR121) and Luleå (SkR260), and 92 goes two to four times daily to Nikkaloukta (SkR71) for the Kebnekaise trail head. To reach Karesuando and Finland, take bus 50 (SkR162, not Saturday). Bus 91 runs two or three times daily to Riksgränsen via Abisko (SkR130).

Trains connect Kiruna with Luleå, Stockholm and Narvik (Norway). Trains to Narvik call at Abisko and Riksgränsen.

Contact Statoil (143 65; Växlagatan 20) for car hire.

Standard bicycles are available for hire from Kiruna Guidetur (811 10; Vänortsgatan) for SkR75/295 per day/week. Mountain bikes are also available (SkR125/495).

Abisko (Abeskovvu)

0980

An exceptionally inviting and rewarding place to hike, the 75-sq-km Abisko National Park spreads out from the southern shore of scenic Lake Torneärtak. It’s less rugged than either Sarek or Padjelanta, and easier to get to, being well served by trains, buses and the scenic mountain motorway between Kiruna to Narvik. Abisko is the driest place in Sweden, with only 300mm of rainfall per year, which creates an interesting landscape, quite distinct from its surroundings. One of the most renowned mountain profiles in Lappland, Lapporten, can be seen from Abisko.

Sights & Activities

The popular Kungsleden trail follows the Abiskojäkkä valley and day trips of 10km or 20km are no problem from Abisko. Kungsleden extends 450km south from Abisko to Hemavan, with STF huts serving most of the trail. Other hikes include the overnight trip to the STF hut at Käravaggge (west of Abisko, 15km each way), the four-hour return trip to rock formations at Kärkevuggge, with Rissåjávre the ‘Sulphur Lake’, and a four-hour return hike to Paddus, a former Sami sacrificial site, 4km south of Abisko Östra train station. There’s also a route around Abisko canyon and a 39km-long Navvy Trail to Riksgränsen, alongside the railway line. Use the map Fjällkartan BD6 (available at the STF lodge or at Naturum). For more information on the Kungsleden trail see p49.

Naturum (401 77; jul–mid-Sep) has an office and exhibition space next to STF Abisko.
Tutistation; it provides some good information to help you prepare for the hikes described above, plus many others.

The Lindbana chair lift (one-way/return from Skr70/95) takes you to 900m on Njulla (1169m), where there’s a café (9:30am-3pm summer).

In Björkliden, 8km northwest of Abisko, you will find Hotel Fjällfjält (461 00; www.bjorkliden.com) which offers various summer and winter activities, including hiking and caving (spelunking). The STF also organises great hikes for groups of all sizes; both places offer outdoor gear for hire or for sale.

The unique Björklidens golf course (0890-641 00; info@bjorkliden.com; 8am-4:30pm Apr-Sep), which was rated in the Top 100 by Golf World magazine, is the world’s northernmost golf course – and as a result has a fairly short season (it is covered in snow for most of the year).

Sleeping & Eating Abisko Fjällturist (461 00; www.abisko.net; dm per person Skr150) Just behind the town, this is a backpacker’s delight. The small hostel has basic comfortable accommodation and a wonderful wooden sauna, but the treat is in the reasonably priced activities on offer, especially in winter. Owner, Tomas, and his father keep a large team of sledge dogs; one package includes a night’s accommodation plus the chance to drive your own sled, pulled by dogs, for about 10km. There are also very popular week-long sled trips (around Skr8000), which include all of your meals and accommodation – you will need to book very early for these. During summer you can take mountain walks with the dogs. To find the place, follow signs to the ‘Dog Hostel – Vandrarhem’.

STF Abisko Turiststation (461 00; info@abisko.nu, www.abisko.nu; dm from Skr190) This is another excellent option, kept to the usual high STF standards. Trekking gear can be hired here, there’s a variety of guided tours, a shop with basic groceries, and breakfast/lunch/dinner available for Skr70/75/205. A packed lunch costs Skr70, and there’s a pub in the basement that often has live music.

Hotel Fjälljet (461 00; info@bjorkliden.com; sites from Skr75, cabins from Skr600; s/d from Skr650/7000) This is a well-equipped resort about 8km northwest of Abisko in Björkliden, offering camping and cabin accommodation, as well as rooms in a large hotel. There are loads of facilities, including a restaurant, bar, equipment rental (ski gear in winter, bicycles and golf, fishing and hiking gear in summer), organised activities, and even a nine-hole golf course. Prices vary wildly depending on the season, and it’s best to book ahead at any time of year.

Lättjåkkå (641 00; dm from Skr425) Nine kilometres further west of Hotel Fjälljet, this is the highest place to stay in Sweden, at 1228m, and you’ll have to hike into the hills to reach it. It has good facilities for weary hikers, such as a sauna and restaurant, and breakfast is included in the tariff.

Self-service STF huts (bed Skr160-220, nonmembers additional Skr50) along Kungsleden are spread at 10km to 20km intervals between Abisko and Kiveljokk; you’ll need a sleeping bag. Day visitors/campers are charged Skr25/45.

If you can invest the time, there’s a great, highly recommended 100km trek from Abisko to Nikkaluokta that runs via the STF lodge Kebekeaisa Fjällstat (0890-550 50; info@kebekeaisa.sitturist.se; dm/spring/summer from Skr190/280; Mar-Apr & mid-Jun–mid-Sep). Meals are available here, and guided tours to the summit of Kebekeaisa are offered.

Lapporten Stormarknad (8am-10pm), in Abisko village, is a grocery store that also carries a range of outdoor supplies, such as maps, batteries, candles, bug spray and basic camping gear.

Getting There & Away In addition to trains (stations at Abisko Östra and Abisko Turiststation) between Luleå and Narvik, bus 91 runs from Kiruna to Abisko (Skr597, one hour 20 minutes). There’s an interesting museum next door that is well worth a look. The old church near the train station dates from 1755.

The Gällivare tourist office also runs tours of the LKBAB iron-ore mine (Skr150; mid-Jul–late Aug), covering 250 years of mining.

In Malmberget, 5km north of Gällivare, Kåktan (admission free) is a historical ‘shanty town’ museum village, dating from the 1888 iron-ore rush. Contact the Gällivare tourist office for details.

Sleeping & Eating Abisko Östra and Abisko Turiststation between Luleå and Narvik, bus 91 runs from Kiruna to Abisko (Skr997, one hour 20 minutes). The helpful tourist office (166 60; www.gellivare.se; Storgatan 16; Internet access per 15 min Skr10; 8am-6pm daily mid-Jun–mid-Aug; Mon-Fri rest of yr) is near the church in the town’s centre, and staff can organise a number of activities and wilderness excursions. The town has all the main facilities, including banks and supermarkets, primarily on Storgatan. The library (Hantverkargatan) also has free Internet access.

The helpful tourist office also runs tours of the Aktik copper mine (adult/child Skr150/75; Mon-Fri late Jun-early Aug) if there’s enough demand.

Sleeping & Eating STF Vardhejmen (143 80; Bankhemvägen 2; dm Skr150-160; closed May & Oct) This rural retreat is just across the footbridges from the train station; bike hire is available, and there’s a good cycle path leading here from the town centre.

QualityHotelGällivare (550 20; gellivare@quality.choicehotels.se; Lassevagatan 1; s/d Skr1090/1450, discounted Skr690/890) This is a large, modern hotel opposite the train station. It has comfortable rooms and a good restaurant-pub.
Dundret (145 60; info@dundret.se; summer s/d Skr750/895, cabins from Skr550) At the top of Dundret hill, this is a large resort offering hotel and cabin accommodation, as well as a restaurant, outdoor gear rental and lots of activities – especially in winter. Prices are considerably higher in winter.

Gällivare Camping (100 10; Hembygdsmödråd; sites Skr100, 2-4-bed cabins from Skr300; Jun-early Sep) This campsite is beside the river; the cabins are set up like apartments, with excellent, modern facilities. A short, well-marked footpath leads to an ICA supermarket.

Dining choices are pretty limited. Your best bet for anything other than fast food is the Vassara Pub (Lassettsagan 1; lunch Skr60-80, meals Skr70-220) inside the Quality Hotel, offering good-value lunch options and a decent selection of à la carte dishes.

The eastern part of Storgatan is home to two good restaurants: at No 17, New Delhi (169 60; lunch around Skr65) serves a range of Indian meals, while Restaurant Pekin (176 85; lunch around Skr65) at No 21, has Chinese and Thai dishes on offer.

Getting There & Away
Regional buses depart from the train station. Bus 45 runs daily to Östersund (via Jokkmokk and Arvidsjaur, bus 93 serves Ritsem and Kungsleden in Stora Sjöfallet National Park (mid-June–September only), buses 10 and 52 go to Kiruna, and bus 44 runs to Jokkmokk and Luleå.

Tågkompaniet (0771-44 41 11; www.tagkompaniet.se in Swedish) trains come from Luleå and Stockholm (sometimes changing at Boden), and from Narvik in Norway. More exotic is the Inlandsbanan (0771-53353; www.inlandsbanan.se), which terminates at Gällivare.

JOKKMOKK (DÄLVADIS) 0971 / pop 5633
Jokkmokk is the home of perhaps the best museum devoted to Sami culture in the entire country, and the village is worth a stop just for that. Jokkmokk also serves as a base for those visiting the Laponia World Heritage site; ask for information on the site at the tourist office or the Äjtte museum (below). Just north of the Arctic Circle, it can be reached by Inlandsbanan. Started as a Sami market and mission, Jokkmokk has been home (since 1605) to the Sami winter fair – a three-day event which attracts some 30,000 people and starts on the first Thursday in February – during which you can shop seriously for Sami duodji (handicraft).

The tourist office (121 40; www.turism.jokkmokk.se; Stortorget 4; 10am-6pm Mon-Fri yr-round, plus 10am-4pm Sat & Sun mid-Jun–mid-Aug) can help with information, and has Internet access. The reference library, and other facilities in the small town centre.

For daily weather reports and forecasts, call 0980-113 50.

Sights & Activities
The welcoming and illuminating Äjtte Museum (170 70; Kyrkogatan 3; adult/child Skr50/free; 9am-6pm mid-Jun–mid-Aug, 10am-4pm Mon-Fri rest of yr) is the highlight of a visit to Jokkmokk; it gives the most thorough introduction to Sami culture anywhere in Sweden, including Sami dress, silverware and an interesting display of 400-year-old shamans’ drums. Look out for replicas of sacrificial sites, and a diagram explaining the significance of various reindeer entrails. There are extensive notes in English. The museum also has a very practical section, with information on Lappland’s mountain areas, including detailed maps, slides, videos and a reference library.

Naturfoto (557 65; Jun-Aug), at the main Klockartorget intersection, exhibits and sells work by local wilderness photographer, Edvin Nilsson. The beautiful wooden church (Stortorgatan; Jun-Aug), near Naturfoto, is worth a visit if you have time. The ‘old’ octagonal church on Hantverkarzgatan has been rebuilt, as the original was burned down in 1972.

Jokkmokks Fjällträdgård (adult/child Skr25/free), by the lake, introduces mountain trees and other local flora, and there’s a homestead museum just across the road. Jokkmokks Stencenter, with lapidary and mineral exhibits, is reached from Borggatan. These attractions are all open daily in summer, but keep irregular hours the rest of the year; check with the tourist office for details.

About 7km south of Jokkmokk you will cross the Arctic Circle on road No 45. There is a café and campsite at the site that awards cute but corny certificates to those interested in having proof that they have travelled this far north.

HIKING
Kvikkjokk (Huthtán), around 100km west of Jokkmokk, is on the Kungsleden and Padjelantaleden trails. There are several fantastic day walks from the village, including climbs to Snjørak (809m, three hours return), a steeper ascent of Prinskullen (749m, three hours return), and Nammatj (662m, two hours, but this hike requires taking a boat and a day quay on the southern side of Tarráanto).

For the best hiking in this area, at least for experienced and well-outfitted trekkers, is in Sarek National Park (0920-962 00). Sarek is full of sharp peaks and huge glaciers, and its largest valley, Rapadalen, is lush with birch and willow trees. The Kungsleden trail dips briefly into Sarek, at the southeastern corner of the park. Trekking here is certainly not for the casual walker, and hikers must be prepared for very rugged conditions. Major trails are often washed out or in poor repair, and the extremes of terrain make for volatile weather conditions. There are no tourist facilities within the park, so be sure to check with an STF lodge or the National Park office before setting out. For more information on hiking in these regions see p48.

Sleeping & Eating
Jokkmokks Camping Center (123 70; camping center@jokkmokk.com; sites Skr120, d hostel rooms Skr300, cabins from Skr510) This is the diminutive yellow guest-holdings in town.

At the Äjtte museum restaurant (lunch specials Skr65-80) you can try unusual regional dishes, local fish or perhaps a reindeer sandwich.

The Café Piano (104 00; Porjusvägen 4; dinner mains Skr80-100) is another good choice, with a grand piano inside, a large garden seating area outside and an extensive menu that features pasta and wok meals (around Skr65 at lunch).

For self-caterers, there’s a Laponia World Heritage site off the beaten path. For more information on hiking in these regions see p48.

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Getting There & Away
Buses arrive and leave from the bus station on Klockarvägen. Buses 44 and 45 run twice daily to and from Gällivare (Sk97, three to six hours), and bus 45 goes to and from Arvidsjaur once a day (Skr46, two to three hours). Bus 94 runs to Kvikkjokk (Skr121, three hours) twice daily.

Inlandsbanan trains stop in Jokkmokk. For main-line trains, take bus 94 to Murjek via Vuollerim (Sk71, up to six times daily) or bus 44 bus to Boden and Luleå (Skr162). Another alternative is bus 36 to Ålsbyn via Bredslet (Skr130), where you can visit the amazing 82m Storforsen, Europe’s greatest cataract falls (best May–June).

ARVIDSJUAR 0960 / pop 6948
The small settlement of Arvidsjaur, on Inlandsbanan, was established as a Sami market-place. The tourist office (175 00; www.arvidsjaur.se/turism; Östra Skogatan 18C; 9.30-6pm summers, 10am-6pm wintertime)
8.30am-4.30pm Mon-Fri rest of yr) is behind the park by the main square, and can provide useful information for seeing the area. There are facilities such as banks and supermarkets on Storgatan, the main road through town.

Lappstaden (admission free; 10am-7pm), a well-preserved Sami church village, contains almost 100 buildings as well as forestry and reindeer-breeding concerns. Guided tours cost Skr30 (Jul only). From early July to early August, an old steam train makes return evening trips to Slaganäs on Friday, and Moskose on Saturday. Also in summer is the opportunity for white-water rafting (adult/child Skr350/175) on the nearby Piteälven.

Arvidsjaur is bustling in winter, when test drivers from around Europe put cars through their paces in the tough weather conditions, and there are excellent cold-weather activities available, including dog-sledding. Inquire at the tourist office for more details of all activities.

Friendly, cozy Lappugglans Turistviste (124 13; Västra Skolgatan 9; per person Skr150) and the small, stylish Rallaren (070-682 12 84; Stationsgatan 4; per person Skr150; summer only), both near the train station, have excellent hostel accommodation.

Kaffestugan (126 00; Storgatan 21) is a popular café by the main square, with good daily lunch specials (Skr60), plus an assortment of cakes, sandwiches and light meals. There’s also Athena (105 95; Storgatan 10; mains Skr65-90), offering pastas, salads and grill dishes.

The daily bus between Gällivare and Östersund (No 45) stops at the bus station on Storgatan. Bus 200 runs daily between Skellefteå and Bodo (Norway) via Arvidsjaur. The Inlandsbanan train can take you north to Gällivare via Jokkmokk, or south to Mora via Östersund.

**SORSELE**

**0952 / pop 2981**

Sleepy Sorsele, on Inlandsbanan, has the small but since Inlandsbanamuseet (adult/child Skr20/ free; summer) at the train station – a must for train enthusiasts. The adjoining tourist office (140 90; turist@inlandslaven.se; 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, noon-5pm Sat & Sun), at the Inlandsbanamuseum, has details of local activities, including fishing and canoe tours. Internet access is available (Skr10 per 10 minutes). Sorsele has all facilities, including a bank, supermarket and public library (with Internet access).

The local Hembygdsgård (1-8pm Jun-Aug) has a good café with home-made food. Also out this way is the STF Vandrarhem (100 48; dm Skr120, cabins per person Skr140), 500m west of the train station. Reception is at the nearby camping ground (101 24; sites Skr75, 4-bed cabins from Skr295; ), which has bikes and canoes for hire.


**TÄRNABY & AROUND**

**0954**

A skiing capital in the Swedish lake district, Tärnaby, 125km northwest of Storuman on the E12, has gorgeous views of the nearby lakes. The village has most facilities and a tourist office (104 50; www.tarnaby.se; 8.30am-7pm Mon-Fri & 10am-6pm Sat & Sun mid-Jun–mid-Aug, weekdays only rest of yr). The tourist office dispenses coffee and cakes, stamps, fish cards and snow-scooter licenses. It also organises various talks and tours in summer, including Sami culture evenings, fishing, hiking, and cave and glacier tours.

Mountain biking is a warm-weather activity growing in popularity in the region. There’s a very popular winter ski area here, and many of Sweden’s champion skiers hail from the area – ask at the tourist office if the planned museum dedicated to them and their achievements has opened. Take the time to hike to the top of Laxfjället (820m) for great views of the lakes.

**Sämegården** (104 40; Tärnaby; adult/child Skr30/15; Mon-Fri summer), 5km east of the tourist office, has exhibits about the Sami and their lifestyle.

Hemavan, 18km north of Tärnaby, has a larger ski area and a summer chairlift (adult/child one way Skr65/50, return Skr75/60; 10am-5pm Jul-Aug), plus basic facilities. The southern entry to Kungsleden (Sweden’s finest hiking route) is here, but most people doing just this section start in Amarnä. From Tärnaby the Åkerlundska gård (100 32; dm Skr160-180; s/d from Skr320; Mar-May & mid-Jun–Sep) is a wonderful place, perched halfway up the hillside with killer views across the valley, comfortable bunks in cozy, rustic rooms, and modern facilities. There’s a restaurant on the ground floor that serves meals, including a vast breakfast buffet for around Skr65.

The friendly Hotel Sänningsgården (130 00; www.senningsgardens.com; B&B/full board per person from Skr195/695), 6km north of Hemavan, has good-value, cosy accommodation, and an acclaimed restaurant (lunch buffet Skr99, dinner mains Skr130-260) serving regional specialities like herb-fried reindeer in Madeira, and ripa baked in berry juice. If you’re out this way, it’s well worth stopping in for a unique meal – the extensive menu includes well-prepared elk, game birds, Arctic char and even the occasional bear. There are vegetarian options for those who prefer not to consume the local wildlife, and the magnificent desserts will please everyone – try the delectable artic raspberry and cloudberry parfait.

**UMNÄS**

**0951**

Slightly off the beaten trail is this quirky tourist ‘village’. Umnäs Skoterhotellet (520 20; frihet@laplrand.se; dm Skr150, s/d Skr650/850) is a friendly place, about 6km off the scenic E12 road (also known as the Blå Vägen, or Blue Hwy), 64km northwest of Storuman. There’s a hotel with bar and restaurant (meals Skr50-115), a hostel and self-contained cabins are available, plus there’s the opportunity for some great activities in the vicinity – including guided or self-guided snowmobile safaris (Best February to April). But the main attraction on the premises is the unique snow-scooter museum (admission Skr40), which contains some 70 vehicles from the 1960s right up to the present, as well as a separate museum (admission Skr20) of local history.

The Silent Way (520 43; info@silenthillway.com) is also based in Umnäs, near the hotel (and run by another family member). This company offers guided dog-sledding tours from December to May, with various trips possible, from a half-day excursion to a 16-day safari. Appropriate cold-weather gear can be rented, and food and accommodation in cabins is included in the cost. These trips are extremely popular, so book well ahead. The website has comprehensive information, as well as options for self-sufficient or guided trips. Buses between Storuman and Tärnaby stop at Slussfors on the E12, about 8km from Umnäs.

**STORUMAN**

**0951 / pop 6595**

Storuman, on Inlandsbanan, has an interesting location at the southern end of the 56km-long lake with which it shares a name. The very scenic Flemingsberg road links the centre with a series of islands, including Luspholma, with a small outdoor museum. Follow the road Utsiktsvägen (across the E12 from the train station) for 1.5km to the viewpoint at Utsiken; sunsets over the lake are magnificent. Sweden’s largest wooden church is at Stensele, about 3km from Storuman towards Umeå on the E12.

The tourist office (333 70; entrelapland@svip.net; www.jarnvagstjanstarna.se; Jun-Aug, Mon-Fri rest of yr) is at Hotell Luspen, near the station, and the town has most facilities.

Hotell Luspen (333 80; luspenhotel@svipnet.se; hostel s/d from Skr200/300, hotel s/d Skr600/720) is a
friendly place by the train station, offering accommodation to suit most budgets. The helpful tourist office is also here, and you can rent bikes for exploration for Skr60 per day.

Eating options in the village are basically limited to fast food. There’s an ICA and a Konsum supermarket on the main drag (E12), both open daily.


**FATMOMAKKE & AROUND**
The southern areas of Lappland have some of the finest mountain scenery in Sweden, particularly around the mountain Marsfjället (1590m); you can hike up and back from Fatmomakke, but it’s a long day (28km, 10 hours). The trek through the mountains to the village Kittelfjäll (where the scenery is even more impressive), via the wilderness cabin Blerikstugan, is best over two days (32km).

The late-18th-century Sami church village at Fatmomakke has an exhibition, kåtas (huts) and other old buildings. Silver shamanistic Sami jewellery was found here in 1981. Klimpfjäll is about 20km west from here, and Saxnäs – a small village set in a scenic spot between lakes, and considered a paradise for fishing folk – is about 25km east.

The journey from Fatmomakke into Jämtland, close to the Norwegian border, offers some stunning scenery (mountains, plateaus and small lakeside settlements), and is highly recommended – although it’s only possible with your own transport.
ACCOMMODATION
Accommodation in Sweden is generally of a high standard; you’d have to be very unlucky to stay in a dump! Our Sleeping entries are categorised by price and then listed by preference, with favourites appearing first. ‘Budget’ options cost Skr500 or under, ‘Midrange’ options range from Skr500 to Skr1100, and ‘Top End’ places come in at over Skr1100.

Cabins & Chalets
Swedes are all for the outdoors, and cabins and chalets (stugor) are everywhere, either on campsites or scattered liberally through the countryside. Most contain four beds, with two- and six-person cabins sometimes on offer too. They’re particularly good value for small groups and families, costing between Skr300 and Skr800 per night. In peak summer season, many are rented out by the week (generally for between Skr800 and Skr5000). The cheapest cabins are simple, with bunk beds and little else (you share the
bathroom and kitchen facilities with campers or other cabin users). Chalets are generally fully equipped with their own kitchen, bathroom and even living room with TV. Bring your own linen and clean up yourself to save cleaning fees of around 500.

Pick up the brochure Campsites & Cottages in Sweden: Greater Freedom from any tourist office, or check out the website www.stuganu.

**Camping**

Camping is wildly popular in Sweden, and there are hundreds of grounds all over the country. Most open between May and August only. The majority are extremely busy family holiday spots with fantastic facilities, like shops, restaurants, pools, playgrounds, canoe or bike rentals, minigolf, kitchens and laundry facilities. Lots of them also have cabins or chalets.

Camping prices vary (according to the season and facilities) from Skr90 for a small site at a basic ground, to Skr240 for a large site at a multistarred ground. Slightly cheaper rates may be available if you’re a solo hiker or cyclist. If you’re on the move, look out for grounds offering a Quick Stop reduction: where you get a discount if you arrive after 9pm and leave by 9am the following day.

You must have a CampCard Scandinavia to stay at Swedish campsites. Apply for one at least a month before your journey by writing to Sveriges Camping & Stugfore tagare Riksorganisation (fax 035-64 24 30; info@scr .se; Box 255, SE-45117 Udevalla) or fill in the form on the website www.camping.se; otherwise pick up a temporary card at any Swedish campsite. The card itself is free, but the annual validation sticker costs Skr100 and is stuck on your card at the first campsite you visit. One card covers the whole family.

Primus and Sievert supply propane gas for camping stoves, and containers are available at petrol stations. T-spirit Röd (methylated spirit; denatured alcohol) for Trangia stoves can be bought at petrol stations and Fotogen (paraffin; kerosene) is sold at paint shops such as Fargtema and Spektrum. See p54 for information on free camping in Sweden.

**Hostels**

Sweden has well over 450 hostels (vandrarhem), usually with excellent facilities. Outside major cities, hostels aren’t backpacker hangouts but are used as holiday accommodation by Swedish families, couples or retired people. A related oddity is the frequent absence of dormitories, meaning you often have to rent out a room rather than a bed. Some hostels also have singles and doubles with en suite bathrooms that are almost of hotel quality, for very reasonable rates. About 50% of hostels open year-round; many others open from May to September, while some open only from mid-June to mid-August.

Be warned, Swedish hostels are virtually impossible to enter outside reception opening times, and these hours are frustratingly short (except in Stockholm and Göteborg): generally between 5pm and 7pm, occasionally also between 8am and 10am. The secret is to prebook by telephone – reservations are highly recommended in any case, as hostels fill up fast.

Sleeping bags are usually allowed if you have a sheet and pillowcase; bring your own, or hire them (Skr50 to Skr65). Breakfast is sometimes available (Skr45 to Skr65). Before leaving, you must clean up after yourself; cleaning materials are provided. Most hostels are affiliated with either the STF or SVIF (see below), but there are other non-affiliated hostels also with high standards of accommodation.

**STF**

Some 315 hostels are affiliated with Svenska Turistföreningen (STF; 08-463 21 00; www.svenskaturistforeningen.se), part of Hostelling International (HI). STF produces a free detailed guide to its hostels, but the text is in Swedish only (the symbols are easy to understand). All hostel details on their website are in English.

Holders of HI cards can stay at any STF hostels for between Skr28 and Skr100; children under 16 pay about half price. Non-members can pay Skr45 extra, or join up at hostels (see p314 for membership costs). In this book we quote prices at STF hostels for members.

All STF hostels have kitchens.

**SVIF**

Around 191 hostels belong to SVIF’s ‘rival’, Sveriges Vandrarhem i Förening (SVIF; 0413-55 34 50; www.svif.se). No membership is required and rates are similar to those of STF hostels. Most SVIF hostels have kitchens, but you sometimes need your own utensils. Pick up the free guide at tourist offices or SVIF hostels.

**Hotels**

Private, family-owned hotels with individuality are few and far between as the big hotel chains (with comfortable but often rather bland rooms) monopolise hotel accommodation options.

Sweden is unusual in that hotel prices tend to fall at weekends and in summer (except in touristic coastal towns), sometimes by as much as 40% or 50%. Rates usually include a breakfast buffet. Ask at tourist offices for the free booklet Hotels in Sweden or visit the website www.hotelsinsweden.net.

Travellers on a budget should investigate the two cheapest hotel chains, both with flat rates for rooms. **Formula 1** (www.formula1hotels.com) has four hotels, in Göteborg, Jönköping, Malmö and Stockholm; the small but functional rooms (Skr330) have shared facilities and can sleep up to three people. **Ibis** (www .ibishotel.com) offers simple rooms (SkR600 to SkR700) with private facilities. Breakfast is additional at both chains.

The following hotels are the most common midrange and top-end chains:

- **Best Western** (www.bestwestern.se in Swedish) ;
- **Choice** (www.choicehotels.se);
- **Countrywide** (www.countrysidehotels.se);
- **Ditt Hotel** (www.ditthotel.se);
- **Elite** (www.elite.se);
- **First** (www.firsthotels.com);
- **Radisson SAS** (www.radisson.com);
- **Scandic** (www.scandic-hotels.com);
- **Sweden Hotels** (www.sweedenhotels.se in Swedish);
- **Mountain Huts & Lodges**

Most mountain huts (fjällstugor) and lodges (fjällstationer) in Sweden are owned by STF. There are about 45 huts and nine mountain lodges, usually spaced at 15km to 25km intervals, primarily in the Lapland region. Reception hours are quite long as staff members are always on site. Basic provisions are sold at many huts, and all lodges, and many lodges have hiking equipment for hire.

STF huts have cooking and toilet facilities (none have showers, but some offer saunas). Bring your own sleeping bag. Huts are staffed during March and April and also from late June to early or mid-September. You can’t book a bed in advance, but no-one is ever turned away (although in the peak of summer this may mean you sleep on a mattress on the floor). Charges for STF or HI members vary depending on the season, and range from SkR180 to SkR275 (children SkR75), with the highest charges on northern Kungsleden. Non-members pay SkR10 extra. You can also pitch a tent in the mountains, but if you camp near STF huts you are requested to pay a service charge (SkR60/80 for members/ nonmembers), which gives you access to any services the hut may offer (such as kitchen and bathroom facilities).

At the excellent STF mountain lodges, accommodation standards range from hostel (with cooking facilities) to hotel (with full- or half-board options), and overnight prices range from SkR200 to around SkR800. There are often guided activities on offer for guests, plus they usually have a restaurant and shop.

**Private Rooms, B&Bs & Farmhouse Accommodation**

Many tourist offices have lists of rooms in private houses, which is a great way of finding well-priced accommodation and getting to meet Swedish people. Singles doubles average SkR200/300.

Along the motorways (primarily in the south), you may see ‘Rum & frukost’ or ‘Rum & frukost’ signs, indicating inexpensive informal accommodation (frukost means that breakfast is included) from around SkR200 to SkR300 per person. Kitchen facilities are often available and those who bring their own sheets or sleeping bags may get a discount.

The organisation Bo på Lantgård ([035-12 78 70; www.bopalantgard.org]) publishes a free annual booklet on farmhouse accommodation (B&B and self-catering), available from any tourist office. B&B prices average about SkR275 per person in a double room. Prices for self-catering range from SkR400 to SkR850 per night, depending on the time of year, facilities and number of beds.

**BUSINESS HOURS**

General opening hours are listed below, but there are variations (particularly in the largest cities where opening hours may be longer).
Sights & Activities
Swedes treat children very well, and domestic tourism is largely organised around children’s interests. Many museums have a kids section with toys, hands-on displays and activities, and there are numerous public parks for kids, plus theme parks, water parks and zoos. Most attractions allow free admission for young children up to about seven years of age and half-price (or substantially discounted) admission for those up to about 16. Family tickets are often available.

Liseberg amusement park (p204) in Göteborg is Sweden’s largest; other major places for kids include Junibacken, Skansen and Gröna Lund Tivoli (p76) in Stockholm; Göteborg’s Universeum (p204) and Astrid Lindgrens Värld (p132) in Vimmerby.

CLIMATE CHARTS
Sweden has a mostly cool temperate climate, but the southern quarter of the country is warmer. Norway’s mountains act as a rain break, so yearly rainfall is moderate.

Swedish summers are generally fairly sunny with only occasional rainfall, but August can be wet. The average maximum temperature for July is 18°C in the south and around 14°C in the north. Long hot periods in summer aren’t unusual, with temperatures soaring to over 30°C.

The harsh Lapland winter starts in October and ends in April, and temperatures can plummet as low as −50°C. Snow can accumulate to depths of several metres in the north, making for superb skiing, but snow depths in the south average only 20cm to 40cm. It usually rains in winter in the far south (Skåne).

The west coast is warmer than the east, thanks to the warming waters of the Gulf Stream.

For information see the When to Go section on p17.

CUSTOMS
Duty-free goods can only be brought into Sweden from non-EU countries and Åland. Tobacco products and alcoholic drinks can only be brought into Sweden duty-free by those over 18 and 20, respectively.

Duty-free alcohol allowances for travellers from outside the EU are: 1L of spirits, 2L of fortified wine, 2L of wine and a quantity of beer that must be included within the Skr1700 limit. The tobacco allowance is 200 cigarettes, 50 cigars or 250g of smoking tobacco.

The limits on goods brought into Sweden with ‘tax paid for personal use’ from within the EU are more generous: 10L of spirits, 20L of fortified wine, 90L of wine (but no more than 60L of sparkling wine) and 110L of beer. The tobacco allowance is 800 cigarettes, 400 cheroots, 200 cigars or 1kg of tobacco.

Going through customs rarely involves any hassles, but rules on illegal drugs are strictly enforced; you may be searched on arrival, especially if you’re travelling from Denmark. Live plants and animal products (meat, dairy etc), from outside the EU, and all animals, syringes and weapons must be declared to customs on arrival. For the latest regulations, contact Swedish Customs (0771-23 23 23; www.tullverket.se).

DANGERS & ANNOYANCES
Opening Hours & Queuing
It’s difficult for foreigners to understand why some tourist offices aren’t open at weekends, not to mention why museums open at 11am and close by 4pm (even in July), and hotels (and some hotels) only have reception for two or three hours in the afternoon. Don’t even think of going to a liquor store in the evening or for most of the weekend – it will be closed.

Queuing by number is a national pastime in Sweden, hunt down the ticket machine as soon as you enter shops, post offices, liquor stores, offices, police stations etc. Don’t miss your turn, or you’ll have to go back to the end of the queue.

Road Hazards
Motorists should be alive to the risks posed by elk and reindeer; see p332.

Theft
Sweden is fairly safe, but petty crime is on the increase. In Stockholm, Göteborg, Malmö and Linköping, ask locally for areas to avoid before wandering around at night. Beware of pickpockets and bag-snatchers in crowded public places.

DISABLED TRAVELLERS
Sweden is one of the easiest countries to travel around in a wheelchair. People with disabilities will find transport services with
adapted facilities, ranging from trains to taxis, but contact the operator in advance for the best service.

Public toilets and some hotel rooms have facilities for disabled people; Hotels in Sweden (www.hotelsinsweden.net) indicates whether hotels have adapted rooms. Some street crossings have ramps for wheelchairs and audio signals for visually impaired people, and some grocery stores are wheelchair accessible.

For further information about Sweden, contact the national association for the disabled, De Handikappades Riksförbund (08-685 80 00; www.dhr.se; Katrinebergsvägen 6, Box 47305, SE-10074 Stockholm).

Also, contact the travel officer at your national support organisation; they may be able to put you in touch with tour companies that specialise in disabled travel. The disability-friendly website www.allgohere.com has an airline directory that provides information on the facilities offered by various airlines.

**DISCOUNT CARDS**

**City Summer Cards**

Göteborg, Malmö, Stockholm and Uppsala have worthwhile summer cards that get you into their major attractions, and sometimes includes unlimited transport and discounts at participating hotels, restaurants and shops; see the individual city chapters for details.

**Hostel & Student Cards**

A Hostelling International (HI) card means cheaper accommodation in STF hostels, mountain-stations and mountain-cabins. You can join the STF at hostels and many tourist offices while in Sweden (membership costs Skr285 for adults, Skr110 for those aged 16 to 25, Skr25 for six to 15 year-olds and Skr410 for families).

The most useful student card is the International Student Identity Card (ISIC), which provides discounts on many forms of transport (including some airlines, international ferries and local public transport) and on admission to museums, sights, theatres and cinemas.

**Seniors**

Seniors normally get discounts on entry to museums and other sights, cinema and theatre tickets, air tickets and other transport. No special card is required, but show your passport if asked for proof of age (the minimum qualifying age is generally 60 or 65).

**EMBASSIES & CONSULATES**

**Swedish Embassies & Consulates**

The following are some of the Swedish embassies around the world. The website for all of the Swedish embassies abroad is www.swedenabroad.com.

- **Australia** (02-6270 2700; 5 Turrana St, Yarralumla ACT 2600)

- **Canada** (613-214 8200; 377 Dalhousie St, Ottawa K1N 9N8)

- **Denmark** (045-33 36 03 70; Sankt Annæ Plads 15A, DK-1250 Copenhagen K)

- **Finland** (09-6877 660; Pohjois espanlan 78, 00170 Helsinki)

- **France** (01-44 18 88 00; 17 rue Barbet-de-Jouy, F-75007 Paris)

- **Germany** (040-300-500; Raushstrasse 1, 107 87 Berlin)

- **Ireland** (01-474 4400; 13-17 Dawson St, Dublin 2)

- **New Zealand** (04-499 9895; 13th fl, Vogel Bldg, Aitken St, Wellington)

- **Norway** (24 11 42 00; Nobelsgate 16, NO-0244 Oslo)

- **UK** (020-7917 6400; 11 Montagu Place, London W1H 2AL)

- **USA** (202-467 2600; 1501 M St NW, Suite 900, Washington DC 20005-1702)

**Embassies & Consulates in Sweden**

The diplomatic missions listed here are in Stockholm; some neighbouring countries have additional consulates in Göteborg, Malmö and Helsingborg.

- **Australia** (Map p103; 08-613 29 00; www.sweden.embassy.gov.au; 11th fl, Sergels Torg 12)

- **Canada** (Map p103; 08-453 30 00; www.canadaemb.se; Tegelbacken 6, Stockholm)

- **Denmark** (Map p103; 08-406 75 00; www.ambstockholm.dk in Danish; Jacobs Torg 1)

- **Finland** (Map pp66-9; 08-676 67 00; www.finland.se/|fi| in Finnish & Swedish; Gärdesgatan 9-11)

- **France** (Map p103; 08-459 53 00; www.ambafrance-fr-so.org in French & Swedish; Kommendörsgatan 23)

- **Germany** (Map pp68-9; 08-670 15 00; www外交 nga.org/|de|; Tribunj 13, Düsseldorf)

- **Ireland** (Map p103; 08-556 93 00; www.embassy.ie; Götahge 16A)

- **New Zealand** (070-346 9324; nzemb@xs4all.nl; Camgaela 10; 2517 KH The Hague)

- **Norway** (Map pp68-9; 08-665 63 40; emb_stockholm@mfa.no; Skargårdsgatan 4)

- **UK** (Map pp68-9; 08-671 30 00; www.ambassador.com; Skargårdsgatan 6-B)

- **USA** (Map pp68-9; 08-783 53 00; http://stockholm.usembassy.gov; Dag Hammarskjöldsgatan 31)

**FESTIVALS & EVENTS**

Nearly all Swedish towns and cities have special summer festivals and concerts, usually between May and September. The main ones are covered in the relevant chapters, and in the Festivals & Concerts boxed text, below.

For books on Swedish festivals, try Staggering numbers of festivals are staged in Sweden. The warm summer months are a particularly

- **April**

- **May**

- **June**

- **July**

- **August**

- **September**

- **October**

- **November**

- **December**

- **FESTIVALS & EVENTS**

- **Rock & Pop**

- **Jazz, Opera & Folk**

- **Other Annual Events**

- **Staggering numbers of festivals are staged in Sweden. The warm summer months are a particularly**

- **Large, annual, three-day summer rock festivals are held around Sölvesborg**

- **Well-respected jazz festivals are held in Stockholm**

- **Europe’s largest snow festival is held in late January and features snow-sculpturing competitions and reindeer-sled racing, with Sami traditions also emphasised.**
Midsommardag (Midsummer’s Day) This is the festival of the year, celebrated towards the end of the month. Decorating, raising and dancing round the Midsummer pole are traditional activities on Midsummer’s Eve. For the folk touch, the Dalarna region is a good place to celebrate, but folk costumes, singing, music, dancing, pickled herring, snaps, strawberries and cream, and beer drinking are common everywhere.

August–September
Kraftskivor (Crayfish parties; late August) Swedes celebrate the end of summer by wearing bibs and party hats while eating lots of crayfish and drinking snaps. In the north similar parties take place but with sursträmning (strong-smelling fermented Baltic herring), while in the south similar gatherings in September feast on eels and snaps.

December
Ludaidagen (Lucia Festival; 13 December) Wearing a crown of candles, Lucia leads a white-clad choir in the singing, and glögg (a hot alcoholic punch) is drunk. Oddly, this celebration seems to merge the folk tradition of the longest night and the story of St Lucia of Syracuse.

Christmas markets (December) Held in many towns.
Julafton (Christmas Eve; 24 December) The night of the smörgåsbord and the arrival of jultomten, the Christmas gnome, carrying a sack of gifts. This is the biggest celebration at Christmas time.

FOOD
Our Eating entries are categorised by price and then preference, with favourites appearing first. ‘Budget’ options cost Skr75 or under, ‘Midrange’ options are between Skr75 and Skr185, and ‘Top End’ places come in at over Skr185. For in-depth information on Swedish cuisine, see p58.

GAY & LESBIAN TRAVELLERS
Sweden is a famously liberal country and allows gay and lesbian couples to form ‘registered partnerships’ that grant general marriage rights, with a few exceptions (such as not allowing access to church weddings). In 2002 the Swedish parliament voted in favour of allowing gay couples to adopt.

The national organisation for gay and lesbian rights is Riksföreundet för Sexuellt Likaberätthållande (RFSL; 08-457 13 00; Sveavägen 59, Box 350, SE-10326 Stockholm), with an attached bookshop, restaurant and nightclub. Gay bars and pub-clubs in the big cities are mentioned in this book, but ask local RFSL societies or your home organisation for up-to-date information. The Spartacus Inter-
national Gay Guide, published by Bruno Gmünder Verlag (Berlin), is an excellent international directory of gay entertainment venues, but it’s best used in conjunction with more up-to-date listings in local papers; as elsewhere, gay venues in the region can change with the speed of summer.

Another good source of local information is the free monthly magazine QX. You can pick it up at many clubs, stores and restaurants in Stockholm, Göteborg, Malmö and Copenhagen (Denmark). The magazine’s website www.qx.se has excellent information and recommendations in English.

One of the capital’s biggest parties is the annual Stockholm Pride (www.stockholmpride.org), a five-day festival celebrating gay culture, held between late July and early August. The extensive programme covers art, debate, health, literature, music, spirituality and sport.

HOLIDAYS
There’s a concentration of public holidays in spring and early summer. In particular, Midsummer brings life almost to a halt for three days: transport and other services are reduced, most shops and smaller tourist offices close, as do some attractions. Some hotels close between Christmas and New Year, and it’s not uncommon for restaurants in larger cities to close during July and early August (when their owners join the holidaying throngs at beach or lakeside areas).

School holidays vary from school to school, but in general the kids will be at large for Sweden’s one-week sport’s holiday (February/March), the one-week Easter break, Christmas, and from June to August.

Many businesses close early the day before and all day after official public holidays, including the following:

Nyårsskat (New Year’s Day) 1 January
Trettontedag Jul (Epiphany) 6 January
Långfredag, Påsk, Annandag Påsk (Good Friday, Easter Sunday & Monday) March/April
Första Maj (Labour Day) 1 May
Kristi Himmelsfärds dag (Ascension Day) May/June
Pingt, Annandag Pingst (Whit Sunday & Monday) Late May or early June
Midsommardag (Midsummer’s Day) First Saturday after 21 June
Alla Helgons dag (All Saints’ Day) Saturday, late October or early November
Juldag (Christmas Day) 25 December
Annandag Jul (Boxing Day) 26 December

Note also that Midsommarafont (Midsummer’s Eve), Julafont (Christmas Eve; 24 December) and Nyårssfont (New Year’s Eve; 31 December) are not official holidays, but are generally nonworking days for most of the population.

INSURANCE
Insurance is important: it covers you for every likely eventuality, including medical expenses and luggage loss to cancellations or delays in your travel arrangements – depending on your policy.

If you do need health insurance, remember that some policies offer ‘lower’ and ‘higher’ medical-expense options, but the higher one is chiefly for countries such as the USA that have extremely high medical costs. Everyone should be covered for the worst possible case, such as an accident requiring an ambulance, hospital treatment or an emergency flight home. You may prefer a policy that pays healthcare providers directly, rather than you having to pay on the spot and claim later.

In Sweden, EU citizens pay a fee for all medical treatment (including emergency admissions), but showing an EHIC form will make matters much easier. Inquire about the EHIC well in advance at your social security office, travel agent or local post office. Other options exist but are more expensive and not very portable. If you are younger, still uninsured, you may prefer a policy that pays local treatment directly, rather than you having to pay on the spot and claim later.

In Sweden, EU citizens pay a fee for all medical treatment (including emergency admissions), but showing an EHIC form will make matters much easier. Inquire about the EHIC well in advance at your social security office, travel agent or local post office. Other options exist but are more expensive and not very portable. If you are younger, still uninsured, you may prefer a policy that pays local treatment directly, rather than you having to pay on the spot and claim later.

If you plan to carry your notebook or palmtop computer with you, remember that the power-supply voltage in Sweden may be different. Inquire about the EHIC well in advance at your social security office, travel agent or local post office. Other options exist but are more expensive and not very portable.

LEGAL MATTERS
If arrested, you have the right to contact your country’s embassy, which can usually provide you with a list of local lawyers. There is no provision for bail in Sweden. Sweden has some of the strictest drug laws in western Europe, with fines and possible long prison sentences for possession and consumption.

MAPS
Tourist offices, libraries and hotels usually stock free local town plans.

The best maps of Sweden are published and updated regularly by Kartförlaget, the sales branch of the national mapping agency, Lantmäteriet (08-263 30 00; www.lantmateriet.se; SE-80182 Gävle). Maps can be bought at most tourist offices, bookshops and some youth hostels, service stations and general stores.

Motorists planning an extensive touring trip should get Motormännens Sverige Vägatlas produced by Kartförlaget for Skr270, with town plans and detailed coverage at 1:250,000 as far north as Sundsvall, then 1:400,000 for the remainder.

The best tourist road maps are those of Kartförlaget’s Vägkartan series, at a scale of 1:100,000, available from larger bookshops. Also useful, especially for hikers, are the Fjäll kartan mountain series (1:100,000, with 20m contour interval); these are usually priced around Skr100 apiece and are available at larger bookshops, outdoor equipment stores and mountain stations operated by Svenska Turistförening (STF; 08-20 23 03; www.svenska turistforeningen.se).

To buy maps in advance, try online at Lantmäteriet’s website, which has a good mail-order service, or at Kartbutiken (08-20 23 03; www.kartbutiken.se; Kungsatan 74, SE-11122 Stockholm).
Sweden uses the krona (plural kronor) as currency. One krona is divided into 100 öre. The country has recovered well from an economic slowdown in 2002 and the krona is stable. See the Inside Front Cover for exchange rates, and p17 for typical costs.

Cash & ATMs
The simplest way to get money in Sweden is by accessing your account using an ATM card from your home bank. ‘Bankomat’ ATMs are found adjacent to many banks and around busy public places such as shopping centres. They accept major credit cards as well as Plus and Cirrus cards. Note that many ATMs in Sweden will not accept PINs of more than four digits; if your PIN is longer than this, just enter the first four and you should be able to access your account.

Credit Cards
Visa, MasterCard, American Express and Diners Club cards are widely accepted. You’re better off using a credit card since exchange rates are better and transaction fees are avoided. Credit cards can be used to buy train tickets but are not accepted on domestic ferries, apart from on sailings to Gotland. Electronic debit cards can be used in most shops.

If your card is lost or stolen in Sweden, report it to one of the following appropriate agencies.

- **American Express** (0336-393-1111)
- **Diners Club** (08-14 68 78)
- **MasterCard** (020 79 13 24)
- **Visa** (020 79 56 75)

Moneychangers & Travellers Cheques
Banks around the country exchange major foreign currencies and accept international brands of travellers cheques. They may, however, charge up to a rather steep Skr60 per travellers cheque, so shop around and compare service fees and exchange rates before handing over your money.

- **Forex** (0200-22 22 20; www.forex.se) is the biggest foreign money exchange company in Sweden, with good rates and branches in major airports, ferry terminals and town and city centres; these are noted where appropriate in the destination chapters. They charge a service fee of Skr15 per travellers cheque exchanged.

Tipping
Service charges and tips are usually included in restaurant bills and taxi fares; a common practice is to round up a restaurant bill to the nearest Skr10. There’s certainly no problem if you want to reward good service with an extra tip (or round up the taxi fare, particularly if there’s luggage).

**PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEO**
Print and slide film are readily available, but prices (including developing costs) are fairly high. It’s better to bring your own film and develop your photos or slides back home. Expert, a chain of electrical goods shops, sells a wide range of film, and camera equipment can be bought or repaired there.

It’s particularly important to ask permission before taking photos of people in Sami areas, where you may meet resistance. Photography and video is prohibited at many tourist sites, mainly to protect fragile artwork. Photographing military establishments is forbidden.

The clear northern light and glare from water, ice and snow may require use of a UV filter (or skylight filter) and a lens shade. ISO 100 film is sufficient for most purposes. In winter, most cameras don’t work below −20°C. Lonely Planet’s book Travel Photography contains some handy hints.

**POST**
In 2001–02, the Swedish postal service Posten (020-23 22 21; www.posten.se) was radically reorganised: in a cost-cutting bid, it closed many post offices and instead opened up a network of 3000+ counter services in shops, petrol stations and supermarkets across the country. Look out for the yellow post symbol on a pale blue background, which indicates that postal facilities are offered.

Most Swedes now buy their stamps and post letters while going about their grocery shopping. If your postal requirements are more complicated (such as posting a heavy parcel), you’ll have to track down one of the original post offices as the post-office-lite counter services can’t deal with them.

**Postal Rates**
Mailing letters or postcards weighing up to 20g within Sweden costs Skr5.50; it’s Skr9.50 to elsewhere in Europe, and Skr9.70 beyond Europe. The ekonomibrev (economy post) option takes longer to reach its destination and costs marginally less (Skr5.80 and Skr8.70, respectively). Airmail will take a week to reach most parts of North America, perhaps a little longer to Australia and New Zealand.

A package weighing 2kg costs Skr200 by airmail within Europe, and Skr235 outside Europe. The ekonomibrev option here is roughly Skr20 cheaper, but postage time may take up to a month.

**Sending & Receiving Mail**
Receiving poste restante mail under the new postal system is more difficult for travellers, as many of the old-style post offices have closed down. Poste restante mail must be sent to a Postcenter, now generally only found in larger towns. The person sending you mail will need to specify which Postcenter you will be collecting from, using the specific address and postal code for that Postcenter.

You can find Postcenter addresses by visiting the website www.posten.se, and clicking on ‘Vad vill du göra’, click on ‘Postcenter’, then in the box to the right type the town where you intend to send mail. A list of Postcenters in the area will pop up (this information isn’t available on the English section of the website so you’ll have to wade through the Swedish). Alternatively, telephone 46 8 23 22 21 and request assistance.

**SHOPPING**
In Sweden, there’s no shortage of the gorgeous furniture and interior design for which the country is famous. Head to DesignTorget (www.designtorget.se), which showcases the work (usually quite affordable) of established and new designers. There are branches in Stockholm, Täby, Göteborg and Malmö.

Souvenirs, handicrafts and quality Swedish products in glass, wood, amber, pewter...
SOLO TRAVELLERS
Travelling in Sweden poses no particular problems for lone travellers, apart from it can be trickier than most other countries to meet people. Hostel dormitories aren’t common, except in cities, and quite often you’ll end up stuck in a room on your own, surrounded by families. Female solo travellers should obviously take care at night in the cities, and check with locals about which dodgy areas to avoid.

TELEPHONE & FAX
Swedish phone numbers have area codes followed by varying digits. Look for business numbers in the Yellow Pages (www.gulaidodorna.se in Swedish). The state-owned telephone company, Telia, also has phone books, which include green pages (for community services) and blue pages (for regional services, including health and medical care).

Public telephones are usually to be found at train stations or in the main town square. They accept phonecards or credit cards (although the latter are expensive). It’s not possible to receive return international calls on public phones.

For international calls dial +00 followed by the country code and the local area code. Calls to Sweden from abroad require the country code +46 followed by the area code and telephone number (omitting the first zero in the area code).

Mobile phone codes have +46010, +46070, +46073, +460730. Toll-free codes include +46020 and +460200 (not from public tele phones or abroad).

Directory assistance (+46 118 119) International.
Directory assistance (+46 118 118) Within Sweden.
Emergency services (+46 112) Toll-free.

Fax
Fax is not a common form of communication in Sweden, and is difficult for on-the-road travellers to access. Many post offices used to offer a fax service but don’t any longer, so your best bet is to ask at the local tourist office or your place of accommodation.

Bargaining
Bargaining isn’t customary, but you can get ‘walk-in’ prices at some hotels and stugby (chalet parks).

or silver are relatively expensive, but tend to be a lot cheaper when bought directly from the manufacturer; some places will organise shipping for you. The best souvenirs include glassware (such as bowls, jars, vases and ornaments) from Glasriket (p127), Swedish painted wooden horses from Dalarna (p267), wooden toys and jewellery made from amber and silver. Some foodstuffs, such as hjortronsylt (cloudberry jam) and sill (pickled herring), are also well worth taking home. Sale prices in shops are advertised with the word rea; for discounts or special offers look for lågpris, extraspris, rabatt or fynd.

Handicrafts carrying the round token Svensk slöjd, or the hammer and shuttle emblem, are endorsed by Svenska Hemslöjdsföreningarnas Riksförbund, the national handicrafts organisation whose symbol is found on affiliated handicraft shops. Look out for signs reading hemslöjd, indicating handicraft sales outlets.

If you’re interested in Sami handicrafts, look for the Duodji label (a round, coloured, authenticity token) and, if possible, go to a Sami village and make your purchase there. Be careful of some town shops that may have fakes on the shelves. Some typical Sami handicrafts include ornament carved sheath knives, cups, bowls, textiles and jewellery.

Reindeer bone, wood (birch), reindeer hide and tin are commonly used materials.

Tax-Free Shopping
At shops that display the ‘Tax Free Shopping’ sign, non-EU citizens making single purchases of goods exceeding Skr200 are eligible for a VAT refund of up to 17.5% of the purchase price. Show your passport and ask the shop for a ‘Global Refund Cheque’, which should be presented along with your unopened purchases (within three months) at your departure point from the country (before you check in), to get export validation. You can then cash your cheque at any of the refund points, which are found at international airports and harbours. The Tax Free Shopping Guide to Sweden is available from tourist offices free of charge, or call +46 020-74 17 41 for more information.

Bargaining
Bargaining isn’t customary, but you can get ‘walk-in’ prices at some hotels and stugby (chalet parks).

buying a Swedish SIM card, which gives you a Swedish mobile number. Vodafone, for example, sells a local SIM card for Skr95, which you then need to load with at least Skr100-worth of credit. You can then purchase top-ups at many stores, including petrol stations. Your mobile may be locked to your local network in your home country, so ask your home network for advice before going abroad.

Phonecards
Telia phonecards (telefonkort) for public phones cost Skr50 and Skr120 (for 50 and 120 units, respectively) and can be bought from Telia phone shops and newsagents.

You can make international telephone calls with these phonecards, but they won’t last long! For international calls, it’s better to buy one of a wide range of phonecards (such as a Star phonecard) from tobacco-nists that give cheap rates for calls abroad. These are generally used in public phone boxes in conjunction with a Telia card: so you might have to put the Telia card into the phone, dial the telephone number shown on the back of your cheap international phonecard, then follow the instructions given. International collect calls cannot be made from pay phones.

Time
Sweden is one hour ahead of GMT/UTC and is in the same time zone as Norway and Denmark as well as most of Western Europe. When it’s noon in Sweden, it’s 11am in London, 1pm in Helsinki, 6am in New York and Toronto, 3am in Los Ange-les, 9pm in Sydney and 11pm in Auckland. Sweden also has daylight-saving time: the clocks go forward an hour on the last Sun-day in March and back an hour on the last Sunday in October.

Timetables and business hours are quoted using the 24-hour clock, and dates are often given by week number (1 to 52).

Toilets
Public toilets in parks, shopping malls, mu-seums, libraries, and bus or train stations are rarely free in Sweden; some churches and most tourist offices have free toilets. Except at larger train stations (where there’s an attendant), pay toilets are coin operated, and usually cost Skr5.

Visas
Citizens of EU countries can enter Sweden with a passport or a national identification card (passports are recommended) and stay up to three months. Nationals of Nordic countries (Denmark, Norway, Finland and
Iceland) can stay and work indefinitely, but nationals of other countries require residence permits (uppehållstillsänd) for stays of between three months and five years; there is no fee for this permit for EU citizens.

Non-EU passport holders from Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the US can enter and stay in Sweden without a visa for up to three months. Australian and New Zealand passport holders aged between 18 and 30 can qualify for a one-year working-holiday visa (see the following section).

Citizens of South Africa and many other African, Asian and some Eastern European countries require tourist visas for entry. These are only available in advance from Swedish embassies (allow two months); there’s a nonrefundable application fee of Skr315. Visas last up to three months, and extensions aren’t easily obtainable.

Non-EU citizens can also obtain residence permits, but these must be applied for before entering Sweden. An interview by consular officials at your nearest Swedish embassy is required – allow up to eight months for this process. Foreign students are granted residence permits if they can prove acceptance by a Swedish educational institution and are able to guarantee that they can support themselves financially. Migrationsverket (011-15 60 00; www.migrationsverket.se; SE-60170 Norrköping) is the Swedish migration board and it handles all applications for visas and work or residency permits.

**WORK**

Non-EU citizens require an offer of paid employment prior to their arrival in Sweden. They need to apply for a work permit (and residence permit for stays over three months), enclosing confirmation of the job offer, completed forms (available from Swedish diplomatic posts or over the Internet), two passport photos and their passport. Processing takes six to eight weeks, and there’s a nonrefundable application fee of Skr1000.

EU citizens only need to apply for a residence permit (free) within three months of arrival if they find work, then they can remain in Sweden for the duration of their employment (or up to five years).

Australians and New Zealanders aged 18 to 30 years can now qualify for a one-year working holiday visa. Full application details are available online through Migrationsverket (www.migrationsverket.se). Work permits are only granted if there’s a shortage of Swedes (or citizens from EU countries) with certain skills, and speaking Swedish may be essential for the job. Students enrolled in Sweden can take summer jobs, but can be hard to find and such work isn’t offered to travelling students. No seasonal work permits were to be granted for 2006.

Helpful information is available online from the Arbetsförmedlingen (AMV; Swedish National Labour Market Administration; www.ams.se).
Sweden is a mostly hassle-free destination, for visa requirements see p321.

AIR

**Airports & Airlines**

The main airport is Stockholm Arlanda, which links Sweden with major European and North American cities. Göteborg Landvetter is Sweden’s second biggest international airport. Stockholm Skavsta (actually 100km south of Stockholm, near Nyköping) and Göteborg City both act as airports for the budget airline Ryanair.

**Stockholm Arlanda** (code ARN; ☎ 08-797 60 00; www.lfv.se)
**Stockholm Skavsta** (code NYO; ☎ 0155-28 04 00; www.skavsta-air.se)
**Göteborg Landvetter** (code GOT; ☎ 031-94 10 00; www.lfv.se)
**Göteborg City** (code GSE; ☎ 031-92 60 60; www.goteborgcityairport.se)

For travelling between international airports and city centres, see the Getting Around sections in the relevant chapters.

**Scandinavian Airlines System (SAS)** is the regional carrier with a good safety record.

**Airlines Flying to & from Sweden**

Most of the usual airlines fly into Sweden including the following:

- **Air France-KLM** (airline code AF; ☎ 08-5199 9990; www.airfrance.com; hub Charles de Gaulle, Paris)
- **Blue1** (airline code KF; ☎ 0900-102 5831; www.blue1.com; hub Helsinki-Vantaa, Finland)
- **British Airways** (airline code BA; ☎ 0200-770098; www.britishairways.com; hub Heathrow Airport, London)
- **City Airline** (airline code CF; ☎ 0200-250500; www.cityairline.com; hub Göteborg)
- **Finnair** (airline code AY; ☎ 0771-781100; www.finnair.com; hub Helsinki-Vantaa, Finland)
- **Icelandair** (airline code FI; ☎ 08-690 9800, ext 2; www.icelandair.net; hub Keflavík, Iceland)
- **Lufthansa** (airline code LH; ☎ 08-611 5930; www.lufthansa.com; hub Frankfurt, Germany)
- **Ryanair** (airline code FR; ☎ 0900-202 0240; www.ryanair.com; hub Dublin, Ireland)
- **SAS** (airline code SK; ☎ 0770-72 77 27; www.svenskflygbusiness.com; hub Stockholm Arlanda)
- **Skyways** (airline code JZ; ☎ 0771 95 95 00; www.skyways.se; hub Stockholm Arlanda)

**Tickets**

Most airline websites list special offers, and there are good online ticket agencies that will compare prices for you (such as www.travelocity.co.uk and www.deckchair.com). However, dealing direct with a travel agent can furnish extra details, like which airlines have the best facilities for children, or which travel insurance is most suitable for you.

If you’re planning on visiting the south, flights to Copenhagen airport, just across the Öresund bridge from Sweden, may be cheaper than flights to Malmö.

**THINGS CHANGE...**

The information in this chapter is particularly vulnerable to change. Check directly with the airline or a travel agency to make sure you understand how a fare (and the ticket you may buy) works and be aware of the security requirements for international travel. Shop carefully. The details given in this chapter should be regarded as pointers and are not a substitute for your own careful, up-to-date research.
Departure tax is included in the ticket price.

**Australia & New Zealand**

Airlines such as British Airways, Lufthansa, Thai Airways, Malaysia Airlines, Qantas Airways and Singapore Airlines can get you heading in the right direction, but you’ll have to change planes at least once in Singapore, Bangkok, Paris or London. The following are major agencies for cheap fares:

- **Flight Centre** Australia (☎ 133 133; www.flightcentre.com.au); New Zealand (☎ 0800 243 544; www.flightcentre.co.nz)
- **STA Travel** Australia (☎ 1300 733 035; www.statravel.com.au); New Zealand (☎ 0508 782 872; www.statravel.co.nz)

**Continental Europe**

SAS offers numerous direct services between Stockholm and European capitals (including Amsterdam, Berlin, Brussels, Dublin, Geneva, Helsinki, Moscow, Oslo, Paris and Prague); many are routed via Copenhagen or Frankfurt. It also has routes from Göteborg to Copenhagen and Frankfurt.

Finnair has direct flights from Helsinki (which Swedes call Helsingfors) to Stockholm (around 15 daily) and Göteborg (up to four daily). Blue’l has regular daily flights from Stockholm to Helsinki, Oulu, Tampere, Turku (known as Abo in Swedish) and Vaasa, and from Göteborg to Helsinki.

Skyways has several flights daily from Copenhagen to Swedish regional centres Karlstad, Linköping, Norrköping and Orebro.


Across Europe many travel agencies have ties with **STA Travel** (www.statravel.com), where cheap tickets can be purchased.

**UK & Ireland**

London is Europe’s major centre for discount fares. Budget airline Ryanair flies from London Stansted to Stockholm Skavsta, Göteborg City and Malmö Sturup; Glasgow Prestwick to Stockholm Skavsta and Göteborg City; London Luton to Västerås; and Shannon to Stockholm Skavsta.

Between London (Heathrow) and Stockholm Arlanda, several commercial airlines have regular daily flights, including SAS, British Airways and Finnair. Prices start at around UK£120.

From Sunday to Friday, SAS has one flight per day from Stockholm Arlanda to Manchester and Dublin. British Airways shuttles between Manchester and Stock- holm Arlanda four times weekly.

SAS also flies daily between London (Heathrow) and Göteborg.

City Airline has two flights weekly from Göteborg (Landvetter) to Birmingham and Manchester.

The following are some recommended travel agencies and online ticket sites:

- **Flightbookers** (☎ 0870 814 0000; www.ebookers.com)
- **STA Travel** (☎ 0870 160 0599; www.statravel.co.uk)

**USA & Canada**

Thanks to the large ethnic Swedish population in Minnesota, North Dakota and Wisconsin, you may find small local agencies in those areas specialising in travel to Scandinavia and offering good-value charter flights.

Icelandair flies from Baltimore-Washing- ton, Boston, New York, Minneapolis and Orlando via Reykjavík to many European destinations, including Stockholm. Twice per week between mid-May and mid-October, you can also fly from/to San Francisco.

If you’re planning on flying within Scandi- navia, SAS offers a Visit Scandinavia/Europe Air Pass to its transatlantic passen-gers. SAS’s North American hub is New York City’s Newark Airport, with direct daily flights to/from Stockholm.

From Canada, there are no direct flights; connect through one of Icelandair’s US hubs or through Copenhagen or London.

Discount travel agents are known as consolidators in the USA; track them down through the Yellow Pages or the major daily newspapers. The following are travel agencies recommended for online bookings:

- **STA Travel** Canada (☎ 1 888 427 5639; www.statravel.ca); US (☎ 1 800 781 4040; www.statatravel.com)
- **Expedia** Canada (☎ 1 888 397 3342; www.expedia.ca); US (☎ 1 800 397 3342; www.expedia.com)
- **Travelocity** Canada (☎ 1 877 282 2925; www.travelocity.ca); US (☎ 1 888 709 5983; www.travelocity.com)

**LAND**

**Border Crossings**

Customs and immigration posts on border crossings between Sweden and Denmark, Finland or Norway are usually deserted,
TRAVELLING TO SWEDEN BY EUROLINES

Eurolines (www.eurolines.com) is an association of companies forming Europe’s largest international bus network. It links Swedish cities such as Stockholm, Göteborg and Malmö directly to Denmark, Germany and Norway, and indirectly to cities all over Western and Central Europe. Advance ticket purchases are compulsory. Most buses operate daily in summer and several times per week in winter.

The Eurolines Pass allows unlimited travel to 35 cities across Europe. From mid-June to mid-September, and around late December, a 15-/30-/40-day pass costs €325/435/490 (€275/353/420 for those under 26 years or over 60; it’s cheaper outside these months). Some popular routes include the following:

- **Denmark (Copenhagen)** to/from Stockholm (Skr248, nine hours, at least three per week) and Göteborg (Skr205, 4½ hours, daily).
- **Germany (Berlin)** to/from Stockholm (Skr590, 17 hours, three weekly), Göteborg (Skr610, 12 hours, daily) via Copenhagen, and Malmö (Skr500, 8½ hours, daily) via Copenhagen.
- **Germany (Hamburg)** to/from Stockholm (Skr648,14 hours, four weekly), Göteborg (Skr568, 11 hours, two daily) and Malmö (Skr388, seven hours, two daily) all via Copenhagen.
- **Norway (Oslo)** to/from Stockholm (Skr260, 7½ hours, two daily), Göteborg (Skr176, four hours, two daily) and Malmö (Skr260, 7½ hours, two daily).
- **UK (London)** to/from Stockholm (Skr198, 30 hours, one to four times weekly) via Amsterdam and Hamburg, and Göteborg (from Skr1098, 35 hours; five weekly). For both these routes you may have to change buses three or four times.

**Eurolines Representatives in Northern Europe**

- **Bayern Express** (030 8609 6211; www.berlinlinienbus.de in German; Mannheimer Str. 33/34, 10713 Berlin)
- **Deutsche Touring/Eurolines** (040-280 4538; www.deutsche-touring.com; Am Römerhof 17, 60486 Frankfurt am Main)
- **Eurolines Scandinavia** (08 762 59 60; www.eurolinestravel.com; Klarabergsviadukten 72, City Terminalen, 11164 Stockholm)
- **Eurolines Scandinavia** (033 88 70 00; Reventlowsgade 8, 1651 Copenhagen V)
- **Eurolines Scandinavia** (031 10 02 40; Nils Ericssonplatsen 5, 41103 Göteborg)
- **Norway Bussexpress** (02217 2000; www.nor-way.no; Karl Johans gate 2, NO-0154 Oslo)
- **Eurolines UK** (0207 259 9285; www.eurolines.co.uk; 4 Vicarage Rd, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 3E5)

so passports are rarely checked. There are many minor roads between Sweden and Norway that don’t have any border formalities at all.

**Denmark**

**BUS**

Apart from Eurolines, see above, Säfflebussen buses regularly connect the same cities, although they’re more expensive (eg Skr510 from Stockholm to Copenhagen). Swebus Express has five buses daily from Copenhagen to Göteborg (Skr225, four hours).

**CAR & MOTORCYCLE**

You can drive from Copenhagen to Malmö across the Öresund bridge on the E20 motorway. Tolls are paid at Lernacken, on the Swedish side, in either Danish (single/return crossing per car Dkr235/470) or Swedish (Skr285/570) currency, or by credit or debit card.

**TRAIN**

Trains run regularly every 20 minutes between the cities of Copenhagen and Malmö (Skr87, 35 minutes), travelling via the Öresund bridge. The trains usually stop at Copenhagen Airport.

From Copenhagen, it’s necessary to change in Malmö for Stockholm trains. Six or seven services operate directly between Copenhagen and Göteborg (Skr373, four hours). Trains every hour or two connect Copenhagen, Kristianstad and Karlskrona. X2000 high-speed trains are more expensive.

**Germany**

**BUS**

See the Eurolines boxed text, opposite.

**TRAIN**

Hamburg is the central European gateway for Scandinavia, with direct trains daily to Copenhagen and a few on to Stockholm.

There are direct overnight trains running every day between Berlin and Malmö via the Trelleborg–Sassnitz ferry. The journey takes nine hours and a couchette/bed costs €88/125 (approximately Skr820/1170). See www.berlin-night-express.com for details.

**Finland**

**BUS**

Frequent bus services run from Haparanda to Tornio (Skr10, 10 minutes) and on to Kemi (Skr45, 45 minutes), buses link Boden and Luleå with Haparanda, and Tornio/Kemi with Oulu (Finland). Tapanis Buss (0922-129 55; www.tapanis.se in Swedish) runs express coaches from Stockholm to Tornio via Haparanda twice a week (Skr480, 15 hours).

Länstrafiken i Norrbotten (020 47 00 47; www.ltnbd.se) operates buses as far as Karesuando, from where it’s only a few minutes’ walk across the bridge to Kaaruesvanto (Finland). There are also regular regional services from Haparanda to Övertorneå (some continue to Pello, Pajala and Kiruna) – you can walk across the border at Övertorneå or Pello and pick up a Finnish bus to Muonio, with onward connections from there to Kaaruesvanto and Tromsø (Norway).

**CAR & MOTORCYCLE**

The main routes between Sweden and Finland are the E4 from Umeå to Kemi and No 45 from Gällivare to Kaaruesvanto; five other minor roads also cross the border.

**Norway**

**BUS**

Säfflebussen runs from Stockholm to Oslo (Skr380, 7½ hours, five times daily) via Karlstad, and from Göteborg to Oslo (Skr220, four hours, seven daily). Swebus Express has the same routes with similar prices.

In the north, buses run once-daily from Umeå to Mo i Rana (eight hours) and from Skellefteå to Bodø (nine hours, daily except Saturday) are run by Länstrafiken i Västerbotten (0771-10 01 10; www.lanstrafikin.se) and Länstrafiken i Norrbotten (0771-10 01 10; www.ltnbd.se), respectively.

**CAR & MOTORCYCLE**

The main roads between Sweden and Norway are the E6 from Göteborg to Oslo, the E14 from Stockholm to Oslo, the E14 from Sundsvall to Trondheim, the E12 from Umeå to Mo i Rana, and the E10 from Kiruna to Bjerkvik. Many secondary roads also cross the border.

**TRAIN**

The main rail links run from Stockholm to Oslo, from Göteborg to Oslo, from Stockholm to Östersund and Storlien (Norwegian trains continue to Trondheim), and from Luleå to Kiruna and Narvik. Trains run daily between Stockholm and Oslo (Skr462, six hours), and there’s a night train from Stockholm to Narvik (Skr500 not including couchette, from 20 hours). You can also travel from Helsingborg to Oslo (Skr590, seven hours), via Göteborg. X2000 high-speed trains are more expensive.

**UK**

**BUS**

See the Eurolines boxed text, opposite.

**TRAIN**

The Channel Tunnel makes land travel possible between Britain and Continental Europe. From Brussels, you can connect to Hamburg, a main gateway to Scandinavia.

From London, a 2nd-class single ticket (including couchette) costs around £220 to Stockholm. For reservations and tickets, contact Deutsche Bahn UK (08 0702 435 363; www.bahn.co.uk).

**Transport Operators**

Services across Swedish borders are operated by the following:

- **Eurolines** (08 762 59 60; www.eurolines.com) See also the boxed text, opposite.

- **Säfflebussen** (0771-15 15 15; www.safflebussen.se in Danish) Long-distance buses within Sweden and to Oslo (Norway) and Copenhagen (Denmark).

- **Swebus Express** (0200 21 82 18; www.swebus express.se) Long-distance buses within Sweden and to Oslo (Norway) and Copenhagen (Denmark).
SEA

Ferry

Ferry connections between Sweden and its neighbours are frequent and straightforward. Most lines offer substantial discounts for seniors, students and children, and many rail-pass holders also get reduced fares. Most prices quoted in this section are for single journeys at peak times (weekend travel, overnight crossings, mid-June to mid-August); at other times, fares may be up to 30% lower.

DENMARK

Helsingør–Helsingborg

This is the quickest route and has frequent ferries (crossing time around 20 minutes).

HH-Ferries (042-19 80 80; www.hhferries.com)

24-hour service. Pedestrian/car and nine passengers SKr22/55/265.

Scandlines (042-18 63 00; www.scandlines.com)

Similar service and prices.

Sundsbussarna (042-38 58 80; www.sundsbussarna.se in Swedish) Regular passenger-only ferries to Helsingør from around 7am to 8pm daily. Pedestrian/bike SKr12/25.

Göteborg–Fredrikshavn

Stena Line (031-704 00 00; www.stenaline.se)

Three-hour crossing. Up to six ferries daily. Pedestrian/car and five passengers/car SKr210/1155/155.

Stena Line (Express) Two-hour crossing. Up to three ferries daily. Pedestrian/car and five passengers/car SKr275/1495/215.

Varberg–Grenå

Stena Line (031-704 00 00; www.stenaline.se) Four-hour crossing. Three or four daily. Pedestrian/car and five passengers/car SKr210/1155/155.

Ystad–Ronne

BornholmsTrafikken (0411-55 87 00; www.bornholmstrafikken.dk) Conventional (1½ hours) and fast (80 minutes) services, two to nine times daily. Pedestrian/car and five passengers/car SKr204/1192/21.

EASTERN EUROPE

To/from Estonia, Tallink (08-666 6001; www.tallink.ek in Estonian) runs the routes Stockholm–Tallinn and Kapellskär–Paldiski.

To/from Latvia, Riga Sea Line (08-5100 1500; www.rigasealine.lv) operates Stockholm–Riga night ferries. Scandlines (08-5206 02 90; www.scandlines.dk) operates Ventspils–Nynäshamn ferries around five times a week.

To/from Lithuania, Lisco Line (0454-33680; www.lisco.lt) runs daily between Karlshamn–Klaipėda.

To/from Poland, Polferry (040-121700; www.polferrys.pl) and Unity Line (0411-556900; www.unityline.pl) have daily Ystad–Swinoujście crossings. Polferry also runs Nynäshamn–Gdansk.

Stena Line (031-704 00 00; www.stena.line.se) sails Karlskrona–Gdynia.

FINLAND

Helsinki is called Helsingfors in Swedish, and Turku is Åbo.

Stockholm–Helsinki and Stockholm–Turku ferries run daily throughout the year via the Åland Islands (except from the abolition of duty-free within the EU, making them a popular outing for Swedes). These ferries have minimum age limits; check before you travel.

Stockholm–Helsinki

Silja Line (08-22 21 40; www.silja.com) Around 15 hours. Car and up to five passengers/bicycle SKr700/95, ticket and cabin berth from SKr590.

Viking Line (08-452 40 00; www.vikingline.fi) Operates the same routes with slightly cheaper prices.

Stockholm–Turku

Silja Line (08-22 21 40; www.silja.com) Eleven hours. Car/bicycle SKr515/95, day/night ticket SKr215/330, cabin berth from SKr315. From September to early May, ferries also depart from Kapellskär (90km northeast of Stockholm), connecting buses operated by Silja Line are included in the full-price fare.

Viking Line (08-452 40 00; www.vikingline.fi) Operates the same routes with slightly cheaper prices. In high season it offers passage from both Stockholm and Kapellskär.

RG Line (090-18 52 00; www.rgline.com) runs the routes Umeå–Vaasa and Sundsvall–Vaasa.

Stockholm–Åland Islands (Mariehamn)

Besides the Silja Line and Viking Line routes above, two companies offer foot passenger-only overnight cruises. Prices quoted are for return trips.

Birka Cruises (08-702 72 00; www.birkacruises.com) A 22 hour round-trip. One or two daily. Berth from SKr350. Prices include supper and breakfast.

Eckerö Linien (0175-258 00; www.eckerolinen.fi) runs to the Åland Islands from Grebbestad.

Ånедин Linien (08-456 22 00; www.anedinlinjen.com in Swedish) Six hours, daily. Couchette SKr50, berth from SKr235.

GERMANY

Trebelrogg–Sassnitz

Scandlines (042-18 61 00; www.scandlines.se) A 3½ hour trip. Two to five times daily. Pedestrian/car and up to nine passengers/passerger with bicycle SKr125/965/185.

Trebelrogg–Rostock

Scandlines (042-18 61 00; www.scandlines.se) Six hours (night crossing 7½ hours). Two or three daily. Pedestrian/car and up to nine passengers/passerger with bicycle SKr210/1285/225.

TT-Line (0410-562 00; www.ttline.com) Operates the same as Scandlines, with similar prices.

Trebelrogg–Travemünde

TT-Line (0410-562 00; www.ttline.com) Seven hours. Two to five daily. Pedestrian/car and up to five passengers/passerger with bicycle SKr240/1700/280. Berths are compulsory on night crossings and cost from SKr215 per person.

Göteborg–Kiel

Stena Line (031-704 00 00; www.stenaline.se) Fourteen hour. One crossing nightly. Pedestrian/car and up to five passengers/passerger with bicycle SKr240/1700/280. Berths are compulsory, and cost from SKr190 per person.

NORWAY

There’s a daily overnight DFDS Seaways (031-65 06 80; www.dfdsseaways.com) ferry between Copenhagen and Oslo, via Helsingborg. Passenger fares between Helsingborg and Oslo (14 hours) cost SKr1048, and cars SKr450. DFDS also sails from Göteborg to Kristiansand (Norway), three days a week (from seven hours); contact them for prices.

A Color Line (0526-620 00; www.colorline.com) ferry between Strömstad (Sweden) and Sandefjord (Norway) sails two to six times daily (2½ hours) year-round. Tickets cost SKr180 (rail passes get 50% discount); bicycles cost SKr40 and cars SKr195.

UK

DFDS Seaways (www.dfdsseaways.com)–Göteborg (031- 65 06 50; UK (08705-33 30 00) There are two crossings per week between Göteborg and Newcastle via Kristiansand (Norway). The trip takes 25 hours. Fares start from £33 per person including economy berth; cars cost £75 and bicycles are free.

GETTING AROUND

Public transport is heavily subsidised and well organised. It’s divided into 24 regional networks (länsstrafik), but with an overarching Tägpluss (www.tagpluss.se) system, where one ticket is valid on trains and buses. The three-part Riksidtablilven gives timetables for all domestic services: buy it at railway stations or large newsagents for SKr80. Handier local timetables are available free of charge or for a nominal fee from tourist offices or the operators.

Holders of International Student Identification Cards (ISIC) will get discounts with some operators – it pays to ask.

AIR

Airlines in Sweden

Domestic airlines in Sweden tend to use Stockholm Arlanda (code ARN; 08-797 60 00; www.jf.se) as a hub, but there are 30-odd regional airports. Flying domestic is expensive on full-price tickets (usually between SKr1000 and SKr3000 for a single ticket), but substantial discounts are available on Internet bookings, student and youth fares, off-peak travel, return tickets booked at least seven days in advance or low-price tickets for accompanying family members and seniors. It’s worthwhile asking about stand-by fares.

The following is a small selection of Sweden’s internal flight operators and the destinations they cover. Skyways has the best offers.

FlyMe (airline code SH; 0770-79 07 90; www.flyme.com; hub Göteborg Landvetter) Stockholm to Göteborg, Ångelholm (near Helsingborg), Malmö and Östersund.


Air Passes
Visitors who fly SAS to Sweden from Continental Europe, North America or Asia can buy tickets on a Visit Scandinavia Air Pass, allowing one-way travel on direct flights between any two Scandinavian cities serviced by SAS, Skyways and other operators. When you buy your international ticket, you buy up to eight coupons, each of which can be used on one domestic flight and is valid for three months. A coupon for use within Sweden costs €69 (except Stockholm–Kiruna, which is €122); international flights between Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Finland cost €80. They can be purchased after arriving in Sweden if you have a return SAS international ticket. For the latest information, call SAS or check their website.

BICYCLE
Cycling is an excellent way to see Sweden and a very common mode of transport for Swedes. Most towns have separate lanes and traffic signals for cyclists. For more information see p53.

BOAT
Canal Boat
The canals provide cross-country routes linking the main lakes. The longest cruises, on the Göta Canal from Söderköping (south of Stockholm) to Göteborg, run from mid-May to mid-September, take at least four days and include the lakes between.

Regional Networks
The länsstrafik bus networks are well integrated with the regional train system, with one ticket valid on any local or regional bus or train. Rules vary but transfers are usually free within one to four hours. Fares on local buses and trains are often identical.

In remote areas, taxis may have an arrangement with the county council to provide a reduced-fare taxi trip to your final destination. These fares are only valid when arranged in advance (they cannot be bought from the taxi departure point). Ask the regional bus company for details.

Bus Passes
Good-value daily or weekly passes are usually available from local and regional transport offices, and many regions have 30-day passes for longer stays, or a special card for peak-season summer travel.

CAR & MOTORCYCLE
Sweden has good roads, and the excellent E-class motorways don’t usually have traffic jams.

Car Hire
To hire a car you have to be at least 20 (sometimes 25) years of age, with a recognised licence and a credit card.

Driver's Licence
An international driving permit isn’t necessary, your domestic licence will do.

Bus Passes
Good-value daily or weekly passes are usually available from local and regional transport offices, and many regions have 30-day passes for longer stays, or a special card for peak-season summer travel.

CAR & MOTORCYCLE
Sweden has good roads, and the excellent E-class motorways don’t usually have traffic jams.

Automobile Associations
The Swedish national motoring association is Motormännens Riksförbund (020-21 11 11; www.motormannen.se).

Bring Your Own Vehicle
If bringing your own car, you’ll need your domestic licence.

Hire
To hire a car you have to be at least 20 (sometimes 25) years of age, with a recognised licence and a credit card.

Fly-drive packages may save you money. International rental chains (such as Avis, Hertz and Europcar) are more expensive but convenient; all have desks at Stockholm Arlanda and Göteborg Landvetter airports and offices in most major cities. The best car hire rates are generally from larger petrol stations (like Statoil and OK-Q8) – look out for signs saying biluthyrning or hyrbilar.

Avis (0700-82 00 82; www.avisworld.com)
Europcar (020-78 11 80; www.europcar.com)
Hertz (0771 211 212; www.hertz-europe.com)
Mabi Hyrbilar (08-612 60 90; www.mabirent.se)

National company with competitive rates.

Click on hyrbilar in the website menu to see car-hire pages.

ROAD DISTANCE (KM)

GETTING AROUND •• HITCHING

**Statoil** (08-429 63 00; www.statoil.se/bluthyrrning in Swedish) Click on **uthyrningstationer** to see branches with car hire, and on **priser** for prices.

**Road Hazards**

In the north, elk (moose) and reindeer are serious road hazards, particularly around dawn and dusk; around 40 people die in collisions every year. Look out for the signs saying **vilt och soppor**, which means that elk may cross the road, and for black plastic bags tied to roadside trees or poles – this is a Sami signal that they have reindeer herds grazing in the area. Report all incidents to police – failure to do so is an offence.

Beware of trams in Göteborg and Norrköping, which have priority; overtake on the right.

**Road Rules**

In Sweden, you drive on and give way to the right. Headlights (at least dipped) must be on at all times when driving. Use of seat belts is compulsory, and children under seven years old should be in the appropriate harness or child seat.

The blood-alcohol limit is a 0.02% – one drink will put you over the limit. Maximum speeds are: motorways (signposted in green and called E1, E4 etc) 110km/h; highways 90km/h; narrow rural roads 70km/h; built-up areas 50km/h. The speed limit for cars towing caravans is 80km/h. Police using hand-held radar speed detectors can impose on-the-spot fines of up to Skr1200.

On many major roads broken lines define wide-paved edges, and a vehicle being overtaken is expected to move into this area to allow faster traffic to pass safely.

**HITCHING**

Hitching is never entirely safe in any country, and we don’t recommend it. Travellers who decide to hitch should understand that they are taking a small but potentially serious risk; consider travelling in pairs and let someone know where you’re planning to go.

Hitching isn’t popular in Sweden and very long waits are the norm. It’s prohibited to hitch on motorways.

**LOCAL TRANSPORT**

In Sweden, local transport is always linked with regional transport (länsstrafik). Regional passes are valid both in the city and on the rural routes. Town and city bus fares are around Skr15, but it usually works out cheaper to get a day card or other travel pass.

Swedish and Danish trains and buses around the Öresund area form an integrated transport system, so buying tickets to Copenhagen from any station in the region is as easy as buying tickets for Swedish journeys. Stockholm has an extensive underground metro system, and Göteborg and Norrköping run tram networks. Göteborg also has a city ferry service.

Beware of getting ripped off in taxis. It’s best to agree to a fare before the trip. In Stockholm, flag fall is around Skr32, then Skr7 per km; most taxis in the capital will take you to Arlanda airport for between Skr350 and Skr450.

**TOURS**

This book recommends tours and includes routes followed by the following companies:

- **Svenska Turistföreningen** (STF; Swedish Touring Association; 08-463 21 00; www.svenskaturisterforeningen.se; Box 25, SE-10120 Stockholm) Offers scores of events and tours, mostly based on outdoor activities (e.g. kayaking and hiking).

- **Sweden Booking** (0498-20 33 80; www.swedenbooking.com; Flugastra 3A, SE-62145 Växjö) Can organise rail tickets as well as interesting package trips, like a traditional Christmas in Dalarna or canoeing in Värmland.

**TRAIN**

Sweden has an extensive and reliable rail network and trains are certainly faster than buses. However, many destinations in the northern half of the country cannot be reached by train alone.

**Train Operators**

- **Sveriges Järnväg** (SJ; 0771-75 75 75; www.sz.se) National network covering most main lines, especially in the southern part of the country. Its X2000 fast trains run at speeds of up to 200km/h.


There are some smaller regional train operators, but they tend to cooperate closely with SJ.

In summer, almost 25 different tourist trains offer special rail experiences. The most notable is **Inlandsbanan** (0771-53 53 53; www.inlandsbanan.se), a slow and scenic 1300km route from Kristinhamn to Gällivare, one of the great rail journeys in Scandinavia. Several southern sections have to be travelled by bus, but the route proper starts at Mora. It takes seven hours from Mora to Östersund (SKr347) and 15 hours from Östersund to Gällivare (SKr697). A pass allows two weeks’ unlimited travel for SKr1195.

**Train Passes**

The Swedish Rail Pass, Eurodomino tickets and international passes, such as Inter-Rail, Eurail and ScanRail, are accepted on SJ services and most regional trains.

**ScanRail** (www.scanrail.com) has a flexible rail pass covering 2nd-class travel in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden.

Scandinavia, otherwise you’ll face restrictions. There are three versions:

- **Flexi 5-day** For travel on any five days within a two-month period, UK£171 (travellers under 26 UK£119, over 60 UK£152).

- **Flexi 10-day** For travel on any 10 days within a two-month period, UK£229 (under 26 UK£160, over 60 UK£203).

- **Consecutive** For unlimited travel during 21 consecutive days, UK£266 (under 26 UK£185, over 60 UK£235).

ScanRail passes are valid on state railways in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden. They’re also valid on most Swedish länstrafik trains – but not on Stockholm (SL) local trains, or on certain Länstrafikken trains in Värmland, Upplands Länstrafik (UL) and Östgötatrafiken trains. They’re valid on two privately operated Swedish lines, the Arlanda Express (from Arlanda Airport to Stockholm) and the Connex night trains between Stockholm/Göteborg and upper Norrland.

The pass does not cover the Fläm line in Norway or Inlandsbanen in Sweden.

Pass holders also get discounts on cabins, and cheaper prices (up to 50% off) on the ferry services in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Route</th>
<th>Operator</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Stena Line</td>
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<td>Grenå–Varberg</td>
<td>Stena Line</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stockholm–Helsinki</td>
<td>Viking or Silja Line</td>
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<td>Stockholm–Turku</td>
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<td>Nynäshamn–Visby</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oskarshamn–Visby</td>
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X2000 trains require all rail pass holders to pay a supplement of Skr65 (including the obligatory seat reservation).
Health

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You’re unlikely to encounter serious health problems in Sweden. Travel health depends on your predeparture preparations, your daily health care while travelling and how you handle any problem that does develop.

BEFORE YOU GO

Before departure, obtain travel insurance with good medical coverage. If you wear glasses or contact lenses take a spare set and a copy of your optical prescription. If you require a particular medication, carry a legible copy of your prescription from your doctor. Most medications are available in Sweden, but brand names may be different, so you’ll need the generic name.

RECOMMENDED VACCINATIONS

Immunisations aren’t necessary for travel to Sweden, unless you’ve been travelling somewhere where yellow fever is prevalent. Ensure that your normal childhood vaccines (against measles, mumps, rubella, diphtheria, tetanus and polio) are up to date. You may also want to have a hepatitis vaccination, as exposure can occur anywhere.

IN SWEDEN

AVAILABILITY & COST OF HEALTH CARE

There’s no general practitioner service in Sweden, but pharmacies (apotek) sell non-prescription (and prescription) medicines, and give advice on how to deal with everyday ailments and conditions.

For emergencies and casualty services, go to a local medical centre (vårdcentral) or a hospital (sjukhus or lasarett), where duty doctors are standing by. There are centres in all districts and main towns, listed by area under municipality (kommun) in the local telephone directory. EU citizens with an EHIC form are charged around Skr120 to consult a doctor and up to Skr300 for a visit to casualty; hospital stays cost Skr90 per day (free for patients under 16 years). Non-EU citizens should have adequate travel insurance or be prepared to face high costs, although some countries (such as Australia) have reciprocal health-care agreements with Sweden.

Denists (tandläkare) charge about Skr700 for an hour’s treatment.

For general emergencies, including the ambulance service, call 112.

TRAVELLER’S DIARRHOEA

Simple things such as a change of water, food or climate can cause mild diarrhoea, and a few rushed toilet trips with no other symptoms do not indicate a major problem. Stomach upsets are as possible in Sweden as anywhere else. Occasionally, cooked meats displayed on buffet tables may cause problems. Also, take care with shellfish (cooked mussels that haven’t opened properly aren’t safe to eat), unidentified berries and mushrooms.

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Giardiasis

Stomach cramps, nausea, a bloated stomach, watery foul-smelling diarrhoea and frequent gas are all symptoms of giardiasis, which can occur several weeks after you have been exposed to the parasite. The symptoms may disappear for a few days and then return; this can go on for several weeks.

ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS

Hypothermia

This condition occurs when the body loses heat faster than it can produce it and the core temperature of the body falls. It’s surprisingly easy to progress from very cold to dangerously cold due to a combination of wind, wet clothing, fatigue and hunger, even if the air temperature is above freezing. It’s best to dress in layers; silk, wool and some of the new artificial fibres are all good insulating materials. A hat is important, as a lot of heat is lost through the head. A strong, waterproof outer layer (and a space blanket for emergencies) is essential. Carry basic supplies, including food containing simple sugars to generate heat quickly, and fluid to drink.

The symptoms of hypothermia are exhaustion, numb skin, shivering, slurred speech, irrational or violent behaviour, lethargy, stumbling, dizzy spells, muscle cramps and violent bursts of energy. Irritation may take the form of sufferers claiming they are warm and trying to take off their clothes.

To treat mild hypothermia, first get the person out of the wind and/or rain, remove their clothing if it’s wet and replace it with dry, warm clothing. Give them hot liquids (not alcohol) and some high-calorie, easily digestible food. Do not rub victims; instead, allow them to slowly warm themselves. This should be enough to treat the early stages of hypothermia. Early treatment of mild hypothermia is the only way to prevent severe hypothermia, which is a critical condition.

Insect Bites & Stings

Mosquitoes, blackflies and deerflies are common from mid-June to the end of July, and fly swarms in northern areas are horrid. To avoid bites, completely cover yourself with a cloth and a mosquito head net. Any exposed areas of skin, including lower legs (and even underneath trousers), should be treated with a powerful insect repellent containing DEET (although frequent application of DEET isn’t recommended). Calamine lotion, a sting relief spray or ice packs will reduce any pain and swelling.

Sunburn

In high northern latitudes you can get sunburned surprisingly quickly, even through clouds, and especially when there’s complete snow cover. Use sunscreen, a hat, and a barrier cream for your nose and lips. Calamine lotion or commercial after-sun preparations are good for mild sunburn. Protect your eyes with good quality sunglasses, particularly if you’ll be near water, sand or snow.

Water

Tap water is safe to drink in Sweden, but drinking from streams may be unwise due to the presence of farms, old mine workings and wild animals. The clearest-looking stream water may contain giardia and other parasites. If you don’t have a filter and can’t boil water it should be treated chemically; iodine is effective and is available in liquid and tablet form.
The national language of Sweden is Swedish, a Germanic language belonging to the Nordic branch that is spoken throughout Sweden and in parts of Finland. Swedes, Danes and Norwegians can make themselves mutually understood, and most Swedes speak English as a second language.

Since they share common roots, and the Old Norse language left sprinklings of words in Anglo-Saxon, you’ll find many similarities between English and Swedish – albeit with different pronunciations. There are three letters at the end of the Swedish alphabet that don’t exist in the English version, namely å, ä and ö.

Swedish verbs are the same regardless of person or number: ‘I am, you are’ etc are, in Swedish, jag är, du är and so on. There are two genders, common (non-neuter) and neuter. Gender is reflected in the articles en and ett (a/an). The definite article (the) is added to the ends of nouns, eg ett hus (a house), huset (the house). Unfortunately there are no set rules for determining gender – it’s something that has to be learnt word by word.

PRONUNCIATION

Sweden is a large country with considerable dialectal variety. There are sounds in Swedish that don’t exist in English, so in the following pronunciation guides we’ve tried to give the closest English equivalents. In terms of dialect, we’ve gone with the version you’ll hear in Stockholm. If you follow the pronunciation guides and listen to the way the Swedes themselves speak the language, you’ll soon start getting the hang of it. The first thing you’ll need to master is the songful rise and fall that is so characteristic of Swedish and Norwegian.

ACCOMMODATION

**hotel**

hotel **ho-tel**

gästhus **yest-hoo**

**youth hotel**

vandrarhem **vaan-dra-hem**

camping ground **kamping-plats**

**Where is a cheap/good hotel?**

Var är ett billigt/bra hotell?

va vaa ait billigt/braa ho-tel

**What’s the address?**

Vilken adress är det?

vii-lken adhess aar det

**Could you write the address, please?**

Kan du skriva ner adressen?

kaan doo skree va neer a-dressen

**Do you have any rooms available?**

Finns det några lediga rum?

fins de nor-gra le-di-ga room

**How much is it per person/night?**

Hur mycket kostar det per person/natt?

hoo meh-kreet ko-stra det

I’d like ...

Jag skulle vilja ... ya skool-ee vil-ya ...

**a single room**

ha ett enkelrum **hoo eet engr-el-room**

**a double room**

ha ett dubbelrum **hoo eet doob-el-room**

**a room with a bathroom**

ha ett rum med bad **hoo eet room med bad**

**to share a dorm**

bo i soovsal **boo ee soov-sal**

for one night

en natt **en nat**

for two nights

tva nätter **tov a-ne-te**

**Does it include breakfast?**

Inkluderas frukost?

in-ko-oo-dor-as froo-kost?

May I see the room?

Kan jag får se rummet?

kaan jaa faa seh room-met

**Where is the bathroom?**

Var är badrummet?

va vaa baad-room-met

CONVERSATION & ESSENTIALS

**Hello.**

Hej.

hay

**Goodbye.**

Adja/Hej då.

a-ya/hay-dor

Yes.

Ja.

yaa

No.

Nej.

nay

*Please.*

Snälla.

snel-la

Thank you.

Tack.

tak

That’s fine.

Det är bra.

det aair baar

You’re welcome.

Det är bra.

det aair baar

May I/Do you mind?

Finns det några lediga rum?

fins de nor-gra le-di-ga room

What’s your name?

Vad heter du?

vaa heer doo

My name is ...

Jag heter ...

ya heer ...

Where are you from?

Varifrån kommer du?

vaa-ree-fran ko-mer doo

I’m from ...

Jag kommer från ...

ya ko-mer fraan ...

DIRECTIONS

**Where is ...?**

Var är ...?

va vaa ait ...

**Can you show me on the map?**

Kan du visa mig på kartan?

kaan doo vsaa mee paa kartaan

Go straight ahead.

Gå rakt fram.

goo rakt fraam

**Turn left.**

Väg till vänster.

veeg till vaneeter

**Turn right.**

Väg till höger.

veeg till hoy-ger

near

nair-a

far

lomngt

may I see the room? kan ja for seh room-met

where is the bathroom? va vaa baad-room-met

hello. hay

goodbye. a-ya/hay-dor

yes. yaa

no. nay

please. snel-la

thank you. tak

that’s fine. det aair baar

you’re welcome. det aair baar

may I/do you mind? fins de nor-gra le-di-ga room

what’s your name? vaa heer doo

my name is ... ya heer ...

where are you from? vaa air fran ko-mer doo

I’m from ... ya ko-mer fraan ...

directions where is ...? va vaa ait ...

can you show me on the map? kaa doo mee paa kartaan

go straight ahead. goo rakt fraam

turn left. veeeg till vaneeter

turn right. veeeg till hoy-ger
SAMI LANGUAGES

Sami languages are related to Finnish and other Finno-Ugric languages. Five of the nine main dialects of the Sami language are spoken in Sweden, with speakers of each varying in number from 500 to 5000.

Most Sami speakers can communicate in Swedish, but relatively few speak English. Knowing some Sami words and phrases will give you a chance to access the unique Sami culture.

**Fell (Northern) Sami**
The most common of the Sami languages, Fell Sami is considered the standard variety of the language. It’s spoken in Sweden’s far north around Karesuando and Jukkasjärvi.

Written Fell Sami includes several accented letters, but it still doesn’t accurately represent the spoken language – even some Sami people find the written language difficult to learn. For example, *giitu* (thanks) is pronounced ‘geech-too’, but the strongly aspirated ‘h’ isn’t written.

**TIME & DATE**

- (to person leaving)  
  - Buorre beaivi.
  - De lea.
  - Giitu.
  - Leage buorre.

- (to person staying)  
  - Bad sammaju.
  - Manna dearnan.
  - Båze dearnan.
  - Giitu.

- (reply)  
  - Buorre dat manna.

**SHOPPING & SERVICES**

- I (don’t) understand.  
  - Ja, jag förstår inte.

**LANGUAGE DIFFICULTIES**

Do you speak English?

- Talar du engelska?

- Do you speak English?

- Finns det någon här som talar engelska?

- I (don’t) understand.

Could you speak more slowly, please?

- Kan du vara snellare?

- Could you speak more slowly, please?

- kan du vänta ett stund?

- Can you wait a moment?

- What time does it open/close?

- Hur dags öppnas/ stänger de?

- Could I please have ...?

- Kan jag få ...

- How much is it?

- Hur mycket kostar den?

- bookshop

- boghandel

- bookshop

- camera shop

- fotostation

- camera shop

- clothing store

- klädselsaffär

- clothing store

- delicatessen

- delikatessaffär

- delicatessen

- Falls (Northern) Sami

- Sáme jokk

- Falls (Northern) Sami

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- **NUMBERS**

- 0  
  - noll

- 1  
  - ett

- 2  
  - två

- 3  
  - tre

- 4  
  - fyra

- 5  
  - fem

- 6  
  - sex

- 7  
  - sju

- 8  
  - åtta

- 9  
  - nio

- 10  
  - tio

- 11  
  - elva

- 12  
  - tretton

- 13  
  - fjorton

- 14  
  - femton

- 15  
  - sexton

- 16  
  - sjutton

- 17  
  - arton

- 18  
  - nittion

- 19  
  - tjugotton

- 20  
  - femton

- 30  
  - trettio

- 40  
  - fjorttiot

- 50  
  - femton

- 60  
  - sexton

- 70  
  - sjutton

- 80  
  - otton

- 90  
  - nittion

- 100  
  - hundra

- 1000  
  - miljon

- 1,000,000  
  - miljon

**SHOPPING & SERVICES**

- I’m looking for ...

- Jag letar efter ...

- a bank

- en bank

- the city centre

- centrum

- the ... embassies

- ... ambassaden

- the market

- marknadens

- the museum

- museet

- the office

- posten

- a public telephone

- en offentlig telefon

- a public toilet

- en toalett

- the tourist office

- turistinformations

- What time is it today?

- Jag behöver ett medicin

- I have a toothache.

- Jag är gravid.

- I’m pregnant.

- Jag behöver ett medicin

- I need medication for ...

- Jag behöver ett medel mot ...

- Do you speak English?

- Talar du engelska?

- Hello.

- Hej!

- How are you?

- Jag är ...
TRANSPORT

Where is the ...?

Var är ...?

bus stop
buschållplatsen
boos-hol-plat-sen

train station
tågstationen
torg-sta-shoo-ten

tramstop
spårvagnshållplatsen
spor-vaags-hol-plat-sen

What time does the ... leave/arrive?

När avgår/kommer ...

boat
båten
bor-ten

bus
bussen
boos-sen

tram
spårvagnen
spor-vaagn

train
tåget
tor-get

I’d like ...

Jag skulle vilja ha ...

a one-way ticket
en enkelbiljett
en en-keel-bil-yet

a return ticket
en returbiljett
en re-toor-bil-yet

1st class
första klass
fer-shta klas

2nd class
andra klass
an-dra klas

left luggage
effektförvaring
ek-fekt-fur-vaoo-ring

timetable
tidtabell
tee-ta-bel

Where can I hire a car/bicycle?

Var kan jag hyra en

bil/cykel?

va vaa kan ya see-keel
You may encounter some of the following terms and abbreviations during your travels in Sweden. See also the Language chapter and Food & Drink chapter.

Note that the letters å, ä, and ö fall at the end of the Swedish alphabet, and the letters v and w are often used interchangeably (you will see the small town of Vaxholm also referred to as Waxholm, and an inn can be known as a värdshus or wärdshus). In directories like telephone books they fall under one category (eg wa is listed before vu).

**Glossary**

- **aktie bolaget (AB)** – company
- **allemansrätt** – literally ‘every person’s right’; a tradition allowing universal access to private property (with some restrictions), public land and wilderness areas
- **ank** – arrives, arrivals
- **apotek** – pharmacy
- **atelje** – gallery
- **avg** – departs, departures
- **avgift** – payment, fee (seen on parking signs)
- **avhämtning** – takeaways
- **bad** – swimming pool, bathing place or bathroom
- **bakfickan** – literally ‘back pocket’, a low-profile eatery usually associated with a gourmet restaurant
- **bankautomat** – cash machine, ATM
- **barn** – child
- **bastu** – sauna
- **bensin** – petrol, gas
- **berg** – mountain
- **bibliotek** – library
- **bil** – car
- **billjet** – ticket
- **biljettautomat** – ticket machines for street parking
- **bilstycke** – car hire
- **bio, biograf** – cinema
- **björn** – bear
- **bokhandel** – bookshop
- **bro** – bridge
- **bruk** – factory
- **bryggeri** – brewery
- **buss** – bus
- **busshållplats** – bus stop
- **butik** – shop
- **båt** – boat
- **campingplats** – camping ground
- **centrum** – town centre
- **cykel** – bicycle
- **dag** – day
- **dagens rätt** – daily special, usually on lunchtime menus
- **dal** – valley
- **diskotek** – disco
- **domkyrka** – cathedral
- **drottning** – queen
- **dubbelrum** – double room
- **duodji** – Sami handicraft
- **dusch** – shower
- **dygn** – a 24-hour period
- **dygnet runt** – around the clock
- **dygnskort** – a daily transport pass, valid for 24 hours
- **ej** – not
- **enkelrum** – single room
- **exkl** – excluded
- **expedition** – office
- **fabrik** – factory
- **fest** – party, festival
- **fi** – verb meaning to meet friends for coffee and cake
- **fjäll** – mountain
- **fjällstation** – mountain lodge
- **fjällstugor** – mountain huts
- **fjärd** – fjord, drowned glacial valley
- **flod** – large river
- **flyg** – aeroplane
- **flygbuss** – airport bus
- **flygplat** – airport
- **folkdräkt** – folk dress
- **folkhemmet** – welfare state
- **fr o m** – from and including (on timetables)
- **friluft** – open-air
- **frukost** – breakfast
- **fyr** – lighthouse
- **fågel** – bird
- **färja** – ferry
- **fästning** – fort, fortress
- **gamla staden, gamla stan** – the ‘old town’, the historical part of a city or town
- **gammal, gamla** – old
- **gatan** – street (often abbreviated to just g)
- **galleri, galleria** – shopping mall
- **gamla staden, gamla stan** – the ‘old town’, the historical part of a city or town
- **gammal, gamla** – old
- **gatan** – street (often abbreviated to just g)
**gatukök** – literally ‘street kitchen’; street kiosk/stall/grill selling fast food
**glaciar** – glacier
**grotta** – grotto, cave
**grundskolan** – comprehensive school
**gruva** – mine
**gränsen** – border
**gymnasieskolan** – upper secondary school
**gård** – farm, estate
gästgiveri – guesthouse
**gästhamn** – ‘guest harbour’, where visiting yachts can berth; cooking and washing facilities are usually available
**gästhem, gästhus** – guesthouse

**hamn** – harbour
**hav** – sea
**hembygdsgård** – open-air museum, usually old farmhouse buildings
**hemsjöd** – handicraft
**hiss** – lift, elevator
**hittegods** – lost property
**hotell** – hotel
**hund** – dog
**hus** – house, sometimes meaning castle
**husmanskost** – homely Swedish fare, what you would expect cooked at home when you were a (Swedish) child
**hytt** – cabin on a boat
**hällristningar** – rock carvings
**kök** – kitchen

**kontor** – office
**kort** – card
**kreditkort** – credit card
**krog** – pub, restaurant (or both)
**krona (sg), kronor (pl)** – the Swedish currency unit
**kulle (sg), kullar (pl)** – hill
**kung** – king
**kust** – coast
**kväll** – evening
**kyrka** – church
**kyrkogård** – cemetery

**lågdom** – sufficient, just right
**landskap** – region, province, landscape
**lavin** – avalanche
**lilla** – lesser, little
**linbana** – chairlift
**lö** – lynx
**loppis** – secondhand goods (usually junk)
**län** – county
**Länstrafiken** – public transport network of a län

**magasin** – store (usually a department store), warehouse
**mat** – food
**medlem** – member
**Midsommar** – Midsummer’s day; first Saturday after 21 June (the real celebrations take place on Midsummer Eve)
**miljö** – environment, atmosphere
**MOMS** – Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (National Parks Authority)
**MÖM** – value added tax (sales tax)
**morgon** – morning (but morgon means tomorrow)
**museet, museum** – museum
**mynt** – coins
**mynt tvätt** – coin-operated laundry (rare in Sweden)
**målning** – painting, artwork

**natt** – night
**nattklubb** – nightclub
**naturcamping** – camping site with a pleasant environment
**naturistcamping** – nudist colony
**naturspark** – nature reserve

**Naturum** – national park or nature reserve visitor centre
**Naturvårdsverket** – Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (National Parks Authority)
**nedre** – lower
**nor** – north
**norrkvarn** – aurora borealis (northern lights)
**ny** – new
**nyheter** – news

**obs!** – take note, important
**och** – and
**ordning och reda** – orderliness

**palats** – palace
**pendeltåg** – local train
**pensionat** – pension, guesthouse
**P-hus** – multistorey car park
**polarcirkeln** – Arctic Circle, latitude 66°32’N
**polis** – police
**pris, prislista** – price, pricelist
**på** – on, in
**påsk** – Easter

**raukar** – limestone formations
**reisebyrå** – travel agent
**restaurang** – restaurant
**riksdag** – parliament
**rum** – room
**RFSL** – Riksförbundet för Sexuellt Likaberättigande (national gay organisation)
**rådhus** – town hall
**röka** – insect repellent

**sas** – Scandinavian Airlines Systems
**simhall** – swimming pool
**skog** – forest
**skådespel** – performance
**skådepalatset** – parliament

**söder** – south
**södra** – south

**snavntvätt** – quick wash (at laundrette)
**snö** – snow
**sommar** – summer
**souvenir** – gift
**spack** – salespersons’ cart
**spårvagn** – tram
**stark** – strong
**statsekonom** – prime minister
**STF** – Svenska Turistföreningen (Swedish Touring Association)
**stor, stora** – big or large
**storgården** – main square
**strand** – beach
**stuga (sg), stugor (pl)** – hut, cabin
**stugby** – chalet park; a little village of chalets
**städning** – room cleaning
**sund** – sound
**svensk** – Swedish
**Sveriges** – Sweden
**SYF** – Sveriges Vandrahem i Förening

**systembolaget** – state-owned liquor store
**sång** – song
**söder** – south

**t.o.m.** – until and including
**tandläkare** – dentist
**teater** – theatre
**telefonen** – telephone card
**tid** – time
**tidtabell** – timetable
**toalett** – toilet
**torg, torget** – town square
**torn** – tower
**trapphus** – stairs
**trädgård** – garden open to the public
**tull** – customs
**tunnelbanan, T-bana** – underground railway, metro
**turistbyrå** – tourist office
**tåg** – train
**tågplats** – combined train and bus ticket
**tält** – tent
**uteservering** – outdoor eating area
**uthyrningsfirma** – hire company

**vandrarhem** – hostel
**vattenfall** – waterfall
**vecka** – week
**vik** – bay, inlet
**vinter** – winter

**vårdcentral** – hospital
**väg** – road
**vårdhus** – inn
**västra** – western
**växel** – switchboard, money exchange

**världshus** – inn
**yoik** – ‘Song of the Plains’ (also referred to as joik)
**å** – stream, creek, river
**år** – year
**älg** – elk
**älvdelta** – river
**ön** – island
**öl** – beer
**öppettider** – opening hours
**öst** – east (abbreviated to ö)
**öst** – east
**över** – upper
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NOTE
The Swedish letters å, ä and ö fall at the end of the alphabet.

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