

SWEDEN

Travelers can enjoy a wide variety of experiences in Sweden: From hiking the King's Trail (Kungsleden), a 300-mile snaking trail through the Swedish mountains to skiing up mountains (ski mountaineering). Up north, locals can take you ice-fishing, dog-sledding or experience the old traditions of the indigenous Sami people. In summer, the nearly constant daylight opens up a whole other world of adventures and experiences.

In the cities, you can experience both living history and modernity. The capital city of Stockholm is a marvelous blend of old and new, historical yet young and vibrant; a trendsetter in the world of gastronomy and fashion. Spend the day exploring Gamla Stan and its enchantingly narrow and winding cobblestone streets, or choose from more than 80 museums and the many cool cafes spread around town plying hearty treats and coffee.

Along the Bohuslän coast, you will find Gothenburg, its lively fish market and dazzling natural seaside scenery. On the island of Gotland, step into the world of the Vikings and travel back in time as you explore the historic streets of the Hanseatic town of Visby. And in the province of Dalarna in central Sweden, characterized by its red cottages and rolling hills, experience all of Sweden's cherished traditions.

Sweden has long been regarded a bastion of liberalism and tolerance. Its people are wonderful and warm, its cities culturally rich, its nature abounds. During the winter, the northern lights dance in the sky amidst almost perpetual darkness. In the summer Sweden transforms into a land of sprawling orchid fields, roaming wild moose and the midnight sun.

Did You Know?

- ❖ Though probably not a known fact, Sweden has produced some of the world's greatest pop bands and singers, including Abba, The Cardigans, Roxette, Ace of Base, Carola Häggkvist, Army of Lovers, Robyn, A*Teens, Europe and Alcazar.
- ❖ Sweden has one of the longest and most generous maternity and paternity leaves in the world. Both the mother and the father share a total of 480 days off at 77.6% of their annual salary.
- ❖ The most well-known Swedish companies are IKEA and Volvo. But there are many others that you might not know about: appliance manufacturer Electrolux, telecommunications company Ericsson, music streaming platform Spotify and phone/video call service Skype are all important international names.
- ❖ In Easter, children dress up as witches and go trick-or-treating in honor of the witches traveling to Blåkulla on Maundy Thursday.
- ❖ Sweden has one of the best recycling programs in the world, so much so that it has run out of garbage to recycle. In order to maintain the country's energy programs, they have started importing garbage from Norway, which is then recycled and turned into fuel.