Quick view

Stockholm: City of islands

One of Europe’s loveliest cities – and one of its oldest – Stockholm is spread across 14 islands, each with their own character. The southern island of Södermalm is home to a bohemian world of quirky boutiques and markets, while historic Gamla Stan is famous for its asperous architecture and a daring rooftop tour.

Elsewhere, peaceful Djurgården is crammed with witty museums and bloom-filled parks, while Norrmalm is a mecca for shoppers in search of a luxe style fix. Whether you’re after a culture fix, a slap-up supper or some stylish new additions to your wardrobe, Stockholm is guaranteed to delight.

Sweden

General Information

Country overview

Sweden is a land of incredible contrast. Home to a vast array of landscapes – from the dense pine forests and craggy mountains of the north, to the rolling hills and glossy golden beaches of the south. The seven major cities, which include Malmö, Gothenburg and the capital, Stockholm – each have their own distinct character, compelling histories and wildly varying architectural styles. Despite these differences, urban Sweden tends to be stylish, modern and sophisticated, while the countryside offers simpler pleasures for those in search of peace and tranquillity.

Geography

Sweden shares land borders with Norway to the west and Finland to the northeast. Along with Denmark, Sweden has maritime borders with Germany, Poland, Russia, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

The largest lake is Vänern and the highest peak is Kebnekaise, which stands 2,104m (6,903ft) above sea level and is part of the Scandinavian mountain chain on the Norwegian border.

General knowledge

Key facts

Population: 10.2 million (2018)

Capital: Stockholm

Language

The main language is Swedish.

Currency

Swedish Krona (SEK; symbol kr) = 100 öre. Notes are in denominations of kr1,000, 500, 100, 50 and 20. Coins are in denominations of kr10, 5, 2 and 1, and 50 öre.

Electricity

230 volts AC, 50Hz. Round two-pin Continental plugs are used.

Public holidays

Listed below are the public holidays for the period January 2020 to December 2021.
Travel etiquette

How to fit in

Social conventions

Swedes tend to address each other on a first-name basis, except when conducting business in a government setting. Lateness is considered extremely rude. You should never take a drink before your host raises his or her glass and makes a toast. "Cheers" is "Skål," and people generally only toast once before drinking. After a meal, you can thank the cook in Swedish by saying "tack för maten."

Generally, in places where you are expected to wait in line, you will need to take a number. Always join the end of the line and never try to cut to the front.

Casual clothing is appropriate almost everywhere; more elegant clothing is only expected at fancy restaurants, clubs or for special occasions.

Smoking is prohibited in all public spaces, public buildings, on public transportation and in all restaurants and bars in Sweden.

Service charges are already included in hotel and restaurant bills, but you should generally round up the total anyway. Service charges are higher at night. Taxi drivers are always pleased when passengers round up the fare.

Health

Main emergency number: 112

Food & Drink

Food in Sweden is safe to eat although care should be taken when purchasing food from roadside stalls. In most cases, Swedish food tends to be safer than that
produced in other countries, thanks to the Swedish National Food Administration's tough rules on pesticides and additives. Sweden also enforces tough rules on misleading food marketing claims, which means – provided you can translate the Swedish text – that you shouldn’t get any nasty surprises when picking up food in supermarkets. Tap water is also safe, although drinking from streams, lakes and rivers – however clean they look – isn’t recommended as even the most inviting-looking water can harbour parasites. Water that has been boiled or treated with iodine or chlorine tablets is usually safe to drink.

Other Risks

The World Health Organisation recommends vaccination for tick-borne encephalitis regardless of the destination. If you intend to participate in winter sports, make sure your travel insurance policy covers it as many will refuse to pay out should you take ‘unnecessary risks’ – under which heading come many of the country’s most popular winter sports; skiing and snowboarding included. While Sweden’s mild summers pose little risk for outdoor adventure enthusiasts, its arctic winters are a different story. With temperatures regularly dipping below zero (to as low as minus 30ºC in northern regions), care needs to be taken when participating in outdoor sports during the colder months. Extra layers, including thick woollen hats and gloves, are essential and it’s also worth carrying a small supply of food and fluids should you get into trouble.

Phone calls & Internet

Telephone & Internet

Telephone

Country code: +46

Mobile telephony and Internet

Since June 2017, EU citizens traveling within the EU, and also in Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein have been able to use their cell phones and surf the Net without incurring any extra charges: In other words, customers pay the same price for phone calls, text messages and data volume as they do at home. Restrictions do apply to the constant use of SIM cards abroad, however, and caps may be set on data packages. For full details, contact your mobile telephony provider in your country. Travelers using a SIM card from a non-EU state do not benefit from the new arrangement.

Free Internet access via Wi-Fi is possible in many busy tourist spots. When using public Wi-Fi networks, it is a wise precaution to ensure encryption of all passwords, credit card details and banking TANs entered. Use of a VPN app or security software to check the safety of a hotspot is recommended.

Getting around Stockholm

Getting around

Public transport

The Tunnelbanan, or T-bana, metro system is the quickest way to get from A to B, although the bus service is also easy to use and a good way to explore Stockholm if you have time to spare. Trams are fewer, although the number seven, the Djurgårdslinjen, wends its way past many of the main sights. If you’re planning to rely on public transport, pick up a Stockholmskortet which lasts for one, two, three or five days and gives you unlimited travel on all routes as well as unlimited use of the city’s public bike scheme.

Taxis

Stockholm taxis are notoriously expensive but safe and easy to find. Hail one on the street or order from Taxi Stockholm (tel: (08) 150 000) or TaxiKurir (tel: (08) 300 000). Taxis have higher rates for evenings and weekends. Tips are usually
Top 10 sights
Top 10 sights in Stockholm

Kungliga Slottet
Sweden’s royal seat, built on the ruins of Tre Kronor, a royal castle that burned down in 1697, is open to visitors year-round. Highlights include the Karl XI Gallery and the glittering Royal Treasury.

Opening times:
Tue-Sun 1000–1600 (14. september–13. may)
daily 1000–1700 (14. september–13. may)
daily 830–1700 (1. july–31. august)
daily 1000–1700 (1. september–14. september)

www.kungahuset.se/

Vasamuseet
One of Sweden’s most visited attractions, the Vasamuseet is home to the wrecked warship Vasa, a 69m-long (226ft) beast that sank in the Saltsjön Bay on its maiden voyage in 1628.

Opening times:
daily except Wed 1000-1700
Wed 1000-2000 (1. september-30. may)
daily 830-1800 (1. june-31. august)

www.vasamuseet.se

Storkyrkan
A picturesque medieval cathedral in the heart of the Old Town, Storkyrkan was built in 1279 and was the setting for the 2010 wedding of Crown Princess Victoria and her former personal trainer, Daniel Westling.

Opening times:
Daily 0900-1600

www.stockholmsdomkyrkoforsamling.se

ABBA: The Museum
Dedicated to Sweden’s most famous pop export, ABBA, the museum is crammed with outré memorabilia and has its own dancefloor just in case the urge to strut your stuff to Dancing Queen becomes too much.

Opening times:
Mon & Tue, Sat & Sun 1000-1800
Wed-Fri 1000-2000
(extended opening times in summer see website)

www.abbathemuseum.com
Östermalms Saluhall

The Östermalms Saluhall is worth visiting for its gorgeous 18th-century carapace alone but once inside, Stockholm’s prettiest food market offers everything from live langoustines to traditional cinnamon buns.

Östermalstorg 114 39 Stockholm Sweden
Opening times:
Mon-Thurs 0930-1800
Fri 0930-1900
Sat 0930-1600
www.ostermalmshallen.se

Ericsson Globe

Taking in most of Stockholm, the views from the top of the Ericsson Globe, the world’s largest spherical building, are hard to beat. Access is via one of the two SkyView gondolas which travel up the exterior to the 130m (427ft) apex.

Globentorget 2 121 77 Stockholm Sweden
Tel: (07) 7181 1000
Opening times:
Mon-Fri 0930-1800
Sat-Sun 0930-1600
www.globearenas.se

Millesgården

The former home of sculptor Carl Milles (1875-1955), Millesgården, on the island of Lidingö, is a flora-filled series of open terraces dotted with examples of his work.

Herserudsvägen 32 181 34 Lidingö Sweden
Tel: (08) 446 7590
Opening times:
Daily 1100-1700 (May-Sep)
Tues-Sun 1100-1700 (Oct-Apr)
closed January
www.millesgarden.se

Rosendals Trädgård

There’s no shortage of pretty parks in Stockholm but with its groves of gnarled apple trees and tumbling rows of blooms, Rosendals Trädgård (‘Valley of Roses’ in Swedish) is one of the loveliest.

Rosendalsterrassen 12 115 21 Stockholm Sweden
Tel: (08) 5458 1270
Opening times:
Tues-Sun 1100-1600 (Feb-March, Oct-Dec)
Tues-Sun 1100-1700 (Apr)
daily 1100-1700 (May-Sep)
closed January
www.rosendalstradgard.se

Stadshuset

Begun in 1911, the Stadshuset, Sweden’s favourite building according to a recent poll, is the world of art nouveau architect Ragnar Östberg. Highlights include the commanding tower and the Blue Hall (which is actually red) where the Nobel Prize winner’s banquet is hosted.

Hantverkargatan 1 111 52 Stockholm Sweden
Opening times:
Daily 1000-1200 (Oct-May)
0900-1700 (Jun-Aug)
**Junibacken**

Perhaps the most enchanting of Djurgården’s many museums, Junibacken is dedicated to all things fairytale, in particular Astrid Lindgren, the creator of Sweden’s favourite fictional character Pippi Longstocking.

Galärvarvsvägen 8  
115 21 Stockholm  
Sweden  
Tel: (08) 5872 3000

Opening times:
Tues-Sun 1000-1700 (Sep-Apr)  
daily 1000-1700 (May-Jun and mid-late Aug)  
daily 1000-1800 (Jul-mid-Aug)

www.junibacken.se

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**Shopping in Stockholm**

**Key areas**

Stockholm is a style fan’s dream, with everything from Scandi chic knick-knacks to pieces by hip local labels such as Acne, Dagmar and Whyred. Most are to be found in and around Östermalm, the city district famous for its luxury boutiques clustered along Birger Jarlsgatan. Elsewhere, bohemian Södermalm is the place to go for stylish clothes and accessories at pocket-friendly prices.

**Markets**

The baroque Östermalms Saluhall food market is the main event but also worth visiting are Glass Hus, Birkagatan 8, which offers more than 50 different types of ice cream and sorbet, and the quaint Marsipanbåt, moored along Nybrokajen in December.

**Shopping centres**

Stockholm doesn’t really do brash mega-malls, instead focusing on smaller gallerias such as Sturegallerian, Stureplan, which opened in 1885 and boasts a carefully curated selection of boutiques and a spa. Other highlights include Ordning&Reda, which specialises in homeware and accessories, the youth-oriented Bruno Götgatsbacken, Götgatan 36, and Hamngatan’s 80-store Gallerian.

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**Restaurants**

**Restaurants in Stockholm**

Thanks to the efforts of René Redzepi in neighbouring Copenhagen, Scandinavian food is enjoying something of a renaissance and Stockholm does it just as well as its Danish competition. As you’d expect from a harbour city, seafood features heavily on local menus as do traditional treats such as cinnamon buns.

**Lux Dag för Dag**

Expect a gourmet take on local fare using produce sourced from the surrounding

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Tel: (08) 5082 9058  
1000-1400 (Sep)

Opening times Stadshusshopen (Shop):  
Daily 0830-1630 (Oct-May)  
0830-1730 (Jun-Aug)

www.stockholm.se
Gondolen
Perched above the harbour in Södermalm, Gondolen does food with a spectacular view.

Stadsgården 6
104 65 Stockholm
Sweden
Price: Expensive

Nytorget Urban Deli
A slick modern effort that serves up Scandinavian classics made from ingredients sold on site.

Nytorget 4
116 40 Stockholm
Sweden
Price: Moderate

Pelikan
Popular with Stockholm's style set, Pelikan serves up Swedish classics washed down with local beer.

Blekingegatan 40
116 62 Stockholm
Sweden
Price: Cheap

Cultur Bar and Restaurant
Hidden away in the heart of Gamla Stan, the Cultur Bar and Restaurant specialises in wine and tapas.

Österlånggatan 34
111 31 Stockholm
Sweden
Price: Cheap

Nightlife
Nightlife in Stockholm
Seriously stylish clubs, quaint jazz joints and cheerful beer halls – there’s no shortage of choice once the sun goes down in Stockholm. Although the Swedish penchant for death metal is still very much in evidence, everything from classical chamber music to hip hop is on offer.

Icebar Stockholm
Cool in more ways than one, the Icebar Stockholm is the place to go for chic cocktails in sub-zero temperatures.

Vasaplan 4
101 37 Stockholm
Sweden
**Fasching**

A cult spot for music lovers since the 1970s, Fasching offers some of the best live jazz performances in the city.

Kungsgatan 63
111 22 Stockholm
Sweden

**Och Himlen Därtill**

Occupying the top floor of a Södermalm skyscraper, the stylish bar boasts 360-degree views.

Götgatan 78
118 30 Stockholm
Sweden

**Pet Sounds Bar**

Young bands perform and DJs play danceable music in the basement of this small indie club on Södermalm. In the bar on the ground floor, there’s a small snack menu and a much larger one for beverages and cocktails. The atmosphere is laid back, the crowd mixed. If you’re into owning rock and jazz, electro and pop on old-fashioned vinyl, the bar’s partner store, Pet Sounds Records, is just down the street at number 53.

Skånegatan 80
116 37 Stockholm
Sweden

**Riddarhuset**

Completed in 1674, the beautiful Riddarhuset is home to the Stockholm Sinfonietta orchestra.

Riddarhustorget 10
103 11 Stockholm
Sweden

**Calendar of events**

**Walpurgis night**

Heralding the arrival of spring, Walpurgis Night (otherwise known as Valborg) is an often frenzied celebration involving copious bonfires, alcohol and singing. The party takes place all over the country – there are especially lively festivities in the nearby student city of Uppsala.

April 30, 2020
Venue: Various venues, including Skansen

**Swedish National Day**

The world’s oldest open-air museum, on an island near the centre of Stockholm, consists of historic buildings set in parkland, with a zoo for further amusement. Each year on 6 June, it welcomes Swedish Royal Family arrive to celebrate National Day, a patriotic occasion celebrated mainly by nationals, but also offering much in the way of pageantry for the tourist to enjoy. Expect flag waving, speeches
and music throughout Stockholm, before the royals proceed to Skansen, where further events are held. The release of 50,000 yellow and dark blue balloons takes place at Skeppsbron outside the Royal Palace.

June 6, 2020  
Venue: Skansen Open-air Museum

**Midsummer celebrations**

Midsummer is one of the highlights of the year in Skansen. Celebrations last for a few days. Visitors help in making garlands of flowers for the maypole which they raise together with Skansen Folk Dance Team.

June 24, 2020  
Venue: Skansen

**Stockholm Pride**

The Stockholm Pride is the largest gay and lesbian event in Scandinavia and each year attracts thousands of revellers of all persuasions for the week-long celebrations, which take place on the largest (and trendiest) of Stockholm’s islands, Södermalm. The entire island turns itself over to the event, with many of the streets and shops bedecked with rainbow flags and decorations. Many of the events take place at the Pride Park where there is a stage, stalls, food and drink vendors and other entertainment. Numerous other events, ranging from political debates to film screenings, take place at various venues outside of the park.

July 27 - August 2, 2020  
Venue: Various venues and locations in Stockholm

**Hotels**

**Hotel recommendations**

From Scandinavian minimalism to plush and palatial, there’s no shortage of stylish sleeping spots in Stockholm. Most cater to business travellers so prices drop by as much as 50% in the summer and many also offer generous weekend deals.

**Scandic Grand Central**

Built in 1885, the imposing Scandic Grand Central, in the heart of Norrmalm, is effortlessly cool.

Kungsgatan 70  
111 22 Stockholm  
Sweden  
Price: Expensive

**Birger Jarl**

Named for Stockholm’s founding father, the Birger Jarl is a seriously stylish place to escape the crowds.

Tulegatan 8  
104 32 Stockholm  
Sweden  
Price: Expensive

**Stallmästaregården**

The oldest guesthouse in Stockholm, Stallmästaregården boasts pretty rooms and a prettier setting next to the Royal Pavilion in Haga.
Mornington Bromma

A stylish budget option with cheerful modernist décor and a sunny breakfast terrace.

Norrbyvägen 30
168 69 Stockholm
Sweden

Price: Cheap

Crew Tip
My Stockholm

"Whenever I'm in Stockholm, I just have to have some kanelbullar, cinnamon rolls. The Swedes love their kanelbullar, kladdkaka (chocolate cake) and princesstårta (princess cake – cream sponge layer cake encased in green marzipan) with their coffee. I particularly enjoy the ones they serve at the Skansen open-air museum restaurant, where you also have a fantastic view of the city."

Best of ...
Nordic Cuisine

The Swedish metropolis is clearly also the country's culinary capital thanks to its colorful array of star-studded restaurants, major proponents of the new Nordic cuisine, and cozy bistros.

Den Gyldene Freden

© Deutsche Lufthansa AG
Stockholm’s oldest restaurant was established in 1722 in honor of the Peace of Nystad. Diners here can enjoy both Swedish gourmet cuisine and excellent traditional home-style fare.

Tranan

This restaurant, located in Vasastaden district north of the old town, is famous chiefly for its rårakor, a kind of potato pancake.

Solliden

The oldest open-air museum in the world offers a fantastic view of Stockholm. In the summer, a classic Swedish smörgåsbord buffet is served every day between 12 noon and 4pm in the time-honored dining room there.

Esperanto

Hailed as one of Sweden’s best restaurants by the respected White Guide magazine, Esperanto describes its concept as “romantic, surrealistic, with a touch of nature.”

Mathias Dahlgren

Mathias Dahlgren, one of Sweden’s best-known chefs, presents his country’s products in a whole new light – and vis-à-vis the Royal Palace.

Pontus!

Unconventional restaurant setup (bistro-cum-delicatessen) with international and Swedish fare served on various levels.
Frantzén

The absolute trend restaurant in the Gamla Stan (old town) district lines up a spectacular array of food brimming with surprises for its evening guests.

Lilla Nygatan 21 111 28 Stockholm Sweden
Tel. +46-8/20 85 80 www.restaurantfrantz.com/

24 hours in ...
Stockholm

09:00 a.m. – From ship to palace

We spent the night on board the yacht hotel Mälardronningen on the island of Riddarholmen – you couldn’t hope to find a more maritime place to stay. Once the property of Woolworth heiress Barbara Hutton, the yacht now lies securely tied up at the quayside. A number of its 61 cabins offer views of Lake Mälar.

From the quayside, it’s just a short walk to the neighboring island of Stadsholmen. In the narrow streets of Stockholm’s old town center, Gamla Stan, the medieval architecture dating from the days of the Hansa League is still very much in evidence: fine houses with steep gables and richly decorated portals once inhabited by the burghers and merchants of the city. Behind their walls, cellar vaults and chalk paintings dating from the Middle Ages still survive today. If you’re looking for arts and crafts, curiosities and souvenirs, you are sure to find something you like here in Gamla stan. Pleasure steamers, and theater and cruise ships are tied up down on the waterfront and towering majestically above the scene, there’s the Royal Palace – with over 600 rooms, one of the largest palaces in the world. First built in 1697, almost entirely destroyed by fire and reconstructed in Italian Baroque style by 1754, the palace also accommodates the king’s offices.

Södra Riddarholmshammen
111 28 Stockholm
Sweden
Tel. +46-8/54518780

10:00 a.m. – Breakfast at the Grand Hôtel
From the old town island of Stadsholmen, we take the few steps across Strömbron bridge to Blasieholmen peninsula and the Grand Hôtel, which traditionally provides the accommodation for each year's Nobel prizewinners. The hotel opened in 1874 and offers a superb view over Gamla stan and the Royal Palace. But even without a Nobel prize, all comers are very welcome to enjoy the excellent service of the hotel's five cafés, restaurants and bars. At Matsalen restaurant, for example, head chef Mathias Dahlgren, (who holds two Michelin stars) astounds diners with "exclusive simplicity."

Södra Blasieholmshamnen 8
111 48 Stockholm
Sweden
Tel. +46-8/679 3500

11:00 a.m. – Museums ahoy!

On the neighboring island of Skeppsholmen, the Museum of Modern Art (Moderna Museet) shows contemporary works and Swedish design. The Museum of Modern Art has one of the best collections of post-1900 exhibits, including works by Marcel Duchamp, Louise Bourgeois, Pablo Picasso, Niki de Saint Phalle, Salvador Dali, Carolee Schneemann, Henri Matisse and Robert Rauschenberg. The neighboring Museum of World Culture (Världskultur Museerna/Ostasiatiska Museet) contains one of the most extensive collections in Europe of cultural artifacts from China, Japan, India and other parts of Asia.

A brief detour across Kastellholmsbron bridge to Kastellholmen brings us to the tiny citadel of Kastellet, to which the green islet owes its name.

Exercisplan 4
111 49 Stockholm
Sweden
Tel. +46-8/52 02 35 00

02:00 p.m. – Still more museums!

After crossing back to Skeppsholmen, we continue on to Djurgården, once the site of the Royal Zoological Gardens. Most of this peninsula is taken up by woodland – and museums. The Vasa Museum is dedicated to the Vasa, the only 17th century ship in the world to have survived. With more than 95 percent of its original parts still preserved and decorated with hundreds of carvings, it is a unique art treasure. The Nordic Museum contains extensive collections of artifacts related to Sweden's cultural history and its various ethnic groups.

The Neoclassical building housing Liljevalchs art gallery is considered one of the most beautiful museums in northern Europe. The Spring Salon features an exhibition of 20th century Swedish and international artworks. After taking in so much art, we reward ourselves with some of the delicious treats to be had next door at the Blå Porten café and restaurant (blaporten.com).

Djurgårdsvägen 6-16
115 93 Stockholm
Sweden
Tel. +46-8/51 95 46 00

08:00 p.m. – Drink with a view

Before ending our tour of Stockholm, we pay a visit to Kaknästornet television tower in the Ladugårdsfjärden district of the city. At 155 meters, it is the tallest building open to tourists in Sweden and offers the best view over nighttime
Stockholm and its unique, glittering island realm. The observation platform and a restaurant and café/sky bar are located on level 30 of the square (!) television tower.

Mörka Kroken 28 – 30
115 27 Stockholm
Sweden
Tel. +46 8/667 21 80

10:00 p.m. – A dance to end the day

We want to end our evening dancing, which brings us to the Trädgården under the Skanstullbron road bridge on Södermalm. The Trädgården is one of the city’s best open-air clubs and boasts a festival atmosphere throughout the summer. People dance the long nights away here until 5 am, retreating to the building under the bridge only on colder days. After tripping the light fantastic on the dance floor, we take a taxi a couple of hours later, which takes us back to our floating hotel, Mälardrottningen.

Skanstull
Hammarby Slussväg
211 80 Stockholm
Sweden

The great journey
Island hopping in Stockholm

Stockholm is not really a city so much as a collection of inhabited islands connected by more than 50 bridges – and each of those islands has a charm of its own.

For a breath of California, try Hornsbergs strand beach on Kungsholmen. There’s neither sand nor beach volleyball to be had here, but it’s a public space, it’s free
and it’s at the heart of the city. Where else can you take a refreshing dip amid tall buildings?

The locals stop by on their lunch break. At Lily's Burger, which belongs to Hollywood star Joel Kinnaman (“House of Cards”), you can enjoy tasty fries and one of the many burger variations on the menu while relaxing with your toes dangling in the water from a floating pontoon.

Narrow buildings stand cheek by jowl in Stockholm’s old town quarter – as though they’d had to squeeze into a small space. That’s why on the ground you often find yourself in the shadows. If you like to set your sights a little higher and enjoy an open view, you have the chance to balance over the roofs of the city here – properly secured, of course, and with certified guides.

If below ground is more your style, the Hotel With Urban Deli is the place for you. What’s special here is that all the rooms are windowless and must surely be the quietest in town. If your palate craves something special, you’ll find just what the doctor ordered at the Pharmarium, a bar in a former pharmacy that serves cocktails with whacky ingredients like smoke and home-brewed root essences.

The Vasa Museum on the island of Djurgården is home to the only almost fully intact 17th century ship in the world: the Vasa. She sank on her maiden voyage in 1628 and was salvaged only 333 years later. The Prince van Orangijen, on the other hand, an elegant cutter with an interior of ebony and oak, is anchored offshore.Magnu Ek and Agnete Green of the Oaxen restaurant restored it and transformed it into a luxury hotel. Inside, you feel like an explorer, all set for a great voyage of discovery. If being a ship’s captain is what you always dreamed of, you can also walk across the bridge to Östermalm and hop aboard one of the small rental GoBoats there to take a turn around Djurgården.

Getting there: The best way to get to Djurgården is by ferry from Slussen or Skeppsholmen, number 7 tram from Sergels torg, number 44 bus from Karlaplan to Skansen, or number 67 bus to Vasamuseet

SoFo is what the locals call South of Folkungagatan, the former working-class area that has now advanced to the status of design hub, vintage mecca and hipster haunt. Brandstationen, a Herr Judit store, resides in an old fire station, stocks an amazing array of kitsch and art from the past 50 years, from capacious leather armchairs and minimalist lamps to delicate porcelain figurines. Every last Thursday in the month, the stores in SoFo stay open through 9pm and welcome shopaholics with special offers, events and small surprises.

At closing time, a good place to chill is at Trädgård på Spåret, a garden planted in an old track bed, where men with magnificent beards sit beside women in leggings and sweaters so large they may well have pilfered them from the men.
Alternatively, there’s the fantastic Fotografiska museum of photography, and for architecture fans, the pilgrimage to Hammarby Sjöstad, where since the 1990s, a sustainable “Greenhattan” has been emerging from the docklands and old industrial complexes.

Right on Stockholm’s doorstep, we find the skerry gardens, an archipelago of some 24,000 islands and islets. During the last ice age, glaciers created valleys, gorges and low hills in the rock, and they are surrounded by the sea today, peeping out from the waves as islands. Gällnö is one such island. It has a youth hostel that’s a kind of summer camp for adults. Jonas Backlund, Robin Eriksson and half a dozen of their friends work there from May through October, running the hostel and the shop that goes with it. Back in the 1980s, it was Eriksson’s grandmother who ran the show.

Sometimes the team’s band friends will come across from the mainland and give a spontaneous acoustic concert. The pair also host an attractive flea market here with some artist friends. Otherwise, Backlund and Eriksson have something very special to share here on Gallnö: the luxury of idleness.

Getting there: With the Waxholmsbolagets ferry from Strömkajen or the Cinderella ferry from the quay on Strandvägen, outside the Grand Hotel. Alternatively, sail out in your own boat – the island has two berths.

Sandhamn is a murderous place – if only in the world of Viveca Sten. This small island in the Stockholm archipelago is where bestselling Swedish author Viveca Sten sends detective Thomas Andreasson to investigate. Bodies are found buried in the woods, washed up on the beach or discovered in hotel rooms here. Sandhamn is one of the most outlying islands in the archipelago with only the open ocean beyond.

The first thing you notice when you arrive on the island is the stillness. There are no cars on Sandhamn; the island’s soundtrack is composed only of wind and waves. It’s the ideal place to combine free time and crime – by taking a walking tour of the scenes of Sten’s novels.

Island walking tour to the scenes of Viveca Sten’s crime novels. The tour takes two hours and starts at the ferry terminal at 10 am. Minimum number of participants 8, maximum 25, price on request.