

# Super Scandinavia

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ON THE WONDERS OF  
DENMARK AND SWEDEN



Colourful Copenhagen

When it comes to history, scenery, art and cuisine, Europe as a continent, is unbeatable. Be it the cobbled streets, spectacular architecture or the chilled out vibe, each country has its own unique charm and flavour. I have visited several European countries over the years and fallen in love with each of them but this time I trod a different path – the Scandinavian nations of Denmark and Sweden.

Compared to other European cities, Copenhagen (Denmark's capital) and Stockholm (the capital of Sweden), have a special feel to them. The Nordic air is fresh and pure, the locations are modern, the architecture crosses between old and contemporary while the people are artistic and stylish.

Here's a peek into the best things both these wonderful cities have for you...



Picture perfect Stockholm

## GETTING THERE...

Emirates has a direct flight of about six hours to Copenhagen in Denmark. I flew back to Dubai from Stockholm in Sweden.

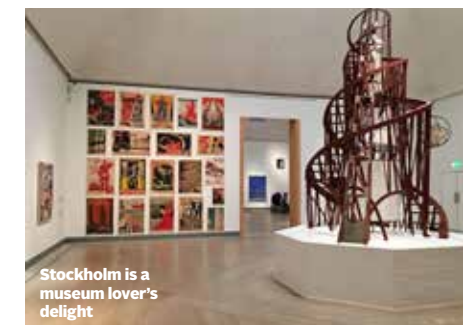
There are other airlines like Qatar Airways, SAS and Lufthansa that fly to Scandinavia but they are not direct.

## MUST-DO'S

- Free walking tours in both cities. Use Copenhagen Walking Tours, they give you lots of tips on where to go for food or how to spend your day in the city. [www.copenhagenfreewalkingtours.dk](http://www.copenhagenfreewalkingtours.dk)
- In Stockholm, use Free Tour Stockholm. Try taking the City tour, Old Town tour and most definitely the Sodermalm one. [www.freetourstockholm.com](http://www.freetourstockholm.com)
- Hire a bicycle and ride! It is a liberating feeling and you feel one among the locals.
- Visit the alternative side of Copenhagen – Christiania – a free town, run by a council, selected by the 800 residents that live there.

## WHAT'S SUPER

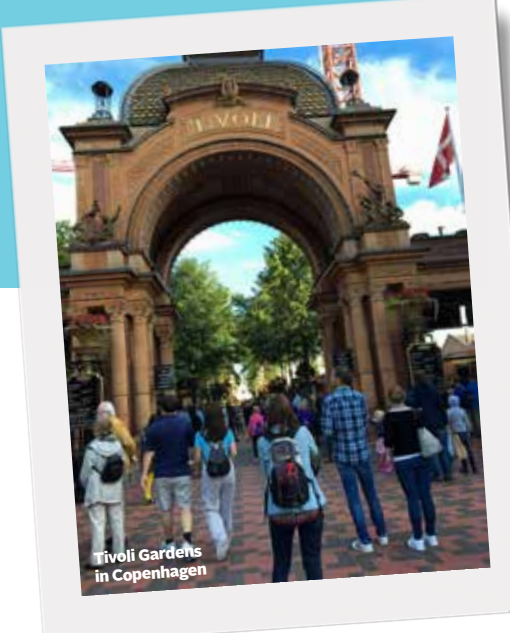
- Tivoli Garden in Copenhagen, right in the city centre, is the second oldest amusement park in the world. A visit takes you into a fairytale land. At dusk, it's spectacularly romantic when the fairy lights come on.
- The pottery, stationary and design shops in both cities are stunning. Streamlined and clean lines in particular rule Copenhagen's aesthetics. It's a design-obsessed city.
- The Palace grounds in Copenhagen are open to all and the change of guards can be seen from up close. But be warned! If a guard gets annoyed, then he taps the ground twice and the third time, he is allowed to shoot.
- It's hard not to fall in love with Stockholm's old town Gamla Stan with its narrow alleys that are history hubs with storybook building architecture.
- The museums in Stockholm are exquisite. Most are free to enter on certain days during summer.
- The ferry ride across a few Stockholm islands on a clear day is beautiful. Sweden's archipelago is stunning and vast; definitely worth checking out.



Stockholm is a museum lover's delight

## WHAT'S OVERRATED

- The little mermaid statue in Copenhagen. A long walk near the port will take you to the statue but you have to look carefully to find it. I missed it the first time, the second time I had to use Google maps. Seriously, don't waste your time trying to find the statue and DO NOT take a boat ride as it's not only expensive but you will only see a part of it.
- The story of Alfred Nobel is fascinating but the Nobel Museum is quite disappointing. It's small and dark, with pictures of Nobel laureates and some of the items used by them while working on their inventions. You finish the tour in 15 minutes.
- The Djurgarden area in Stockholm belongs to the royal family from the 15th century, but is open to public. It's green and that's about it. Get your green fix from other parks and gardens.



Tivoli Gardens in Copenhagen

It's colourful with Graffiti and has some good restaurants. Take one of the free walking tours or go on your own.

- Visit the Design museum and the Carlsberg museum in Copenhagen. The design museum is situated in an ancient hospital building and the inner court is stunning. An absolute treat for design lovers. Carlberg museum also has a brewery on site.
- Visit the Vasa museum, a maritime museum in Stockholm that displays a 17th century ship, Vasa, and the Moderna Museet, a museum in Stockholm. Its permanent exhibition include Picasso and Dali paintings.
- Visit Sodermalm in Stockholm – a hipster, artsy area. You can see a lot of kitch art galleries, quirky restaurants and hip people.

## WHAT TO EAT

- Smorrebrod (open sandwich) with a variety of toppings was the staple food of

Danish farmers and factory workers. It now has many variations including its name, which is now Smushi. Visit Royal Smushi café in Downtown Copenhagen.

- Have the Danish hotdogs available on the many carts throughout the city. Have the one that has a lot of toppings including pickles, onions, mustard etc.
- Swedes love their meatballs. You can get them everywhere and anywhere. Including IKEA.
- Sweden is also famous for its seafood.
- Stockholm has a variety of vegetarian and vegan restaurants. Try Hermans and Chutneys, both offer great options if you don't meat.

## WHAT'S QUIRKY

- The flights between Copenhagen and Stockholm can be cheaper than the train.
- The hostels in both the cities can be quite expensive, so do check the hotels as well; you might get a better deal. [T](#)