



# Central Jutland

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## Why Go?

Easily the largest and most varied of all Danish regions, central Jutland encompasses dramatically different features, from the calm beaches of the sheltered east coast to the wild and woolly west coast, battered by North Sea winds. Lying in between, offering visual stimulation among the flatness, are the rolling hills and beech forests of the Lake District.

The real beauty of this region is that you can skip between themes depending on your mood. Fancy some world-class art and top-notch restaurants? Aarhus, Jutland's main city and Denmark's second-largest metropolis, will provide. How about Viking history? Set sail for Hobro. Religious history? Off to Jelling. Want to explore the great outdoors? Head for Rold Skov or Silkeborg. Are you really up to tackling nature's forces? Let loose on the waters of Hvide Sande. And OK, you've suppressed that inner child long enough – make a beeline for plastic-fantastic Legoland, and beware the accompanying pangs of childhood nostalgia.

## Best Places to Eat

- » Kähler Spisesalon (p229)
- » Nordiske Spisehus (p229)
- » Klassisk 65 Bistro & Vinbar (p228)
- » Molskroen (p235)
- » Hotel Julsø (p243)

## Best Places to Stay

- » Niels Bugges Hotel (p255)
- » Hotel Guldsmeden (p227)
- » Hotel Legoland (p247)
- » Danhostel Silkeborg (p240)
- » Hotel Randers (p251)

## When to Go

Warm weather is the key to enjoying much of this region – the beaches, theme parks, music festivals, activities – but Aarhus holds year-round appeal. Its museums, cafes and stores will entertain you in all weather, but the city's bars are in fact quieter in summer, when Aarhus University has its break and students head for home or on holidays.

The star attraction in this region, Legoland, is open daily from May to August and most days in April, September and October. It's closed from November to March.

## AARHUS

POP 250,000

Sure, Aarhus (*oar-hus*) may be Denmark's second-largest city, but it feels more like a relaxed and friendly big town, a little bashful in the shadow of its more glamorous, attention-seeking big sister, Copenhagen.

Regular visitors will notice Aarhus' growing confidence. The stunning art museum, AROS, is a prime example of the city demanding to be noticed. Further evidence can be found in the redevelopment of the Å river through town (once buried under concrete but now flowing again in the public eye), and the boulevard of sleek restaurants that has sprung up alongside it (from the school of obvious names, that would be called Åboulevarden). Latest developments are happening dockside, with Nordhavnen, a new harbourfront suburb, being built, full of impressive architectural designs for offices and apartments. The city's sizable student population continues to enliven Aarhus' parks and cobblestone streets (and fill its impressive number of bars). Savvy travellers are coming to appreciate the city's charms.

The train station (Aarhus Hovedbanegård) marks the south side of the city centre. A pedestrian shopping street extends 850m from the station to Aarhus Domkirke (the cathedral) in the heart of the old city.

### History

Due to its central seaside location, Aarhus has always been a busy trading town. Its name comes from Aros, meaning 'place at the river's mouth'. Excavations from the mid-1960s suggest the city was founded around 900.

Medieval times were Aarhus' most turbulent, as the town was wedged in the middle of feuding neighbouring states. King Sweyn II of Denmark and King Magnus of Norway engaged in a major battle off Aarhus in 1043, and just a few years later, in 1050, Aarhus was ravaged by the Norwegian warrior king Harald Hardrada. Prosperity was kept in check over the following centuries by raids from rival Vikings and attacks by fearsome Wend pirates.

Stability then ensued until the 1500s and it was during this time that Aarhus flourished as a centre of trade, art and religion. Its natural asset, a large, protected harbour, drew attention from far and wide and in the process turned Aarhus into one of Jutland's most important transport and trading hubs.

The university has a tale of its own, as Aarhus established it against the wishes of the national government in 1928. By the time it was ready in 1933 the government had changed its tune and was in full support. Nowadays it's a cornerstone of the vibrant life of the city; there are around 40,000 students living in Aarhus, studying at the uni and various other higher education establishments.

### Sights

 **ARoS Aarhus Kunstmuseum**

ART MUSEUM

([www.aros.dk](http://www.aros.dk); Aros Allé 2; adult/child 100kr/free; ☀10am-5pm Tue-Sun, to 10pm Wed) The towering, cubist, red-brick walls of Aarhus' showpiece art museum look rather uninspiring from the outside, but inside it's nine floors of sweeping curves, soaring spaces and white walls. Intriguingly, the museum's main theme is Dante's *The Divine Comedy*; the entrance is on level 4, and from there you either descend into Hell or climb towards Heaven. Hell is **De 9 Rum** (The 9 Spaces), on the bottom floor, painted black and home to some moody installation pieces; Heaven is the spectacular **Your Rainbow Panorama**, a 360-degree rooftop walkway offering technicolour views of the city through its glass panes in various shades of the rainbow. The walkway, opened in May 2011, is the brainchild of Danish-Icelandic artist Olafur Eliasson, famed for big, conceptual pieces such as *The Weather Project* at London's Tate Modern in 2003, and the *New York City Waterfalls* in 2008.

### AARHUS VS ÅRHUS

On 1 January 2011, the city of Århus reverted to the old spelling of its name: Aarhus. The letter å was officially introduced to the Danish alphabet in 1948 and represents the sound 'aa'; pronounced as the 'a' in the English 'walk', but it is not commonly used in names of people or towns. It has been argued that the new spelling will help strengthen the city's international profile, help private enterprise and make it easier to access Aarhus on the internet. We follow the new spelling, but be aware that you may still encounter Århus on a number of signs, maps etc.