



Zealand

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Best Places to Stay

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Why Go?

Denmark's largest island offers much more than the dazzle of Copenhagen. North of the city lie some of the country's finest beaches, quaintest fishing villages and vainest castles. Here you'll find Helsingør's hulking Kronborg Slot and the striking new Maritime Museum of Denmark, not to mention Hillerød's sublimely romantic Frederiksborg Slot.

West of Copenhagen awaits history-steeped Roskilde, home to a World Heritage-listed cathedral, Scandinavia's top rock music festival and the superb Viking Ship Museum. History also comes to life at nearby Sagnlandet Lejre, an engrossing, hands-on archaeology site.

Further west stands the millennia-old Trelleborg ring fortress, while Zealand's southern assets include medieval Køge, the World Heritage-listed coastline of Stevn's Klint, and Vordingborg's cutting-edge museum, Danmarks Borgcenter.

Much of Zealand is easy to get around, and (bonus!) the Copenhagen Card allows free public transport and admission to many attractions.

When to Go

The best time to visit Zealand is between June and August. The weather is at its warmest, the countryside is a luxuriant green, and the region's gorgeous north coast is at its most enticing. Tourist offices and attractions are in full swing, and world-class cultural events such as the Roskilde Festival bring some of the world's top performers. The downside is that you won't be the only one soaking up the sun, sea and culture. Most Danes take their holiday in July, making coastal towns particularly crowded and accommodation scarce. Book ahead.

Outside of summer, May and September are your next best bets, with mild weather, fewer crowds, and most attractions open at full capacity. In winter the days are cold and short and the region's beach towns are mostly shut for the season. Many museums and tourist attractions run to reduced opening hours.

Zealand Highlights

- 1 Are you in Denmark or the south of France? Ponder the question on the wide golden beach at **Hornbæk** (p105)
- 2 Snoop around the immense bastion **Kronborg Slot** (p97), setting for Shakespeare's *Hamlet*
- 3 Explore nautical themes and spectacular architecture at Helsingør's showstopping **Maritime Museum of Denmark** (p99)
- 4 Continue the castle odyssey at lakeside **Frederiksborg Slot** (p101), one of Denmark's finest historic buildings
- 5 Let your child run free with an axe at the Iron Age settlement at **Lejre** (p113)
- 6 Party hard at northern Europe's largest rock music festival in **Roskilde** (p112)
- 7 Puzzle over the enigmatic remains of the Viking ring fortress at **Trelleborg** (p122)
- 8 Lose yourself in the narrow, medieval streets of **Køge** (p114), home to Denmark's oldest house
- 9 Delve into medieval conflict and strategy on one of Denmark's most important historical sites at **Danmarks Borgcenter** (p124) in Vordingborg

