



Scandinavia



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NUSEFJORD, LOFOTEN
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DOG-SLEDDING, KIRUNA
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Plan Your Trip

Itineraries



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WEEKS

Scandinavia in a Nutshell

This quick hop jaunts around southern Scandinavia's classic sights. With just a week, it's essentially one city in each of Denmark, Sweden and Norway; extra time allows more detailed exploration and side trips.

Start in **Copenhagen**, admiring the waterfront, museums and lights of Tivoli at

night. Day-trip to the cathedral and Viking Ship Museum at **Roskilde** or Hamlet's castle at **Helsingør**.

Next, train it to **Stockholm** and get into the design scene and the stately, watery town centre. An overnight train takes you to **Oslo**, to check out Munch's work and the city's extraordinary portfolio of museums. From Oslo, a long but very scenic day includes the rail trip to **Flåm** and a



Fjærlandsfjorden (p329), Norway

combination boat/bus journey along the Sognefjord to **Bergen**, Norway's prettiest city. Out of time? Fly out from Bergen.

Otherwise, head to **Kristiansand**, where there's a ferry to **Hirtshals**. Nose on down to **Aarhus** – don't miss the ARoS art museum. From here, it's an easy train to Copenhagen.

Extra days? A side trip from Stockholm on a Baltic ferry could take you to **Helsinki** or picturesque **Tallinn**. Other stops could include **Göteborg** or **Kalmar**; more fjord-y Norwegian experiences at **Fjærland** and **Geiranger**; or extra Danish time at **Odense**.



3
WEEKS

Finland & the Baltic

Starting in Stockholm, this itinerary follows the old trading routes around the Baltic and covers plenty of Finland, including the capital, Helsinki, and beautiful Lakeland, as well as taking in the sumptuous Baltic city of Tallinn.

Kick things off in **Stockholm**, for centuries a Baltic trading powerhouse. Admire its picturesque Old Town and ponder that famously neutral Sweden once ruled most of the Baltic from here. Take a day trip to ancient **Uppsala** before taking advantage of Stockholm's cheap, luxurious overnight ferries to Finland. Don't overdo it on the duty-free booze, because you'll want a good view of the spectacular arrival in **Helsinki**, where you should investigate the cathedrals, market halls, modern architecture and design scene. Catch a classical concert at Musiikkitalo or a rock gig at legendary Tavastia.

From here, a good excursion heads east to the town of **Porvoo**, with its picturesque wooden warehouses and cathedral. Back in Helsinki, it's an easy boat ride across the Baltic to medieval **Tallinn**, a historic treasure trove that's worth a couple of days' exploration. If time's short, take a day trip.

In summer, take the train to the shimmering lakes of **Savonlinna**, with its awesome medieval castle and opera festival, and/or **Kuopio**, to steam up in its large smoke sauna. If you have the time, historic lake boats travel between these and other inland Finnish towns, a fabulously leisurely way to travel on a sunny day. A side trip from either of these towns can take you to **Joensuu**, from where you can visit the Orthodox monastery of **Valamo** or what is deservedly claimed to be Finland's best view at **Koli**.

Turning west again, head to the dynamic cultural city of **Tampere**, visiting its quirky museums and re-imagined fabric mills, and patronising its interesting cafes and restaurants. Then it's on to the third member of the trinity of Finnish cities, intriguing **Turku**, with excellent museums of its own, a towering castle and cathedral, and some very quirky drinking dens. From here you can get a ferry back to Sweden via the **Åland islands**. Stop off here for as long as you wish and tour the archipelago by bike.



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JAMES MARCOLI/GETTY IMAGES ©

Top: Stockholm (p386), Sweden
Bottom: Strawberries in a Helsinki market, Finland



Beyond the Arctic Circle

This visit to the north takes in Santa, Sámi culture, spectacular coastal scenery viewed from the sea and opportunities for excellent activities. It'll be a completely different experience in summer or in winter.

Take the overnight train from **Helsinki** to **Rovaniemi**. Visit the fabulous Arktikum, chat with Santa Claus and stock up on anything you might need for your wilderness adventure; it will be a while before you see another town this big. Head north, crossing the Arctic Circle to **Saariselkä**, a base for great activities, whether summer hiking in the adjacent Urho Kekkonen National Park or husky-sledding trips in winter. There's a huge range of other things on offer year-round, too.

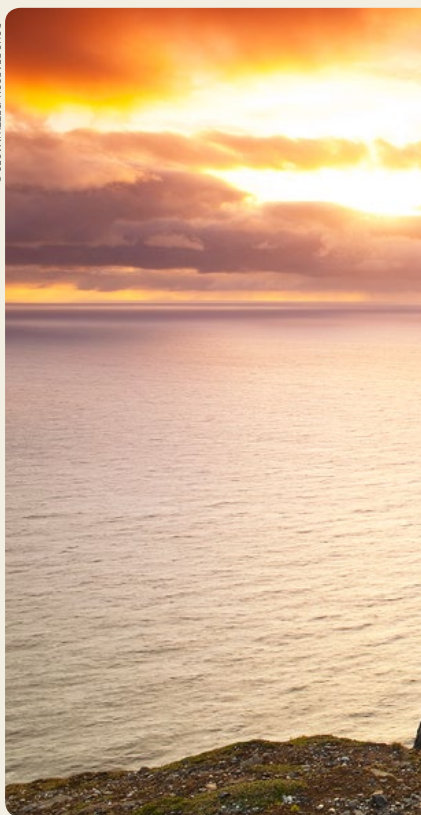
From here it's a short hop to the Sámi village of **Inari**, where Siida is a wonderful exhibition on Lapland's nature and indigenous cultures. Check out the craft shops too, and the impressive parliament building. To continue the theme, head onwards to **Karasjok**, Inari's Norwegian counterpart and an important meeting place for representatives of different Sámi groups.

From Karasjok (and Inari) summer buses run to **Nordkapp**, where you can stand at the top of Europe and gaze out towards the utter north. From nearby **Honningsvåg**, catch the *Hurtigruten* coastal steamer to the stunning **Lofoten Islands**, possibly stopping in lively **Tromsø**. Did we say Nordkapp was the top of Europe? We lied; from Tromsø there are flights way north to **Svalbard**, demesne of polar bears and an epic Arctic experience to really impress the folks back home.

Take some time to enjoy the Lofoten Islands, doing some cycling and visiting the Lofotr Vikingmuseum. When you're done, the *Hurtigruten* heads right down to Bergen, but jump off in **Narvik** and take the train to **Kiruna**, a remote Swedish mining town, and, in winter, home to the famous Icehotel. On the way, stop off for some hiking or aurora-watching at stunning **Abisko National Park**. Also be sure to check out the Sámi village and typical reindeer-herding region of **Jokkmokk**.

From here, you could fly, train or bus all the way south to **Stockholm**, cut back into Norway to continue your trip down the coast, or head to the Finnish border at **Haparanda/Tornio** to head back to Helsinki from there.

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GAVIN HELLER/GETTY IMAGES ©



Top: Nordkapp (p355), Norway
Bottom: Icehotel (p463), Jukkasjärvi, Sweden





4
WEEKS

Northern Islands



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Fly into Copenhagen, taking some time to absorb its addictive atmosphere. Get in the mood for your sea crossing by visiting the Viking Boat Museum at nearby Roskilde. Then hit north Jutland and the beautiful dunes at Skagen, where at the sandy headland of Grenen, two seas meet at Denmark's northernmost tip.

Jump aboard the Smyril Line ferry leaving from nearby **Hirtshals**. In summer there are two ferries running per week, so you can make a three-day stop in the remote **Faroe Islands**, but in the off season it's either nine hours there or a whole week. If you manage some time on the islands, giggle at the comical puffins on the awesome cliffs of **Mykines** and take a boat trip to visit the immense seabird colonies at **Vestmanna**.

The ferry (April to late October only, with some limited departures in winter) continues to Iceland, arriving at **Seyðisfjörður**. From here journey along the south coast past **Skaftafell**, a national park area that is one of Iceland's most spectacularly scenic regions, offering great hiking and unforgettable glacier walks. If you've got time to explore, head to the interior for the amazing geoscapes of **Landmannalaugar**. Take the spectacular three-day hike to Þórsmörk, one of Europe's most spectacular walks. The tough day's extension to **Skógar** takes you across some of the country's newest lava fields. Next, you could head out to see the birdlife and traditional communities of the **Vestmannaeyjar** islands.

Hit the capital **Reykjavík**, enjoy the night-life, visit the Saga Museum and take trips to the Blue Lagoon, then travel around the Ring Rd to the north of the island, where an R&R stop at peaceful fjord-side **Akureyri** can include a side trip to the **Mývatn** natural thermal baths and the steaming volcanic landscape of **Krafla**.

From here, you can return to the ferry terminal to head back to Denmark by sea if you're still game, otherwise you can fly back from Reykjavík.



ANDREA NICOBILI/ITALY/GETTY IMAGES ©

Top: Landmannalaugar (p260), Iceland
Bottom: Puffin, Faroe Islands (p113), Denmark



Anthony Ham

Norway Anthony fell in love with Norway the first time he laid eyes on her and there aren't many places in Norway he hasn't been, from Lindesnes in the south to the remote fjords of Svalbard in the far north. His true passion is the Arctic north whether dog-sledding and spending time with the Sámi around Karasjok or drawing near to glaciers and scouring the horizon for polar bears in the glorious wilderness of Svalbard. When he's not travelling for Lonely Planet to the Arctic

(or, his other great love, Africa), he lives in Melbourne and Madrid and writes and photographs for magazines and newspapers around the world. See more at www.anthonyham.com.

Read more about Anthony at:
lonelyplanet.com/members/anthony_ham



Anna Kaminski

Sweden Anna got her first taste of Sweden as a youngster in the Soviet Union through the books of Astrid Lindgren and Selma Lagerlöf and has had a great affinity for it ever since. During this research trip, she roamed both of Sweden's coastlines by boat, drove close to 3000 miles, descended into three mines and flew over the Arctic tundra in a helicopter. This is the third time she researched Sweden for Lonely Planet and this seemingly sedate country never fails to surprise her.



OUR STORY

A beat-up old car, a few dollars in the pocket and a sense of adventure. In 1972 that's all Tony and Maureen Wheeler needed for the trip of a lifetime – across Europe and Asia overland to Australia. It took several months, and at the end – broke but inspired – they sat at their kitchen table writing and stapling together their first travel guide, *Across Asia on the Cheap*. Within a week they'd sold 1500 copies. Lonely Planet was born.

Today, Lonely Planet has offices in Franklin, London, Melbourne, Oakland, Beijing and Delhi, with more than 600 staff and writers. We share Tony's belief that 'a great guidebook should do three things: inform, educate and amuse'.

OUR WRITERS



Andy Symington

Coordinating author: **Finland** Andy hails from Australia, lives in Spain, learned to ski as a child in Norway, was entranced by wintertime Finland as a backpacking teenager and has been a regular visitor to the Nordic lands ever since. He has travelled extremely widely throughout the region, and is a regular contributor on Finland and Scandinavia for Lonely Planet guides and other publications. His highlights have included close encounters with bears, rowing-boat odysseys on

enormous lakes and a near-terminal swim in a seriously cold Arctic Ocean. In a never-ending bid for honorary citizenship of the north, he has a huge stockpile of Nordic CDs ranging from contemporary Sámi yoiks to epic eighties Viking metal.

Read more about Andy at:
lonelyplanet.com/members/andy_symington



Carolyn Bain

Iceland Melbourne-born Carolyn has had an ongoing love affair with the Nordic region, ignited as a teenager living in Denmark and regularly rekindled over 14 years of writing guidebooks to glorious northern destinations such as Iceland, Denmark, Sweden and Nordic-wannabe Estonia (see more at carolynbain.com.au). Carolyn has worked on six editions of this book (dating back to 2003); for this edition she got to feed her addiction to skyr, fjords, secret hot-pots and

glacier trails, puffins, lopapeysur and the music of Ásgeir.



Cristian Bonetto

Denmark Cristian is proudly addicted to Henningsen lamps, Herning sweaters, and *kanelnsnegle*. He has contributed to many Scandinavian titles for Lonely Planet, and his musings on Danish food, design and culture have featured in numerous media outlets, including San Francisco magazine 7x7 and UAE radio station Dubai Eye 103.8. When he's not Tweeting on his Danish bike, you'll find him hunting down the next big thing in Italy, New York City, Singapore and his

native Australia. He tweets @CristianBonetto.



Peter Dragicevich

Tallinn After a dozen years working for newspapers and magazines in both his native New Zealand and Australia, Peter ditched the desk and hit the road. After contributing to literally dozens of Lonely Planet titles (including the *Estonia*, *Latvia & Lithuania* guidebook) he wholeheartedly rates Tallinn as one of his favourite cities in the world.

OVER MORE
PAGE WRITERS

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