

STOCKHOLM

ENCOUNTER

BECKY OHLSEN

Stockholm Encounter

Published by Lonely Planet Publications Pty Ltd
ABN 36 005 607 983

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This title was commissioned in Lonely Planet's London office and produced by: **Commissioning Editor** Jo Potts **Coordinating Editor** Barbara Delissen **Coordinating Cartographer** Corey Hutchison **Layout Designer** Jim Hsu **Assisting Editor** Michala Green **Assisting Cartographer** Khanh Luu **Managing Editor** Imogen Bannister **Managing Cartographer** David Connolly **Cover Image** research provided by lonelyplanetimages.com **Project Manager** Sarah Sloane **Thanks to** Jessica Boland, Sally Darmody, Laura Jane, Wayne Murphy, Cara Smith, Herman So, Lyahna Spencer

ISBN 978 1 74179 286 7

Printed through Colorcraft Ltd, Hong Kong.
Printed in China

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Colour-Coding & Maps

Colour-coding is used for symbols on maps and in the text that they relate to (eg all eating venues on the maps and in the text are given a green knife and fork symbol). Each neighbourhood also gets its own colour, and this is used down the edge of the page and throughout that neighbourhood section.

Shaded yellow areas on the maps denote 'areas of interest' – for their historical significance, their attractive architecture or their great bars and restaurants. We encourage you to head to these areas and just start exploring!

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BECKY OHLSEN

Becky has written about Sweden for Lonely Planet several times; she visits Stockholm at least twice a year to spend time with friends and relatives and to get a sneak-peek at the fashion trends that will eventually reach her home town of Portland, Oregon, many months later. She loves Stockholm's saffron-coloured buildings and fantastic museums and is particularly fond of the view from the Söder hills.



BECKY'S THANKS

Thanks go to Cristian Bonetto for a stellar 1st edition of this book, and to Jo Potts for assigning me the job of updating it. I'm also very grateful to my interview subjects: Jennifer Spratly, Daniel Lampinen, Sara Arrhenius at Bonniers Konsthall, Erika and Ulrika Larsson at Normal, Lina the bartender, and Lydia Kellam of the Swede Beat.

THE PHOTOGRAPHER

Raised in the Scottish Highlands, Jonathan Smith graduated from St Andrews University in 1994 with an MA in German. Unsure of what to do with his life, he took a flight to Vilnius and spent the next four years travelling around the former USSR. Having tried everything from language teaching to translating Lithuanian cookery books into English, Jon resolved to seek his fortune as a freelance travel photographer. Since then Jon's byline has appeared in over 50 Lonely Planet titles.

Our Readers Many thanks to the travellers who wrote to us with helpful hints, useful advice and interesting anecdotes.

Guy Badman, Fredrik Blomberg, Kristin Bray, Lauren Geilhufe, Alexander Gotthard Real, Gwenno Jones, Blair Rodger, Valerie Schnee, Isabell Skarby Hay, Esther Span-Murre, Mario Toups, Anne Wouters

Cover photograph Art in a Tunnelbana station, Siegfried Stolzfuß/eStock Photo

Internal photographs p46 by Sara Arrhenius; pp144-5 by Anders Blomqvist; pp10-11 by dayhot image/Leif Davidsson/Alamy; p18 by Greg Elms; p16 by Christer Fredriksson; p96 by Dorothea Kaufmann; p130 Lydia Kellam; p6, p50 by Martin Llado; p6 by Ernest Manewal; p23 by www.mrrichardryan.com; p6, p20, p24, pp32-3, p43, p60, p158, p159 by Jonathan Smith; p137 by Wayne Walton. All other photographs by Lonely Planet Images and by Jonathan Smith.

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The trendy streets of SoFo (p94)

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THIS IS STOCKHOLM

Straddling 14 islands where the Baltic meets Lake Mälaren, this shiny Nordic star seems to have it all – edgy creativity, inner-city forests and waterways clean enough for a bracing downtown dip.

Here, heritage and hip live side by side; urbanites toast the spring with old-school tunes and wooden huts sidle up to modernist blocks. Washing the lot is a pure northern light, from ice-blue winter tones to amber autumn hues. It hits the earthy red and saffron buildings and makes them glow with fairy-tale appeal.

The city's eye-candy factor extends to its well-travelled denizens, often gorgeous and enviably fashion-literate. After all, this is home turf to street-smart labels like Acne, Nudie and Patrik Söderström, all part of a burgeoning fashion scene that's conquering wardrobes from New York to Japan.

And it's not just Stockholm threads stealing the headlines. A bold new wave of Michelin-star chefs has sexed up the city's food culture, redefining fusion and turning the Swedish capital into an unexpected epicentre of cutting-edge cuisine.

Not bad for a city already famed as a design heavyweight. In Stockholm, names like Thomas Sandell and Jonas Bohlin style everything from uberglam clubs to stainless-steel doorknobs. An even fresher league of talent is ditching the minimalist white of the 1990s, giving Stockholm bolder, more daring spaces to play in.

But don't think this passion for fashion implies a superficial soul. About 200 museums, art galleries and theatres pack the city, among them contemporary dance hothouse Dansens Hus and the mighty Moderna Museet, home to one of Europe's finest caches of 20th-century art. Pretty good for a city of 1.8 million on the geographic edge of the EU main stage.

So what's the catch? Admittedly, Stockholm is not cheap, but neither is New York or London. And as for those winter temperatures, with so many hotspots to hide in, who has time for counting centigrades (envious rivals aside)?

Top left Descending into Odenplan Tunnelbana station **Top right** See *God's Hand* by Carl Milles reaching for the sky at Millesgården (p19) **Bottom** Looking back at Stockholm from the island of Skeppsholmen (p76)