

# welcome to Sweden



## Swedish Style

In some ways, visiting Sweden feels like walking right into a fashion or home-decor magazine. There are no boring outfits on the streets of Stockholm, and the care with which houses and cottages and cafes and public spaces are decorated and kept up throughout the country is truly inspiring. But Swedish style is never too showy; form and function are tightly linked in this society known for valuing moderation, practicality, order, simple lines and clever designs. Whether you decide to shop for your own versions or just enjoy the scenery around you, it's hard not to fall for the cool aesthetics of this place.

## Landscape

Truth be told, the best thing about Sweden is its natural beauty. But to really appreciate this country's charms, you have to leave the city behind. Whether that means sailing across an archipelago to visit an island or two, or trekking along a kingly trail through the northern wilderness, just depends on your preferences – why not try both? Hiking, camping, cycling, skiing, boating, fishing and foraging for mushrooms and berries are all major Swedish pastimes, and it's easy to get in on the action from just about any place in the country.



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*Frozen wastelands, cosy cottages, virgin forest, rocky islands, reindeer herders and Viking lore – Sweden has all that and mad style, too.*

(left) Wood cabin in birch and aspen forest, Åre (p269)  
(below) Prästgatan, Gamla Stan, Stockholm (p55)



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## The Sami

The northern part of Sweden is home to the indigenous Sami people, whose traditionally nomadic lifestyle is built around reindeer herding. Sami culture, including handicraft, homes and villages, methods of transport and style of cooking, is one of the many things a visitor can become immersed in while spending time in Lappland. Don't miss the chance to learn about this unique group of people: spend a night or two in a Sami reindeer camp or take a dogsledding tour. If you're on a more limited schedule, have a meal in a Sami restaurant or pick up some handmade Sami woodwork or leather goods to take home as souvenirs.

## Vikings & History

Ancient rune stones poke out of the grass in parks all over Sweden; huge stone ship settings and unobtrusive burial mounds are almost as common. Walled medieval cities and seaside fortresses are regular stops on the travellers' circuit. Viking ruins and the stories surrounding them are very much a part of the modern Swedish landscape, and it's easy to feel as if you're walking through history. In fact, you are.