



# SCANDINAVIA

TOP SIGHTS, AUTHENTIC EXPERIENCES

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## Welcome to Scandinavia

*Effortlessly chic cities meet remote forests, drawing style gurus and wilderness hikers alike. Endless day, perpetual night. Rocking festivals, majestic aurora. Scandinavia: anything but bland.*

The great outdoors is rarely greater than in Europe's big north. Epic expanses of wilderness – forests, lakes, volcanoes – and intoxicatingly pure air mean engaging with nature is a viscerally pleasurable experience. National parks cover the region, offering some of Europe's best hiking as well as anything from kayaking to glacier-walking. Spectacular coasts invite exploration from the sea. Wildlife, from whales to wolverines, awaits the fortunate observer.

Stolid Nordic stereotypes dissolve in the region's vibrant capitals. Crest-of-the-wave design can be seen in them all, backed by outstanding modern architecture, excellent museums, imaginative solutions for 21st-century urban living, internationally acclaimed restaurants and a nightlife that fizzles along despite hefty beer prices. Live music is a given: you're bound to come across some inspiring local act, whether your taste is Viking metal or chamber music.

Despite scary subzero temperatures in winter, there's a wealth of things to do: skiing, sledding behind huskies or reindeer, snowmobile safaris to the Arctic Sea, ice fishing, romantic nights in snow hotels, visiting Santa Claus and gazing at the soul-piercing aurora borealis. Summer's long, long days are filled with festivals, beer terraces and wonderful boating, hiking and cycling.

“Epic expanses of wilderness... Scandinavia is anything but bland.”

Nyhavn canal, Copenhagen, Denmark  
ADAM GRIMSHAW/LONELY PLANET ©



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Black sand beach, Jökulsárlón,  
Iceland

MATT MUNRO/LONELY PLANET ©

# Plan Your Trip

## Scandinavia's Top 12

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### Norway's Fjords

#### Landscapes of unrivalled and dramatic beauty

Norway's fjords (p214) cut deep gashes into the interior, adding texture and depth to the map of northwestern Scandinavia. Sognefjorden and Hardangerfjord are extensive fjord networks, but Nærøyfjorden, Lysefjord (pictured above) and Geirangerfjord (pictured right), with their quiet, precipitous beauty, are possibly Scandinavia's most beautiful corner.

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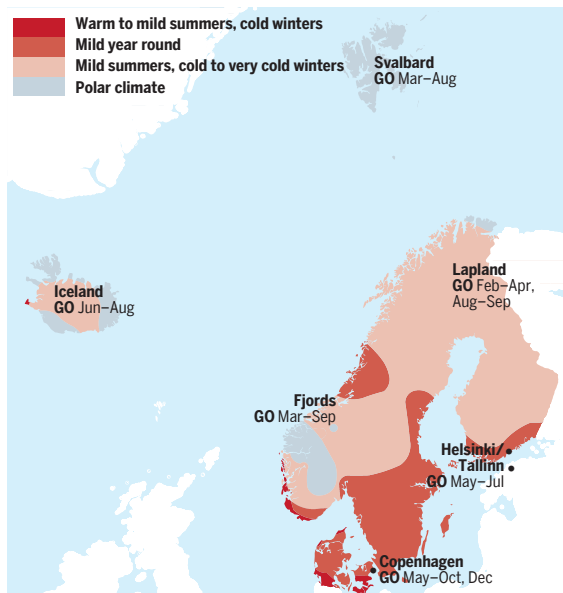


# Plan Your Trip

## Need to Know



### When to Go



### High Season (Jun–Aug)

- All attractions and lodgings are open.
- Hotels in many parts are often substantially cheaper.
- Winter sports high season is January to March.

### Shoulder (Apr, May, Sep & Oct)

- Expect chilly nights and even snow.
- Not the cheapest time to travel as summer hostels and camping grounds have closed.
- Many rural attractions close or shorten opening hours.

### Low Season (Nov–Mar)

- Hotels charge top rates except at weekends.
- January to April is busy for winter sports.
- Short, cool or cold days.

### Currency

Denmark: Danish krone (kr; DKK)  
 Finland & Tallinn: euro (€; EUR)  
 Iceland: Icelandic króna (kr; ISK)  
 Norway: Norwegian krone (kr; NOK)  
 Sweden: Swedish krona (kr; SEK)

### Language

Danish, Estonian, Finnish, Icelandic, Norwegian and Swedish  
 English is widely spoken.

### Visas

Generally not required for stays of up to 90 days; some nationalities need a Schengen visa.

### Money

ATMs are widespread. Credit/debit cards are accepted everywhere

### Mobile Phones

Local SIM cards cheap, widely available. Need an unlocked phone.

### Time

Iceland: Western European Time (GMT/UTC plus zero hours)  
 Denmark, Norway & Sweden: Central European Time (GMT/UTC plus two hours)  
 Finland & Tallinn: Eastern European Time (GMT/UTC plus two hours)  
 All but Iceland use summer time from late March to late October.