

Sweden national day

Sweden offers visitors a variety of activities, breathtaking vistas

With the spectacular aurora borealis, beautiful nature and traditional craftsmanship, Sweden enjoys a broad appeal.

The Sweden Tourism & Culture Center, in the Sweden Embassy in Tokyo, provides tourism information and introduces the beauty of the Scandinavian country, which has different looks in the north, central and southern regions.

Northern Sweden

Northern Sweden is home to Swedish Lapland, which boasts the highest probability of seeing the aurora borealis in the world. It has unique a charm and is popular year-round. The world-famous Icehotel, made every year with massive pieces of ice, is a breathtaking piece of art. Camping with the Saami indigenous tribe allows tourists the opportunity to rough it in fire-warmed tent and give dogsledding a try. The Aurora Sky Station is a perfect place to view the beautiful aurora borealis.

During the summer, when the sun never sets, visitors can enjoy fly-fishing or putting on a pair of hiking shoes to walk the Kungsleden, or King's Trail. Kiruna and Lulea are two cities in the north and serve as the gateway to Lapland.

Kiruna and Lulea are about 80



Stockholm is built on 14 islands, which are connected by 57 bridges. OLA ERICSON/IMAGEBANK.SWEDEN.SE

to 90 minutes by air from Stockholm. During the high season of aurora viewing in winter, direct flights from Narita to Kiruna are available with Scandinavian Airlines, or SAS. Finnair and Norwegian Air Shuttle also fly to the two cities. Traveling by sleeper train is also highly recommended as a way to enjoy the amazing scenery.

Traveling to Gällivare, another city in the north, visitors can take the Inlandsbanan train that connects the north and south of Sweden.

The Malmaban train connecting Lulea and Narvik, Nor-

way, takes tourists to the famous ski resorts of Riksgransen and Dundret, as well as to Abisko National Park.

Central Sweden

Stockholm is not the only city worth visiting in central Sweden. Uppsala, Sigtuna and Dalarna are famous for their medieval architecture. Dalarna, which is well-known for its long-standing tradition of tribal craftsmanship is said to be the hometown and the heart of the Swedish people. The beautiful lakes and white birches make visitors feel as if they've stepped into a fairy tale.

The county of Dalarna is famous for dalahast, carved wooden horses considered a symbol of Sweden. The area is also home to the Falun copper mine, which is registered as a UNESCO World Heritage site.

There are many buses and trains running from Stockholm, making getting around central Sweden a breeze. Uppsala, known for botanist Carl Linnaeus and the Uppsala Cathedral, is just 40 minutes by train and bus from Stockholm's Arlanda Airport and central Stockholm.

The Dalarna region has the beautiful towns of Rattvik, Mora and Leksand, which surround Siljan Lake. To travel to Dalarna, an express train from the Stockholm Central Station and a local from Borlange Central Station will get you there in about three hours. There is a daily bus, run by Swebus Express, connecting Stockholm and the Dalarna region.

Southern Sweden

The coastal area of southern Sweden has beautiful towns dotting the coastline like jewels on a map. Karlskrona is a historic navy town, while the fishing towns of Molle and Arild are also popular with tourists. Bastad, the venue for Swedish Open tennis tournament, and Torekov are

luxurious resort areas where people have second houses.

An abundance of farm products also makes gourmet food part of the allure of the south. Come and enjoy visiting farmers' markets and cozy skilled artisans' shops. With organic foods and restaurants marked with "Ekologisk" and "KRAV" logos, southern Sweden is the perfect place for gourmants to enjoy restaurants, bistros, bars and cafes.

The Swedish national rail service, Statens Jarnvagar, or SJ for short, has a nationwide network and its excellent design wins tourists over. For those who want to enjoy views of local cities and towns, train journeys are a wonderful way to see the sights. For some areas of south-

ern Sweden, traveling from Copenhagen, Denmark, is sometimes more convenient than from Stockholm.

Vaxjo, which is home to Sweden's National Glass Museum, is about three hours and 30 minutes by train from Stockholm.

Karlskrona, a UNESCO World Heritage site and a navy town, is three hours and 20 minutes by train from Copenhagen.

Stockholm, Goteborg

Stockholm is the most populous city in Scandinavia and boasts more than 100 museums. The must-see museums include Vasa Museum, Stockholm Palace, the Museum of Modern Art, Stockholm City Hall, ABBA The Museum, Drottningholm Palace and Artipelag.



The area around Kiruna is well-known for viewing the aurora borealis in Sweden. FREDRIK BROMAN/IMAGEBANK.SWEDEN.SE

Besides museums, sight-seeing boats are also recommended. Stockholm has a world-renowned ocean view and more than 20,000 large and small islands. Waves and rocky shorelines lit by shining sunlight and an extraordinarily beautiful twilight will transport you to a dream world.

Goteborg, Sweden's second largest city is in Southern Sweden. It was built by King Gustav II Adolf in the sixteenth century

when Sweden was in its golden age. It was a trading hub in the Age of Exploration and is considered to be the entrance to the North Sea.

Today, large international trade shows are held at convention halls and many business professionals from all over the world visit the seaside city. The Goteborg Museum of Art, Universeum science center and Liseberg Amusement Park are must-visit venues.

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