



# Northern Jutland

Northern Jutland, split from the rest of Jutland by the Limfjord, will enthral you with its magnificent light, intimidate you with its barrenly beautiful landscapes and charm you with its bluntly infectious characters. The tourist boards promote this region as 'Lysets Land', or the Land of Light, and if you have the opportunity to admire the soft blue hues by the water as day turns into night, you'll certainly understand how the name came about (and you'll begin to comprehend the appeal of the region to artists).

But it's not just artists who flock here. Windsurfers and beach-goers make a beeline for the north the minute the weather turns kind. The tourist literature makes much of the fact that this region enjoys the most hours of summer sunshine in the country thanks to its latitude (let's conveniently overlook the fact that this also means the fewest hours of daylight in winter!). So sun-lovers get their fix of vitamin D, families head off to the zoos, aquariums and fun parks, and seafood-lovers rejoice in the fresh-off-the-boat catch.

The region's 'capital' is Aalborg, Denmark's fourth-largest city and place that's flown under the traveller's radar for some time. It's worth a visit for its wealth of cultural attractions, as well as Denmark's most recognisable party street, Jomfru Ane Gade, and an abundance of great eateries. Further north is the area's most coveted tourist destination, Skagen. This treasure lies at Denmark's northern tip and acts as a magnet for most of Denmark each summer, when the town is full to capacity but still manages to charm. It's both a civilised place of upmarket restaurants and art museums, and a wild place where nature calls the shots (witness the turbulent tides of Grenen or the shifting sands of Råbjerg Mile) – which neatly sums up the entire region, really.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Standing with one foot in the seas of Kattegat and Skagerrak at Denmark's northernmost point, **Grenen** (p305)
- Finding inspiration in the artworks of **Skagens Museum** (p304)
- Discovering the culinary and cultural treasures of **Aalborg** (p294)
- Letting the wind take you places at **Klitmøller** (p313)
- Stepping back in time on low-key **Læsø** (p302)
- Lolling about on lovely **Løkken beach** (p311) or **Tornby Strand** (p309)



## AALBORG

pop 100,600

We found it hard to get a handle on Aalborg, sitting at the narrowest point of the Limfjord (the long body of water that slices Jutland in two). It's Denmark's fourth-largest city but feels somehow larger, more industrial and more impersonal than Århus (strange, given that Århus is more than double its size). Aalborg has lost chunks of its historical quaintness to industrial and commercial development, although the centre contains enough ancient half-timbered buildings to give you an idea of the kind of affluence its Renaissance merchants enjoyed. Aalborg is certainly handsome in parts, but it seems to lack a city heart, and the long-awaited waterfront rejuvenation is slow in coming. Meanwhile, tourism authorities are shining the spotlight on Aalborg's 'lifestyle attractions' (shopping and dining), and indeed its restaurants are one of its best features. Sadly the accommodation doesn't match up, and the city is crying out for a swish boutique crash-pad to woo the city-breakers. All in all, Aalborg's a mixed bag but shows loads of potential. Traditionally it's been ignored by foreign travellers, but there are enough diversions here to occupy a day or two for most visitors, from families to foodies, party animals to history boffins.

## Orientation

Aalborg spreads along both sides of the Limfjord, with its two halves linked by bridge and

tunnel. The business, shopping and dining hub and most traveller amenities are on the southern side, including the tourist office, about 750m north of the train and bus stations (follow Boulevarden and it becomes Østerågade).

## Information

### BOOKSHOPS

**Arnold Busck Boghandel** (☎ 98 13 21 44; Bispensgade 10) Sells a wide selection of maps and guides.

### EMERGENCY

**Police/ambulance** (☎ 112)

**Police station** (☎ 96 30 14 48; Jyllandsgade 27)

### INTERNET ACCESS

**Boomtown** (☎ 98 78 09 62; Nytorv 18; per 30 min 20kr, per hr 30kr; ☎ 11am-1am Mon-Thu, 11am-8am Fri & Sat, 8am-midnight Sun)

**In-The-Matrix** (☎ 98 12 20 98; JF Kennedys Plads 1F; per hr 30kr; ☎ noon-late)

**Public library** (☎ 99 31 43 00; Rendsburggade 2; admission free) Enter from Nørregade.

### LAUNDRY

**Laundry** (cnr Christiansgade & Rantzausgade; ☎ 8am-8pm) On the southern edge of town.

### MEDICAL SERVICES

**Aalborg Sygehus Syd** (Hospital; ☎ 99 32 11 11; Hobrej 18-22) South of town, with a 24-hour emergency ward.

**Budolfi Apotek** (☎ 98 12 06 77; cnr Vesterbro & Algade; ☎ 24hr) 24-hour pharmacy.

## MONEY

There are banks and ATMs all over town.

**Forex** (Gravensgade 9; ☎ 9am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-3pm Sat) Foreign exchange.

**Jyske Bank** (Nytorv 1)

**Nordea** (Algade 41)

## POST

**Post office** (Algade 42; ☎ 9.30am-5.30pm Mon-Fri, 9.30am-1pm Sat) West of Budolfi Domkirke.

## TOURIST INFORMATION

**Det Danske Udvandrerarkiv** (The Danish Emigration Archives; ☎ 99 31 42 20; www.emiarch.dk; Arkivstræde 1; ☎ 9am-4pm Mon-Thu, 9am-2pm Fri) Behind Vor Frue Kirke; keeps records of Danish emigration history and helps foreigners of Danish descent trace their roots.

**Tourist office** (☎ 99 31 75 00; www.visitaalborg.com; Østerågade 8; ☎ 9am-5.30pm Mon-Fri, 10am-1pm Sat mid-Jun-Aug, 9am-4.30pm Mon-Fri, 10am-1pm Sat Sep-mid-Jun) Loads of town information plus professional, clued-up service.

## Sights

### BUDOLFI DOMKIRKE

This 12th-century **cathedral** (Algade 40; admission free; ☎ 9am-4pm Mon-Fri, 9am-2pm Sat Jun-Aug, 9am-3pm Mon-Fri, 9am-noon Sat Sep-May) marks the centre of the old town and its elegant carillon can be heard throughout town every hour, on the hour. Its whitewashed interior creates an almost Mediterranean ambience.

As you enter the cathedral from Algade, look up at the foyer ceiling to see colourful frescoes from around 1500. The interior boasts some beautifully carved items, including a gilded Baroque altar and a richly detailed pulpit. Interestingly, despite their different appearances, both were created by Danish sculptor Lauritz Jensen; apparently the altar, carved in 1689, was too flashy for the parish so in 1692 Jensen used an older Renaissance style for the pulpit.

### HISTORY MUSEUMS

A block west of Budolfi Domkirke is the **Aalborg Historiske Museum** (☎ 99 31 74 00; Algade 48; adult/child 20kr/free; ☎ 10am-5pm Tue-Sun), with artefacts from prehistory to the present and furnishings and interiors that hint at the wealth Aalborg's merchants enjoyed during the Renaissance.

The underground **Gråbrødrekloster Museet** (☎ 96 31 04 10; Algade 19; ☎ 10am-5pm Tue-Sun) allows you to step off one of Aalborg's busiest shop-

ping streets to explore the life of a Franciscan friary in Aalborg in medieval times. Entry is via an elevator outside Salling department store on Algade; the museum is free to enter, but you pay to ride the elevator (20kr per 250kg in the lift).

## OTHER CENTRAL SIGHTS

An alley between the Aalborg Historiske Museum and post office leads to the rambling **Helligåndsklostret** (Monastery of the Holy Ghost; Adelgade 14), which dates from 1431 and is home to some fascinating frescoes. The interior can only be visited on a **guided tour** (adult/child 40/20kr; ☎ 2pm Tue late Jun-mid-Aug) arranged through the tourist office.

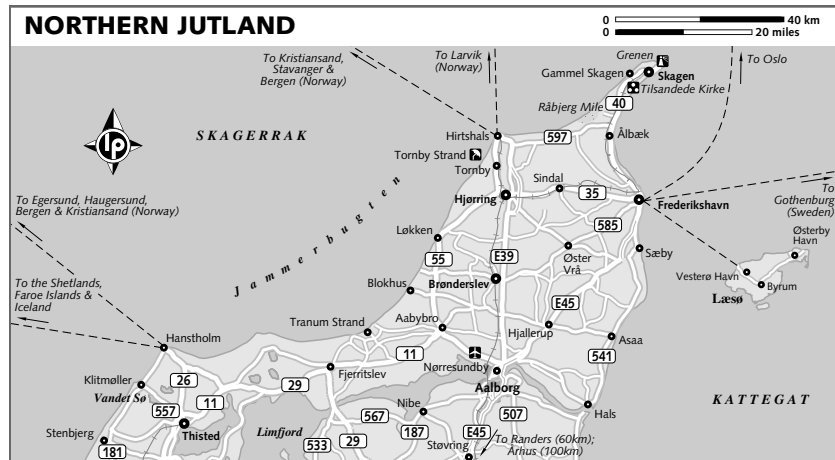
East of Budolfi Domkirke on Østerågade are three noteworthy historic buildings: the Baroque-style **old town hall** (c 1762), opposite the tourist office; **Jens Bangs Stenhus** (c 1624); and **Jørgen Olufsens House** (c 1616) at Østerågade 25. The latter two are lovely Renaissance buildings – Jens Bang's house was built by a wealthy merchant and now functions as a pharmacy; Jørgen Olufsen's house was built by a wealthy mayor and now operates as a cosy Irish pub (p299).

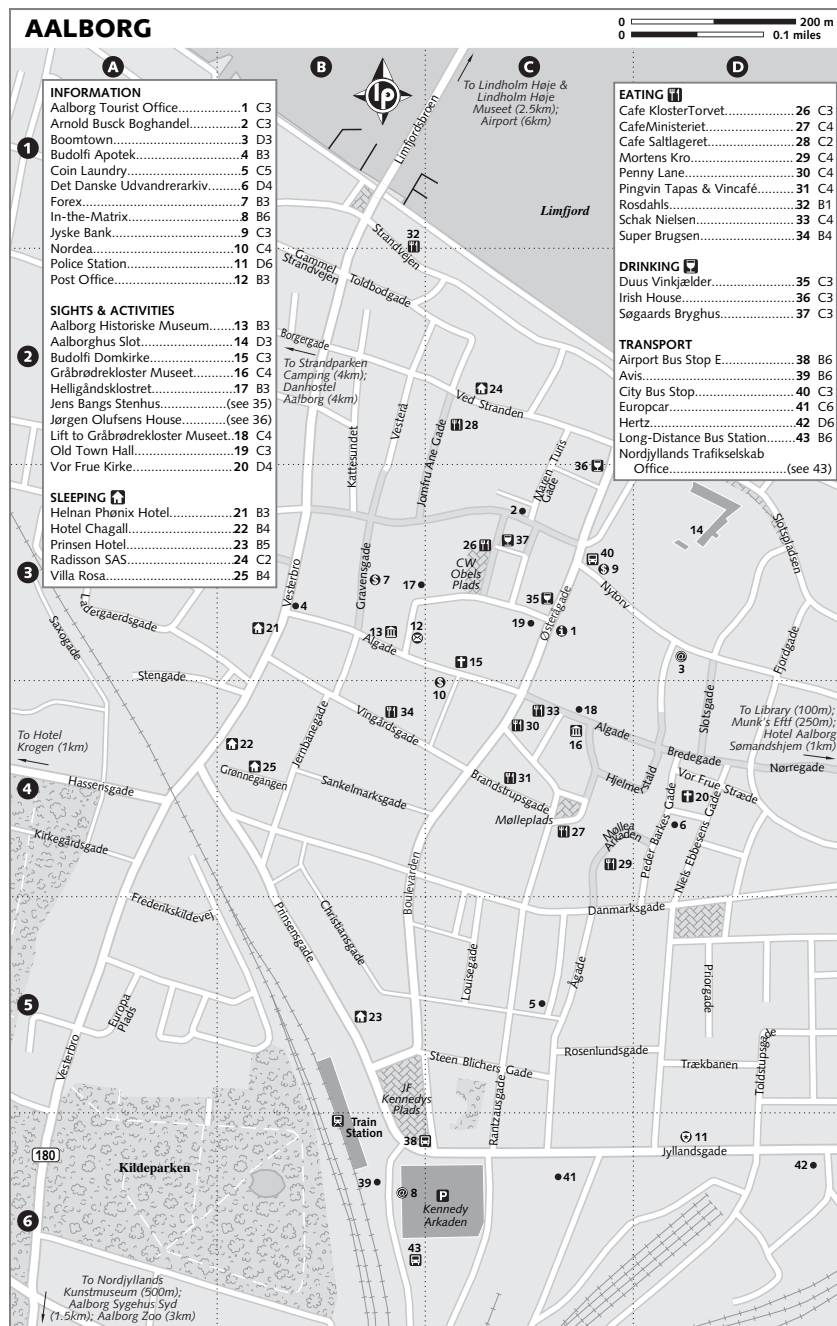
In addition, the neighbourhood of half-timbered houses around **Vor Frue Kirke** (Peder Barks Gade) are worth seeing, particularly the cobbled street Hjælmerstald. The mid-16th-century **Aalborghus Slot** (Slotspladsen), near the waterfront, is more an administrative office than a castle but there's a small **dungeon** (admission free; ☎ 8am-9pm May-Oct) you can visit.

Ask at the tourist office for the English-language *Good Old Aalborg* booklet, which maps out two suggested walking tours and provides details of buildings and sights along the way.

### LINDHOLM HØJE

The Limfjord was a kind of Viking motorway providing easy and speedy access to the Atlantic or longboat raiding parties. It's not surprising, then, that by far the most important piece of Aalborg's historical heritage is a predominantly Viking one. The atmospheric **Lindholm Høje** (admission free; ☎ dawn-dusk) is a Viking burial ground where nearly 700 graves from the Iron Age and Viking Age are strewn around a hilltop pasture ringed by a wall of tall beech trees. Many of the Viking graves are marked by stones placed in the oval outline of a Viking ship, with two larger end stones as





stem and stern. At the end of the Viking era the whole area was buried under drifting sand and thus preserved until modern times.

**Lindholm Høje Museet** (☎ 99 31 74 40; Vendilavej 11; adult/child 30kr/free; ☞ 10am-5pm daily Easter-Oct, 10am-4pm Tue & Sun Nov-Easter) adjoins the site and explains its history, and has displays on archaeological finds made during its excavation. Huge murals behind the exhibits speculate on what the people of Lindholm looked like and how they lived.

Lindholm Høje is 15 minutes from Aalborg centre via bus 2; cross the fence 50m beyond the bus stop and you'll be in the burial field. With your own wheels, head north from the city centre over Limfjordsbroen to Nørresundby, and follow the signs taking Lindholmsvej north.

### NORDJYLLANDS KUNSTMUSEUM

A striking marble building designed by Finnish architect Alvar Aalto houses this regional **museum of modern art** (☎ 98 13 80 88; www.nordjyllandskunstmuseum.dk; Kong Christian Allé 50; adult/child 40kr/free; ☞ 10am-5pm Tue-Sun; ☞). Its lovely, light-filled interior houses a fine collection of Danish art dating from the late 19th century to the present day, including works by JF Willumsen, Asger Jorn and Richard Mortensen.

To get there take the tunnel beneath the train station, which emerges into Kildeparken, a green space with statues and water fountains. Go directly through the park, cross Vesterbro and continue through a wooded area to the museum, a 10-minute walk in all. Alternatively, take bus 15.

### AALBORG ZOO

Teeming with feathered, furry and four-legged friends, it's no surprise this **zoo** (☎ 96 31 29 29; www.aalborg-zoo.dk in Danish; Mølleparkvej 63; adult/child 105/55kr; ☞ from 9am year-round; ☞) is one of Denmark's most popular. Some 1300 animals call it home, including tigers, zebras, elephants, giraffes, chimpanzees, penguins and polar bears. The zoo is southwest of the city and can be reached by bus 11; closing times vary, from 3pm from November to February, to 9pm in July.

### Festivals

Each year in late May, Aalborg kicks up its heels hosting the biggest Carnival celebrations in northern Europe, when up to 100,000 participants and spectators shake their maracas and paint the town red at the **Aalborg Carnival** (www.kamevaliaalborg.dk). Festivities include a

huge street parade, kids' carnival, plenty of live music and the 'Battle of Carnival Bands', which see the city at its effervescent best.

### Sleeping

With a few exceptions, Aalborg's hotel scene is lacklustre. There are limited central budget options, and bland business hotels charge high prices for dated décor. The large new branch of the Cab Inn chain (www.cabinn.com) planned for Fjordgade will inject some life into the accommodation scene, but it's not due to open until mid-2009. Check the website if you'll be visiting after then.

The tourist office can book rooms in private homes, with singles costing 270kr to 310kr, and doubles from 325kr to 400kr (breakfast additional).

### BUDGET

The following facilities are in the marina area about 4km west of the centre of Aalborg. Take bus 13.

**Strandparken Camping** (☎ 98 12 76 29; www.strandparken.dk; Skydebanevej 20; camp sites per adult/child/site 65/35/25kr; ☞ Apr-mid-Sep; ☞) A small and sweet ground with thoughtful management – the ground is divided into areas for families (near the playground), younger campers and seniors. There's a range of cabins for rent, as well as a bike hire, and it's a stone's throw from a popular swimming area.

**Danhostel Aalborg** (☎ 98 11 60 44; www.bbbb.dk; Skydebanevej 50; dm/d 160/330kr; ☞ ☞) Handy for boating activities on the fjord (you can hire canoes and kayaks here) but it's hardly central, so this is perhaps not a great choice if you're in town to sample the nightlife. The surrounds are green and the accommodation is simple (rooms come with or without bathrooms); dorm beds are only available in summer. There's an adjoining camping ground with budget cabins on offer.

### MIDRANGE & TOP END

**Prinsen Hotel** (☎ 98 13 37 33; www.prinsen-hotel.dk; Prinsengade 14; s/d from 445/645kr; ☞ ☞) Modern, simple rooms (although some are rather small), a good central location (close to the train and bus stations) and added extras (such as free internet access, wi-fi and tea and coffee) make this a very appealing option, and the prices make it a relative bargain.

**Hotel Krogen** (☎ 98 12 17 05; www.krogen.dk; Skibstedsvvej 4; s/d with shared bathroom 480/650kr, with bathroom

750/850kr; (P) (📍) The unassuming Krogen has personality compared with many in-town offerings. Small (12 rooms) and homely, it offers bright rooms and sometimes-dated furnishings. Our favourite features are the large lush garden and the quiet position in a well-to-do neighbourhood of west Aalborg, a pleasant 15-minute walk from the town centre.

**our pick Villa Rosa** (☎ 98 12 13 38; www.villarosa.dk; Grønnegangen 4; r & apt 500-800kr; (P)) Easily the most interesting option in town, so the very reasonable rates and great central location are added bonuses. Book early to snare one of only six theatrically decorated rooms over three floors (no lift) at this late-19th-century villa. The three small self-contained apartments are the standout bargain here – the English Room is especially lovely. Three rooms share a large bathroom and guest kitchen.

**Hotel Chagall** (☎ 98 12 69 33; www.hotel-chagall.dk; Vesterbro 36-38; s/d 900/1100kr; (P)) With its streamlined modern décor, good facilities and fresh feel, the Chagall is actually the nicest business-style hotel in Aalborg, but it leads a double life – 50 of the 70 rooms here are used by patients of the nearby hospital (predominantly healthy mothers and newborns), so rooms for travellers are limited.

**Radisson SAS** (☎ 98 16 43 33; www.radissonsas.com; Ved Stranden 14; r 1100-1550kr; (P)) Stumbling distance to the action of Jomfru Ane Gade, so a good choice for cashed-up party-hard travellers. Still, it may be considered the flashiest place in town, the fjord views are nice, and the attached casino and piano bar add a certain degree of class, but we think the rack rates are way too high for what you get – make sure you get a discount, online or otherwise!

Also recommended:

**Hotel Aalborg Søndshjem** (☎ 98 12 19 00; www.hotel-aalborg.com in Danish; Østerbro 27; s/d/f 620/825/900kr; (P) (📍)) Geared towards families, and the single and double rates are pricey for what you get. It's 1km east of the centre.

**Helnan Phoenix Hotel** (☎ 98 12 00 11; www.helnan.dk; Vesterbro 77; r 895-1295kr; (P)) Good old-fashioned service and (somewhat pricey) old-school rooms.

## Eating

Eating out in Aalborg has never been better. A clutch of new places dotted around the town centre cater well to all budgets and tastes. If it's just ballast you want with your alcohol, then Jomfru Ane Gade, a lively pedestrian street jammed solid with restaur-

rants and bars, is the place to go. Nearby Ved Stranden offers a growing number of dining options too.

**Schak Nielsen** (☎ 98 12 35 92, Algade 23; meals around 30kr; (📍) lunch) This fishmonger sells cheap takeaway fish burgers and a range of fishy morsels, from sushi to fish and chips. Cheap and cheerful, and perfect for quelling hunger pangs on a budget.

**Café KlosterTorvet** (☎ 98 16 86 11; CW Obels Plads 4; meals 38-65kr; (📍) lunch & dinner) A funky, laid-back café with a studenty feel, thanks largely to its dirt-cheap meals (baguettes, lasagne and the like), strong coffee, cheap house wine and backgammon-playing clientele.

**Penny Lane** (☎ 98 12 58 00; Boulevarden 1; sandwiches 48kr; (📍) 10am-6pm Mon-Fri, 9.30am-2pm Sat) A heavenly little delicatessen offering its own freshly baked bread, local cheeses and cured meats for fine picnicking, plus there's an in-house café offering a standout brunch platter (99kr) or snack-worthy sandwiches, quiche, cake and tarts.

**our pick Pingvin Tapas & Vincafé** (☎ 98 11 11 66; Brandstrøgsgade 11; light meals 48-78kr, 4/6 tapas tastes 128/168kr; (📍) lunch & dinner Mon-Sat) Definitely one of our favourites and it seems we're not alone. This warm restaurant-bar offers a brilliant selection of 30 'tapas' (it's not so much a place to order dishes to share among a group, but more an individual tasting-plate approach). Make your selection and sit back to enjoy taste sensations such as figs wrapped in Parma ham, smoked duck breast on coleslaw or prawns cooked with sun-dried tomatoes and chilli. There's a superb wine list, plus lunch-friendly one-stop dishes such as soup, sandwiches and burgers.

**Café Ministeriet** (☎ 98 19 40 50; Mølleplads; mains 50-80kr; (📍) lunch & dinner) Generous portions of fresh café fare includes burgers, sandwiches, salads and so on. The cool crowd seated inside and out on the summer terrace seem indifferent to the slow service. Becomes a popular drinking spot later in the night.

**Café Saltlageret** (☎ 98 12 59 77; Jomfru Ane Gade 16; lunch 50-100kr, dinner 90-190kr; (📍) lunch & dinner Mon-Sat) This is our favourite spot on Jomfru Ane Gade, with its cute outdoor seating and classy interior. If you can face this street again after a big night on the turps, there are good brunch offerings served until 2pm and the potential for hair of the dog. Otherwise, peruse the lengthy menu for classic café fare. It transforms into a bar-club later on (hey, don't

they all?) and stays open until 6am on Friday and Saturday nights.

**Rosdahls** (☎ 98 12 05 80; Strandvejen 6; lunch 75-156kr, dinner mains 186-275kr; (📍) lunch Fri & Sat, dinner Mon-Sat) Occupying an impressive waterside warehouse right by the water, Rosdahls may look rustic but the cooking is sophisticated, and the locals love it – especially the good-value 189kr fish and seafood buffet on Friday and Saturday nights (come hungry!), or the legendary Saturday brunch (149kr) from 11am. A great fresh-produce market sets up down on the docks on Saturday morning.

**Mortens Kro** (☎ 98 12 48 60; Mølleå 4-6, Mølleå Arkaden; mains around 230kr, 4/5/6-course menu 498/598/698kr; (📍) dinner Mon-Sat) Hands down both the best and priciest place to eat in town, Mortens Kro is owned by celebrity chef Morten Nielsen, Denmark's answer to Gordon Ramsay (minus the swearing, possibly). It's a superstylish, well-hidden setting for the immaculately prepared food – you're best to go with a menu of plentiful courses in order to experience the full 'Morten magic'. This place is always hot, so advance booking is a good idea. Mølleå Arkaden is accessed from Danmarksgade or Peder Barkes Gade.

For self-caterers, the **Super Brugsen** (Vingårds-gade 10; (📍) 9am-8pm Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm Sat) supermarket is a block south of the cathedral; the bakery here opens at 7.30am.

## Drinking & Entertainment

Tourist brochures give Aalborg the moniker 'the Paris of the north'. Danish folk describe the scene as the only place in Denmark where you're likely to see a good, old-fashioned bar fight. The truth lies somewhere in between, but if it's a flirt, a drink or loud repetitive beats in the form of thumping techno, Euro-rock or house music you're after, trawl Jomfru Ane Gade, Aalborg's take-no-prisoners party street. The venues themselves are pretty homogenous, so it's best to explore until you hear your kind of music or spy your type of crowd. Things are pretty tame early in the week (when the crowd of middle-agers dining along the strip may take you by surprise), but things get rowdy later in the week, especially on Friday and Saturday nights.

You won't have trouble somewhere to whet your whistle along Jomfru Ane Gade, so we've listed a few favourite places away from the main strip that you might not track down on your own.

**Irish House** (☎ 98 14 18 17; Østerågade 25; (📍) from noon Mon-Thu, 2pm Fri-Sun) It's almost too beautiful a setting in which to get drunk, but we're sure you can rise to the challenge if need be. Inside a 17th-century building loaded with timber carvings and stained glass, this cheerful pub offers live music Thursday to Saturday, decent pub grub fresh from the Emerald Isle and a big range of draught and bottled beers – and whiskies too.

**Duus Vinkjælder** (☎ 98 12 50 56; Østerågade 9; (📍) from noon Mon-Sat) A superb way to cap off the evening is with a glass of wine at this smoulderingly romantic 300-year-old candlelit wine cellar in Jens Bangs Stenhus. If you can't hear your lover's sweet nothings over your rumbling tum, there's plenty of traditional Danish food on offer here too.

**Søgaards Bryghus** (☎ 98 16 11 14; CW Obels Plads 4; (📍) from 11pm Mon-Thu, 10am Fri & Sat) Every Danish town worth its salt now has a microbrewery, and Aalborg's is a cracker. With a swank interior, loads of outdoor seating and a long menu of beer accompaniments, you could easily lose an afternoon or evening here sampling the seven different locals brews – favourite is the Jomfruhumle pilsner, followed closely by the Klosterbrylle, a dark beer in the German style.

## Getting There & Away

### AIR

**Aalborg airport** (airport code AAL; ☎ 98 17 11 44; www.aal.dk) is 6.5km northwest of the city centre. There are loads of direct connections with Copenhagen, and flights to/from Oslo and Helsinki. **Sterling** (www.sterling.dk) also has about 10 weekly connections with London (Gatwick).

### BUS

Long-distance buses stop at the bus station on JF Kennedys Plads (behind the new shopping centre), just south of the train station. From Aalborg you can reach most Jutland towns of note on the **X-bus network** (www.xbus.dk in Danish). Express bus line 981, operated by **Thinggaard Express** (☎ 98 11 66 00; www.ekspressbus.dk in Danish), runs four times per week to Odense (one-way adult fare 190kr, 4½ hours), calling at Randers, Århus and Vejle en route.

### CAR & MOTORCYCLE

Aalborg is 117km north of Århus and 65km southwest of Frederikshavn. The E45 bypasses the city centre, tunnelling under the Limfjord,

while Rte 180 (which links up with the E45 both north and south of the city) leads into the centre.

To get to Lindholm Høje, or points north of the centre, take Rte 180 (Vesterbro), which crosses Limfjordsbroen.

## TRAIN

Trains run about hourly north to Frederikshavn (83kr, 1¼ hours) and south to Århus (153kr, 1½ hours) or to Copenhagen (338kr, five hours).

## Getting Around

Town bus 2A and 2B (from 'E' stop on JF Kennedys Plads) run half-hourly to/from the airport (16kr).

Almost all city buses leave from JF Kennedys Plads and pass the city-centre stops on Østerågade and Nytorv, near Burger King. The standard local bus fare is 16kr; you can also buy a good-value *klippekort*, valid for 10 rides, for 104kr, or a 24-hour summer pass valid for all transport in Northern Jutland (adult 120kr, available from May to August). Information on tickets, routes and schedules is available at the very helpful Nordjyllands Trafikskabskab office at the bus station on JF Kennedys Plads, or by dialling ☎ 98 11 11 11.

Apart from a few one-way streets that may have you driving in circles a bit, Aalborg is easy to travel around by car. There's free (but time-restricted) parking along many side streets, and metered parking in the city centre. If you're unable to find a parking space, there are several large commercial car parks, including one at Ved Stranden 11 (opposite the Radisson hotel), and one at JF Kennedys Plads 12 (enter from Østre Allé); the charge is usually 12kr per hour (maximum 90kr for 24 hours).

You can order a **taxi** (☎ 98 10 10 10, 98 12 48 00), or just pick one from the rank at the train station. Bikes can be hired from **Munk's Eftf** (☎ 98 12 19 46; www.cuh.dk; Løkkegade 25; per day/week 80/400kr).

Car-rental companies Hertz, Avis and Europcar have booths at the airport or in town: **Avis** (☎ 98 13 30 99; JF Kennedys Plads 3A) Close to the train station.

**Europcar** (☎ 98 13 23 55; Jyllandsgade 6)

**Hertz** (☎ 98 17 15 99; Jyllandsgade 28)

## FREDERIKSHAVN

pop 23,640

A transport hub rather than a compelling destination, Frederikshavn shuffles more than

three million people through its port each year, making it Jutland's busiest international ferry terminal. The majority of visitors are overtaxed Scandinavians raiding Denmark's supplies of relatively cheap booze and meat. The town itself lacks the historical glamour of its coastal neighbours but can successfully entertain you for a few hours with its feature attraction, Bangsbo – still, Skagen or even Sæby make for more appealing overnight options.

## Orientation

An overhead walkway leads from the ferry terminals to the tourist office, which sits at the edge of the central commercial district. The train station and the adjacent bus terminal are a 10-minute walk north of the ferry terminals.

## Information

**Danske Bank** (Danmarksgade 70)

**Frederikshavn Sømandsbjerg & Hotel** (☎ 98 42 09 77; Tordenskjoldsgade 15B; per 30/60min 20/40kr) Offers public internet access on a handful of computers.

**Post office** (Skippergade 27) Beside the train station.

**Tourist office** (☎ 98 42 32 66; www.frederikshavn-tourist.dk; Skandiatorv 1; ☎ 9am-6pm Mon-Sat, 9am-2pm Sun late Jun-mid-Aug, 9am-4pm Mon-Fri, 11am-2pm Sat rest of year) Over the walkway from the ferry terminal and offering the low-down on the town and surrounds.

## Sights

If you're waiting for a train it's an ideal time to climb the nearby whitewashed **Krudttårnet** (Gunpowder Tower; ☎ 98 43 19 19; Kragholm; adult/child 10kr/free; ☎ 10am-5pm Tue-Sun Jun-Aug), a remnant of the 17th-century citadel that once protected the port.

It's well worth exploring the Bangsbo area, about 3km from the centre on the southern edge of town. The main drawcard is **Bangsbo Museum** (☎ 98 42 31 11; www.bangsbo.com in Danish; Dronning Margrethes Vej 6; adult/child 40kr/free; ☎ 10am-5pm Tue-Sun), an old country estate with an interesting mix of exhibits. The manor house displays antique furnishings and collectibles, while the old farm buildings house military paraphernalia and exhibits on WWII Danish Resistance. The most intriguing exhibit is the Ellingå ship, reconstructed remains of a 12th-century Viking-style merchant ship that was dug up from a nearby stream bed. Bus 3 from central Frederikshavn stops near the entrance to the estate, from where it's an enjoyable 500m walk through the woods to the museum. The adjoining **Bangsbo Botaniske Have** (Botanic

Gardens) has a deer park and make a pleasant place to stroll or picnic.

## Sleeping & Eating

**TopCamp Nordstrand** (☎ 98 42 93 50; www.nordstrand-camping.dk; Apholmenvej 40; camp sites per adult/child/site 70/50/50kr; ☎ Apr-Sep; ☎) Found 4km north of town (walking distance to Frederikshavn's best beach), this huge park is chockers with summertime fun and family-friendly facilities – there's a supermarket, café, games room, indoor pool and bike hire, for starters. Cabins and caravans can be hired. Take the north-bound train to Skagen and get off at Strandby (the first stop), or summer bus 89.

**Danhostel Frederikshavn** (☎ 98 42 14 75; www.danhostel.dk/frederikshavn; Buhlsvvej 6; dm 85-100kr, d 300-350kr; ☎ Feb-Nov) Busy with ferry passengers in a residential neighbourhood about 1.5km from the train station, signposted from the road to Hjørring. It's a pleasant, no-frills place, made more appealing by some of the cheapest hostel prices in Denmark.

**Frederikshavn Sømandsbjerg & Hotel** (☎ 98 42 09 77; www.fshotel.dk; Tordenskjoldsgade; 15B; s/d with shared bathroom 515/695kr, with bathroom from 675/795kr; ☎) There are a number of chain hotels (Scandic, Radisson) across from the ferry harbour charging business-account prices; this option has more reasonable rates for its spacious, well-equipped rooms.

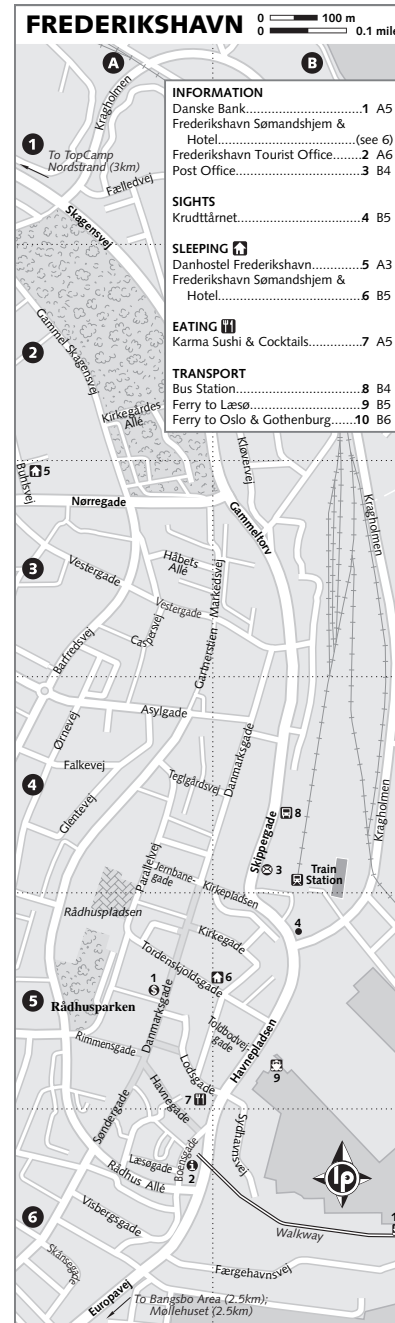
**Karma Sushi & Cocktails** (☎ 98 43 22 01; Lodsgade 10; sushi 35-100kr; ☎ lunch Fri & Sat, dinner nightly) When hunger strikes, head for the eastern end of Lodsgade, where you can choose between Greek, Italian and Mexican restaurants. The standout among the pack is Karma, a slick, newly opened Japanese restaurant and bar, with model good looks, warm service and delightfully fresh sushi morsels.

**Møllehuset** (☎ 98 43 44 00; Skovalléen 45; lunch 65-145kr, dinner mains 168-189kr; ☎ lunch daily, dinner Tue-Sat) This handsome old *kro* from the mid-18th-century is in a pretty setting in the Bangsbo area (what a pity the outdoor seating overlooks the car park when there is so much surrounding greenery). Still, the small menu has plenty of appeal in the form of cheese platters and fresh fish.

## Getting There & Away

Frederikshavn is 65km northeast of Aalborg on the E45 and 41km south of Skagen on Rte 40.

For information on ferries from Frederikshavn to Sweden see p331, and to Norway see p330.



Frederikshavn is the northern terminus of the **Danske Statsbaner** (DSB; ☎ 70 13 14 15; www.dsb.dk) train line (DSB operates most train services in Denmark). Trains depart about hourly south to Aalborg (88kr, 1¼ hour) and Århus (199kr, three hours, involving a change of train in Aalborg). A private train line operates hourly trains north to Skagen (48kr, 35 minutes).

Bus and train routes in northern Jutland extend as far afield as Hirtshals, Hjørring and Løkken. Express bus 980 travels to Esbjerg twice per day (see p236), calling at Aalborg and Viborg en route.

## LÆSØ

pop 2400

Læsø's appeal lies in its ability to stay firmly entrenched in the past. It may be just 28km off the coast of Frederikshavn, but it seems 100 years in arrears. It's an island of small farms, sandy beaches, heathlands, dunes, much-loved traditions and contagiously charming small communities.

Fittingly, legend has it that Queen Margrethe I was saved from a shipwreck off Læsø in the 14th century and rewarded her rescuers with a stunning dress, giving them the right to adapt it as an island costume. Although such regional customs had largely disappeared elsewhere in Denmark by the 19th century, Læsø women wore their traditional island dress daily until just after WWII; today the costume is still worn on special occasions. Another island tradition continues in the making of Læsø salt. At one time an island export, salt is now sold in small souvenir bags for tourists.

Læsø is free of large resort hotels and attracts visitors looking for a low-key holiday. The island has a few small towns (Vesterø Havn, Byrum and Østerby Havn), a couple of medieval churches, a seaweed-roofed farm museum and a straw-roofed fishing museum, and a saltworks. South of the main island is Rønnerne, an area of tidal wetlands with extensive seaside meadows and heathland, impressive bird life and unique flora and fauna.

The island's **tourist office** (☎ 98 49 92 42; www.laesoe.dk; Vesterø Havnegade 17; ☎ 9am-4pm Mon-Fri, 10am-3pm Sat & Sun mid-Jun-mid-Aug, 9am-2pm or 4pm Mon-Fri rest of year) is 300m east of the ferry terminal in Vesterø Havn.

A good way to experience Læsø is by doing a day trip from Frederikshavn, and there are

four options – all outlined on the ferry company's website (www.laesoe-line.dk) and costing between 200kr and 285kr for the day, including return ferry passage (if you're staying on the island you can also join the tours and pay a lesser charge). There's a four-hour bus tour of the island, taking in the major sights, or you can learn about the flora and fauna of southerly Rønnerne with a ranger. There's also the option of a self-guided cycling tour of the island, or a boat trip to investigate a seal colony. Make enquiries about the complex schedules for these tours, and bookings, at the **Frederikshavn ferry office** (☎ 98 49 90 22).

## Sleeping & Eating

The tourist office can organise holiday cottages and flats for hire around the island; if you plan to visit in high season (July and August) it's worth booking any accommodation in advance. The larger hotels have on-site restaurants (and dinner, bed and breakfast packages), plus there's no shortage of cafés and kiosks, particularly in Vesterø Havn.

**Læsø Camping & Hytteby** (☎ 98 49 94 95; http://laesoe.dk-camp.dk; Agersigen 18, Vesterø Havn; camp sites per adult/child/site 63/35/30kr; ☎ May-Sep) Not too far from the ferry terminal and beach on the island's northwest, this appealing ground has a laid-back vibe and good facilities, including bike rental and a good array of cabins (from 295kr).

**Danhostel Læsø** (☎ 98 49 91 95; www.danhostel.dk/laesoe; Lærkevej 6, Vesterø Havn; dm 150kr, d without/bathroom 400/500kr; ☎ May-Sep) Flower-filled outdoor areas and inviting indoor facilities make this an extremely good-value choice, but you'll need to book early in July and August. It's a few minutes' signposted walk from the ferry harbour.

**Hotel Strandgaarden** (☎ 98 49 90 35; www.hotel-strandgaarden.dk; Strandvejen 8, Vesterø Havn; s/d with shared bathroom 500/800kr, d with bathroom from 1100kr; ☎ Apr-Oct) A great choice with loads of thatched-roof character, top-notch service, a classy on-site restaurant and superb beach on the doorstep. There's a range of rooms, from old-style in the main building (dating from 1727) that share bathrooms, to glossy modern suites.

## Getting There & Around

**Færgeselskabet Læsø** (☎ 98 49 90 22; www.laesoe-line.dk; return trip adult/child Jul & Aug 185/105kr, Sep-Jun 135/65kr) sails two to seven times daily year-round between Læsø and Frederikshavn (1½ hours).

A free public bus runs about hourly on weekdays and less frequently on weekends between the villages of Vesterø Havn, Byrum and Østerby Havn; it operates in connection with ferry departure and arrival times. Bicycles can be rented from **Jarvis Ny Cykelservice** (☎ 98 49 94 44; Vesterø Havnegade 29; per day 80kr) in Vesterø Havn, close to the ferry terminal. The tourist office has cycling maps outlining various routes.

## SÆBY

pop 8500

While Skagen is the inspiration behind world-renowned Scandinavian artists, Sæby could well be called the spiritual home (or at least the holiday house) of Danish literature. The pretty town was the inspiration behind Herman Bang's *Sommerglæder* (Summer Pleasure) and Henrik Ibsen's renowned work *Fruen fra havet* (The Lady from the Sea). In summer, Sæby's pretty harbour, whitewashed church and historic old town are packed with sunburnt, ice-cream-toting holiday-makers. It's a sleeper compared with Skagen further up the road, but it has plenty of low-key charm and makes for a pleasant pitstop.

## Orientation & Information

The bus station is 300m southwest of the town centre, on Stationspladsen. The **tourist office** (☎ 98 46 12 44; www.visitsaebby.dk; Krystalgade 3; ☎ 9am-5pm Mon-Sat mid-Jun-Aug, 9am-4pm Mon-Fri, 10am-1pm Sat Sep-mid-Jun) is in the middle of town – just walk down the main shopping street Vesterogade and you can't miss it. Continue down on Søndergade and turn right into Algade to reach the church and port, about five minutes on foot from the centre.

There's an ATM at the **Danske Bank** (Vestergade 35) on the main shopping street.

## Sights & Activities

Just north of the tourist office is the **Sæby Museum** (☎ 98 46 10 77; Algade 1-3; adult/child 35kr/free; ☎ 10am-4pm Tue-Sun Jun-Aug, 10am-4pm Tue-Fri Sep-May), occupying a charming 17th-century timber-frame house. Expect to see an amber collection, a 1920s classroom and a classically furnished Victorian sitting room.

The town's living history may be more interesting, and you can soak it up on a walk along **Algade**, lined with pretty gardens, half-timbered houses and a handful of craft shops. At Algade 7 you'll pass the former home of Adda Ravnkilde (1862–83), who wrote three

very powerful novels regarding female artists in a male-dominated domain and then tragically took her life at the age of 21.

Amble further along Algade and you'll reach **Sæby Klosterkirke** (Strandgade 5; ☎ 8am-6pm Mon-Sat, 8am-4pm Sun Apr-Oct, shorter hr Nov-Mar), all that remains of a four-winged Carmelite monastery from 1470. Its visually imposing exterior is coupled with an interior that boasts beautiful frescoes from the Middle Ages and an 16th-century pulpit and canopy.

From the church you can readily access the harbour, with both an older and modernised section and plenty of fish restaurants. For those disappointed with the physical size of the Little Mermaid in Copenhagen, Sæby's symbol of protection, **the Lady from the Sea statue**, has presence *and* stature. It's based on Henrik Ibsen's play of the same name, which he wrote after a summer spent walking along the beach and up into the woods around Sæby.

## Sleeping & Eating

**Sæby-Strand Camping** (☎ 98 46 20 90; www.saebystrand.dk; Frederikshavnsvej 96A; camp sites per adult/child/site 69/41/30kr) About 1km north of town (and one of a handful of beach-fronting camping grounds along this stretch), this place offers plenty of summertime activity, including playgrounds and mini-golf. There is also a mini-market and café on site, and cabins for rent.

**Sæby Fritidscenter-Danhostel** (☎ 98 46 36 50; www.saebyfritidscenter.dk; Sæbygaardvej 32; dm 105-125kr, d 225-425kr; ☎ ☎) Around 1.5km west of the town centre, at a large sports centre and with plenty of open space. Facilities are of the usual high standard.

**Our pick Aahøj** (☎ 98 46 11 27; www.aahoj.dk; Hans Aabelsvej 1; s/d from 450/550kr) Easily the top pick in town, for its intimate atmosphere (nine homely rooms in an elegant 1896 villa) and top-notch central location. The sun room is the perfect spot to enjoy breakfast, while the superb riverside garden beckons for a lazy afternoon with a book.

**Jensens Fiskerestaurant** (☎ 98 46 11 56; Havnen; buffet lunch/dinner 109/169kr; ☎ lunch & dinner Apr-Sep) In the harbour area restaurants woo you with tables overloaded with fresh shrimp bounty and assorted fishy treats. Upstairs at Jensens is a smart, light-filled restaurant offering buffet or à la carte offerings (the buffets are the best value-for-money); downstairs is a more casual café/takeaway serving well-priced fish

and chips (49kr) to a beer-drinking, sun-seeking crowd.

**Frøken Madsen's Spisehus** (☎ 98 40 80 36; Pindborggade 1; dinner mains 140-210kr; ☞ lunch Sat & Sun, dinner Wed-Sun) Frøken Madsen serves up an international menu alongside plenty of Danish favourites in a cosy old building a block back from the main street. Sure, it's cute inside, but on a warm evening you can't go wrong with a table on the flower-filled garden terrace above the small river. The weekend lunch buffet (99kr) is a great deal.

## Getting There & Away

Sæby is 12km south of Frederikshavn on Rte 180. There is no train line here but the hourly route 73 bus between Aalborg and Frederikshavn stops at Sæby (24kr from Frederikshavn).

Rent bikes at **Mosquito Cykel Center** (☎ 98 46 14 10; Søndergade 6A; per day/week 70/390kr).

## SKAGEN

pop 9400

Skagen, with its rich art, fresh seafood, photogenic neighbourhoods and classic characters, is an utterly delicious slice of Denmark.

In the mid-19th century, artists flocked to Skagen (pronounced Skain), charmed by the radiant light's impact on the ruggedly beautiful landscape. Now tourists flock here, drawn by an intoxicating combination of a busy working harbour, long sandy beaches and a buzzing holiday atmosphere. The town gets packed in summer but maintains every bit of its charm, especially in the intimate, older neighbourhoods, filled with distinctive yellow houses framed by white-picket fences and red-tiled roofs. Catering to the tourist influx are numerous top-notch museums, arts and craft galleries, bike-rental outlets, ice-cream parlours and harbourside restaurants serving fish fresh off the boats. Come and see why half the Danish population lights up whenever the town's name is mentioned.

## Orientation

Sankt Laurentii Vej, the main street, runs almost the entire length of this long, thin town and is never more than five minutes' walk from the waterfront. The train station is on Sankt Laurentii Vej, 100m north of the pedestrianised town centre.

The closest beach to town is accessed from Østre Strandvej; east-coast beaches are shel-

tered and good for families, the west coast is wilder.

## Information

**Danske Bank** (Havnevej 1)

**Jakobs Café & Bar** (☎ 98 44 16 90; Havnevej 4A) Free internet access.

**Library** (☎ 98 44 28 22; Sankt Laurentii Vej 23) Close to the train station; offers free internet and is a wi-fi hotspot.

**Nordjyske Bank** (Sankt Laurentii Vej 39)

**Post office** (Christian X's Vej 8) 100m west of the station.

**Tourist office** (☎ 98 44 13 77; www.skagen-tourist.dk; Vestre Strandvej 10; ☞ 9am-6pm Mon-Sat, 10am-4pm Sun mid-Jun-mid-Aug, 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat May-mid-Jun & mid-Aug-Sep, 10am-4pm Mon-Fri, 10am-1pm Sat Oct-Apr) In its new home in front of the harbour, the well-stocked tourist office has loads of info on regional sights, attractions and activities. There are walking tours of Skagen in summer but these have no fixed schedule, so it's best to enquire with the tourist office when you arrive in town.

## Sights & Activities

### SKAGENS MUSEUM

Artists discovered Skagen's luminous light and its colourful, wind-blasted heath-and-dune landscape in the mid-19th century, and fixed eagerly on the romantic imagery of the area's fishing life that had earned the people of Skagen a hard living for centuries. Painters such as PS Krøyer and Anna and Michael Ancher followed the contemporary fashion of painting *en plein air* (out of doors), often regardless of the weather. Their work established a vivid figurative style of painting that became known internationally as the 'Skagen School'. This wonderful **museum** (☎ 98 44 64 44; www.skagensmuseum.dk; Brøndumsvej 4; adult/child 70kr/free; ☞ 10am-5pm daily Jun-Aug, 10am-5pm Tue-Sun Apr-May & Sep, 10am-3pm Wed-Sun Oct-Mar; ☞) showcases the outstanding art that was produced here between 1830 and 1930, much of it kitchen-sink portraits of the lives and deaths of those in the fishing community. PS Krøyer's work is quite incredible, particularly his efforts to 'paint the light', the transition between day and night, when the sky and the sea seem to merge into each other in the same shade of blue.

Overall, the paintings here evoke an atmospheric sense of place and demonstrate a real community of artists in Skagen who worked and played together. Aksel Jørgensen's painting of the funeral procession for Holger

Drachmann, a writer who made his home in Skagen, shows the procession passing the dunes at Skagen's northern beach and is quite touching. Krøyer's painting of a Midsummer's Eve bonfire on Skagen's beach shows notable Skagen residents including Anna Ancher and Holger Drachmann. The museum also houses the former dining room of Brøndums Hotel (p307), one-time hang-out of many of the Skagen artists, moved in its entirety in 1946 from the hotel across the road.

## GREKEN

Appropriately enough for such a neat and ordered country, Denmark doesn't end untidily at its most northerly point, but on a neat finger of sand just a few metres wide. You can actually paddle at its tip where the waters of the Kattegat and Skagerrak clash and you can put one foot in each sea – but not too far. Bathing here is strictly forbidden because of the ferocious tidal currents and often-angry seas that collide to create man-tossing white horses.

The tip is the culmination of a long, curving sweep of sand at Grenen, about 3km northeast

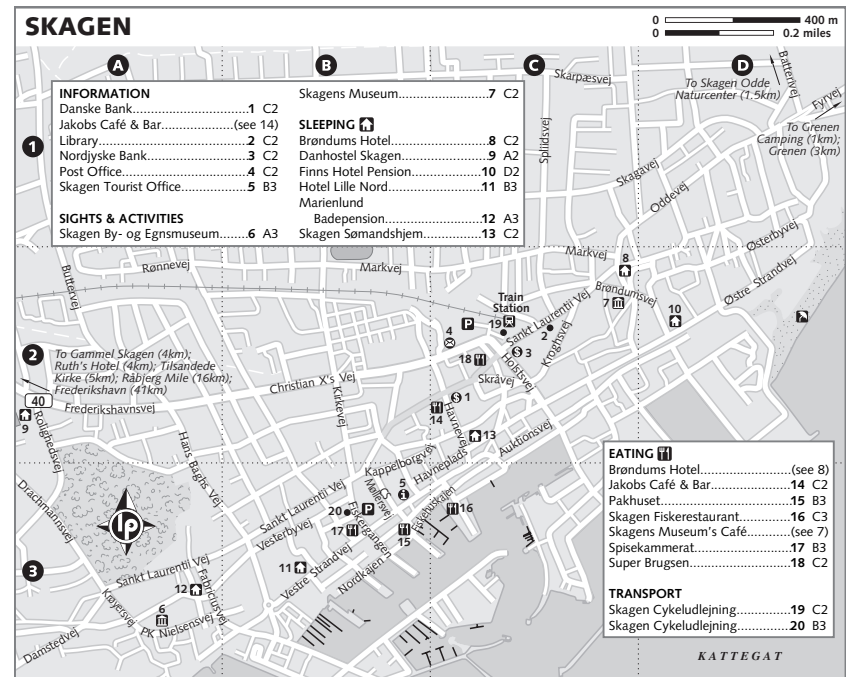
of Skagen along Rte 40. Where the road ends there's a car park (10kr per hour), restaurant and small art museum. From the car park the 30-minute walk up the long, thin, sweeping stretch of sand passes Holger Drachmann's (1846-1908) grave. Yachts and blue water make an irresistible postcard image, and Skagen's light comes into its own here as the earth, water and sky combine.

The tractor-pulled bus, the **Sandormen** (☎ 98 44 33 07; adult/child return 20/10kr; ☞ Apr-Oct), can take you out to the point if it's raining or if time is not on your side; it leaves from the car park at Grenen from 9am daily, and runs regularly all day, according to demand.

In high summer, the Skagerakkeren bus (p308) runs between Skagen station and Grenen (16kr). Otherwise, taxis charge about 80kr each way from the town centre.

## GAMMEL SKAGEN

There's a touch of Cape Cod in refined Gammel Skagen (also known as Højen). Renowned for its gorgeous sunsets, upmarket hotels and well-heeled summer residents, it's a fine place to head late in the afternoon. It was a fishing



### FISHY BUSINESS

They say the early bird catches the worm but if you want to catch the heartbeat of this fishing community head down to the **fish auctions** (📞 from 6am Mon-Fri) at the port when the boats return with their catch. The theatre of it all is infectious, as the auctioneers and buyers go toe-to-toe in rapid Danish. The proud fishermen have harsh, weather-beaten faces and some fantastic yarns up their sleeves, so it's well worth sparking up a conversation once the sales are over.

hamlet before sandstorms ravaged this wind-swept area and forced many of its inhabitants to move to Skagen on the more protected east coast. It's a pleasant bike ride 4km west of Skagen: just head towards Frederikshavn and turn right at Højensvej, which will take you to the waterfront.

### SKAGEN BY- OG EGNSMUSEUM

Evocatively presented, the open-air **Skagen By- og Egnsmuseum** (📞 98 44 47 60; www.skagen-bymuseum.dk; PK Nielsenvej 8; adult/child 35kr/free; 🕒 hours vary daily May-Sep, Mon-Fri Oct-Apr), 200m southwest of the harbour, depicts Skagen's maritime history and gives you an insight into the traditional fishing community that so transfixed the Skagen artists (but without the romanticism!). There are interesting displays on Skagen's lifeboat rescue service, including dramatic photos of ships in distress, as well as the preserved homes of fisherfolk with their original furnishings.

### TILSANDEDE KIRKE

The Tilsandede Kirke (Buried Church) was erected during the late 14th century and was once the biggest church in the region, but in time it fell victim to a sand drift that began in the 17th century and became progressively worse – so much so that churchgoers eventually had to dig their way into God's sacred building. In 1795 the relentless sand drift broke the will of the congregation and the church was closed by royal decree. The main part of the church was torn down in 1810 but the whitewashed **tower** (adult/child 10/5kr; 🕒 11am-6pm Jun-Aug) still stands. It was used as a navigational tool for sailors back in the early days.

The photogenic church tower and the surrounding area comprise part of **Skagen Klitplantage**, a nature reserve. It's 5km south of Skagen and well signposted from Rte 40. The nicest way to get there is by bike; take Gammel Landevej from Skagen.

### SKAGEN ODDE NATURCENTER

In a beautiful building designed by the prolific architect Jørn Utzon, this **nature centre** (📞 96 79 06 06; www.skagen-natur.dk; Batterivej 51; adult/child 65/30kr; 🕒) on the outskirts of town gives an insight into the natural elements that surround Skagen and make it unique (the shifting sands, the luminous light, the raging winds, the clashing waters). It's a little pricey but well done, and there's plenty of interactive kid-friendly fun (particularly the remote-controlled model boats).

### Festivals

Since 1971 the **Skagen Festival** (www.skagenfestival.dk in Danish) has seen the town packed with official performers, buskers and appreciative visitors, and acts encompassing rock to folk music. It's held on the first weekend of July, and you'll need to book accommodation for this period well in advance.

### Sleeping

The tourist office can book rooms (350kr to 475kr plus 75kr booking fee) in private houses, or help with securing a holiday cottage for a week-long stay. You'll need to book ahead for summer visits.

**Grenen Camping** (📞 98 44 25 46; www.grenen.camping.dk; Fyrvej 16; camp sites per adult/child 78/45kr; 🕒 May-mid-Sep) This busy, well-organised place is in an ideal seaside location on the outskirts of town towards Grenen. There's plenty of tree cover and excellent facilities, including cabins (available only by the week in summer) and bikes for hire.

**Danhostel Skagen** (📞 98 44 22 55; www.danhostel.skagen.dk; Rolighedsvej 2; dm 150kr, d 325-600kr; 🕒 mid-Feb-Nov) Always a hive of family activity, this hostel is modern, functional and spic-and-span. It's decent value for families or groups, but prices for a double are steep in high season (600kr, with or without a bathroom), and there are similarly priced options with more character and/or a better location. It's 1km towards Frederikshavn from the train station.

**Finns Hotel Pension** (📞 98 45 01 55; www.finns.hotelpension.dk, Østre Strandvej 63; s 400kr, d 675-950kr;

🕒 Apr-Oct) A feast for the senses, inside and out. Gay-friendly, TV-free and adults-only (no kids under 15), Finns is a stone's throw from the beach and housed in an incredible 'log cabin' built as a holiday house for a Norwegian count in 1923. Inside are six individually decorated rooms and no end of art, photos, antiques and memorabilia to take in. Accommodating hosts will cook dinner for guests (250kr for two courses) and you can make yourself at home in the library or lovely garden.

**Marienlund Badepension** (📞 98 44 13 20; www.marienlund.dk, Fabriciusvej 8; s 430-55kr, d 700-930kr; 🕒 Mar-Oct) A cosy atmosphere, idyllic garden and beautiful lounge and breakfast areas make Marienlund a top option. There are only 14 rooms, all light, white and simply furnished, and it's almost an child-free zone, so makes for an appealing romantic retreat.

**Brøndums Hotel** (📞 98 44 15 55; www.brøndums-hotel.dk in Danish; Anchersvej 3; s/d with shared bathroom from 575/875kr) This charming hotel in the old town, right across from Skagens Museum, had close associations with the Skagen artists in its heyday. It retains an old-world sense of décor (slightly chintzy, flowery furnishings) but has similarly old-world facilities and plumbing – there's only one TV (in the living room) and few of the rooms have a private bathroom. It's a great place to relax though, especially in front of a roaring fire, and there's a good restaurant here too.

Also recommended:

**Skagen Sømands hjem** (📞 98 44 25 88; www.skagenhjem.dk; Østre Strandvej; s/d with shared bathroom 495/750kr, with bathroom 595/895kr) Simple, well-priced rooms in a prime location, and open year-round. Prices here are for May to mid-September – outside these months rates are reduced by 100kr to 200kr.

**Hotel Lille Nord** (📞 98 44 67 16; www.lille-nord.dk; Vestre Strandvej 28; d 895-1245kr, 4-person apt 995-1745kr) Newly revamped hotel with fresh double rooms and a complex of classy, fully equipped apartments.

**Ruth's Hotel** (📞 98 44 11 24; www.ruths-hotel.dk; Hans Ruths Vej 1, Gammel Skagen; r from 1625kr) Renowned hotel in chichi Gammel Skagen, with acclaimed restaurant, wellness centre, and stylish modern-meets-traditional décor.

### Eating & Drinking

Perhaps a dozen seafood shacks line the harbour selling fresh seafood to devour inside, outside or takeaway. Freshly caught prawns/shrimp (*rejer*) are the favourite fare, costing

around 85kr for a generous helping. Havnevej, the main road connecting the harbour and the town centre, has a cluster of inexpensive eateries and bars, including pizzerias and kebab shops.

**Jakobs Café & Bar** (📞 98 44 16 90; Havnevej 4A; snacks & meals 50-220kr; 🕒 lunch & dinner) The outside terrace of this relaxed café-bar makes a great spot for people-watching, and the comprehensive menu has universal favourites such as pasta, Caesar salad, steak sandwiches, fish soup and steaks. On long summer nights the place is generally heaving with young Danes enjoying a few warm-up drinks.

**Brøndums Hotel** (📞 98 44 10 55; Anchersvej 3; lunch smørrebrød 55-80kr, dinner mains 180-315kr; 🕒 lunch & dinner) French cuisine is the main influence on the otherwise classic Danish dishes, with more of that local seafood on offer. Meals are served in the old-world ambience of the dining room – it has a special-occasion feel, but you can just as easily pop in for classic lunchtime smørrebrød or afternoon coffee and cake.

**Pakhuset** (📞 98 44 20 00; Rødspættevej 6; mains café 70-185kr, restaurant 150-250kr; 🕒 lunch & dinner) Two harbourside options are worthy contenders for best in town – best for seafood, atmosphere and for late-night summer drinks (often accompanied by live music). The discerning seafood-lover will feel at home upstairs at Pakhuset, where fresh fish dishes are meticulously prepared and served on white linen. Downstairs is the more relaxed café, with easier-on-the-wallet prices and appetising meals such as fish soup or steamed mussels. We give Pakhuset the nod over its downstairs café solely for the cheerful wooden ship mast-heads it displays inside.

**Skagen Fiskerestaurant** (📞 98 44 35 44; Fiskehuskaj 13; mains café 80-130kr, restaurant 185-385kr; 🕒 lunch & dinner) The other contender for the town's favourite restaurant, with the same approach as Pakhuset – cheaper, more casual downstairs snacks and meals (superb *fiskefrikadeller*, fishballs, or fresh-off-the-boat prawns you peel yourself), and a smarter upstairs area for fancy-pants dining. Downstairs is rustic and fun (you know it doesn't take itself too seriously when the floor is covered in sand).

**Ruth's Hotel** (📞 98 44 11 24; www.ruths-hotel.dk; Hans Ruths Vej 1, Gammel Skagen; restaurant mains 320-350kr, brasserie mains 120-175kr) The elegant restaurant at Ruth's is run by one of Denmark's finest French chefs, Michelin-starred Michel



Michaoud, and is a great place to blow the budget. If your holiday dollar won't quite stretch that far, Ruth's Brassiere has a big sunny outdoor terrace and an all-day menu of classic French dishes making great use of the local produce (try the home-smoked salmon or the fish soup, or go old-school with steak tartar or escargot). True to form, the brassiere's bakery starts selling its delectable pastries from early morning.

For self-caterers, the large, central **Super Brugsen** (Sankt Laurentii Vej 28; ☎ 9am-7pm Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm Sat) supermarket has an in-house bakery open from 6.30am. It's open daily in summer. Another great place to fill a picnic basket or grab something for dinner is **Spisekammeret** (☎ 98 44 48 00; Fiskergangen 12; sandwiches from 55kr, juices & smoothies 35kr; ☎ 9.30am-8pm), a new deli selling fresh juices and smoothies, salads, quiches, wine and coffee. For coffee and cake in a lovely garden setting, head to the summertime **café at Skagens Museum** (Brøndumsvej 4), serving up delicious home-baked cakes and tarts for 20kr a pop. You don't need to pay the museum's admission charge if you're just visiting the café.

### Getting There & Away

Skagen is 41km north of Frederikshavn on Rte 40 and 49km northeast of Hirtshals via Rtes 597 and 40.

There are trains to Frederikshavn about once an hour (48kr, 35 minutes). The summertime Skagerakkeren bus connects Skagen with other northern towns and attractions (see below).

### Getting Around

Car parking is at a premium in summer – there's paid parking beside and in front of the tourist office, and beside the train station. The

best way to get around is by bike, and loads of places offer rental. **Skagen Cykeludlejning** (☎ 98 44 10 70; Banegårdsplassen; per day/week 75/295kr) is adjacent to the train station and has a wide range of bikes. It has a second outlet close to the harbour, at Fiskergangen 8.

**Taxis** (☎ 98 43 34 34) are available at the station.

### RÅBJERG MILE

Denmark's largest expanse of drifting sand dunes, Råbjerg Mile is an amazing natural phenomenon. These undulating, 40m-high hills are great fun to explore and almost big enough to lose yourself in. The dunes were formed on the west coast during the great sand drift of the 16th century and have purposefully been left in a migratory state (moving towards the forest at a rate of 15m per year). The dunes leave a low, moist layer of sand behind, stretching westwards to Skagerrak.

Råbjerg Mile is 16km southwest of Skagen, signposted off Rte 40 on the road to Kandestederne. In summer the Skagerakkeren bus (below) runs five times daily from Skagen station to Råbjerg Mile (24kr, 20 minutes) and on to Hirtshals etc. The dunes themselves are a 750m walk from the Råbjerg Mile bus stop.

### HIRTSHALS

pop 6500

Adored by discount-hungry Norwegians and largely inhabited by hardened Hirtshals seamen, this thriving modern town makes a reasonable base for sightseeing, but its looks aren't likely to take your breath away. Beaches and an impressive show of sea life round out the appeal.

The **tourist office** (☎ 98 94 22 20; Nørregade 40; www.visithirtshals.dk; ☎ 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, 10am-3pm Sat

mid-Jun-Aug, 10am-3pm Mon-Fri, 9am-noon Sat Sep-mid-Jun) is at the end of the far pedestrian walk, about five minutes' walk from the train station, and has town and region information. The seaward end of Nørregade opens out into a wide, airy space, Den Grønne Plads (The Green Square), which overlooks the fishing harbour and its tiers of blue-hulled boats.

### Sights & Activities

If you've always wondered what lurks beneath, head to the impressive **Nordsømuseum** (North Sea Museum; ☎ 98 94 44 44; www.nordsømuseum.dk; Willemoesvej 2; adult/child 120/60kr; ☎ 9am-6pm Jul-Aug, 9am-5pm Sep-Jun; ☎), home to the largest aquarium in northern Europe. Here, 4.5 million litres of seawater is the home of thousands of elegantly balletic North Sea mackerel and herring in a huge, four-storey tank. Every day at 1pm a diver enters the tank to feed the marine life (in July and August there's an additional feeding at 4pm). The seal pool outside comes alive during feeding time at 11am and 3pm daily. Touchpools and playgrounds make this a good family excursion. By car the E39 passes close to the museum (signposted); if you're coming by train from Hjørring, get off at Lilleheden station, from where it's a five-minute walk.

If all you're after is a long stretch of untouched white sand, **Tornby Strand** delivers it in spades (and buckets...). It's 5km south of Hirtshals and attracts locals and tourists soaking up as much vitamin D as possible. As the sand is compact enough to drive on, many park next to the breakers. Hiking is possible in the high mounded dunes and into the coastal woodlands that back the southern side of the beach. Tornby Strand can be reached from Hirtshals via Rte 55 and Tornby Strandvej. The village here has a summer camping ground and a handful of sleeping and eating options.

In summer the Skagerakkeren bus (opposite) stops at both Nordsømuseum and Tornby Strand.

### Sleeping & Eating

**Hirtshals Camping** (☎ 98 94 25 35; http://hirtshals.dk-camp.dk; Kystvejen 6; camp sites per adult/child 65/39kr; ☎ May-mid-Sep) Hope for good weather at this flat, treeless ground by 150m south of the hostel, in the shadow of an old lighthouse. If the sun is shining you're right by the water, but if the wind's up you're exposed to the ele-

ments. If the latter is the case, there are also cabins for hire (from 350kr).

**Danhostel Hirtshals** (☎ 98 94 12 48; www.danhostel.hirtshals.dk; Kystvejen 53; dm 150kr, d 410-520kr; ☎ Mar-Oct) This is a pleasant budget option, 1km southwest of the train station and with the usual high-standard facilities and functional rooms expected from Danhostels. Its best feature is its location, right across the road from the beach. Dorm beds are only available from June to August.

**Hotel Hirtshals** (☎ 98 94 20 77; www.hotelhirtshals.dk; Havnegade 2; d/tr/f 865/1040/1395kr) On the main square above the fishing harbour, the Hirtshals has bright, comfortable rooms with high steepled ceilings – try for one with a sea view. It's in the best position for enjoying the town's restaurants and is heavily peopled by ferry-going Norwegians.

**Hirtshals Kro** (☎ 98 94 20 77; Havnegade; lunch 69-189kr, dinner 149-199kr; ☎ lunch & dinner) The best spot in town for a meal, with loads of character in its low ceilings, wooden beams and assorted fishing memorabilia. Straight from the owner's mouth (whose grandfather owned this *kro* in the 1900s) – order the *rodspætte* (plaice). There's a large outdoor terrace, plus an intimate bar next door where Norwegians are known to overindulge in the cheap Danish beer (hey, it's all relative!).

### Getting There & Around

Hirtshals is 49km southwest of Skagen via Rtes 597 and 40, and 41km northwest of Frederikshavn via the E39 and Rte 35.

#### JUTLAND'S BEST BEACHES

It's true, the water's never going to be as warm as on the Med, but Denmark has long coastal stretches of appealing white sand. Following are some of our fave Jutland beach-going spots:

Als (p252)

Fanø (p236)

Grenaa (p273)

Løkken (p310)

Moesgård Strand (Århus; p260)

Rømø (p244)

Skagen (p304)

Tornby Strand (Hirtshals; left)

#### SUMMER BUSES

If you're holidaying in Northern Jutland in summer and don't have your own transport, you need to know all about 'Skagerakkeren' – the number 99 bus that runs from the top tip of Jutland (Grenen) along the northwest coast, to Skagen, Gammel Skagen, Råbjerg Mile, Nordsømuseum, Hirtshals, Tornby Strand, Hjørring, Lønstrup, Løkken, Fårup Sommerland and Blokhus (where it connects with bus 200E to Aalborg). Naturally, it also does the route in reverse. The service runs only for about six weeks – the height of the summer season – from July to mid-August; it runs the entire route four times a day, plus an additional two express services calling only at a few major stops (Skagen, Hjørring, Løkken and Blokhus), plus a few runs between just the northern/southern stops). Pick up a timetable or call ☎ 98 11 11 11; the website for **Nordjyllands Trafikelskab** (NT; North Jutland Transport Association; www.nordjyllandstrafikelskab.dk) is only in Danish, but timetables should be easy enough to access.

**Color Line** ([www.colorline.com](http://www.colorline.com)) operates ferries year-round between Hirtshals and the Norwegian ports of Kristiansand, Stavanger, Bergen and Larvik (see p330).

Hirtshals' train station is 500m south of the ferry terminal. A private railway connects Hirtshals with Hjørring hourly between 6am and 7pm, with a few later connections (24kr, 20 minutes). At Hjørring you can connect with a DSB train to Aalborg or Frederikshavn or points further south.

## HJØRRING

pop 24,800

That the inland town of Hjørring only has one hotel speaks volumes – the holiday action is going on elsewhere, at all the surrounding seaside towns. Still, if you don't have your own wheels Hjørring may be an OK base, given its good transport connections with most of the region. And it's a pleasant enough service town, with medieval churches and plenty of sculptures enlivening the streets.

### Orientation & Information

Hjørring's old town is around its main square, Springvandspladsen, and runs north up to Sankt Olai Plads, which is bordered by the three medieval churches. Springvandspladsen is a five-minute walk north of the train station along Jernbanegade; stroll 200m further north on the pedestrian walk Strømgade to reach Sankt Olai Plads.

The **tourist office** (☎ 98 92 02 32; [www.visithjoerring.dk](http://www.visithjoerring.dk); Museumsgade 3; ☎ 10am–5pm daily May–Sep, 10am–4pm Mon–Fri, 10am–2pm Sat Oct–Apr) is inside the Vendsyssel Historiske Museum, off Skolegade (west of Strømgade).

### Sights

Hjørring is unique in that it managed to retain three medieval churches despite the thinning out that occurred throughout Denmark following the Reformation. All three churches are within 200m of each other, on the northern side of Sankt Olai Plads. The oldest, **Sankt Olai Kirke** (☎ 8am–4pm Mon–Fri), dates from the 11th century.

The tourist office is inside the **Vendsyssel Historiske Museum** (☎ 96 24 10 50; [www.vhm.dk](http://www.vhm.dk); Museumsgade 3; adult/child 40kr/free; ☎ 10am–5pm daily May–Sep, 10am–4pm Mon–Fri, 10am–2pm Sat Oct–Apr), with a standard collection of town treasures and tales. More interesting is to walk the town streets and admire the abundance of sculptures.

### Sleeping & Eating

**Hotel Phønix** (☎ 98 92 54 55; [www.phoenix-hjoerring.dk](http://www.phoenix-hjoerring.dk); Jernbanegade 6; r 750kr) If you're using Hjørring as a base the Phønix is a better choice than the out-of-town hostel, thanks to its handy position close to the train and bus stations. It's the town's only hotel, in a lovely 1887 building in a prime position. The welcome is warm and the rooms well-equipped.

There's no shortage of eating and drinking options along Jernbanegade, but it's worth searching out **Blomster Caféen** (☎ 98 90 08 44; Nørkjær Plads 16; lunch 35–60kr; ☎ 10am–6pm Mon–Fri, 9am–4pm Sat), off Søndergade. The lunch menu is a good one, but we like this place for the outdoor seating among some interesting statues and water features – check out the rather bizarre C3PO-ish statues of the male and female form.

### Getting There & Away

Hjørring is 35km west of Frederikshavn on Rte 35 and 17km south of Hirtshals on Rte 55 or the E39.

Hjørring is on the Århus–Frederikshavn DSB train line and is also the terminus of a short private train line to Hirtshals. Destinations by train include Hirtshals (24kr, 20 minutes), Frederikshavn (48kr, 30 minutes), Skagen (56kr, 1½ hours, change trains at Frederikshavn), Aalborg (72kr, 45 minutes) and Århus (181kr, 2¼ hours).

Hjørring is well served by regional buses operated by **Nordjyllands Trafikselskab** (☎ 98 11 11 11), with services to many parts of Northern Jutland, including Skagen, Løkken, Aalborg, Sæby and Hirtshals (prices are the same as for train journeys). The bus station is 150m northeast of the train station, near the intersection of Jernbanegade and Asylgade.

## LØKKEN

pop 1300

A generation of Danish holidaymakers may raise an eyebrow when they read this, but Løkken is now an appealing holiday spot for all ages (see opposite). The town's biggest drawcard is its wide, sandy beach, and the requisite shops, ice-cream stands and cafés welcome the summer bombardment. Colder months see the town go into hibernation.

### Information

The super-helpful **tourist office** (☎ 98 99 10 09; [www.loekken.dk](http://www.loekken.dk); Harald Fischers Vej 8; ☎ 10am–5pm

### THE REINVENTION OF LØKKEN

We were surprised by Løkken. After hearing tales of teenage party-animals making this town their regular summer habitat ('Danish Ibiza' was one tag), Løkken had a less seedy, and indeed a less youthful, aura than we expected. Tourism authorities and locals told us that over the past couple of years Løkken has worked hard – and succeeded, by the looks of things – to change its image and attract a different crowd (it's now aiming squarely for families and cashed up over-fifties). A faithful younger crowd still makes a visit to its old summer playground, but not in the numbers that appeared in its heyday.

A large factor in the dwindling of the party crowd in Løkken is the closure of three in-town camping grounds – these properties are being developed into even more summer houses and apartments. Younger travellers will still find popular summertime discos and clubs, especially on Søndergade and Nørregade (although one clued-up young local expressed concern for the future of such establishments if the club-going crowd continues to overlook Løkken). Meanwhile, visitors will find newer spots catering to a more mature clientele in search of a civilised drink (there's the ubiquitous microbrewery, for example), and more family-friendly diversions.

Mon–Sat, 10am–1pm Sun mid–Jun–Aug, 10am–4pm Mon–Fri, 10am–1pm Sat Sep–mid–Jun) is 200m east of the main Torvet. It has a wealth of knowledge on the area and can book hotels and summer houses. The post office is part of the tourist office. There's free internet access at the town's **library** (☎ 72 33 48 85; Nørregade 28).

### Sights & Activities

**Fårup Sommerland** (☎ 98 88 16 00; [www.faarupsommerland.dk](http://www.faarupsommerland.dk); Pirupvejen 147, Blokhuis; admission 155–180kr; ☎ from 10am May–early Sep; 🚗 ) is another wholesome (and pricey) amusement park catering to holidaying families in search of distractions – of which there are plenty, from a wooden roller coaster to kiddie-safe rides and a huge water park with wave pool and waterslides. It may be worth visiting just of an afternoon, when the entry price drops to 80kr to 100kr, depending on the time of year. It's on the outskirts of Blokhuis, about 15km south of Løkken.

Or go looking for your own (free) beach-side fun at Løkken's lovely long strand, lined with neat rows of white wooden beach huts and a few stout little fishing vessels. Check out the kitesurfers taking advantage of west-coast winds (BYO gear). From May to September **SurfSkolen** (☎ 22 16 90 03; [www.surf-skolen.dk](http://www.surf-skolen.dk)) offers a three-hour beginners course in surfing at Løkken beach. The course costs 225/275kr adult/child (kids over 10 welcome), including wetsuit and board hire.

The charming little **Løkken Museum** (☎ 98 99 64 54; Nørregade 12; adult/child 10kr/free; ☎ 10am–4pm Mon–Fri, 1–4pm Sun Jun–Aug) and **Kystfiskerimuseet** (Coastal Fishing Museum; ☎ 98 99 64 54; Ndr Strandvej;

adult/child 10kr/free; ☎ 10am–4pm Mon–Fri, 1–4pm Sun Jun–Aug), perched above the beach, tell the story of Løkken seagoing.

### Sleeping

The tourist office has loads of holiday houses on its books, usually rented out weekly in high season. Hotels and apartments are also generally geared to long-stayers rather than overnighters passing through.

**Løkken Campingcenter & Hytteby** (☎ 98 99 17 67; [www.loekken-hytteby.dk](http://www.loekken-hytteby.dk) in Danish; Søndergade 69; camp sites per adult/child 80/20kr; ☎ late May–Aug) Very much a summer family playground, with all the requisite facilities and outdoor play areas. It's the only camping ground left on Søndergade and is only a couple of hundred metres to both town and beach. Cabins are available on a weekly basis (from 1300kr).

**our pick Villa Vendel** (☎ 98 99 14 56; [www.villa.vendel.dk](http://www.villa.vendel.dk); Harald Fischers Vej 12; r 420–640kr, apt 650–850kr) Indicative of Løkken's recent change of image is this delightful option near the tourist office, a member of the Small Elegant Hotels group (and, well, we couldn't put it better). It has five rooms (most with shared bathroom) and two apartments on offer, and a classy old-world feel with wooden floors and neutral décor. There's a guest kitchen, a courtyard for alfresco breakfast (45kr) and a large garden. Friendly owners, great-value prices and year-round opening round out a pretty impressive package.

### Eating

You'll have no problems finding a place to eat on Torvet, filled with alfresco tables and

relaxed holidaymakers. While you're here, pop into every dentist's nightmare, **Bolcheriet** (☎ 98 99 00 77; Torvet 1; ☞ 10am-5pm), where you can see boiled lollies being made – and of course purchase the sweet stuff.

**Løkken Fiske-Restaurant** (☎ 98 99 02 00; Nørregade 9; lunch 39-49kr, dinner mains 132-239kr; ☞ lunch Fri-Sun, dinner nightly) Just off Torvet and offering a taste of the coast, this restaurant serves up bargain lunches of fish and chips or herring on rye bread – best enjoyed outside with a beer – or more upmarket dinnertime options, including butterfried sole or lobster tail. The summer fish buffet (129kr) is a piscatorial treat.

**Peter Bådsmænd** (☎ 98 99 13 87; Sdr Strandvej 4; lunch 58-99kr, dinner mains 139-199kr; ☞ lunch & dinner) This salty old pub is just short of the beach and well worth a visit for its ye-olde fishing boat interior. It's fabulously done – the front bar is an old rowing boat, and there's the requisite lanterns, ropes, beams and fishing paraphernalia to add atmosphere. The food is good honest fare, and the place turns into a club later on, with live music and/or a disco.

### Getting There & Away

Løkken is on Rte 55, 18km southwest of Hjørring. Bus 71 runs hourly on weekdays (less frequently on weekends) between Løkken and Hjørring (32kr, 30 minutes), and Løkken and Aalborg (64kr, 70 minutes). Løkken is also on the summertime Skagerakkeren bus route (see p308).

## HANSTHOLM

pop 3500

Despite its interesting wartime museum and newfound status as the northern boundary of Denmark's newest national park, modern Hanstholm is a rather charmless place – thanks largely to the fact that a small, lacklustre shopping centre serves as the town's heart. There's little reason to linger, except if you need to jump on a ferry to Norway or Iceland.

The **tourist office** (☎ 97 92 19 00; www.thy.dk; Bytorvet 9; ☞ 9.30am-4pm or 5pm Mon-Fri Apr-Oct, very reduced hr Nov-Mar) is inside the central shopping centre. Winter sees the office closed for four days out of seven. If you're fresh off the boat, there's an ATM down at the harbour (and supermarkets catering to discount-hungry Norwegians).

### Sights

Hanstholm's impressive commercial harbour was completed in 1967 and since then the

town has developed into one of Denmark's largest fishing ports and prominent industrial centres. There's a good viewpoint over the harbour at the end of Helshagevej.

Hanstholm was a key player in the German occupation of Denmark and the impressive **MuseumsCenter Hanstholm** (☎ 97 96 17 36; www.museumscenterhanstholm.dk; Molevej 29; adult/child 50/20kr; ☞ 10am-5pm Jun-Aug, 10am-4pm Feb-May & Sep-Oct) is based around a German bunker. In the bunker is one of four 38cm guns used to fire across the channel. It had a range of 55km and with the other three guns made up the German battery known as 'Hanstholm II'. Hitler used this as part of his 'Atlantic Wall' system, a series of fortifications that spread from Kirkenes in Norway to the Pyrenees. Along with the bunker you can visit the Documentation Centre, which outlines this period in more detail and provides an insight into the way of life for locals under Hitler's rule. The museum is 300m west of the centre and well signposted.

### Sleeping & Eating

**Hanstholm Sømandshjem & Hotel** (☎ 97 96 11 45; www.hshh.dk; Kai Lindbergs Gade 71; dm/s/d/f 150/475/665/850kr; ☞) You're most likely to be overnighing in Hanstholm thanks to ferry connections, and this is your best option. It's down by the harbour with a good-value on-site cafeteria (dinner mains 95kr to 145kr) and a homely feel. If you want to explore further, there are bikes for hire. Dorm prices don't include breakfast and linen (although both are available); room prices include the works.

**Hotel Hanstholm** (☎ 97 96 10 44; www.hotelhanstholm.dk; Christian Hansens Vej 2; s/d 750/995kr; ☞) A more upmarket option, inland from the harbour and close to the town 'centre' (aka shopping centre). Rooms are pretty standard and facilities are laid on thick, including pool, sauna and on-site restaurant.

Other eating options can be found at the harbour or inside the shopping centre at Bytorvet. The best place for a slap-up meal is the shiny new restaurant **Brasserie Pynten** (☎ 97 40 70 70; www.pynten.dk in Danish; Helshagevej 98; lunch 115-135kr, dinner mains 215-250kr), which doesn't look like much from the outside but has a sexy modern interior, sweeping views and a creative international menu. There are also seriously swank apartments available here, with serious price tags to match (2000/4000kr for two/four people).

### Getting There & Away

Hanstholm is at the terminus of Rtes 181, 26 and 29. Thisted, 21km to the south via Rte 26, has the nearest train station. Buses 22 and 23 run to Thisted train station from Hanstholm harbour roughly every hour on weekdays, less often on weekends (24kr, 45 minutes).

There are car ferries connecting Hanstholm with the Norwegian cities of Egersund, Haugesund, Bergen and Kristiansand, as well as to Iceland and the Shetland and Faroe Islands (p330).

## KLITMØLLER

pop 900

Klitmøller's windy ways and curving waves have transformed the small fishing village into one of Europe's premier windsurfing destinations, known colloquially as 'Cold Hawaii'. It's a small holiday spot, filled with summer houses, where wetsuit-clad surfers roam the streets and outdoorsy folk get around on bikes, seemingly oblivious to the cracking wind. If such tumultuous weather – and activity – doesn't appeal, Klitmøller can be bypassed en route to the calmer bathing spots north and south of the town.

### Activities

Don't despair if you're not world championship windsurfing material. In addition to the challenging waves of the North Sea, Vandet Sø, a few kilometres east of Klitmøller, is a popular windsurfing lake, with conditions suitable for all levels.

**Westwind Klitmøller** (☎ 97 97 56 56; www.westwind-klitmoller.dk in Danish; Ørhagevej 151) is by the beach and has enthusiastic surfers keen to show you the ropes of windsurfing and kitesurfing. A three-hour introductory windsurfing course costs 400kr, or eight hours (four two-hour blocks) is 799kr – and they guarantee you'll be able to windsurf after those eight hours. A three-hour introduction to kitesurfing costs 750kr. For those who know what they're doing, gear rental is available.

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### Sleeping & Eating

**Nystrup Camping** (☎ 97 97 52 49; www.nystrupcampingklitmoller.dk; Trøjborgvej 22; camp sites per adult/child/site 75/45/25kr; ☞ Mar-Oct; ☞) Populated by windswept types and littered with surfing kit, this popular ground has plenty of trees for shelter decent facilities including free mini-golf, horse riding and a sauna. It also has a minimarket and café.

**Klitmøller Gammel Kro & Badehotel** (☎ 97 97 55 20; www.klitmollerbadehotel.dk in Danish; Krovej 15; s/d/f with shared bathroom 200/300/400kr) This old *kro* (inn) is a popular spot thanks to its decent, well-priced hostel-style accommodation (the prices listed here don't include linen or breakfast, but both are available – B&B is 295kr per person). It's a chilled-out mix of families and cyclists, and there's a guest kitchen or quality meals served up in the onsite restaurant.

**Klitmøller Røgeri** (☎ 97 97 55 66; Ørhagevej 152; snacks & meals 40-80kr; ☞ lunch & dinner May-Sep) Offers a sensational selection of fresh and smoked seafood not far from the beach – grab some fish and chips (49kr) or a baguette stuffed with prawns and a cold beer and watch the water acrobatics in full swing. There's a barbecue here of an evening in summer.

**Restaurant Niels Juel** (☎ 97 97 51 88; Ørhagevej 150; buffet 120kr; ☞ dinner) If the wind dies down a little, the large terrace of this elevated restaurant – whitewashed under a thatched roof – is the best spot to watch the surfing action. In the evening there's the sound of diners loosening their belts in order to partake of more of the fish buffet, heaving with herrings, prawns and salmon. Downstairs from the restaurant is a casual all-day café-bar with internet, draught beer and fast food.

### Getting There & Away

Klitmøller is 11km southwest of Hanstholm on Rte 181, and 18km northwest of Thisted on Rte 557. Bus 22 runs between the three towns, hourly Monday to Friday (less frequently on weekends). Thisted has a rail connection for journeys further south.