

Sweden

From berserker Vikings to the Nobel Peace Prize in just a few short centuries – Sweden really has earned its reputation as a model for progressive society. It's earned most of its other reputations, too: the population is overwhelmingly gorgeous, the standard of living is among the highest in Europe, the interior design is clean-lined and functional, and people really do eat meatballs on a regular basis.

But it's a little more complicated than that. There are plenty of surprises for the traveller, from the diversity and grit of cities like Göteborg (Gothenburg) and Malmö, to the rugged beauty of the national parks in Norrland, to the huge number of pre-Viking relics just lying around in the countryside, to Östersund's mysterious lake monster.

FAST FACTS

Area 449,964 sq km

Capital Stockholm

Currency €1 = Skr9.19; US\$1 = Skr7.13; UK£1 = Skr13.34; A\$1 = Skr5.32; CA\$1 = Skr6.51; NZ\$1 = Skr4.49; ¥100 = Skr6.34

Famous for Vikings, Volvos, Ericsson, ABBA, meatballs, tennis players, IKEA

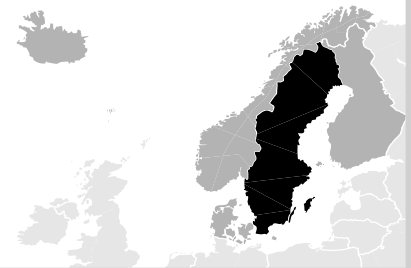
Official Languages Swedish, plus the officially protected minority languages Romani, Finnish, Yiddish, Meänkieli (Tornedal) and Sami (actually three languages)

Phrases *hej* (hello), *hej då* (goodbye), *ja* (yes), *nej* (no), *tack* (thanks)

Population 9.02 million

Telephone Codes country code ☎ 46;
regional codes: Stockholm ☎ 08, Göteborg ☎ 031;
international access code ☎ 00

Visa Not needed for most visitors for stays of up to three months (see p473)



HIGHLIGHTS

- Tour the urban waterways, explore top-notch museums and wander the cobblestone backstreets of Gamla Stan in **Stockholm** (p398)
- Enjoy a frosty beverage – and a frozen bed – at the ultra-cool **Ice Hotel** (p464), near Kiruna
- Let your hair down with holidaying Swedes on **Gotland** (p451), the perfect cycling and camping destination
- Celebrate Midsummer in the heartland villages surrounding the lovely **Lake Siljan** (p422)
- Admire the picturesque farmsteads and cosmopolitan cities that dot the green fields of **Skåne** (p424)

ITINERARIES

- **One week** Spend three days in Stockholm and Uppsala, and two days in and around Göteborg before continuing south to the dynamic cities of Malmö and Lund. Alternatively, explore the Stockholm region more thoroughly, including day trips to Drottningholm and Birka and a couple of days in the archipelago, before heading to Uppsala via Sigtuna.
- **Two weeks** As above, but include a trip northwards to the Lake Siljan region, then further up to Härnösand to explore the quaint fishing villages and dramatic cliffs of Høga Kusten. Alternatively, camp and cycle on Gotland for a few days.

CLIMATE & WHEN TO GO

Sweden is at its best during summer and autumn (late May to September). Summers are short and intense, and daylight hours are long. This is particularly true anywhere north of Stockholm, where the change in seasons is dramatic. Many youth hostels, camping grounds and attractions open only in high summer (late June to early August). This period is also when most Swedes are holidaying, so finding accommodation in areas favoured by the locals (eg Dalarna, Gotland and Öland) may prove difficult. Travel in winter takes some planning, but there are good opportunities for activities such as skiing or dogsled and snowmobile safaris. The big cities are in full swing all year, but smaller towns hibernate when the temperature drops (the notable exceptions being popular ski resorts). The south,

particularly Skåne, is known for its mild climate, as is Gotland.

For climate charts, see the Regional Directory (p466).

HISTORY

Written records in Sweden survive only from the late Middle Ages, but the number of ancient fortifications, assembly places, votive sites and graves is impressive.

The Viking Age was getting under way by the 9th century and vast repositories of Roman, Byzantine and Arab coins attest to the wealth and power Swedish Vikings accumulated over the next century. Vikings travelled mostly to the east, making their mark in Russia, as well as trading with (and pillaging) Byzantine territories.

Internal squabbles whiled away the bulk of the Middle Ages until Denmark intervened and, together with Norway, joined Sweden in the Union of Kalmar in 1397 (signed at Kalmar's grand castle; see p446). Danish monarchs held the Swedish throne for a while.

A century of Swedish nationalist grumblings erupted in rebellion under the young nobleman Gustav Vasa. After being crowned Gustav I in 1523, he introduced the Reformation and a powerful, centralised nation-state. A period of expansion began and resulted in Sweden's control over much of Finland and the Baltic countries.

King Karl XII's adventures in the early 18th century cost Sweden its Baltic territories and the crown much prestige. The next 50 years were marked by greater parliamentary power, but Gustav III led a coup that interrupted this development. Unrestricted royal power was undone by aristocratic revolt in 1809 and Finland was lost to Russia. That same year produced a constitution that divided legislative powers between king and Riksdag (Parliament). Napoleon's marshal Bernadotte was chosen to fill a gap in the succession and, as Karl Johan, became regent. Thus began the rise of liberalism and Sweden's policy of neutrality. In 1814 the military enforcement of the union with Norway was Sweden's last involvement with war.

Sweden declared itself neutral at the outbreak of WWI, but a British economic blockade caused food shortages and civil unrest. Consensus was no longer possible,



HOW MUCH?

- **Hostel dorm bed** Skr150-350
- **Coffee & cake** Skr35
- **Museum entry** Skr40-70
- **Dagens rätt (fixed-price lunch)** Skr65
- **Two-hour Tunnelbana ticket** Skr18

LONELY PLANET INDEX

- **1L of petrol** Skr12
- **1.5L bottle of water** Skr15
- **Pint of lager** Skr35-48
- **Souvenir T-shirt** Skr150-200
- **Street snack (korv, or hot dog)** Skr15-25

and in 1921 a Social Democrat and Liberal coalition government took control for the first time. Reforms followed quickly; the new government introduced the eight-hour work day and suffrage for all adults over age 23.

The Social Democrats dominated politics after 1932. After the hardships caused by the Depression, they reworked the liberal tendencies of the 1920s and combined them with economic intervention policies to introduce Sweden's famed welfare state.

These trends were scarcely interrupted by Sweden's ambiguous approach to WWII. The Social Democrats sponsored models for industrial bargaining and for full employment, which allowed the economy to blossom. The 1950s and '60s saw a rapid rise in the standard of living for ordinary Swedes.

VOX POP/INTERVIEW

Jan Elvsén lives in Stockholm and works as a general practitioner in various health centres across Sweden, often pulling night shifts for one or two weeks straight. When he's not working or running, Elvsén, a seriously opinionated film buff, writes about movies and DVDs for the Swedish magazine *Ingmar* (www.ingmar.se) and a variety of other media outlets. His take on Swedish cinema is unorthodox, to say the least – and particularly ironic considering the name of the magazine he writes for. Mention the country's most famous and revered film director and Elvsén frowns. 'Bergman's shadow still lies like a wet blanket over the Swedish film community,' he says. So who does he like? The list is short, but it does include director Roy Andersson (*Songs from the Second Floor*).

Serious current-account problems during the world recession of the early 1990s provoked frenzied speculation against the Swedish krona, forcing a massive devaluation of the currency. With both their economy and national confidence severely shaken, the Swedes voted narrowly in favour of joining the European Union (EU), effective 1 January 1995.

Since 1995, Sweden's welfare state has undergone tough reforms and the economy has improved considerably, with falling unemployment and inflation. The country has remained outside the single European currency; a 2003 referendum on whether Sweden should adopt the euro resulted in a 'no' vote, but the question is certain to come up again. The 2003 referendum was overshadowed by the murder just days before of Sweden's popular foreign minister, Anna Lindh, in a department store in Stockholm. Her killing plunged the country into a state of shock, but does not appear to have been politically motivated.

In recent years, Sweden has grown away from its rather homogeneous past, both culturally and economically. Immigration and a new reliance on the information technology (IT) industry have corresponded with factionalisation of the sociopolitical landscape. Whether a function of diversity or dissatisfaction with the status quo, the Alliance for Sweden, a left-wing coalition, narrowly defeated the Social Democrats the general election of September 2006

PEOPLE

Around nine million people call Sweden home, making it Scandinavia's most populous country. Most of those folks are crammed into the urban centres of Stockholm, Göteborg and Malmö – only 12% of

the population lives in Norrland, which takes up two-thirds of the country's geographical area. There are around 17,000 Sami in Sweden, largely concentrated in the north. More than 20% of Sweden's population are foreign-born or have at least one non-Swedish parent. Most immigrants have come from other European countries. Of non-European immigrants, the largest group consists of Middle Easterners, mostly from Iraq, Turkey and Iran. There are an estimated 40,000 Roma people in Sweden. Other well-represented countries include Poland, Chile and Somalia.

RELIGION

Some 87% of the Swedish population is Lutheran, although only about 10% regularly attend church services.

ARTS

Sweden today is probably better known for design and pop music than fine arts. Thanks to IKEA, words like 'spartan' and 'clean-lined' are mandatory in any discussion of Swedish aesthetics. The self-assembled bookshelves and affordable bold-print curtains didn't come out of nowhere, of course – artists such as Josef Frank, Carl Malmsten

and Bruno Mathsson are among the early progenitors of Swedish interior design. Also influential is the trifecta of glassworks, Kosta Boda and Orrefors, the products of which can be spotted somewhere in most Swedish households.

By some counts the third-largest exporter of music in the world (after the US and UK), Sweden hosts about 120 music festivals every year, from medieval and baroque to folk, jazz and rock. No discussion of Swedish pop is complete without mention of ABBA; more recent exports include Sahara Hotnights, Hellacopters, The (International) Noise Conspiracy, The Hives, Refused, Timbuktu, In Flames and The Soundtrack of Our Lives. Domestic sensations like Amy Diamond and Elena Paparizou dominate Swedish radio.

For an interesting and thorough summary of Swedish music history, along with factsheets on other topics such as design and architecture, check out www.sweden.se.

In the literary world, stormy dramatist August Strindberg (*Miss Julie*) and Nobel laureate Selma Lagerlöf are probably the biggest names. But the best-loved Swedish writer is Astrid Lindgren, creator of the resourceful, pigtailed Pippi Longstocking.

THANK YOU FOR THE MUSIC

If asked to name Sweden's most famous exports, ABBA would top many people's list.

During the 1970s ABBA, consisting of two couples, became one of the most successful popular music acts of the decade. The individual members were all show-business veterans in their native Sweden, and their wholesome image, perfectly constructed pop songs and strong melodies took the world by storm.

ABBA, an acronym of their names (Agnetha, Björn, Benny and Anni-Frid – more commonly known as Frida), won the Eurovision Song Contest in 1974 with 'Waterloo', which went on to top the charts in several countries. ABBA went from success to success: they toured the world, made a film and recorded hit after hit.

ABBA's last year together was 1982. By then the fairy tale was over and both couples had divorced but, in the words of one of their songs, 'the music still goes on'. Recent years have seen something of an ABBA revival, with successful cover versions of ABBA anthems, ABBA tribute bands, the group's elevation to the status of gay icon, and popular movies featuring ABBA music and impersonations. In 1992 the compilation album *ABBA Gold* was released and became the group's biggest seller (to date it has sold a staggering 25 million copies worldwide). A stage show based on their music, *Mamma Mia!* (written by Benny and Björn), still sells out regularly in Stockholm. The show's soundtrack, with all the group's hits performed in Swedish, went gold in 2005. *ABBA: The Movie* won a Swedish Grammy award in 2006. Despite this revival success, no reunion is on the cards (the media reports that band members knocked back an offer of US\$1 billion to regroup).

There are hundreds of ABBA websites on the internet; a good place to start is the endearing www.abbasite.com, which includes a 'Today in ABBA' section.

Vilhelm Moberg is a renowned documentarian of Swedish working-class life (*The Immigrants* and *The Emigrants*). Contemporary authors to look for include Henning Mankell, author of a crime series featuring morose detective Kurt Wallander (*Dogs of Riga*); and spy novelist Jan Guillou (*Evil*).

The beret-crowned Ingmar Bergman, though supposedly retired from filmmaking, remains one of the most important film directors of all time. New Swedish directors making names for themselves include Lukas Moodysson, Roy Andersson and Josef Fares.

Carl Larsson, Anders Zorn and Bruno Liljefors are among the best-known Swedish painters – visitors to nearly any art museum in the country will see examples of their work.

In the scientific realm, the two biggest Swedish influences are Carl von Linné, the 18th-century botanist who pioneered modern plant taxonomy under Latin classifications; and Alfred Nobel, the inventor of dynamite and other explosives, whose will founded the Nobel Institute and the international prizes in 1901.

ENVIRONMENT

The Land

Sweden covers an area of 449,964 sq km, and its maximum north–south extent is 1574km. This size allows for a little diversity: flat and open Skåne is similar to Denmark, but further north the landscape is hillier and heavily forested. The rocky west coast is most notable for its fjords and skerries, although they scarcely compare with the barrage of rocky islets that shield Stockholm. The islands of Öland and Gotland consist of flat limestone and sandstone.

There are approximately 100,000 lakes in Sweden. Lake Mälaren is the heart of the country, although Vänern is by far the biggest of the south and central lakes. In Norrland there's an almost uniform expanse of forest cut by rivers and narrow lakes. The trees thin out in Jämtland and Lappland and the mountains assert themselves, providing a natural frontier with Norway in the northwest.

Geographical divisions in Sweden are complex. The two kingdoms which united in the 11th century form the southern half

of the country: Götaland in the south and Svealand in lower central Sweden. Anything north of Svealand is called Norrland. The 25 historical regions (based on common dialect), called *landskap*, remain as denominators for people's identity and a basis for regional tourist promotion. Regional administration is based on 21 *län* (counties), which are responsible for things such as *länstrafik* (regional public transport) and *länsmuseum* (county museums).

Wildlife

Large numbers of elk (moose) and deer live in the forests, and in Norrland there are sizable herds of reindeer (no longer truly wild, as each animal belongs to a local Sami community). Other animals peculiar to the north are the arctic fox and lemmings, small, hardy rodents famous (mistakenly so) for leaping off cliffs en masse. European brown bears, Scandinavia's only surviving wild bear population, number about 1000 and live mainly in the remote northern areas; visitors can see them at the Grönklitt Björnpark (p423) outside Orsa in the Lake Siljan area.

National Parks

Nature-loving Swedes led Europe in setting up national parks in the early 20th century; there are now 28 throughout the country (the biggest and best are in Lappland). Rules vary locally, but the constant is that all people have access to open areas (see p469). In 1996, the 9400-sq-km Lapponia area was placed on the World Heritage List – it includes the national parks Stora Sjöfallet, Sarek, Padjelanta and Muddus. See the website of **Naturvårdsverket** (www.environ.se), the Swedish environmental protection agency, for coverage of national parks.

Environmental Issues

Ecological consciousness in Sweden is very high and reflected in concern for native animals, clean water and renewable resources. Swedes are fervent believers in sorting and recycling household waste – you'll be expected to do the same in some hotels, hostels and camping grounds. Most plastic bottles and cans can be recycled – supermarket disposal machines give Skr0.50 to Skr1 per item.

FOOD & DRINK

There's a lot more to Swedish food than meatballs and a crazed Muppet chef.

Staples & Specialities

Classic Swedish *husmanskost* (home-style Swedish food) is based on simply prepared combinations of meat, potatoes and fish. Many traditional restaurants specialise in *husmanskost*, but other restaurants often include a *husmanskost* section (or even just a dish) on the menu. Typical *husmanskost* dishes are *pytt i panna*, a meat-and-potato hash served with pickled beets and a fried egg; fried or pickled herring, called *sill* or *strömming* depending on which coast it comes from; *lax* (salmon) in several forms, from grilled to smoked to *gravad* (salt-and-sugar cured); game such as elk and reindeer; and of course the requisite *köttbullar* (Swedish meatballs), normally served with mashed potatoes and lingonberry sauce.

Where to Eat & Drink

Swedes don't typically go out for *frukost* (breakfast); most start their day with coffee and a pastry or cereal with yogurt. Most hotels and some hostels provide extensive breakfast buffets laden with cereals and yogurt plus bread, fruit, cold cuts, cheese and the like.

Most cafés and restaurants serve a daily lunch special called *dagens rätt* or *dagens lunch* at a fixed price (typically Skr65 to Skr75) between 11.30am and 2pm. The price usually includes main course, salad, bread, cold drink and coffee, and it's one of the most economical ways to sample up-market Swedish cooking.

To counter the mid-afternoon slump, Swedes enjoy *fika*, an almost mandatory coffee break. *Konditori* are old-fashioned bakery-cafés where you can get a pastry or a *smörgås* (sandwich) from Skr25, but there are also many stylish, modern cafés where you can enjoy people-watching over pricier Italian coffees, gourmet salads, bagels and muffins.

For a quick, inexpensive snack, it's hard to beat a *grillad korv med bröd* – a grilled hot dog on a bun (Skr15 to Skr25), available from countless stands and carts, with the price depending on proximity to major tourist attractions. Variations include *kokt*

(boiled) *korv* and several types of *rulle*, which are hot dogs wrapped in pitta-style bread with *mos* (mashed potatoes), onions, shrimp salad and lots of other unlikely things.

Dinner options in medium and large cities are extensive. Pure vegetarian restaurants do exist but they're not common; however, there will usually be at least one vegetarian main-course option on the menu. Due to the strict licensing laws, most pubs and bars in Sweden serve a good range of meals too. Some upscale restaurants have a less formal bar section with a cheaper menu.

Nonsmokers have been breathing easier since 2005, when Sweden implemented a ban on smoking in bars and restaurants.

Alcoholic Drinks

Lättöl (light beer, less than 2.25% alcohol) and *folköl* (folk beer, 2.25% to 3.5% alcohol) account for about two-thirds of all beer sold in Sweden and can be bought in supermarkets everywhere. *Mellanöl* (medium-strength beer, 3.5% to 4.5% alcohol), *starköl* (strong beer, over 4.5% alcohol) and wines and spirits can only be bought at outlets of the state-owned alcohol store, called Systembolaget, which is open until about 6pm on weekdays and slightly shorter hours on Saturday (Friday afternoon queues can be long!). You must be aged 20 or over to make a purchase. Alcohol prices are kept high as a matter of government policy; the result sees many Swedes travelling to Denmark, the Åland islands or even Finland to stock up, though prices are slowly beginning to equalise as Sweden shifts its policies towards compliance with those of the EU.

Habits & Customs

When invited to someone's house for a meal, it's polite to bring flowers or a bottle of wine. Guests should take their shoes off in the foyer, even if the host or hostess says it isn't necessary. Table manners don't differ much from those in most of Europe. It's polite to make eye contact with everyone when toasting. Locals tend to eat breakfast at home, lunch between 11.30am and 2pm (taking advantage of the *dagens rätt* bargains) and the evening meal between 6pm and 8pm, often later in larger cities.

STOCKHOLM

📍 08 / pop 758,148

Known for its impeccable style and a population as conspicuously beautiful as its surroundings, Stockholm is a thoroughly attractive destination. Whether you're wandering the narrow, crooked streets of Gamla Stan or trolling the broad shopping avenues of the modern commercial neighbourhoods, it's hard not to wonder if the whole city's been art-directed. The famously clean, blue water sparkles under the midsummer sun, practically begging locals and visitors alike to take a dip. Winter is equally pretty, as snowfall makes the big, square buildings of the city's historic core look like frosted cakes and the cold air brightens the eyes of people wandering its streets. The view of majestic waterfront buildings and Gala Stan's cobblestone warren of narrow streets as seen from the heights of Södermalm is hard to beat.

But the city is far from a museum piece. Its design and fashion industries race to be cutting-edge, and the populace can be determinedly fast-paced. Best of all, Stockholm is compact enough that a visitor can easily appreciate all of these elements at once.

ORIENTATION

Stockholm is built on 14 islands, with the modern city centre on the main island. The business core is composed of Norrmalm and Vasastan (the boundaries between these two are debatable); the most chic, and historically wealthiest, part of town is Östermalm, to the east.

The tourist office is in the eastern part of Norrmalm; the popular garden Kungsträdgården (often referred to as 'Stockholm's living room') is almost next door. Off the western edge of Norrmalm is the mostly residential island of Kungsholmen.

Smack in the middle of Stockholm is the island housing the historic Gamla Stan (old town). Two smaller, satellite islands are linked to it by bridges: Riddarholmen to the west; and Helgeandsholmen to the north, occupied by the Swedish Parliament building.

To the east of Gamla Stan is the island of Djurgården (known as 'Animal Park'),

where many of Stockholm's better-known museums are located. The small island of Skeppsholmen sits between Djurgården and Gamla Stan; it's home to more museums and the well-known youth hostel STF Vandrarhem of Chapman.

Södermalm, the city's funky, Bohemian area, inhabits the large island to the south of Gamla Stan. It's linked by the car-and-pedestrian bridge Centralbron as well as by the rather baffling traffic snarl called Slussen.

There are some pleasant picnic and bathing spots around Långholmen, the parklike island to the west of Södermalm.

Maps

The *What's on Stockholm* tourist booklet, available free from tourist offices and many hotels, has basic map pages, but *Stockholms officiella turistkarta* (official tourist map, Skr25 from Sweden House) covers a larger area and is easier to read.

A huge range of guidebooks and maps for driving, hiking or sailing in Sweden and across Scandinavia is available at the tourist office in **Sweden House** (Sverigehuset; Map p402; ☎ 789 2490; www.stockholmtown.com; Hamngatan 27), online through **Swedish Lantmäteriet** (www.lantmateriet.se), or at the following shops:

Kartbutiken (Map p402; ☎ 202303; Kungsgatan 74;

☎ Mon-Sat)

Kartcentrum (Map p402; ☎ 411 1687; Vasagatan 16;

☎ Mon-Sat)

INFORMATION

Bookshops

Akadembokhandeln (Map p402; ☎ 613 6100; Mäster Samuelsgatan 28) A good selection of both fiction and nonfiction in English.

Press Stop (Map p402; ☎ 644 3510; Götgatan 31) This shop in Södermalm is attached to a coffee shop and has a wide range of international magazines.

Sweden Bookshop (Map p402; ☎ 453 7880; www.swedenbookshop.com; Slottsbacken 10; ☎ Mon-Fri) This store in Gamla Stan offers the broadest selection of English-language books on Sweden (also available online).

Discount Cards & Packages

Stockholm a la Carte (☎ 663 0080; www.destination-stockholm.com) Discount hotel-and-sightseeing packages; can be booked online.

Stockholm Card (www.stockholmtown.com; adult 24/48/72hr Skr270/420/540, child Skr120/160/190) Avail-

able from tourist offices, a number of camping grounds, hostels and hotels, and Storstockholms Lokaltrafik (SL) public transport centres, the card gives free entry to about 75 attractions (including Skansen), free city parking in metered spaces, free sightseeing by boat and free travel on public transport (including the lift, Katarinahissen, but excluding local ferries and airport buses).

Emergency

Emergency (☎ 112) Free number for fire brigade, police and ambulance.

Police stations Kungsholmen (Map pp396-7; ☎ 401 1300; Kungsholmsgatan 37; ☎ 24hr); Södermalm (Map p402; ☎ 401 0100; Torkel Knutssonsgatan 20; ☎ 24hr)

Internet Access

Nine (Map pp396-7; ☎ 673 6797; Odengatan 44; per hr from Skr35; ☎ 10am-1am) The computer area is downstairs through the café.

Sidewalk Express (www.sidewalkexpress.se in Swedish; per hr Skr19) A chain of roving internet kiosks at numerous central locations (Centralstationen, Cityterminalen, Arlanda and Bromma airports, inside some convenience stores and coffee shops). Vouchers are purchased from vending machines next to the monitors (coins only). See the website for locations in Stockholm and elsewhere in Sweden.

Internet Resources

Local (www.thelocal.se) News and features about Sweden in English.

Stockholm's Museums (www.stockholmsmuseer.com) Has a drop-down menu with links to all museum homepages.

Stockholm: the Official Visitors Guide (www.stockholmtown.com) Excellent tourist information in English (and many other languages).

Laundry

Laundry options are limited and it's best to find a hotel or hostel with facilities.

Tvättomat (Map pp396-7; ☎ 346 480; Västmannagatan 61; per load from Skr70 ☎ 8.30am-6.30pm Mon-Fri, 9.30am-3pm Sat; ☎ T-Odenplan)

Media

There are a number of useful publications for visitors – the best overall guide is the monthly **What's on Stockholm** (www.stockholmtown.com), available free from tourist offices and many hotels and downloadable online, with sections on nightlife, shopping, restaurants, museums, activities, events and sightseeing.

Medical Services

CW Scheele Apotek (Map p402; ☎ 454 8130; Klarabergsgatan 64; ☎ 24hr) Central pharmacy near Centralstationen.

Sankt Eriks Sjukhus (Map pp396-7; ☎ 654 1117; Flemminggatan 22; ☎ 8am-8.30pm) Emergency dental treatment is available here. Outside these hours, dial ☎ 644 9200 for the dentist on duty.

Södersjukhuset (Map pp396-7; ☎ 616 1000; Ringvägen 52; ☎ 24hr) Large hospital in Södermalm handling casualties from the central city area.

Money

There are ATMs all over town, including a few inside Centralstationen, and by the post office (usually with long queues). There are banks around Sergels Torg and along Hamngatan.

Forex (Map p402; www.forex.se; Centralstationen;

☎ 7am-9pm) Other branches are scattered throughout the capital; at all of them the charge is Skr15 per travellers cheque.

Post

Post office (Map p402; Centralstationen; ☎ 7am-10pm Mon-Fri, 10am-7pm Sat & Sun) Next to Hotelcentralen office.

STOCKHOLM IN TWO DAYS

A good way to get familiar with any city is to look down on it, so make a beeline for Slussen and ride to the top of **Katarinahissen** (p401), the big elevator, for a stunning view. From here, stretch out the view and your legs with a stroll along the edge of the **Söder Heights** (p401). Back down at Slussen, catch a ferry across to **Djurgården** (p399) to explore the best of the city's museums in a wonderful, parklike setting. Head back over the Djurgården bridge to Stureplan for shopping, supper and nightlife. Start the next day early with a wander through the old town, **Gamla Stan** (p398), to beat the tourist rush. Peek into **Storkyrkan** (p399), then take a tour of **Kungliga Slottet** (the Royal Palace; p398), and try to be near the outdoor courtyard at midday for the Changing of the Guard. Take an afternoon **cruise** (p401) of Stockholm's waterways for another interesting perspective on the capital. If there's any juice left in your tank, prowl the cool pubs and cafés of **Södermalm** (p407) for an evening meal and offbeat entertainment.






STOCKHOLM



SWEDEN



SWEDEN

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Tourist Information

Hotellcentralen (Map p402; ☎ 789 2456; hotels@svb.stockholm.se; Centralstationen; ☎ 8am-8pm Jun-Aug, 9am-6pm Mon-Sat, noon-4pm Sun Sep-May) This busy office inside the main train station is convenient for arriving travellers. In addition to providing tourist information, staff can reserve hotel rooms and hostel beds (for a Skr60 or Skr25 fee, respectively), sell the Stockholm Card (p394) or SL transport passes (p412), book sightseeing tours and sell maps, books and souvenirs.

Sweden House (Sverigehuset; Map p402; ☎ 789 2490; www.stockholmtown.com; Hamngatan 27; ☎ 9am-7pm Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm Sat, 10am-4pm Sun Jun-Aug, 9am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-4pm Sat & Sun May & Sep, 10am-3pm Sat & Sun Oct-Apr) The capital's main tourist office has lots of good brochures and can book hotel rooms, theatre and concert tickets, and packages such as boat trips to the archipelago.

SIGHTS

Many of the roughly 70 museums and attractions in and around Stockholm can now be visited free of charge, and many of the rest are free with the Stockholm Card (see p394). Museums are generally open daily in summer (June to August) but closed on Monday the rest of the year. Students and seniors usually pay a discounted entrance fee; children under 16 are generally admitted for half-price (or free) and small children enter free if accompanied by a paying adult. Disabled access is generally very

good, and most museums also house cafés. There are many more museums than those listed below; for a full list, refer to *What's on Stockholm*, the booklet that accompanies the Stockholm Card, or check the **Stockholms museer** (www.stockholmsmuseer.com) website.

Gamla Stan

Once you get over the armies of tourists wielding ice-cream cones and shopping bags, you'll discover that the oldest part of Stockholm is also its most beautiful. The city emerged here in the 13th century and grew with Sweden's power until the 17th century, when the castle of Tre Kronor, symbol of that power, burned to the ground. While ambling along Västerlånggatan, look out for **Mårten Trotzigs Gränd** (Map p402) by No 81: this is Stockholm's narrowest lane, at less than 1m wide.

KUNGLIGA SLOTTET (ROYAL PALACE)

The 'new' palace (Map p402; ☎ 402 6130; www.royalcourt.se; Slottsbacken; adult/child per attraction Skr90/35, adult/child combined ticket Skr130/65; ☎ 10am-4pm mid-May-Aug, noon-3pm Tue-Sun Sep-mid-May, closed Jan) is built on the ruins of Tre Kronor, which burned to the ground in the 17th century. Its 608 rooms make it the largest royal palace in the world. Many visitors find the **State Apartments** (Map p402) the most interesting, with two floors of royal

pomp and portraits of pale princes (these may occasionally be closed to the public).

Crowns are displayed at **Skattkammaren** (the Royal Treasury; Map p402), near **Storkyrkan** (the Royal Chapel; Map p402). **Gustav III's Antikmuseum** (Gustav III's Museum of Antiquities; Map p402) displays Mediterranean treasures acquired by that eccentric monarch. **Museum Tre Kronor** (Map p402) is in the palace basement and features the foundations of 13th-century defensive walls and exhibits rescued from the medieval castle.

The **Changing of the Guard** takes place in the outer courtyard at 12.15pm Monday to Saturday, and 1.15pm on Sunday and public holidays.

OTHER ATTRACTIONS

Near the palace, **Storkyrkan** (Map p402; ☎ 723 3021; admission free) is the Royal Cathedral of Sweden, consecrated in 1306. The most notable feature is the life-sized *St George & the Dragon* sculpture, dating from the late 15th century. On nearby Stortorget is the excellent **Nobelmuseet** (Map p402; ☎ 232506; Stortorget; adult/child Skr60/20; ☎ daily mid-May-mid-Sep, Tue-Sun mid-Sep-mid-May), presenting the history of the Nobel Prize and past laureates.

The large collection of royal memorabilia at **Livrustkammaren** (Royal Armoury; Map p402; ☎ 5195 5544; www.livrustkammaren.se; Slottsbacken 3; admission free; ☎ 10am-5pm Jun-Aug, 11am-5pm Tue-Sun Sep-May) includes ceremonial costumes and colourful carriages. **Kungliga Myntkabinettet** (Royal Coin Cabinet; Map p402; ☎ 5195 5304; www.myntkabinettet.se; Slottsbacken 6; admission free; ☎ 10am-4pm Oct-Jun, 9am-5pm Jul-Sep) is opposite the palace and covers the history of money and finance.

The island of Riddarholmen has some of the oldest buildings in Stockholm. **Riddarholmkyrkan** (Map p402; ☎ 5903 5009; Wrangelska Backen; adult/child Skr20/10; ☎ 10am-4pm mid-May-Aug, noon-3pm Sat & Sun Sep), with its striking iron spire, houses the royal necropolis. Nearby, the beautiful **Riddarhuset** (House of Nobility; Map p402; ☎ 723 3990; www.riddarhuset.se; Riddarhusorget; adult/child Skr50/25; ☎ 11.30am-12.30pm Mon-Fri) displays 2325 coats of arms.

The site of **Medeltidsmuseet** (Map p402; ☎ 5083 1790; Strömparterren; admission free; ☎ daily Jul-Aug, Tue-Sun Sep-Jun), the museum of medieval Stockholm, had been allocated as parking space for members of the nearby.

Riksdagshuset (Parliament House; Map p402; ☎ 786 4872; Riksgatan 3A), but excavations in the late 1970s revealed well-preserved foundations of the medieval town and it's now a museum. Riksdagshuset has free one-hour guided tours in English at 12.30pm and 2pm Monday to Friday from late June to August, and they're fascinating to anyone with an interest in how political systems work.

Djurgården

The royal playground, Djurgården is an urban oasis of parkland with some of Stockholm's best attractions. To get here, take bus No 47 from Centralstationen or the regular Djurgården ferry services from Nybroplan or Slussen (see p412). Beyond the large tourist haunts are plenty of small gems, including some excellent art collections. You can rent bikes (see p411) by the bridge, and cycling is the best way to explore the island.

SKANSEN

You could easily spend all day at this 'Sweden in miniature'. **Skansen** (Map pp396-7; ☎ 442 8000; www.skansen.se; adult Skr50-80, child Skr20-30; ☎ 10am-8pm May, 10am-10pm Jun-Aug, 10am-5pm Sep, 10am-4pm Oct-Apr) was the world's first open-air museum (it opened in 1891). Today over 150 traditional houses (with staff in period costume) and other exhibits from all over Sweden occupy the attractive hill top. There's also a handicraft precinct, an unusual **zoo** (Map pp396-7) full of Nordic animals, and daily activities taking place on Skansen's stages in summer (including folk dancing and music). Skansen is the place to head to if you're in Stockholm for any of the country's major celebrations (eg Walpurgis Night, Midsummer, the Lucia festival, Christmas season and New Year's Eve; see p470), though keep in mind that everyone else in town will be here, too.

VASAMUSEET

The flagship *Vasa* sank within minutes of being launched in 1628. Some 300 years later it was painstakingly resurrected, and the long process of restoration and preservation began. This acclaimed **museum** (Map pp396-7; ☎ 5195 4800; adult/child Skr80/40; ☎ 10am-5pm Sep-May, 8.30am-6pm Jun-Aug), behind Nordiska Museet and on the western shore of

Djurgården, allows you to simultaneously look into the lives of 17th-century sailors and appreciate a brilliant achievement in marine archaeology.

Guided tours in English run hourly from 10.30am in summer and at least twice daily at other times. On Wednesday between 5pm and 8pm there's a Skr20 discount on entry. At the moorings behind the museum are the icebreaker *Sankt Erik* and the lightship *Finngrundet*.

OTHER ATTRACTIONS

Nordiska Museet (National Museum of Cultural History; Map pp396-7; ☎ 5195 6000; www.nordiskamuseet.se; Djurgårdsvägen 6-16; admission free; ☞ 10am-5pm Jun-Aug, 10am-4pm Mon-Fri, 10am-5pm Sat & Sun Sep-May) is housed in an enormous Renaissance-style castle, with notable temporary exhibitions and vast Swedish collections of fine arts and handicraft dating from 1520 to the present day.

Junibacken (Map pp396-7; ☎ 5872 3000; www.junibacken.se; adult/child Skr110/95; ☞ 9am-7pm Jul, 10am-5pm Jun & Aug, 10am-5pm Tue-Fri, 9am-6pm Sat & Sun Sep-May) re-creates the fantasy scenes of Astrid Lindgren's children's books, which should stir the imaginations of young children and the memories of adults familiar with her characters.

More family fun can be had at **Gröna Lund Tivoli** (Map pp396-7; ☎ 5875 0100; www.gronalund.com; adult/child Skr60/30), a fun park with dozens of rides and amusements – the Åkbandet day pass (Skr240) gives unlimited rides; individual rides range from Skr15 to Skr60. Big-name concerts are often held here in summer. The park is open from noon to 11pm on most days between mid-May and September; hours vary during the rest of the year.

Central Stockholm

The fashionable, high-heeled heart of modern-day Stockholm beats in bustling Norrmalm. Near T-Centralen station is **Sergels Torg** (Map p402), a severely modern public square (though it's actually round) bordered on one side by the imposing Kulturhuset. Norrmalm is also home to the beloved public park **Kungsträdgården** (Map p402), where locals gather in all weather. The park is home to an outdoor stage, winter ice-skating rink and restaurants, cafés and kiosks. Vasastan is the somewhat quiet-

er, more residential area that extends to the north of Norrmalm.

Sweden's largest art museum, the excellent **Nationalmuseum** (Map p402; ☎ 5195 4300; www.nationalmuseum.se; Södra Blasieholmshamnen; admission free; ☞ 11am-5pm Wed-Sun, 11am-8pm Tue) houses the national collection of painting and sculpture but hosts other exhibitions, including design and handicrafts.

The main national historical collection is at **Historiska Museet** (Museum of National Antiquities; Map pp396-7; ☎ 5195 5600; Narvavägen 13; admission free; ☞ daily mid-May–mid-Sep, Tue-Sun mid-Sep–mid-May). Displays cover prehistoric, Viking and medieval archaeology and culture; don't miss the incredible Gold Room with its rare treasures, including a seven-ringed gold collar.

The giant, boxy **Kulturhuset** (Map p402; ☎ 5083 1508; Sergels Torg) houses temporary exhibitions (often with entry fee), a theatre, bookshop, design store, reading room, several cafés, a comics library and bar. It's open daily, although some sections are closed on Monday.

Skeppsholmen

Across the bridge by the Nationalmuseum are more museums, including the sleek, impressive **Moderna Museet** (Map pp396-7; ☎ 519 55200; www.modernamuseet.se; admission free; ☞ closed Mon), which boasts a world-class collection of modern art, sculpture, photography and installations, temporary exhibitions and an outdoor sculpture garden. Adjacent to Moderna Museet is **Arkitekturmuseum** (Map pp396-7; ☎ 587 27000; admission free; ☞ closed Mon), which is housed in an extraordinary building and contains displays on Swedish and international architecture.

Kungsholmen

The main visitor sight here is the landmark **Stadshuset** (City Hall; Map p402; ☎ 5082 9058; Hantverkargatan; admission by tour only Skr60; ☞ tours 10am, 11am, noon, 2pm & 3pm Jun-Aug, 10am & noon Sep-May), resembling a large church, with two internal courtyards. Inside are the mosaic-lined Gyllene Salen (Golden Hall), Prins Eugen's own fresco re-creation of the lake view from the gallery, and the Blå Hallen (Blue Hall), where the annual Nobel Prize banquet is held. You can walk down the staircase just like the Nobel lau-

reates do, only without putting in all that hard work.

To feel even more important, climb Stadshuset's 106m-high **Stadshustorn** (Tower; Map p402; ☎ 5082 9058; adult Skr20; ☞ daily May-Sep, Sat & Sun Apr), with 365 steps, for a great view of the city.

Södermalm

Södermalm is perhaps Stockholm's most interesting neighbourhood. Historically home to many of the city's artists, Söder (as locals call it) is still the part of town where artistic and alternative types hang out – if you're looking for, say, a straight-edge vegan all-ages punk club, this is where you'll find it. The scene on the street is scarcely less exciting than the gorgeous views over Stockholm from the island's northern cliffs (called the Söder Heights).

The best place to start is at the top of **Kartarinahissen** (Map p402; Slussen; adult Skr5), an old lift that goes up from Slussen. At the top is one of the city's best restaurants, Eriks Gondolen (p407). Wooden staircases also wind steeply up the hillside, though these can be treacherous in winter.

For evening walks, head towards the northern cliffs for the old houses and fine panoramas.

Stockholms Stadsmuseum (Map p402; ☎ 5083 1600; Slussen; admission free; ☞ 11am-5pm Tue-Sun) covers the history of the city and its people, and is worthwhile once you've developed a romantic attachment to Stockholm.

Ladugårdsgärdet

North of Djurgården, in the vast parkland, are more fine museums and attractions. To get to Ladugårdsgärdet, take bus No 69 from Centralstationen.

The very good **Etnografiska Museet** (Museum of Ethnography; Map pp396-7; ☎ 5195 5000; www.etnografiska.se; Djurgårdsbrunnsvägen 34; admission free; ☞ 11am-5pm) brings the entire world under one roof. **Sjöhistoriska Museet** (National Maritime Museum; Map pp396-7; ☎ 5195 4900; www.sjohistoriska.nu; Djurgårdsbrunnsvägen 24; admission free; ☞ 10am-5pm Tue-Sun) exhibits extensive maritime memorabilia. **Tekniska Museet** (Museum of Science & Technology; Map pp396-7; ☎ 450 5600; Museivägen 7; adult/child Skr60/30; ☞ 10am-5pm Mon-Fri, 11am-5pm Sat & Sun) contains exhaustive exhibits on Swedish inventions and their applications.

The 155m-high TV tower, **Kaknästor-net** (Map pp396-7; ☎ 667 2180; adult/child Skr30/15; ☞ 9am-10pm May-Aug, 10am-9pm Sep-Apr), has an observation deck from which you can enjoy stunning 360-degree views.

ACTIVITIES

Summer sees locals and visitors taking advantage of the fine weather; many head for the coast and the islands of the archipelago (with good swimming spots) or organise picnics in the parks. Winter also sees some outdoor activity, including ice-skating on a rink set up in Kungsträdgården.

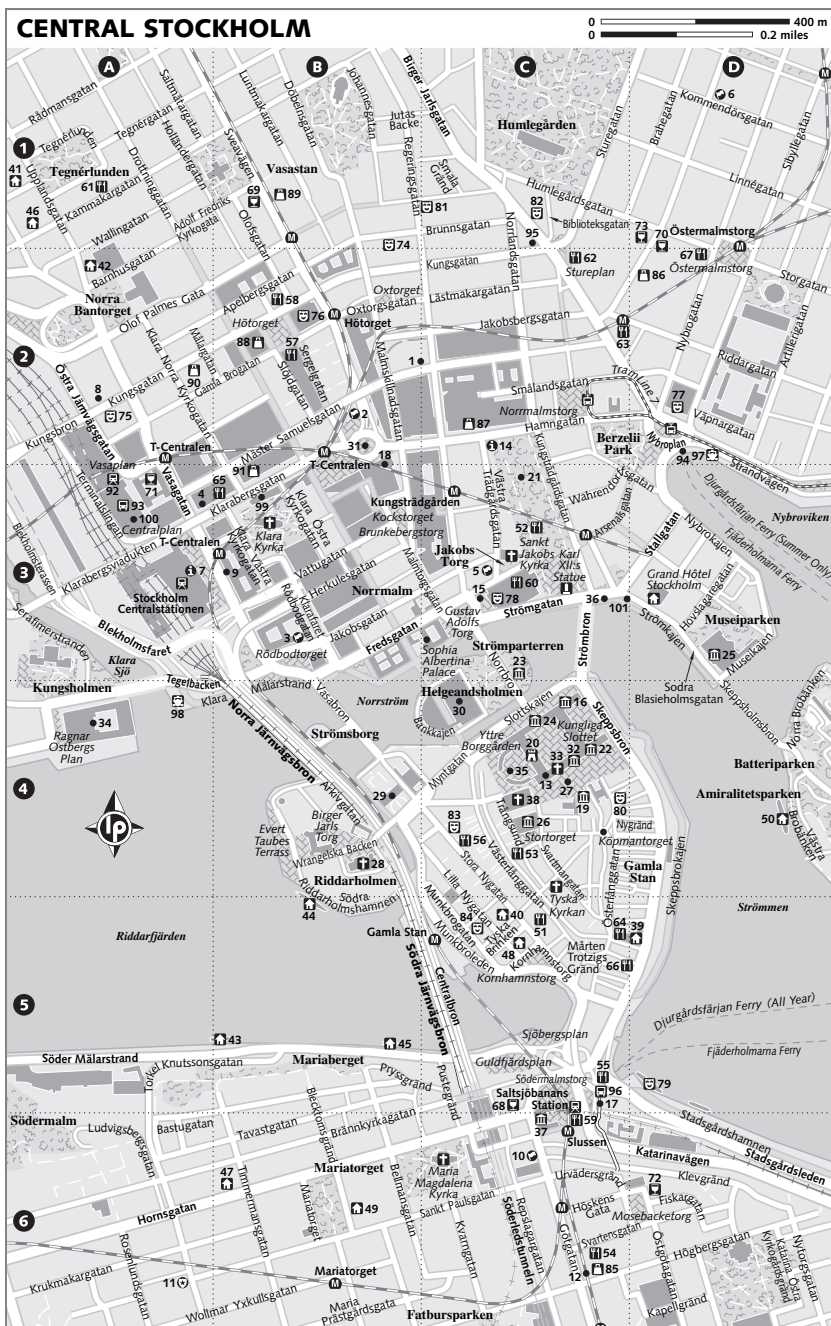
Eriksdalsbadet (Map pp396-7; ☎ 5084 0250; Hammarby slussväg 20; adult/child Skr65/30; ☞ 6.30am-8pm Mon-Thu, 6.30am-7pm Fri, 9am-6pm Sat & Sun) has indoor and open-air swimming pools in the far south of Södermalm, plus gym, aerobics and other activities.

From the restaurant-bar **Djurgårdsbron Sjöcafé** (Map pp396-7; ☎ 660 5757; Djurgårdsbron; ☞ May-Sep), by the bridge leading to Djurgården, you can rent bikes (Skr65/250 per hour/day), as well as inline skates, kayaks, canoes, rowing boats and pedal boats.

TOURS

Stockholm Sightseeing (Map p402; ☎ 5871 4020; www.stockholmsightseeing.com; main terminal, Strömkajen) runs frequent cruises from early April to mid-December around the central bridges and canals from Strömkajen (near the Grand Hôtel), Nybroplan or Stadshusbron. The two-hour 'Under the Bridges of Stockholm' (Skr170) covers the most territory, passing under 15 bridges and through two locks. The land-based sister operation is **City Sightseeing** (Map p402; ☎ 5871 4020; www.citysightseeing.com), which offers year-round 1½- to 3½-hour coach tours of the city (departing from Gustav Adolfs Torg) from Skr170 to Skr395, and one-hour walking tours around Gamla Stan (Skr90, daily July and August).

You can also take a one-hour, English-language guided walk through Gamla Stan with an authorised guide (Skr70). From June to August these tours start at 7.30pm Monday, Wednesday and Thursday, and from September to May at 1.30pm Saturday and Sunday. Meet at the Obelisk at Slottsbacken (Map p402), outside the royal palace; no reservation is needed.



SLEEPING

Options are spread out all over the city, and all are accessible by public transport and close to a neighbourhood of bars and cafés.

Most hostels fill up during the late afternoon in summer so arrive early or book in advance. May is also a busy time for hostels, with many Swedish school groups visiting the capital. For a Skr25 fee, **Hotellcentralen** (Map p402; ☎ 789 2456; hotels@svb.stockholm.se; Centralstationen) can assist you in getting a bed in a hostel. Keep in mind that reception desks for many hostels have limited hours; check out websites or when you book.

A number of agencies can arrange good-value apartment or B&B accommodation (many with a two-night minimum). The going rate in the city centre is Skr200 to Skr500 for a single, Skr500 to Skr800 for a

double. Agencies (with detailed websites) include the following:

- Bed & Breakfast Agency** (☎ 643 8028; www.bba.nu)
- Bed & Breakfast Service** (☎ 660 5565; www.bedbreakfast.se)

Budget

Bredäng Camping (Map p414; ☎ 977071; bredangcamping@telia.com; Stora Sällskapets väg; camp sites Skr180-210, 4-bed cabin Skr650-850, hostel dm/d Skr160/450; M T-Bredäng) Cabins and hostel beds are also available at this pleasant lakeside location 10km southwest of the city centre. The camping ground is open from April to late October, while the hostel is open year-round.

Östermalms Citycamping (☎ 102903; Östermalms Idrottsplats, Fiskartorpövägen; camp sites Skr210; ☎ mid-Jun-mid-Aug; M T-Stadion) This is Stockholm's most

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SWEDEN

SWEDEN

central camping ground (1.5km from the city centre). Take the metro or bus No 55.

STF Vandrarhem af Chapman & Skeppsholmen (Svenska Turistföreningen Map p402; ☎ 463 2266; www.stfchapman.com; Skeppsholmen; dm/d Skr245/550; 📍) Anchored off Skeppsholmen (bus No 65), this boat is a popular hostel, with bunks below and great views from on deck. On dry land beside the boat, with the same reception and prices, is Skeppsholmen Hostel, with kitchen and laundry facilities. Breakfast is Skr70.

STF Vandrarhem Fridhemsplan (Map pp396-7; ☎ 653 8800; info@fridhemsplan.se; St Eriksgatan 20; dm/s/d Skr240/435/585; 📍 T-Fridhemsplan; 📍) One of the few hostels you'll see with egg chairs in the foyer and modern art on the walls, this 150-room STF on Kungsholmen epitomises the Swedish approach to hostelling (ie good facilities, great décor, excellent value). There's parking (Skr95 per day), and breakfast is Skr60.

STF Vandrarhem Långholmen (Map pp396-7; ☎ 720 8500; www.langholmen.com; Långholmsmuren; dm/d Skr250/480) Off the northwestern corner of Södermalm is the small island of Långholmen, home to large parklands and this former prison complex. Hostel beds are in jail cells. Hotel-standard rooms are also available, plus there's an on-site café and restaurant and a prison museum. Breakfast is Skr80. Take the metro to Hornstull, walk north along Långholmsgatan and turn left onto Högalidsgatan, then head north across the footbridge.

Mälaren den Röda Båten (Map p402; ☎ 644 4385; www.theredboat.com; Söder Mälärstrand, Kajplats 6; dm/s/d Skr210/430/530) This red-painted boat in northern Södermalm is probably the cosiest of Stockholm's handful of floating hostels. It features a rustic interior, a good summer restaurant, but no self-catering kitchen.

STF Vandrarhem Zinkensdamm (Map pp396-7; ☎ 616 8100; www.zinkensdamm.com; Zinkens väg 20; dm/s/d Skr240/485/560; 📍 T-Zinkendamm; 📍) This large, well-equipped and welcoming complex (with adjacent hotel) is in a quiet location in the green, western end of Södermalm. It offers an on-site café, breakfast (Skr55), sauna and bike rental. Breakfast is included in the hotel-room tariff.

City Backpackers (Map p402; ☎ 206920; www.citybackpackers.se; Upplandsgatan 2A; dm from Skr210, d Skr560; 📍) About 500m from Central-

stationen and deservedly popular with backpackers. It has clean rooms, friendly staff and facilities including kitchen, sauna, laundry, lockers and courtyard, plus free internet access. No breakfast is offered and prices double on Friday and Saturday.

Hostel Bed & Breakfast (Map pp396-7; ☎ 152838; www.hostelbedandbreakfast.com; Rehngatan 21; dm/s/d Skr200/425/590; 📍 T-Rådmansgatan; 📍) Cosy basement hostel, with breakfast included. Good facilities including kitchen and laundry. Also a large, cheap summer annexe here with 40 beds (June to August, Skr145).

Abbe's Hostels (☎ 300350; www.abbes.se; dm Skr220-260, d Skr500-640); Abbe's Hostel Stora Nygatan (Map p402; Stora Nygatan 38); Abbe's Hostel Skeppsbron (Map p402; Skeppsbron 40); Abbe's Hostel Kungsholmen (Map pp396-7; Fleminggatan 19); Abbe's Hostel Globen (Map pp396-7; Gullmarsvägen 92) Abbe offers new, small, basic hostels scattered around the city centre (including two in prime spots in Gamla Stan and another on Kungsholmen). There are no kitchen facilities or breakfast served, and reception is only staffed from 3pm to 6pm.

Other budget options:

M/S Rygerfjord (Map p402; ☎ 840830; www.rygerfjord.se; Söder Mälärstrand, Kajplats 12; dm Skr195-210, d Skr530; 📍) Boat with small hostel cabins, plus onsite restaurant.

Östra Reals Vandrarhem (Map pp396-7; ☎ 664 1114; www.ostrareal.com; Karlavägen 79; dm Skr150-195, d Skr575; 📍 mid-Jun–mid-Aug; 📍) In an old school, without kitchen facilities or breakfast offered.

STF Vandrarhem Backpackers Inn (Map pp396-7; ☎ 660 7515; www.backpackersinn.se; Banérgatan 56; dm Skr180-215; 📍 late Jun–mid-Aug; 📍) Around 300 beds in a school building. No kitchen facilities, but breakfast is available (Skr50).

Hotel Formule 1 (Map p414; ☎ 744 2044; www.hotelformule1.com; Mikrofönvägen 30; r Skr350; 📍 T-Telefonplan; 📍) Supercheap, small, uninspiring rooms for up to three people (one flat rate, excludes breakfast). Bathroom facilities shared. About 4km southwest of the city centre.

Midrange

In the midrange price category (Skr650 to Skr1500 for a weekday double, including breakfast), you'll find a number of homey places in mostly residential locations a little off the tourist path (but with good transport connections), without all the trimmings of the grander hotels. See also the combined hotel/hostel options listed in the Budget section.

Hotellcentralen (Map p402; ☎ 789 2456; hotels@svb.stockholm.se; Centralstationen) can find you suitable hotel accommodation for a fee of Skr60.

Hotel Tre Små Rum (Map pp396-7; ☎ 641 2371; www.tresmarum.se; Högbergsgatan 81; r Skr695; 📍 T-Mariatorget) In a quiet part of Södermalm, this charming place has small, comfortable rooms, shared bathrooms and rental bikes (Skr85). Great value and location.

Rex Hotel (Map pp396-7; ☎ 160040; www.rexhotel.se; Luntmakargatan 73; s/d Skr1390/1590, discount Skr790/990; 📍) Inside an 1866 townhouse is this no-nonsense boutique hotel, with colourful modern rooms, excellent facilities and ultra-friendly staff. It's the understated sibling of the stylish Hotel Hellsten across the street (right).

Columbus Hotell (Map pp396-7; ☎ 5031 1200; www.columbus.se; Tjärhovsgatan 11; s/d Mon-Fri Skr1250/1550, s/d Sat & Sun Skr950/1250, annex s/d Skr695/895; 📍 T-Medborgarplatsen) A Södermalm option set around a cobblestone courtyard and by a park, close to nightlife. The excellent budget rooms are in the 3rd-floor 'annex' (no lift) and have phone, TV and shared bathroom.

Hotel Gustav Vasa (Map pp396-7; ☎ 343801; www.gustavvasahotel.se; Västmangagatan 61; s Skr649-1149, d Skr949-1449; 📍) The Gustav Vasa is right on Odenplan in the north of town and housed in a building dating from 1899. There's an antique lift and a variety of rooms – the cheapest are well appointed and have private bathrooms located outside the room, in the corridor. Some of the larger rooms have beautiful ceramic stoves. Parking costs Skr125.

Pensionat Oden (☎ 796 9600; www.pensionat.nu; s Skr630-995, d Skr700-1295) Pensionat Oden City (Map p402; Kammakargatan 62), Pensionat Oden Södermalm (Map p402; Hornsgatan 66), Pensionat Oden Vasastan (Map pp396-7; Odengatan 38) A chain of affordable pensions (boarding houses) in character-rich old buildings with attractive rooms. Prices vary according to season, room size and facilities.

Mälardrottningen (Map p402; ☎ 5451 8780; www.malardrottningen.se; Riddarholmen; Mon-Fri s/d from Skr1130/1250, Sat & Sun from Skr930/1050) This classy vessel, launched in 1924 and now anchored off Riddarholmen, was once the world's largest motor yacht and belonged to Barbara Hutton. The deep blue carpets, dark-wood fittings and restaurant (with a bar in the bridge) create a great maritime atmosphere. All cabins have private bathrooms.

August Strindberg Hotell (Map p402; ☎ 325 006; www.hotellstrindberg.se; Tegnérgatan 38; s/d from Skr895/1495, discount Skr695/995) This quiet, family-run hotel offers 27 rooms and personalised service. Entry through a street-front apartment block takes you to the hotel, set in a pretty courtyard. There's an inviting breakfast room and some garden seating. Rooms vary in size and style but all are pretty.

Top End

There's no shortage of Stockholm hotels that fall into this category (Skr1500 and upwards for a weekday double). The listed price, however, is rarely the lowest available – always ask about special deals and discounts when booking, and remember that even the poshest hotels usually offer steep discounts at weekends and in summer.

Hotel Hellsten (Map pp396-7; ☎ 661 8600; www.hellsten.se; Luntmakargatan 68; s/d from Skr1490/1890, discount Sat & Sun Skr990/1190) The minute you walk in, you know this new boutique hotel is something special. The long black hallway leading to reception feels more like a posh nightclub than a crash pad. The foyer, bar and rooms are equally spectacular, each with individually chosen décor to give you the impression you're staying at the manor house of an artistic friend. All the rooms are gorgeous, but the exposed roof beams and skylights give the superior rooms the most atmosphere.

Rival Hotel (Map p402; ☎ 5457 8900; www.rival.se; Mariatorget 3; s/d from Skr1990/2190, discount Sat & Sun Skr1240/1390) ABBA's Benny Andersson is a co-owner of this fabulous, hopping place in Södermalm's prettiest square. All rooms have plasma TVs and DVD players, plus gleaming hardwood floors and huge pictures of Swedish film stars on the walls. The complex includes a vintage 1940s movie theatre, café, swanky cocktail bar and well-preserved retro architecture throughout. Summer rates (singles/doubles Skr650/1300) are a bargain.

Scandic Hotel Hasselbacken (Map pp396-7; ☎ 5173 4300; www.scandic-hotels.com/hasselbacken; Hazeliusbacken 20; s/d Skr1690/1990, discount Skr990/1190) There's only one hotel on the pretty green island of Djurgården, and it's hard to imagine a lovelier setting for a stay in Stockholm. This 1925 building is in the heart of the area's attractions, and facilities (and the on-site restaurant) are first-rate.

Rica City Hotel Gamla Stan (Map p402; ☎ 723 7250; www.rica.se; Lilla Nygatan 25; s/d Skr1710/1895, discount Skr890/1150) One of only five hotels on Gamla Stan (all understandably popular). A classy place in a great location, housed in a 17th-century building and with elegant, unfussy décor – including pictures of Swedish royalty on the walls – and good service.

EATING

Like nearly every other aspect of life here, Stockholm's restaurant scene constantly seeks to be at the forefront of fashion. If there's a food trend happening, you can bet that all the hot restaurants in town are offering a take on it. A great way to sample the options is to visit during the **Smaka på Stockholm** (Taste of Stockholm; www.smakapastockholm.se) festival. This food festival, usually in late May or early June, is staged in Kungsträdgården. Besides sampling from the kitchens of local restaurants, you can also take in a number of performances.

Stockholm has thousands of eateries to cater to all tastes and budgets, ranging from inexpensive lunch cafeterias and old-style *konditori* to five-star gourmet establishments; the city is also home to colourful market halls that are tourist attractions in their own right.

Gamla Stan

Tourists, not surprisingly, love Gamla Stan and many dine on Västerlånggatan, but be sure to check out the offerings along Stora Nygatan and Österlånggatan – the area around Köpmantorget is home to many classy favourites.

Chokladkoppen (Map p402; ☎ 203170; Stortorget 18; snacks from Skr35, mains Skr40-85) In a pair of gorgeous Renaissance buildings from the 1650s you'll find the gay-friendly café Chokladkoppen and its next-door sibling, Kaffekoppen. Servers run from one to the other, candelabras drip wax onto thick wooden tables inside, and the outdoor patio is always buzzing.

Zum Franziskaner (Map p402; ☎ 411 8330; Skeppsbron 44; lunch from Skr75, mains Skr97-200) Founded by German monks, this wonderful, museum-like place is said to be the oldest restaurant in town. It serves enormous plates of German and Austrian classics (sausages, schnitzel) as well as Swedish *husmanskost* meals such as grilled herring and

pytt i panna (meat-and-potato hash served with pickled beets and a fried egg).

Café Art (Map p402; ☎ 411 7661; Västerlånggatan 60; sandwiches Skr35-75) Once hip, but now comfortable, this brick vault makes a nice hideout from busy Västerlånggatan and serves filling, inexpensive lunches and pastries.

Hermitage (Map p402; ☎ 411 9500; Stora Nygatan 11; mains Skr65-85) One for the herbivores: Hermitage rustles up fine vegetarian fare from around the world. The *dagens lunch* is great value.

Sundbergs Konditori (Map p402; ☎ 106735; Järntorget 83; lunch specials Skr70) One of the oldest *konditori* in Gamla Stan is this lovely café on the square, which offers filling lunches and decadent pastries to go with coffee poured from a giant samovar.

Djurgården

Rosendals Trädgård (Map pp396-7; ☎ 5458 1270; Rosendalsterassen 12; light meals Skr40-120; ☎ from 11am May-Sep, Tue-Sun Mar-Apr & Oct) One of the island's hidden gems and enormously popular with locals, this biodynamic garden is home to a fantastic café (inside a greenhouse) serving light lunches and delectable homemade sweet treats. Not to be confused with Rosendals Wårdshus, a more upscale (and also lovely) restaurant atop a hill.

Wårdshuset Ulla Winbladh (Map pp396-7; ☎ 663 0571; Rosendalsvägen 8; lunch Skr80, à la carte mains Skr195-265) With so many places on the touristy island of Djurgården, you won't go hungry. For fine food in an old villa with a lovely garden setting, head to this place along the northern loop road. The menu features superbly prepared traditional meals, including meatballs, herring and crayfish tails.

Central Stockholm

Tranan (Map pp396-7; ☎ 52 72 81 00; Karlbergsvägen 14; starters Skr55-125, mains Skr95-265) A neighbourhood joint beloved by locals – and for good reason – Tranan has a comfortable, low-key vibe that makes its gorgeously prepared seafood and *husmanskost* (home-style Swedish food) an even more delightful surprise. With candlesticks and red-checked tablecloths inside and a terrace that faces the bustling Odenplan, it's a relaxing place to enjoy a fine meal completely free of pretence.

Operakällarens Bakfickan (Map p402; ☎ 676 5808; Karl XlIs Torg; mains Skr95-220; ☎ Mon-Sat) Not far from Kungsträdgården is Kungliga Operan (Stockholm's opera house), housing the late-19th-century, superposh restaurant Operakällaren, the lively Café Opera (more a nightclub than a café) and the intimate Bakfickan – the 'back pocket' of Operakällaren. This casual restaurant features great service, Art Nouveau décor and stools around the bar, and serves gourmet-quality *husmanskost* at moderate prices.

Östermalms Saluhall (Map p402; Östermalmstorg; ☎ Mon-Sat) A classed-up counterpart to Hötorgshallen, this covered market hall contains gourmet food stalls and some excellent dining nooks. It's the perfect place to fill a picnic basket.

Örtagården (Map p402; Östermalmstorg; buffet Skr125; ☎ lunch & dinner Mon-Sat) Upstairs in Östermalms Saluhall is a separate vegetarian restaurant, with a vast lunch buffet in a gardenlike setting.

Hötorgshallen (Map p402; Hötorget) This chaotic (for Sweden) basement food hall hides one of the best places in Stockholm to eat seafood, tucked away amid stalls selling the day's fresh catch. There's also a tantalizing collection of speciality food shops, baked goods, produce stalls and Mediterranean fast-food counters.

Sturehof (Map p402; ☎ 440 5730; Stureplan 2; mains Skr105-295) One of Stockholm's busiest restaurants, particularly in summer when the terrace is perpetually hopping. Sturehof has a modern menu vast enough to satisfy every taste, including lots of seafood and some reasonably priced *husmanskost* options.

Sturekatten (Map p402; ☎ 611 1612; Riddargatan 4; lunch Skr35-85) Pleasantly haunted by the tea parties of a million little old Swedish ladies, this traditional café consists of room after room of antiques – and we're not just talking about the clientele.

Lao Wai (Map pp396-7; ☎ 673 7800; Luntmakargatan 74; dagens lunch Skr75, dinner mains from Skr155; ☎ lunch Mon-Fri, dinner Tue-Sat) Luntmakargatan is home to some great Asian eateries, including this minimalist restaurant with strictly vegetarian Chinese food – spices coax miraculous flavours out of various tofu and vegetable combinations.

Sabai Sabai (Map p402; ☎ 79009 13; Kammakargatan 44; mains Skr59-179) This elaborately decorated Thai place, full of bamboo, wood carvings

and tropical murals, is often named as the best Thai in town. It's always packed, so call ahead.

Sirap (Map pp396-7; ☎ 612 9419; Surbrunnsgatan 31A; meals Skr35-95) One of the few places in Stockholm that serves full, cooked breakfasts – the pancakes are recommended.

Café Piccolino (Map p402; Kungsträdgården) Among the stalls on the edge of Kungsträdgården is this long and lean café with large windows to capture the sun (and the passing parade).

Kungshallen (Map p402; Hötorget) Opposite Hötorgshallen is this enormous fast-food court, best for those days when you need a meal that's quick, cheap and not necessarily an adventure.

The handiest central supermarket is **Hemköp** (Map p402; Klarabergsgatan 50; ☎ 8am-9pm Mon-Fri, 10am-9pm Sat & Sun), in the basement of the Åhlens department store, and there's a **Systembolaget** (Map p402; Klarabergsgatan 62; ☎ 10am-8pm Mon-Fri, 10am-3pm Sat) nearby for buying alcohol.

Kungsholmen

The best eat street on this island is Scheelegatan, with some interesting international options.

Thelins Konditori (Map pp396-7; ☎ 651 1900; St Eriksgratan 43; pastries from Skr35) Walk past the showcase of immaculate pastries (collecting a few on the way, of course) and sip coffee in a sweetly antique, red-velvety back room decorated with small white lampposts.

Mamas & Tapas (Map pp396-7; ☎ 653 5390; Scheelegatan 3; tapas from Skr40, mains Skr98-158) Delirious with kitsch, this energetic place is a little overpriced for dinner but an excellent stop for snacks and drinks of an evening.

Södermalm

This area is home to some great restaurants and cafés – start by branching off the main drag, Götgatan, and then explore further afield for less crowded, more interesting options.

Crêperie Fyra Knop (Map p402; ☎ 640 7727; Svartensgatan 4; crepes Skr42-90; ☎ dinner) Snuggle into this intimate hideaway just off Söder's main drag for inexpensive and delicious crepes, both sweet and savoury.

Hermans (Map pp396-7; ☎ 643 9480; Fjällgatan 23A; lunch Skr68-98) Best in summer for its gardenlike veranda, Hermans loads you up on

vegetarian food while you sit perched atop the hillside feeling like the king or queen of all you survey.

Östgöta Källaren (Map pp396-7; ☎ 643 2240; Östgötagatan 41; lunch Skr65-85, mains Skr72-190) A popular neighbourhood restaurant-bar with lots to recommend it – a dimly lit romantic atmosphere, friendly service and unpretentious *hushandskost*, plus it's a nice place to linger over a drink or two. If you're feeling goth, peek into the Vampire Lounge downstairs.

Marie Laveau (Map p402; ☎ 668 8500; Hornsgatan 66; mains Skr95-248; ☎ dinner Tue-Sat) A chic but lively new hang-out near Pensionat Oden, this restaurant named for the voodoo queen has a bar/lounge area, a fancier restaurant side and a nightclub. There are huge windows draped in red velvet curtains, edgy artwork on the walls, and an upscale French-influenced menu of seasonal dishes.

Eriks Gondolen (Map p402; ☎ 641 7090; Stads-gården 6; mains Skr185-295) Top of the heap – figuratively and literally. Eriks Gondolen is at the top of Katarinahissen, with a spectacular view of the city and a menu of gourmet offerings. The grill bar has a lower-priced bistro menu. It's worth getting up here even just for a drink, though it can be obnoxiously crowded on weekends. Reservations strongly recommended.

Söderhallarna (Map pp396-7; Medborgarplatsen; ☎ Mon-Sat) This modern food hall includes a vegetarian restaurant, deli, cheese shop, Asian supermarket and a pub. It's not the most atmospheric place, however, so make plans to enjoy your lunch in the outdoors on Medborgarplatsen.

Jerusalem Royal Kebab (Map pp396-7; Götgatan 61; kebabs & felafels Skr28-50; ☎ 24hr) Kindly lining the stomachs of Söder's intrepid bar-goers is this no-nonsense kebab outlet, often cited as the best in town.

Nystekt Strömning (Map p402; Södermalmstorg; plates from Skr35) Line up at this van outside metro T-Slussen for a platter of genuinely Scandi navian fast food: fried herring and potatoes.

DRINKING

It seems that almost every decent restaurant in Stockholm has a cool bar attached. Many cafés bring in a DJ in the evening and, *voilà*, another groovy bar is born. In Södermalm, check the Götgatan, Östgötagatan and Skånegatans area, and around Medborgarplatsen. In Kungsholmen, visit

Scheelegatan and Flemminggatan, and in the northern centre try the Tegnérsgatan and Rörstrandsgatan areas. For fashionable late-night bars and clubs frequented by the city's beautiful people, head to Stureplan. The following drinking venues are generally open daily until 1am.

Foggy Dew (Map p402; ☎ 207641; www.foggydew.se; Sveavägen 39; pub snacks from Skr62) Named for the song that got gentle folkie Burl Ives thrown in jail, this lively Irish pub is big on character and full of characters. About 50:50 Swedes and expats, it's a welcoming place to catch up on the local chatter and sink a few.

Soldaten Svejk (Map pp396-7; ☎ 641 3366; www.svejk.se; Östgötagatan 35) Your best bet for seeing accordions and really cool moustaches is at this comfortable Czech pub in Södermalm, with huge beer mugs and hearty food.

Pet Sounds Bar (Map pp396-7; ☎ 643 8225; www.petsoundsbar.se; Skånegatan 80; mains from Skr119) A strong contender for coolest new hang-out in Stockholm, this place, opened by the folk who run the nearby Pet Sounds record shop, has a sleek black-tiled bar, B&W rock photos on the walls and good DJ nights.

Mosebacke Etablissement (Map p402; ☎ 5560 9890; www.mosebacke.se; Mosebacketorg 3) Even if you're not partaking in Mosebacke's many cool club nights, its terrace bar in summertime is a fantastic place to relax.

Ice Bar (Map p402; ☎ 5056 3000; Vasaplan; ☎ 4.30pm-midnight Mon-Fri, 3pm-midnight Sat) It's worth feeling like a tourist for a visit to the Ice Bar; whether it's worth the Skr125 entry charge is another question, but you do get to see a mini version of the famed Ice Hotel, filled with sculptures and shivering cuties in puffy coats. The temperature is a constant -5°C and the vodka comes in glasses made of ice. Refills are Skr85.

El Cubanito (Map pp396-7; ☎ 650 1238; Scheelegatan 3) A worn-in bodega feel and pressed-tin bar make this small Cuban joint feel authentic and worlds away from snowy Stockholm.

Akkurat (Map p402; ☎ 644 00 15; Hornsgatan 18) This old beer hall has a great patio for summertime drinking, plus a good selection of microbrewed beer and delicious plates of mussels.

Grodan Grev Ture (Map p402; ☎ 679 6100; Grev Turegatan 16; mains from Skr95) Drinks and swanky seafood dishes at this très chic bar are merely an excuse to sit outdoors and be looked at.

Tures (Map p402; Sturegallerian shopping mall) Just across the street from Grodan Grev Ture, inside a highbrow shopping mall, is this surprisingly comfortable place with its sleek red-tinted design flourishes.

Two outdoor restaurant-bars on the bridge leading across to Djurgården, the **Sailor's Cafe** (Map pp396-7; Strandvägskajen 27) and its neighbour, **Djurgårdsbrons Sjöcafé** (Map pp396-7; ☎ 660 5757; Djurgårdsbron), are perfect for long leisurely drinks and summertime people-watching.

ENTERTAINMENT

'På Stan' (On the Town) is an arts-and-culture supplement found in the Friday edition of **Dagens Nyheter** (www.dn.se in Swedish), one of Stockholm's two main daily newspapers. **Nöjesguiden** (www.nojesguiden.se) is a free, monthly, music-focused entertainment paper with lots of club listings. Both these publications are written in Swedish only but most of the listings and advertisements for events are easy enough to understand.

The **Ticnet** (www.ticnet.se) website has information in English about larger events.

Theatre

Stockholm is a theatre city, with outstanding dance, opera and music performances; for an overview, pick up the free **Teater Guide** (www.iti.a.se) from tourist offices or online. For tickets, contact the tourist office, theatre box offices or **Biljett Direkt** (☎ 0771-707070; www.ticnet.se). Operas are usually performed in their original language, while theatre performances are invariably in Swedish.

Kungliga Dramatiska Teatern (Map p402; ☎ 667 0680; www.dramaten.se; Nybroplan) The Royal Theatre (aka Dramaten), an unmissable Art Nouveau building resembling a large, gilded wedding cake, stages a range of plays and is the unofficial home of Ingmar Bergman.

Konserthuset (Map p402; ☎ 5066 7788; www.konserthuset.se; Hötorget) This large blue building on Hötorget is a main venue for classical concerts and other musical events, including the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

Kungliga Operan (Map p402; ☎ 248240; www.opera.se; Gustav Adolfs Torg) The royal opera house is the place to go for opera and classical ballet.

Nightclubs

Most of Stockholm's best clubs charge an entrance fee, at least at the weekend, of around Skr100. At many, you're also required to check your coat at the door (Skr10 to 35).

La Habana (Map pp396-7; ☎ 166465; Sveavägen 108) Salsa is big in Stockholm, and this is one of the least pretentious places to sample it; the small basement bar features cigars, rum and dangerously attractive barkeepers.

Kvarnen (Map pp396-7; ☎ 643 0380; Tjörhovsgatan 4) If this bar were a hairstyle, it would be a mullet: business up front, party in the back. DJ nights range from reggae to house. Queues are constant and the doormen are not to be trifled with – just hand over your coat and don't fuss.

Spy Bar (Map p402; ☎ 5450 3704; Birger Jarlgatan 20; admission Skr125; ☎ Wed-Sat) Once Stureplan's crown jewel, 'the Puke' (so nicknamed because *spy* is Swedish for 'vomit') may have lost some of its gleam, but its prime location on Stureplan is still pretty cool, and these days you might actually stand a chance of getting in.

Live Music

Live jazz is popular in the capital and the **Stockholm Jazz Festival** (www.stockholmjazz.com) is held annually in mid-July. Summer sees outdoor concerts performed at places such as Gröna Lund Tivoli (p399).

Glenn Miller Café (Map p402; ☎ 100322; Brunns-gatan 21) This intimate place is the most likely venue for live shows that even local jazz snobs won't sneer at.

Jazzclub Fasching (Map p402; ☎ 5348 2960; www.fasching.se; Kungsgatan 63) Well-known and reliable, Fasching attracts fairly big-name acts from around the world.

Stampen (Map p402; ☎ 205793; www.stampen.se; Stora Nygatan 5) More for good-time boogiers than strict jazz aficionados, this Gamla Stan standby is a fun place to watch Nordic types get their groove on.

Mosebacke Etablissement (Map p402; ☎ 5560 9890; www.mosebacke.se; Mosebacketorg 3) This excellent bar, club and concert venue atop the ridge of Södermalm hosts all sorts of music and performers.

Nalen (Map p402; ☎ 5052 9200; Regeringsgatan 74) This grand, old-school dance hall puts on a wide range of concerts and club nights. Its small basement club, Alcazar, has live rock and pop bands most nights.

Gay & Lesbian Venues

The gay scene is well established in Stockholm, although Sweden's famous open-mindedness means that nonheteros are welcome in almost all bars and clubs, and there is no real 'gay district'. The best source of sass and information is the free monthly mag **QX** (www.qx.se).

Lady Patricia (Map p402; ☎ 743 0570; www.ladypatricia.se; Stadsgårdskajen 152) Patricia is a ship that's been moored near Slussen and converted into a nightclub; it's known for gay nights (complete with drag shows) that draw partiers of all persuasions every Sunday.

Popular gay restaurant-bars on Gamla Stan include **Mandus** (Map p402; ☎ 206055; Österlånggatan 7) and **Torget** (Map p402; ☎ 205560; Mälartorget 13).

SHOPPING

Stockholm's fascination with style and design means there are endless opportunities to pick up clothing and interior-design items from top-notch names. Swedish-made crafts tend to be of a uniformly high quality. Some of the best souvenirs include the country's famous glassware; painted wooden horses from Dalarna; intricately carved woodwork; linen tablecloths and handtowels; and amber and silver jewelry. If you're planning to spend up and you come from outside the EU, see p472 for details on tax-free shopping.

Look out for *hemslöjd* signs, indicating handicraft sales outlets. Another good place to buy traditional items is at Skansen (p399).

Shops in Stockholm are generally open 10am to 6pm Monday to Friday, 10am to 5pm Saturday and noon to 4pm Sunday, although smaller shops are often closed on Sunday and have limited Saturday hours.

DesignTorget (www.designtorget.se) Kulturhuset (Map p402; ☎ 5083 1520; basement, Kulturhuset, Sergels Torg) Södermalm (Map p402; ☎ 462 3520; Götgatan 31) A great place to pick up bargain gifts, this Stockholm chain is a showcase for the work of both established and up-and-coming young designers.

Filippa K (Map p402; ☎ 5458 8256; Grev Turegatan 18) Stockholm clothing designer Filippa K has several boutiques in town, including this one at the end of a long, sloping hallway; walk down it and hope you shrink like Alice in Wonderland.

Svensk Hemslöjd (Map p402; ☎ 232115; Sveavägen 44) The flagship store for the Society of Swedish Handcrafts, here you'll find everything from textiles to pottery made by Swedish artisans.

Svenskt Hantverk (Map p402; ☎ 214726; Kungsgatan 55) A similar range of goods is available here, with special prominence given to the famous carved wooden Dalarna horses.

NK (Map p402; ☎ 762 8000; Hamngatan) The best selection of souvenirs can be found in the basement of NK department store. There's also a gourmet grocery here.

Other handy department stores include **Åhlens** (Map p402; ☎ 676 6000; Klarabergsgatan 50) and **PUB** (Map p402; ☎ 402 1611; Drottninggatan 72-76).

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Air

See p473 for information on international flights to Sweden, and p476 for domestic flights.

Stockholm's main airport, **Arlanda** (Map p414; ☎ 797 6000), is 45km north of the city centre and has all the facilities you could need, including **Sidewalk Express** (per hr Skr19) internet terminals. **Bromma airport** (Map p414; ☎ 797 6874), 8km west of Stockholm, is a minor airport used for some domestic flights. Two airports are used by some low-cost carriers and sometimes labelled as 'Stockholm', despite being a fair distance from the capital: **Skavsta airport** (☎ 0155-280 400) is 100km south of Stockholm, near Nyköping, and **Västerås airport** (☎ 021-805600) is near Västerås, about 105km northwest of Stockholm. Transport connects the city with all airports (see opposite). Infor-

BSTOCKHOLM'S TOP FIVE SHOPPING STREETS

Biblioteksgatan (Map p402) Big-name fashion-designer boutiques in the Östermalm area.

Drottninggatan (Map p402) A central pedestrian mall full of the practical, the affordable, and the blatantly blue-and-yellow.

Götgatan (Map pp396-7, Map p402) The main artery through Södermalm, lined with offbeat shops and galleries.

Hamngatan (Map p402) Department store NK on one side, shopping centre Gallerian on the other.

Västerlånggatan (Map p402) Gamla Stan's mecca for souvenirs (tacky and otherwise).

mation about facilities at each airport can be found on the website of Sweden's civil aviation authority, **Luftfartsverket** (www.lfv.se).

Boat

See p475 for details of international ferry connections from Stockholm and areas surrounding the city to Finland (Helsinki and Turku), Estonia (Tallinn) and Latvia (Riga). When booking tickets, inquire about buses run by the ferry companies from Cityterminalen to their harbours.

Frihamnen, about 3km northeast of the city centre, is the arrival and departure point for **Tallink** (Map p402; ☎ 666 6001; www.tallink.ee; Klarabergsgatan 31) ferries to/from Tallinn. To get to Frihamnen, take a connecting bus from Cityterminalen operated by the ferry company, or town bus Nos 1, 72 or 76.

Silja Line Office (Map p402; ☎ 222140; www.silja.com; Kungsgatan 2) ferries depart for Helsinki and Turku from Värtahamnen, north of Frihamnen – take the connecting bus, walk from T-Gärdet or take local bus No 76 from T-Ropsten.

Viking Line (Map p402; ☎ 452 4000; www.vikingline.fi; Cityterminalen) ferries sail to Turku and Helsinki from the terminal in northeast Södermalm (Map pp396-7). Take the connecting bus from Cityterminalen or walk 1.5km east of T-Slussen.

Bus

Cityterminalen (Map p402; ☎ 3.30am-midnight) is above and next door to Centralstationen (follow the signs from within the main station hall, or use the street entrance on Klarabergsviadukten). From Cityterminalen there are long-distance buses to most major towns in Sweden and international destinations; airport buses (to Arlanda, Bromma, Skavsta and Västerås, see right); and ferry buses (to connect with the services of Silja Line, Viking Line, Destination Gotland and Tallink; see p475 for international ferry details). Cityterminalen has good facilities, including ATMs, foreign exchange, stores, cafés, lockers and internet access.

Train

Stockholm is the hub for the national services of **Sveriges Järnväg (SJ)** (☎ 0771-757575; www.sj.se), see p479. Direct trains to/from Copenhagen, Oslo, Storlien (for Trondheim) and

Narvik arrive and depart from Centralstationen (Stockholm C), as do the SL *pendeltåg* (commuter) services that operate within Stockholm county (see p412). The central hall at **Stockholm Centralstationen** (Map p402; ☎ 5am-12.30am) has all manner of facilities, including restaurants, shops, lockers, ATMs, internet access and public toilets and showers.

Train ticket offices are open as follows:
Domestic 7.30am to 8pm Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 6pm Saturday, 9.30am to 7pm Sunday
International 10am to 6pm Monday to Friday

GETTING AROUND

To/From the Airports

ARLANDA

The **Arlanda Express** (Map p402; ☎ 020-222224; www.arlandaexpress.com) train travels between Arlanda and Centralstationen (Skr200, 22 minutes) at regular intervals from around 5am to midnight (every 15 minutes from 6am to 10.30pm).

A cheaper option is the **Flygbussarna** (☎ 600 1000; www.flygbussarna.se) bus service to/from Cityterminalen (Skr95, 40 minutes). From the airport, Flygbus drivers can arrange to have a Flygtaxi meet you at one of several drop-off points and take you directly to your door (from Skr140); call ☎ 686 1010 to arrange a lift to the airport.

OTHER AIRPORTS

There are **Flygbussarna** (☎ 600 1000; www.flygbussarna.se) bus services from Cityterminalen to Bromma airport (Skr69, 15 to 20 minutes), Skavsta airport (Skr130, 80 minutes), and Västerås airport (Skr130, 75 minutes).

Bicycle

Stockholm has an extensive network of bicycle paths; tourist offices sell cycling maps but they're not usually necessary. Top day trips include: Djurgården; a loop going from Gamla Stan to Södermalm, Långholmen and Kungsholmen (on lakeside paths); Drottningholm (return by steamer); and Haga Park. Some long-distance routes are marked all the way from central Stockholm.

Bicycles can be carried free on SL local trains during off-peak times (ie not from 6am to 9am and 3pm to 6pm Monday to Friday), but they're not allowed in Centralstationen or the metro.

Djurgårdsbrons Sjöcafé (Map pp396-7; ☎ 660 5757; Djurgårdsbron), by the bridge to Djurgården, rents bikes for Skr65/250 per hour/day and has options for longer rentals. Not far away, **Cykel & Mopeduthyrningen** (Map pp396-7; ☎ 660 7959; Strandvägen kajplats 24), by the OK-Q8 petrol station, also rents bikes for around the same price.

Boat

Djurgårdsfärjan city ferry services, operated by SL, connect Djurgården with Nybroplan and Slussen, with many trips calling in at Skeppsholmen.

Strömma Kanabolaget (Map p402; ☎ 5871 4000; www.strommakanolaget.com) operates ferries between Nybroplan and Djurgården (Skr18 to Skr30; every 20 minutes 10am to 8pm daily mid-May to mid-August, weekends and holidays April to mid-May and mid-August to September). Strömma Kanabolaget also runs boats to Drottningholm (see p415) and Birka (see p416).

Waxholmsbolaget (Map p402; ☎ 679 5830; www.waxholmsbolaget.se) runs boats year-round between Djurgården and Slussen (adult/child Skr30/20, every 10 to 20 minutes from 7am Monday to Friday and from 9am on weekends, running to midnight, from late April to mid-September, less frequently in the low season). Trips are free with the SL Tourist Card, but not with the Stockholm Card.

Car & Motorcycle

Driving in central Stockholm is not recommended: small one-way streets, congested bridges and limited parking all present problems and car parks (*P-hus*) charge up to Skr50 per hour (the fixed evening rate is usually more reasonable). There's also a complicated new tax on driving in the heart of the city, implemented to help ease congestion. If you have a car, one of the best, hassle-free options is to stay on the outskirts of town and catch public transport into the centre.

Public Transport

Storstockholms Lokaltrafik (SL; ☎ 600 1000; www.sl.se) runs all *tunnelbana* (T or T-bana) metro trains, local trains and buses within Stockholm county. At T-Centralen (Map p402) there are SL information offices in the lower level of the station hall and at the Sergels Torg entrance. Both offices issue timetables

and sell SL transport passes and the Stockholm Card. You can call for schedule and travel information from 7am to 9pm Monday to Friday and 8am to 9pm weekends.

The Stockholm Card (p394) allows you to travel on all SL trains and buses in greater Stockholm, as well as providing free entry to many city attractions. A cheaper alternative is to buy an SL Public Transport pass (Skr60/180 for 24/72 hours), covering transport only. If you want to explore the county in rather more detail, bring along a passport photo and get yourself a 30-day SL pass (adult/child Skr600/360).

A new fare system for Stockholm's public transport means each trip takes a coupon good for two hours, with no zone limits. Coupons are available individually for Skr20, or in packs of 10 for Skr180 (available at SL offices and Pressbyrå newsagents). International rail passes aren't valid on SL trains.

BUS

Bus timetables and route maps can be complicated but are worth studying. Inner-city buses can be replaced by the *tunnelbana* or by walking, but useful connections to suburban attractions radiate from Sergels Torg, Fridhemsplan (on Kungsholmen), Odenplan and Slussen: bus No 47 runs from Sergels Torg to Djurgården (stopping out the front of Centralstationen); bus No 65 goes from Centralstationen to Skeppsholmen (for STF Vandrarhem af Chapman hostel); and bus No 69 runs to the Ladugårdsgärdet museums and also to Kaknästornet.

Check where the regional bus hub is for different outlying areas. Islands of the Ekerö municipality (including Drottningholm Palace) are served by bus Nos 301 to 323 from T-Brommaplan. Buses to Vaxholm (No 670) and the Åland ferries (bus No 640 to Norrtälje then No 637 to Grisslehamn or No 631 to Kapellskär) depart from T-Tekniska Högskolan. Odenplan is the hub for buses to the northern suburbs, including Haga Park.

METRO

The most useful mode of transport in Stockholm is the *tunnelbana* (T), which converges on T-Centralen and is connected by an underground walkway to Centralstationen. There are three main through lines with branches – check that the approaching train is actually going your way.

TRAIN

Local trains (called *pendeltåg*) are useful for connections to Nynäshamn (for ferries to Gotland); Märsta (for buses to Sigtuna and Arlanda airport); and Södertälje. There are also services to Nockeby (from T-Alvik); Lidingö (from T-Ropsten); Kårsta, Österskär and Näsbyrån (from T-Tekniska Högskolan); and Saltsjöbaden (from T-Slussen).

TRAM

Djurgårdslinjen No 7 (Map pp396-7; ☎ 660 7700; www.ss.se; adult/child Skr25/13) is a historical tram running between Norrmalmstorg and Skansen on weekends from April to December (daily June to August), passing most attractions on Djurgården. Separate fees apply for Stockholm Card-holders, but the SL Tourist Card is valid.

Taxi

There's usually no problem finding a taxi in Stockholm; costs are about Skr35 for flagfall, then Skr8 to Skr9 per kilometre (more expensive late on Friday and Saturday nights). A trip within the city shouldn't cost more than Skr200. Reputable firms:

Taxi 020 (☎ 020-939393)

Taxi Kurir (☎ 300000)

Taxi Stockholm (☎ 150000)

AROUND STOCKHOLM

Most locals will tell you that the one thing not to miss about Stockholm is leaving it – whether for a journey into the lovely rock-strewn archipelago or an excursion into the surrounding countryside. Within easy reach of the capital are idyllic islands, Viking gravesites, cute fishing villages and sturdy royal palaces.

NORTHERN SUBURBS

One of Stockholm's loveliest attractions is **Millesgården** (Map p414; ☎ 446 7594; www.millesgarden.se; Carl Milles väg 2, Lidingö; adult/child Skr80/free; ☎ 11am-5pm mid-May–Sep, noon-5pm Tue-Sun Oct–mid-May), a superb sculpture park and museum of works by Carl Milles. It's on Lidingö island with great views to the mainland; take the metro to T-Ropsten then bus No 207.

The extensive **Naturhistoriska Riksmuseet** (Map p414; ☎ 5195 4040; www.nrm.se; Frescativägen

40; admission free; ☎ 10am-7pm Tue-Fri, 11am-7pm Sat & Sun; (M) T-Universitet), founded by Carl von Linné in 1739, is the national museum of natural history, and includes the Imax theatre and planetarium **Cosmonova** (Map p414; ☎ 5195 5130; adult/child Skr75/50; ☎ 10am-8pm Tue-Sun).

The large parks that extend from Djurgården in the south form **Ekoparken** (www.ekoparken.com), a 27-sq-km national city park and the first such protected city area in the world. The area is perfect for cycling tours.

Haga Park (Map p414) is also pleasant for walks and bicycle tours with attractions including the royal **Gustav III's Pavilion**, **Butterfly House** and colourful **Copper Tent**. To reach the park, take bus No 515 from Odenplan to Haga Norra.

FJÄDERHOLMARNÄ

These tiny islands (the 'Feather Islands') offer an easy escape from the city – they're just 25 minutes away by boat (off the east coast of Djurgården) and are a favourite swimming spot for locals. Take one of the boats (Skr80 return, buy tickets on board) that leave from either Nybroplan (half-hourly) or Slussen (hourly) from May to early September. There are a couple of restaurants here and the last boats leave the islands at around midnight, making them a perfect spot to enjoy the long daylight hours.

FERRY PORTS

Nynäshamn, 50km south of Stockholm, is the main gateway to Gotland (see p451 for more); there are also regular ferries to Gdańsk (Poland). Regular local (SL) trains run from Stockholm to Nynäshamn; you can use SL passes, but international rail passes are not valid. There are also direct bus services from Stockholm's Cityterminalen to connect with the Gotland ferries (Skr85), leaving 1¼ hours before ferry departure times.

Ferries sail between tiny **Kapellskär** (90km northeast of Stockholm) and Turku (Finland) via the Åland islands (see p475). The ferry companies offer a direct bus from Stockholm Cityterminalen to meet the ferries, but you can also take bus No 640 from T-Tekniska Högskolan to Norrtälje and change there to No 631, which

Hedvig Eleanora's fiercely blue bedroom and the painted ceilings of the state bedchamber. The palace is home to the Swedish royal family, and you can either walk around the wings open to the public on your own or take a one-hour guided tour (no additional charge; English tours at 11am, noon, 1pm and 3pm daily from June to August, reduced schedules during the rest of the year).

The unique **Drottningholms Slottsteater** (Map p414; ☎ 5569 3100; www.drottningholmslottsteater.dtm.se; tours Skr60/40; 🕒 noon-4.30pm May, 11am-4.30pm Jun-Aug, 1-3.30pm Sep) is the original 18th-century court theatre and is well worth a tour, especially the backstage sound-effects department; ask about opera, ballet and musical performances here in summer.

At the far end of the gardens is the 18th-century **Kina Slott** (Map p414; ☎ 402 6270; adult/child Skr60/25; 🕒 11am-4.30pm May-Aug, noon-3.30pm Sep), a lavishly decorated 'Chinese pavilion' that was built as a gift to Queen Lovisa Ulrika. Admission includes an entertaining guided tour.

It can add up to an expensive day out if you wish to see everything at Drottningholm. Given the separate admission charges for each attraction, it's a good idea to use the Stockholm Card. You can bring a picnic and enjoy it in the gardens, or dine in one of the two restaurants by the palace. If you're not short of time you could cycle out here, otherwise take the metro to T-Brommaplan and change to bus Nos 301 or 323. The most pleasant way to get to Drottningholm is by boat: **Strömma Kanalbolaget** (Map p402; ☎ 5871 4000; www.strommakanalbolaget.com) has boats that depart from Stadshusbron in Stockholm daily from May to mid-September (Skr95/125 one way/return).

Birka

At the fascinating Viking trading centre of **Birka** (Map p414; ☎ 5605 1445; www.raa.se; 🕒 May-Sep), a Unesco World Heritage Site on Björkö in Lake Mälaren, archaeologists have excavated the ancient settlement's cemetery, harbour and fortress. Cruises to Birka run from May to mid-September; the return trip with **Strömma Kanalbolaget** (Map p402; ☎ 5871 4000; www.strommakanalbolaget.com) from Stadshusbron, Stockholm, is a full day's outing (Skr255). A visit to the museum and a guided tour in English of the settlement's burial mounds and fortifications are included in the price.

SIGTUNA

📞 08 / pop 6500

About 40km northwest of Stockholm is the picturesque lakeside town of Sigtuna, the oldest surviving town in Sweden. It was founded in about 980; the first Swedish coins were struck here in 995. There's a popular **Medieval Festival** in July and good holiday markets throughout December. The friendly **tourist office** (Map p414; ☎ 5948 0650; www.sigtuna.se/turism; Stora gatan 33) can help with inquiries, tours and tickets to local events.

Ten runestones still stand in various places around Sigtuna, and 150 more dot the surrounding landscape. Stora gatan is probably Sweden's oldest main street, and there are ruins of 12th-century churches around town. The mid-13th-century **Maria-kyrkan** (Map p414), Sigtuna's most arresting sight, contains restored medieval paintings. The friendly **Sigtuna Museum** (Map p414; ☎ 5978 3870; Stora gatan 55; adult/child Skr30/free; 🕒 noon-4pm Jun-Aug, noon-4pm Tue-Sun Sep-May) displays finds from excavations of the area.

If you're looking to stay overnight, there's little budget accommodation in town. Those with their own wheels should look for signs advertising *stugor* (cabins) at local farmhouses (usually Skr200 to 300) or ask at the tourist office. **Sigtuna Stiftelsen Gästhem** (Map p414; ☎ 5925 8900; www.sigtunastiftelsen.se; Manfred Björkquists allé 2-4; s/d Skr800/950) is a pretty place run by a Christian foundation.

There are a number of good cafés and restaurants to choose from, plus supermarkets for picnic supplies (and tables by the lake, among the ducks). Don't miss the delightful **Tant Brun Kaffestuga** (Map p414; ☎ 5925 0934; Laurentii gränd 3; snacks Skr20-40), a 17th-century café with a worryingly saggy roof and pretty courtyard just off Stora gatan. **Bäthuset Krog & Bar** (Map p414; ☎ 5925 6780; Strandvägen; mains Skr180-240; 🕒 dinner Tue-Sun) is a classy restaurant and bar, on a pontoon in the lake by the guest harbour.

Travel connections are easy from Stockholm. Take a local train to Märsta, from where there are frequent buses to Sigtuna (bus Nos 570 or 575, half-hourly). In summer there are cruises on Lake Mälaren from Stockholm and Uppsala (stopping at the fine baroque castle Skokloster, around 26km by road northwest of Sigtuna).

SVEALAND

This area, the birthplace of Sweden, offers the visitor much evidence of the region's long history, including rune stones so plentiful you're likely to stumble over a few. Pre-Viking burial mounds in Gamla Uppsala light the imaginations of myth-builders and history buffs. There's also the old mine in Falun, which accidentally provided the means for all those little cottages dotting the landscape to be painted red. And in Mora, the definitive Swedish king's path towards the crown is still retraced today, by thousands of skiers each year in the Vasaloppet.

UPPSALA

📞 018 / pop 191,100

Uppsala's huge pink castle and prominent *domkyrka* (cathedral) give it an instantly recognisable silhouette. The fourth-largest city in Sweden, it's a university town where young people and old buildings meet over coffee. About 70km from Stockholm, it makes a good excursion and has decent budget accommodation. You can soak up history and beer in equal measure.

Gamla (Old) Uppsala flourished as early as the 6th century. The cathedral was consecrated in 1435 after 175 years of construction and the castle was first built in the 1540s, although today's edifice belongs to the 18th century. The city's university was founded in 1477 and is Scandinavia's oldest.

Information

Forex (Fyrystorg 8; 🕒 Mon-Sat) Currency exchange next door to the tourist office.

Port 22 (Sankt Olofsgatan 32; per hr Skr40) Internet access. Enter through the courtyard.

Public library (cnr Sankt Olofsgatan & Svartbäcksgatan; 🕒 Mon-Sat) Offers free internet access, but expect long waits.

Tourist office (☎ 27 4800; www.upsalaturism.se; Fyrystorg 8; 🕒 10am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-3pm Sat year-round, noon-4pm Sun late Jun-mid-Aug) Close to the cathedral. Ask about the summer-only Uppsala Card (Skr100 for 24 hours), which gives you free admission to many of the town's sights plus free local transport.

UNT City Internet Café (cnr Fyrystorg & Drottninggatan; per hr Skr25; 🕒 Mon-Sat) Internet access right by the tourist office, inside the *Upsala Nya Tidning* newspaper office, with tealight candles charmingly decorating the computers.

Sights

GAMLA UPPSALA

A great excursion for imaginative history buffs, especially in nice weather, is Gamla Uppsala – the city's beginnings, consisting of three great **grave mounds** 4km north of the modern city and well signposted (take bus No 2 from Stora Torget). The mounds are said to be the graves of legendary pre-Viking kings and lie in a cemetery including about 300 smaller mounds and a great heathen temple. Even more fascinating is all the myth-making that has grown up around the grave mounds. A 17th-century professor, Olof Rudbeck, argued that Gamla Uppsala was actually the ancient sunken city of Atlantis, just for example.

For more myths, rumours and some of the actual science surrounding the site, visit **Gamla Uppsala Historical Centre** (☎ 239300; www.raa.se/old uppsala; adult/child Skr50/30; 🕒 11am-5pm May-Aug, noon-3pm Sun Sep-Apr). The museum has exhibits of ancient artefacts excavated from Gamla Uppsala and the nearby archaeological sites. Guided tours will help you get more out of your visit – these are held at 3pm daily from May to August and are included in the entry price of the museum.

Christianity arrived in the 11th century and with it the bishops and other church officials. From 1164 the archbishop had his seat in a cathedral on the site of the present **church**, which, by the 15th century, was enlarged and painted with frescoes.

Next to the flat-topped mound Tingshögen is the **Odinsborg Inn**, known for its horns of mead and the Viking feasts at its restaurant, but it's also home to a small café. **Disagården** (admission free; 🕒 mid-May-Aug), a farm and village museum, is a few minutes from the church.

UPPSALA SLOTT

Originally constructed by Gustav Vasa in the mid-16th century, **Uppsala Slott** (castle; ☎ 727 2485; adult Skr60; 🕒 tours 1pm & 3pm Jun-Aug) features the state hall where kings were enthroned and a queen abdicated. It's open by guided tour only. Midsummer and other holidays are frequently marked by ringing the **Gunilla klockan**. The **Botanic Gardens** (admission free; 🕒 7am-9pm May-Aug, 7am-7pm Sep-Apr) are below the castle hill and include the Carl Linnaeus orangery.

OTHER SIGHTS

The Gothic **Domkyrka** (admission free; Domkyrkoplan; ☎ 8am-6pm) dominates the city, just as some of those buried there dominated their country, including St Erik, Gustav Vasa, Johan III and Carl von Linné. Inside, visit the **treasury** (☎ 187201; adult/child Skr30/free; ☎ daily May-Sep, Tue-Sun Oct-Apr) in the north tower.

Gustavianum Museum (☎ 471 7571; www.gustavianum.uu.se; Akademigatan 3; adult/child Skr40/30; ☎ Tue-Sun), the university museum, has an excellent antiquities collection and features an old 'anatomical theatre'. **Uppland Museum** (☎ 169100; Sankt Eriks Torg; admission free; ☎ Tue-Sun), in an 18th-century mill, houses county collections from the Middle Ages.

Carolina Rediviva (☎ 471 3900; Dag Hammarskjöldsväg 1; adult Skr20; ☎ daily mid-May-mid-Sep, Mon-Sat mid-Sep-mid-May) is the old university library and has a display hall with maps and historical and scientific literature, the pride of which is the surviving half of the 6th-century *Codex Argenteus* (Silver Bible).

The **Linné Museum** (☎ 471 2576; Svartbäcksgatan 27; adult/child Skr30/free; ☎ noon-4pm Tue-Sun Jun-mid-Sep) exhibits memorabilia of von Linné's work in Uppsala, and its **gardens** (adult/child Skr30/free; ☎ May-Sep), with more than 1000 herbs, were designed according to an 18th-century plan.

Just west of the Botanic Gardens is the fascinating **Bror Hjorth's hus** (☎ 567030; Norbyvägen 26; adult/child Skr30/free; ☎ noon-4pm Tue-Sun). The home and studio of the Swedish sculptor and

painter (1894-1968) are jam-packed with his work and collections, as well as rotating exhibits of current Scandinavian artists.

Sleeping

Fyrishov Camping (☎ 727 4960; www.fyrishov.se; Idröttsgatan 2; camp sites Skr130, 4-bed cabins from Skr695) This well-equipped, family-friendly camping ground is 2km north of the city, by the river at Fyrisfjädern and neighbouring a huge pool and sports complex. Take bus Nos 4, 6, 25 or 50.

Hotel Uppsala (☎ 480 5000; www.profilhotels.se; Kungsgatan 27; hostel dm/s/d Skr250/435/600, hotel s/d from Skr1050/1275; ♿) It looks dull from the outside, but this hotel has some excellent-value rooms with all the trappings you'd normally find in a more expensive place, and rooms are discounted to Skr700. There are also hostel rooms, a laundry, wheelchair access, a good restaurant and lounge, and free internet access.

STF Vandrarhem Sunnersta Herrgård (☎ 324220; Sunnerstavägen 24; hostel dm/s/d Skr235/385/470, hotel s/d Skr590/680) Some 6km south of the centre in a beautiful green setting is this old manor house. Hostel rooms are small, or you can pay extra for a 'hotel' room - a larger room (still with shared bathroom) with linen and breakfast included. Bike rental is available. Take bus Nos 20 or 50.

STF Vandrarhem Vandraren (☎ 104300; www.vandraren.com; Vattholmavägen 16; s/d Skr295/485; ☎ mid-Jun-mid-Aug) This is a second, summer STF hostel 2km north of town. It's a student residence the rest of the year and facilities, including private bathroom for each room, are top-notch. Bike rental is available. Take bus Nos 2, 20, 24 or 54.

Hotel Svava (☎ 130030; www.hotelsvava.com; Bangårdsgatan 24; s/d Skr1325/1625, discount Skr675/800) Opposite the train station, this hotel (now part of the Comfort Inn chain) has all the facilities of an upper-range business-style hotel, and offers good weekend and summer prices.

Eating & Drinking

There are several eateries on and around the pedestrian mall and Stora Torget, and around the cathedral. Visitors can also head to Sysslomansgatan for some good choices.

Saffet's (☎ 124125; Stora Torget 1; meals Skr59) When it comes to quick sustenance and

cheap food, Saffet's has the works - burgers, enchiladas, baked potatoes, fish and chips, and kebabs.

Svenssons Taverna (☎ 100908; Sysslomansgatan 14; mains Skr80-185; ☎ dinner Mon-Fri, lunch & dinner Sat & Sun) Pottery Barn meets the Ancient Mariner in the decorating scheme of this upscale eatery, with a nice outdoor patio and a menu of gourmet Swedish staples.

Ofvandahls (☎ 132404; Sysslomansgatan 3-5) This is a classy *konditori* full of old-world charm.

Wayne's Coffee (☎ 710012; Smedsgränd 4) Wayne's has good coffee and café fare in stylish modern surrounds.

Hemköp supermarket (Stora Torget) In the basement of Åhlens the central shopping centre, this supermarket is open until 10pm nightly.

Saluhallen (Sankt Eriks Torg; ☎ Mon-Sat) The indoor produce market is between the cathedral and the river. Pop in for a browse and a bite to eat - it houses great stalls and cafés.

O'Connor's (☎ 144010; Stora Torget 1; mains Skr59-180) Upstairs from Saffet's, O'Connor's is much as you'd hope for in an Irish pub anywhere in the world - crowded, lively, friendly and well stocked with Guinness. There's also live music most nights.

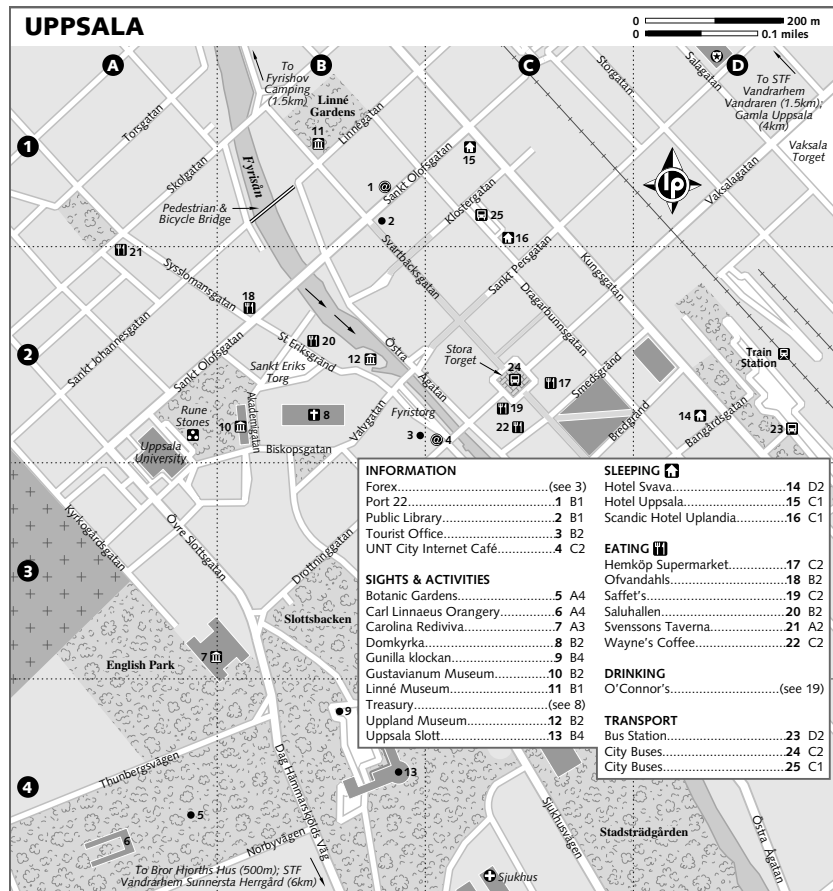
Getting There & Away

The **bus station** (Kungsgatan) is outside the train station. Bus No 801 (the Flygbus) departs at least twice an hour for nearby Arlanda airport (Skr80). **Swebus Express** (☎ 0200-218218; www.swebusexpress.se) runs regularly to Stockholm (Skr55), Örebro (Skr185) and Falun (Skr135). Frequent **SJ trains** (☎ 0771-757575; www.sj.se) run to/from Stockholm (Skr47 to 62); all train services to/from Gävle, Östersund and Mora stop in Uppsala. SL coupons or passes take you only as far as Märsta from Stockholm.

Getting Around

A local bus ticket costs from Skr20 and gives unlimited travel for two hours - just enough for a visit to Gamla Uppsala. Catch a city bus from Stora Torget or outside **Scandic Hotel Uplandia** (Dragarbrunnsgatan). **Upplands Lokaltrafik** (☎ 0771-141414) runs regional transport within the county; if you're staying long in the area, ask about rebate cards and the various passes available.

You can hire a bicycle at Fyrishov Camping (left) or the STF hostels (left), or inquire at the tourist office.



ÖREBRO

☎ 019 / pop 125,000

A castle that looks like it's floating on water, pretty gardens to wander through at leisure, people bicycling everywhere – Örebro has to be one of the most postcard-friendly towns in Sweden. There's a river lined with pink-and-green houses drifting lazily through the city centre, and a bustling square that's a great place for people-watching.

The **tourist office** (☎ 212121; www.orebro.se/turism; ☹ 10am–6pm Mon–Fri, 10am–4pm Sat & Sun Jun–Aug, 10am–6pm Mon–Fri, 10am–2pm Sat & Sun Sep–May) is inside the castle. The **library** (Näbbtorgsgatan) is south of the town centre and has internet access, as does **Video Biljarden** (Järntorget; per hr Skr35; ☹ 11am–midnight).

Sights

Admission to the once-powerful **Slot-tet** (☎ 212121; adult/child Skr50/free), now fully restored, includes a castle tour (in English at 1.30pm and 3.30pm daily mid-June to mid-August; the rest of the year, all tours are in Swedish at 1pm on weekends). Tickets can be purchased from the tourist office.

Outside the castle is the **Örebro Länsmuseum** (☎ 602 8700; Engelbrektsgratan 3; admission free; ☹ 11am–5pm), the combined regional and art museums.

A pleasant stroll east of the castle along the river will take you through Stadsparken. Bikes are available to rent from May to September from the **kiosk** (Hamplan) on the river's edge.

In Stadsparken, the **Stadsträdgården** greenhouse precinct has a great café and, further east, there's the excellent **Wadköping** museum village, which has craft workshops, a bakery and period buildings. You can freely wander around here at any time, but the shops, exhibitions and museums are generally open from 11am to 4pm Tuesday to Sunday.

The commercial centre and some grand buildings are around Stortorget, including the 13th-century **St Nikolai kyrka** (☹ Mon–Sat).

Sleeping & Eating

STF Vandrarhem Örebro (☎ 310240; www.hepa.se in Swedish; Kaptensgratan 1; dm/s/d from Skr185/315/370) This hostel is very well hidden, some 1.6km northeast of the train station (get

hold of a map before setting off). It has good facilities, including some en-suite rooms, and bike hire is available. Take bus Nos 16 or 31.

Livin' Lägenhetshotell (☎ 310240; www.livin.nu in Swedish; apt per night for 1 week Skr400) Next door to Vandrarhem Örebro and run by the same management is this complex of bright, modern apartments. Each apartment has a fully equipped kitchen, bathroom and living area, and can sleep up to four (at a push).

First Hotell Örebro (☎ 611 7300; www.firsthotels.se; Storgatan 24; s/d from Skr1095/1495, discount Skr595/995) In a good location close to the bus and train stations, as well as the castle, this classy hotel offers comfortable rooms in a variety of sizes, and good discounted rates.

Restaurang & Café Stadsträdgården (☎ 139835; Floragatan 1; lunch buffet Mon–Fri/Sat & Sun Skr75/98) Make a beeline for this lovely area in Stadsparken, with a restaurant (lunch only) and café (open until 4pm) surrounded by lush plant life inside a greenhouse.

Slottskällaren (☎ 156960; Drottninggatan 1; lunch Skr79, mains Skr110–250) For something a little more formal, this elegant restaurant located inside the Elite Hotel (right by the castle) serves good-value lunches and posher dinners, including a decent vegetarian selection.

Bishop's Arms (☎ 156920; Drottninggatan 1; pub meals under Skr100) Also part of the hotel, this English-style pub has an outdoor terrace that overflows with bright young things in summertime.

Getting There & Away

You're well placed to go almost anywhere in southern Sweden from Örebro by long-distance buses, which leave from opposite the train station. **Swebus Express** (☎ 0200-218218; www.swebusexpress.se) has connections in all directions: to Norrköping; Karlstad and Oslo; Mariestad and Göteborg; Västerås and Uppsala; and Eskilstuna and Stockholm.

Train connections are similarly good. Direct **SJ trains** (☎ 0771-757575; www.sj.se) run to/from Stockholm every hour; to get to Göteborg, take a train to Hallsberg and change there. Other trains run daily to Gävle and Borlänge (where you can change for trains to Falun and Mora).

FALUN

☎ 023 / pop 54,600

Falun, traditionally the main centre of Dalarna, is a cluster of crooked pedestrianised streets and a main square, intriguingly slanted, that's capped by an imposing church. The town is synonymous with mining and with Stora, perhaps the world's oldest public company (first mentioned in 1288), and the mine is now World Heritage Listed and accessible to visitors. The popular **Falun Folkmusik festival** (www.falufolk.com) features world music as well as Nordic folk traditions and is held over four days in mid-July.

The **tourist office** (☎ 83050; www.visitfalun.se; Trotzgatan 10–12; ☹ daily mid-Jun–mid-Aug, Mon–Sat mid-Aug–mid-Jun) can help with information. There's free internet at the **library** (Kristinegatan 15), and **Billiard & IT Café** (Falugatan 4; per hr Skr40; ☹ Mon–Sat) is a central internet café.

Sights & Activities

The **Kopparberget copper mine** (☎ 782030; www.kopparberget.com; mine tour & museum adult/child Skr100/50, museum only Skr20/free) was the world's most important by the 17th century and only closed in 1992 (it's now on Unesco's World Heritage List). As a by-product, the mine also provided the red coating that became the characteristic house paint of the age and is still in popular use today throughout Sweden. The mine and museum are west of town at the top end of Gruvgatan (take bus No 709). You can go on an interesting one-hour tour of the bowels of the disused mine (bring warm clothing) or just check out the museum; call in advance to find out the times of English-language tours. On weekdays from October to April it's necessary to book tours in advance.

Carl Larsson-gården (☎ 60053; www.carllarsson.se; tour adult/child Skr90/40; ☹ 10am–5pm daily May–Sep, 11am–5pm Mon–Fri Oct–Apr) is the beautiful early-20th-century home of the artist Carl Larsson and his wife Karin in the pretty village of Sundborn (13km from Falun; bus No 64). It's a bright, lively house with superb colour schemes, decoration and furniture. Tapestries and embroidery woven by Karin Larsson reveal she was as skilled an artist as her husband. Admission is by 45-minute guided tour only; call in advance for times of English tours.

There's more folk culture at **Dalarnas Museum** (☎ 765500; Stigaregatan; adult/child Skr40/20), along with some cutting-edge temporary exhibits of Swedish artists. This fine museum features local culture and art, and Nobel-winning novelist Selma Lagerlöf's study is preserved here.

The baroque interiors of **Kristine kyrka** (Stora Torget) show some of the riches that arrived in Falun, but don't miss the late-14th-century **Stora Kopparbergs kyrka**, the oldest building in town, off Mariabacken and a bit north of the centre.

Falun is a winter-sports centre with plenty of **ski runs**, **nordic courses** and **toboggan runs**, particularly in the Lugnet area, to the northwest. Take bus Nos 705 or 713.

Sleeping & Eating

STF Vandrarhem Falun (☎ 10560; www.stfvandrarhem.falun.just.nu; Vandrarvägen 3; dm/s/d Skr185/225/410) This large hostel is 3km east of the town (bikes are available for hire), with excellent facilities. Take bus Nos 701 or 712 to Koppartorget, from where it's a 10-minute walk.

Falu Fängelse Vandrarhem (☎ 795575; www.falufangelse.se; Villavägen 17; dm/s/d Skr200/300/400) A more central option is this friendly, well-equipped hostel, where accommodation is in the simple cells of an old prison, used up until the mid-1990s.

Hotel Falun (☎ 29180; www.hotelfalun.nu; Trotzgatan 16; s/d from Skr540/740, discount Skr490/590) There are a few good hotel choices right by the tourist office, including this small place offering comfortable modern rooms with private toilet and shared shower (or you can pay extra for rooms with full private bathroom).

Café Kopparhatten (☎ 19169; Stigaregatan; lunch from Skr75) This café is the pick of the town's lunchtime haunts, attached to Dalarnas Museum – it was being renovated at the time of research. Choose from tempting sandwiches, soups and cakes, or feel virtuous and fill up at the great-value vegetarian buffet.

Banken Bar & Brasserie (☎ 711911; Åsgatan 41; lunch Skr75, mains Skr115–225) A classy place with a grand interior, formerly a bank. The menu includes a *gott & enkelt* (good and simple) category featuring the likes of *gravad lax* (cured salmon), burgers and pasta (Skr105 to Skr130), plus fancier creations such as bouillabaisse or rack of lamb.

Getting There & Away

Falun isn't on the main railway lines – change at Borlänge when coming from Stockholm or Mora. **Swebus Express** (☎ 0200-218218; www.swebusexpress.se) has buses on the Göteborg–Karlstad–Falun–Gävle route, and also has connections to buses on the Stockholm–Borlänge–Mora route (some run via Uppsala).

Traffic in the region is run by **Dalatrafik** (☎ 0771-959595; www.dalatrafik.se) and covers all corners of the county of Dalarna. Tickets cost Skr17 for trips within a zone, and Skr17 extra for each new zone. A 31-day *Länskort* (County Card) costs Skr900 and allows you to travel throughout the county. Regional bus No 70 runs regularly on the Falun–Rättvik–Mora route.

LAKE SILJAN REGION

This pretty, traditional area in the county of Dalarna is a popular summer- and winter-sports destination, with reasonable-sized towns offering good facilities and attractions. Siljansleden (the Siljan Trail) extends for more than 300km around Lake Siljan and has **walking** and **cycling** paths – maps are available from tourist offices. Another way to enjoy the lake is by boat: in summer, *M/S Gustaf Wasa* has a complex schedule of lunch, dinner and sightseeing cruises from the main towns of Mora, Rättvik and Leksand. Inquire at any of the area's tourist offices for a schedule. Also check out the **Siljan** (www.siljan.se) website. Tourist offices in the area can all help with accommodation, including cottages in the idyllic countryside.

In summer the area is busy with events: Leksand's **Midsummer Festival** is the most popular in Sweden. **Musik vid Siljan** (www.musikvidsiljan.se) is a week-long event taking place in early July with something to suit most tastes, including chamber, jazz and traditional folk music. The stunning Dalhalla venue in Rättvik (right) hosts an **opera festival** in early August.

Rättvik & Around

☎ 0248

Rättvik (population 10,900) has sandy lake-side beaches for summer and ski slopes for winter. Don't miss the longest wooden pier in Sweden, the 625m **Långbryggan** out over the lake. Views from surrounding hills are excellent. Try the 725m-long **rodel run**

(☎ 51300; 1/3 rides Skr45/110; ☽ Jun-Aug), a sort of summer bobsled chute in the hills east of town that's lots of fun. The **tourist office** (☎ 797210; rattvik@siljan.se; Hwy 70; ☽ daily mid-Jun–mid-Aug, Mon-Fri mid-Aug–mid-Jun) is at the train station.

By the lake northwest of the train station, the 13th-century **church**, rebuilt in 1793, has 87 well-preserved **church stables**, the oldest dating from 1470. Further north is **Gammelgården** (☎ 51445; tours Skr45; ☽ mid-Jun–mid-Aug), an open-air museum with a good collection of furniture painted in local style.

Inviting all sorts of bad puns about rocking out, **Dalhalla** (☎ 797950; www.dalhalla.se), an old limestone quarry 7km north of Rättvik, is used as an open-air concert venue in summer. The setting is stunning and allegedly was discovered by an opera singer testing acoustics. Tickets start around Skr165, see tourist offices in the area for a programme of concerts, or check the website.

Tiny **Tällberg**, midway between Rättvik and Leksand, is a pretty village of wooden buildings scattered like a handful of rubies along a hillside, and it's nearly as expensive if you want to stay the night. It has a population of around 200 and no fewer than eight upmarket hotels (most with attached restaurants), plus a few galleries and boutiques. But it's a lovely place to enjoy lunch and have a wander – don't miss the huge pink Dala horse on someone's front lawn. See the **Tällberg** (www.infotallberg.nu in Swedish) website, which has links to all the hotels. Bus No 58 between Rättvik and Leksand stops in the village regularly, and it's worth going just for the scenic landscape along the route.

On the lakeshore near the train station is **Siljansbadets Camping** (☎ 51691; www.siljansbadet.com; camp sites Skr105-155, 4-bed cabins from Skr310). **Rättviksparken** (☎ 56110; www.rattviksparken.fh.se in Swedish; camp sites Skr110-150, cabins from Skr330) is by the river off Centralgatan (1km from the train station). Both camping grounds are large, well equipped and crowded in high season; book ahead if you're planning to travel between mid-June and mid-August.

By Rättviksparken camping ground is the highly rated hostel **STF Vandrarhem Rättvik** (☎ 10566; rattviksparken@rattviksparken.fh.se; Centralgatan; dm/s/d from Skr175/195/350), in a charming complex of old wooden buildings.

Behind the OK-Q8 petrol station on the main road to Leksand, about 3km south of town, is the not-quite-camouflaged **Hotell Vidabläck** (☎ 30250; www.hantverkshbyn.se; Faluvägen; s/d from Skr600/850), offering rustic hotel accommodation sneakily disguised in grass-roofed huts. There's a restaurant on site.

The cheapest eateries are opposite the train station, and Storgatan is home to a few supermarkets. You might want to head to Tällberg or Mora for other evening options, as Rättvik doesn't excel in the restaurant department. The cute **Restaurang Anna** (☎ 12681; Vasagatan 3; mains Skr95-160; ☽ Tue-Sun) is the best option for finer dining in Rättvik. It's a good midrange place in a pretty wooden cottage serving up Swedish and international dishes, including fish, lamb, pork and reindeer.

Buses depart from outside the train station. The **Dalatrafik** (☎ 0771-959595; www.dalatrafik.se) bus No 70 runs between Falun, Rättvik and Mora. Direct trains from Stockholm and Mora stop at Rättvik.

Mora

☎ 0250 / pop 20,000

The popular legend is that, in 1520, King Gustav Vasa fled on skis from Mora after hiding from the Danes. (Historians now tend to think it's more likely he travelled on snowshoes, but that's not as glamorous.) Two good yeomen of Mora chose to brave the winter and follow. **Vasaloppet**, the huge ski race that ends in Mora, commemorates Gustav's journey on the first Sunday every March. It involves 90km of gruelling nordic skiing and about 15,000 people.

The **tourist office** (☎ 592020; mora@siljan.se; Stationsvägen; ☽ daily mid-Jun–mid-Aug, Mon-Fri mid-Aug–mid-Jun) is at the train station.

The ski race that puts Mora on the map is commemorated in **Vasaloppsmuseet** (☎ 39225; Vasagatan; adult/child Skr30/10; ☽ daily mid-May–Aug, Mon-Fri Sep–mid-May), with interesting displays about the event and the story behind it. Mora's other big draw is the **Zornmuseet** (☎ 592310; www.zorn.se; Vasagatan 36; adult/child Skr60/2), celebrating the works and private collections of the Mora painter Anders Zorn. The highlight is an enormous self-portrait done almost entirely in black, a test run for one commissioned by the Uffizi. The Zorn family house, **Zorngården** (☎ 592310; Vasagatan

36; tours adult/child Skr50/15), between the church and the museum, is an excellent example of a wealthy artist's house, reflecting Zorn's National Romantic aspirations. Access to the house is by guided tour only, every 30 minutes, in Swedish unless requested in advance.

The Dalahästar (Dala horses) are wooden horses painted in bright, cheerful colours, and to many they represent the original, genuine symbol of Sweden, more powerful than the Swedish flag. The most reputable of the Dalahästar are made by **Nils Olsson Hemsjö** (☎ 37200; ☽ daily mid-Jun–mid-Aug, Mon-Sat mid-Aug–mid-Jun) at Nusnäs, 10km south-east of Mora (bus No 108). Here you can inspect the workshops and buy up big at the souvenir outlet.

Outside the town of Orsa (16km north of Mora) is **Grönklitt Björnpark** (☎ 46200; www.orsa.gronklitt.se; adult/child Skr95/55; ☽ mid-May–mid-Sep), where you can see bears, wolves and lynxes in fairly natural surrounds. The bears are usually fed around noon, when you'll get a great view of them. To get here, take bus No 104 from Mora to Orsa, then bus No 118 to the park.

SLEEPING & EATING

Mora Parken (☎ 27600; www.moraparken.se in Swedish; Hantverkaregatan; camp sites from Skr155, cabins from Skr270) This busy, family-friendly camping ground has good facilities in a great spot by the river northwest of the church.

Målkull Ann's Pensionat (☎ 38196; www.maalkullann.se; Vasagatan 19; r from Skr600) Housed in a series of more and less rustic buildings is this B&B in the centre of town, with a good range of accommodation choices (with and without private bathroom). Call ahead, as reception hours vary a lot depending on the season.

STF Vandrarhem Mora (☎ 38196; Fredsgatan 6; dm/s/d from Skr205/395/530) This excellent hostel is owned by Ann of Målkull Ann's Pensionat and booked through the Pensionat's office.

Hotell Kung Gösta (☎ 15070; www.trehotell.nu in Swedish; Kristinebergsgatan 1; s/d from Skr995/1150, discount Skr695/895; ☎ ☎) This large hotel, conveniently located opposite the main train station, has business-style rooms. There's a free internet terminal in the hotel foyer.

Kristineberg Hostel (☎ 15070; www.trehotell.nu in Swedish; Kristinebergsgatan 1; dm from Skr130,

s/d with private bathroom Skr445/620; 🏠) Kung Gösta's hostel annexe has en-suite rooms, kitchen facilities, a huge lounge area, linens and breakfast included.

There are a few old-style cafés on Kyrkogatan, plus fast-food joints and supermarkets. All the hotels also have pub-restaurants.

Claras Restaurang (☎ 15898; Vasagatan 38) This place next to Zornmuseet has been a reliable place for light meals and pizzas but was undergoing renovations at the time of research.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

All **Dalatrafik** (☎ 0771-959595; www.dalatrafik.se) buses use the **bus station** (Moragatan 23). Bus No 70 runs to Rättvik and Falun. Bus No 170 goes to Särna, Idre and Grövelsjön, near the Norwegian border.

Mora is an **SJ** (☎ 0771-757575; www.sj.se) terminus and the southern terminus of *Inlandsbanan* (the historic train that travels through Norrland), which runs north to Gällivare in summer (see p479). The main train station is about 1km east of town, by the lake. The more central Mora Strand is a platform station in town but not all trains stop there, so check the timetable.

You can rent bikes from **Intersport** (☎ 593 939; Kyrkogatan).

SKÅNE

Everyone loves Skåne. It would be hard not to. Wearing its proximity to Denmark on its sleeve, **Skåne** (www.skanetur.se) offers the mildest weather on Sweden's mainland and some of the most beautiful pastoral scenery you'll find outside of a frame. Sometimes called Scania, this area was Danish until the mid-17th century – the influence of the Danish is still easily detected in the dialect and architecture. Many natives of Skåne feel more strongly tied to nearby Copenhagen than Stockholm – and they certainly go that direction more often for entertainment.

Being so flat and lovely, Skåne is popular with cyclists; there are numerous attractions in the gently rolling landscape and more hostels than any other region of Sweden. Other treats include castles, historic cities and the pretty coastline.

MALMÖ

☎ 040 / pop 265,000

Malmö is as pretty as it is dynamic, with a well-preserved old town circled by a canal, plus a castle complex, numerous parks and wide, walkable avenues. It's connected to the rest of Europe by the impressive, 7.8km-long Öresunds bridge to Copenhagen. South of the centre is the lively square Möllevågsstorget, the focus of a working-class neighborhood that played a strong role in the early labour movement. It's now lined with multi-ethnic shops, restaurants and pubs.

Orientation

The old town is the city centre and is encircled by a canal. There are three main squares here: Stortorget, Lilla Torg and Gustav Adolfs Torg. Malmöhus castle, in its park setting, guards the west end. Across the canal on the northern side you'll find the bus and train stations.

Information

Dot.Spot (Kalendegatan 13; per hr Skr10-18; ☎ noon-6am) Cool, industrial-designy internet café.

Forex (Centralstationen; ☎ 7am-9pm) Currency exchange.

Library (Regementsgatan; ☎ closed Sun May-Aug)

Malmö Card (1/2/3 days Skr130/160/190 for) Allows free bus transport, free entry to several museums and discounts at other attractions; available from the tourist office.

Post Office (Skeppsbron 1; ☎ 7am-7pm Mon-Fri) Near the train station.

Tourist office (☎ 341200; www.malmo.se; Centralstationen; ☎ 9am-7pm Mon-Fri, 10am-5pm Sat & Sun Jun-Aug, 9am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat & Sun May & Sep; 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat & Sun Oct-Apr) Inside the train station. Pick up the useful, free booklet *Malmö this Month*.

Zeze (Engelbrektsgratan 13; per hr Skr30) Internet café open until 11pm or midnight daily; cheaper rates after 6pm.

Sights & Activities

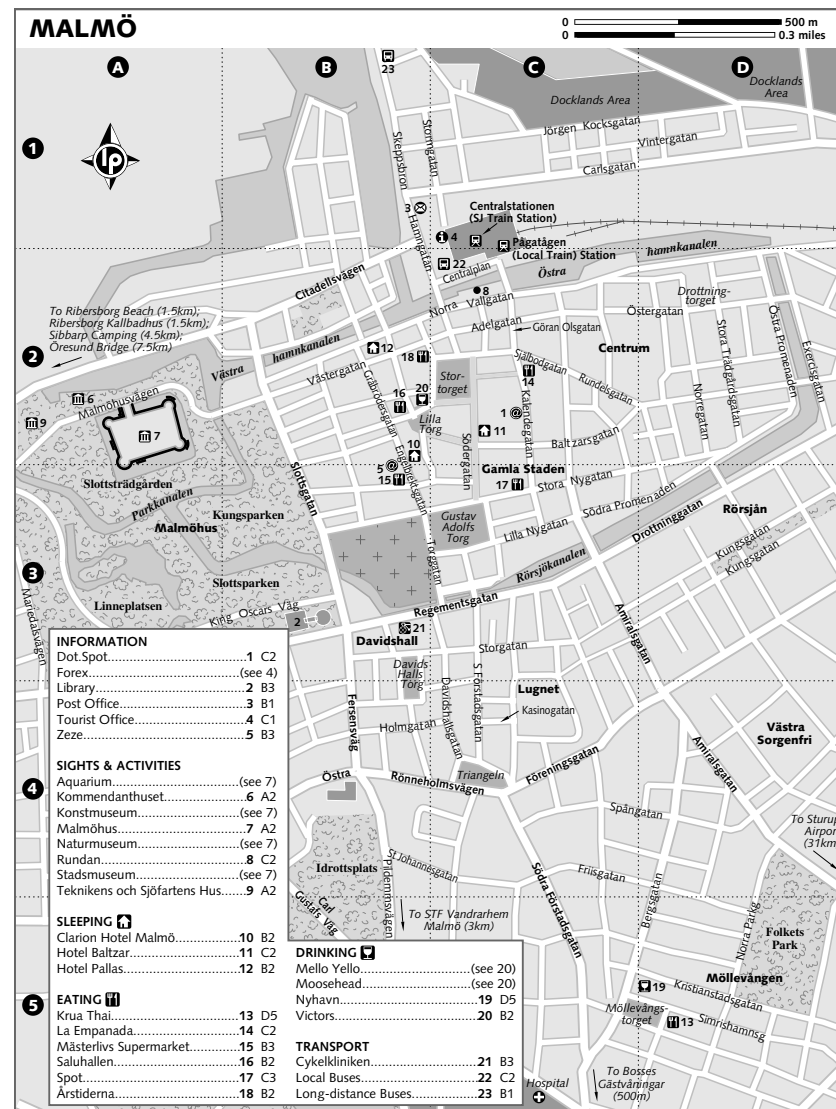
The cobbled streets and interesting buildings around **Lilla Torg** are restored parts of the late-medieval town – the oldest of the half-timbered houses here was built in 1597. The houses are now occupied by galleries, boutiques and restaurants.

The main museums of Malmö are based in and around **Malmöhus** (☎ 344437; www.malmo.se/museer; Malmöhusvägen; adult/child Skr40/10; ☎ 10am-4pm Jun-Aug, noon-4pm Sep-May). You can walk through the royal apartments, see

the **Stadsmuseum** with its Malmö collection, and see works by important Swedish artists such as John Bauer and Sigrid Hjerten at the **Konstmuseum** (admission Skr40). There's also an **aquarium** and **Naturmuseum**. The old **Kommandanhuset** arsenal is opposite the castle and **Teknikens och Sjöfartens Hus** is to the west. The latter is a well-presented

technology and maritime museum displaying aircraft, motor vehicles, steam engines and a submarine.

Boat tours of the canals run regularly from late April through September from the kiosk of **Rundan** (☎ 611 7488; www.rundan.se; tours adult/child Skr75/40), by the canal, opposite Centralstationen.



Ribersborg is a long sandy beach backed by parkland about 2km west of the town centre. Out in Öresund, reached by a 200m-long pier, is the naturist **Ribersborgs Källbadhus** (☎ 260366; www.ribban.se; admission Skr50), dating from 1898. There's a cold, open-air, saltwater pool and wood-fired sauna, and separate sections for men and women. Take bus No 32.

Sleeping

Sibbarp Camping (☎ 155165; Strandgatan 101; camp sites Skr150-190, cabins from Skr280) By the beach about 5km southwest of the town centre, with a great view of the Öresund bridge, this is a large, well-equipped ground with cabins. Catch bus Nos 12B or 12G.

STF Vandrarhem Malmö (☎ 82220; www.malmo-hotel.com; Backavägen 18; dm/s/d from Skr175/325/460) Well hidden, about 3.5km south of the city centre (get a map before setting off), this big, bright, clean and well-equipped place is worth seeking out. Catch bus No 21 from in front of Centralstationen.

Bosses Gästväningar (☎ 326250; www.bosses.se; Södra Förstadsgratan 110B; s/d/tr Skr315/450/550) A pleasant guesthouse in a regular apartment block, close to the cheap eateries on Möllevångstorget. Shared bathrooms and guest kitchens.

Hotel Pallas (☎ 611 5077; home.swipnet.se/Hotell_Pallas; Norra Vallgatan 74; s Skr450, d from Skr550) An affordable budget hotel close to the train station, with shared bathrooms and breakfast for Skr30. The 'large' double rooms are huge.

Hotel Baltzar (☎ 665 5700; www.baltzarhotel.se; Södergatan 20; s/d from Skr980/1300, discount Skr700/850) A comfortable option in an antique-filled turn-of-the-19th-century building, the Hotel Baltzar has good facilities and a bountiful breakfast buffet. It's within spitting distance of the main squares and train station.

Clarion Hotel Malmö (☎ 71020; www.choicehotels.se; Engelbrektsgratan 16; s/d Skr1525/1890, discount Skr790/990) Nicely renovated in recent years and now full of streamlined Scandi style. Features splashes of colour in the inviting foyer, friendly service and a nice restaurant and bar.

Eating & Drinking

Lilla Torget is a picturesque cobblestone square lined by restaurant-bars and often teeming with people. The area around Möllevångstorget reflects the city's interesting ethnic mix, and there's cheap food here from a mix of stalls, grocers, restaurants and bars.

Saluhallen (Lilla Torg; ☎ Mon-Sat) One of the best lunchtime pit stops, with an excellent range of food stalls offering something to appeal to every taste, including pasta, sushi, kebabs and Vietnamese food.

La Empanada (☎ 120262; Sjöbodgatan 10; mains Skr35-50; ☎ 11am-9pm Mon-Sat) Recommended cheap and cheerful cafeteria, with a huge menu of mainly Mexican dishes, plus pasta and even Swedish meatballs.

Ärstiderna (☎ 230910; Stortorget; mains Skr225, 4-course menu Skr525; ☎ 11:30am-midnight Mon-Fri, 5pm-midnight Sat) This upscale place on the main square serves a four-course set menu that serves as a culinary tour guide through gourmet Swedish cooking, usually including salmon and reindeer. Reservations are recommended.

Spot (☎ 124331; Stora Nygatan 33; dishes Skr49-75; ☎ lunch Mon-Sat) For delicious Italian sandwiches, salads and coffee, visit stylish Spot. There are also great gelati available, and an Italian deli for gourmet picnic.

Krua Thai (☎ 122287; Möllevångstorget 14; lunch Skr65, mains Skr60-85) Long-standing eatery with a nice terrace and ornate wood-carved interior, serving cheap and plentiful Thai dishes.

Mästerlivs supermarket (Engelbrektsgratan; ☎ 7am-9pm). Buy groceries at this central supermarket. The best produce market is on Möllevångstorget.

Nyhavn (☎ 128830; Möllevångstorget; mains Skr55-109) One of several bars with enormous outdoor patios on a corner facing Möllevångstorget, this is a good place for people-watching, even if it's pretty indistinguishable from its neighbours.

For drinking, get along to Lilla Torget and take your pick of the restaurant-bars. **Victors** (☎ 127670), **Moosehead** (☎ 120423) and **Mello Yello** (☎ 304525) stand side by side and compete for custom.

Alternatively, for capital-city diversions, head across the Öresund to Copenhagen (trains run every 20 minutes until midnight, then hourly until around 5am). See p474 for details.

Getting There & Away

Sturup airport (☎ 613 1100) is 31km southeast of the city. The low-cost carrier **Ryanair** (☎ 0900-202 0240; www.ryanair.com) flies between Sturup and London. Trains run directly from Malmö to Copenhagen's main airport, which has a better flight selection (p112).

SJ (☎ 0771-757575; www.sj.se) services (including X2000) run regularly to/from Göteborg and Stockholm, all via Lund.

Skänetrifiken (☎ 0771-777777; www.skane-trafiken.se) operates the local buses and trains in the southern region and sells a variety of value cards and passes. Local (purple) trains run to Helsingborg, Lund, Ystad and other nearby destinations. International rail passes are accepted.

Long-distance buses depart from a **bus terminal** (Skeppsbron) about 500m north of the train station. **Swebus Express** (☎ 0200-218218; www.swebusexpress.se) runs daily to Stockholm, Göteborg and Oslo. Trains are best for trips across the Öresund bridge – it takes just 35 minutes, see p474.

Getting Around

Malmö Lokaltrafik information kiosks are at main bus hubs, including Centralplan and Gustav Adolfs Torg. Local buses are green (regional buses are yellow); tickets cost Skr15 for one hour's travel. Bicycles can be rented from **Cykelkliniken** (☎ 611 6666; Regementsgatan 12; per day/week Skr120/600).

LUND

☎ 046 / pop 99,600

This comfortable and pretty place feels as friendly as a university town should. You can take a highbrow or a lowbrow approach to Lund, focusing on history and academics or lounging in student cafés – a little of both is best.

Lund is Sweden's second-oldest town, founded by the Danes around 1000. Much of the medieval town can still be seen. The university was founded in 1666 and today has 35,000 students. In summer it's a fairly quiet place, with the students on holiday and the tourist buses visiting.

The **tourist office** (☎ 355040; www.lund.se; Kyrkogatan 11; ☎ daily Jun-Aug, 10am-5pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat Sep-May) is opposite the cathedral. The **library** (Sankt Petri Kyrkogatan 6; ☎ closed Sun May-Aug) has free internet access.

Sights & Activities

The spectacular **Kulturen** (☎ 350400; www.kulturen.com; Tegnerplatsen; adult/child Skr50/free; ☎ daily mid-Apr–Sep, Tue-Sun Oct–mid-Apr) claims to be the world's second-oldest open-air museum (it opened in 1892). Its impressive collection of about 40 buildings fills two blocks

and includes period homes from the 17th century and countless displays. Nearby, **Hökeriet** (☎ 350400; cnr St Annegatan & Tomtegåpssgatan; admission free; ☎ May-Sep) is an old-fashioned general store.

The magnificence of Lund's Romanesque **domkyrka** (cathedral) is well known, but for a real surprise visit at noon or 3pm (1pm and 3pm Sunday and holidays) when the astronomical clock strikes up. Just opposite the cathedral is the **Domkyrkomuseet**, where you can learn more about it, and the attached **Historiska Museet** (☎ 222 7944; Kraftstorg; ☎ 11am-4pm Tue-Fri) has pre-Viking Age finds. Combined entry to the two museums is Skr30/free for adults/children. There are a number of galleries, plus small, special-interest museums and archives in town, many attached to university departments. Inquire at the tourist office.

The **main university building**, which faces Sandgatan, is worth a glance inside, and Scanian rune stones are arranged in the park nearby. The **Botanic Gardens** with tropical **greenhouses** are east of the city centre.

Sleeping & Eating

Private rooms can be booked at the tourist office from around Skr250 per person plus a Skr50 fee.

STF Vandrarhem Tåget (☎ 142820; www.train-hotel.com; dm from Skr175) Take the overpass from the bus station to access this unusual hostel. Guests sleep in railway carriages set in parkland, with three bunks to a room.

Hotell Oskar (☎ 188085; www.hotelloskar.com; Bytaregatan 3; s/d Skr1295/1595, discount Skr795/995) This small, elegant boutique hotel has well-equipped rooms (with kettle, stereo, cable TV and DVD) right in the heart of town, each with furniture by noted Scandinavian designers. It's next door to the delightful Ebbas Skaffereri; go there to inquire about rooms.

Gräddhyllan Café, Restaurang & Hotell (☎ 157230; www.graddhyllan.com; Bytaregatan 14; s/d Skr595/850, discount Skr500/700) Book early to stay at central Gräddhyllan, a lovely place offering four rooms above a café-restaurant at remarkably good prices.

Ebbas Skaffereri (☎ 134156; Bytaregatan 5; dagens lunch Skr64; ☎ breakfast, lunch & dinner) This courtyard café with a great lunchtime selection is one of the most appealing places in town. A breakfast buffet is also available (Skr55).

Govindas (☎ 120413; Bredgatan 28; lunch Skr35-65; 🍴 lunch Mon-Sat) Join the earnest student-types at friendly Govindas for the good-value vegetarian lunch deals.

Fellini (☎ 137020; Bangatan 6; mains Skr85-200) Fashionable Fellini, opposite the train station, serves up good Italian nosh, including gourmet pizzas for under Skr100 (less if you order takeaway), plus pasta, meat and fish dishes, and the all-important tiramisu and gelato. It's just as nice for a simple glass of wine.

Glasskulturen (Stortorget) The locals will stand in line all afternoon to get a sample of the frozen delights this little ice-cream nook churns out; 50,000 Lund-ites can't be wrong, right?

Saluhallen (Mårtenstorget; 🍴 Mon-Sat) This typical Swedish market hall is a great place to scrounge up some cheap and filling food, from pasta to Thai dishes and kebabs.

Getting There & Away

There are frequent **SJ** (☎ 0771-757575; www.sj.se) and regional train (*pågatågen*) departures from Lund to Malmö (15 minutes);

some trains continue to Copenhagen. All long-distance trains between Stockholm and Malmö stop in Lund. Buses leave from outside the train station. Buses go to Copenhagen, Stockholm, Göteborg, daily. See www.swebussexpress.se for updated timetables. For local bus info, contact Skåntrafik on ☎ 771-777777 or on the web at www.skäntrafik.se.

TRELLEBORG

☎ 0410 / pop 38,600

Trelleborg has Sweden's main ferry connections with Germany, but if you're arriving in Sweden here there's no reason to linger in town long – it's better to move on to Malmö or Ystad. The **tourist office** (☎ 73320; www.trelleborg.se; Hamngatan 9; 🍴 daily Jun-Aug, Mon-Fri Sep-May) is near the harbour. If you need a place to stay, **Night Stop** (☎ 41070; www.ho.telnightstop.com; Östergatan 59; s/d/tr Skr199/299/399) is diagonally opposite the town museum, about 500m from the tourist office.

Bus No 146 runs every half-hour or so between Malmö and Trelleborg's bus station, 500m from the ferry terminals.

There are two ferry terminals, both behind the tourist office. **Scandlines** (☎ 0410-65000; www.scandlines.se) and TT-Line shuttle regularly across to the German ports of Sassnitz, Rostock and Travemünde. See p476 for information.

YSTAD

☎ 0411 / pop 26,200

A supremely attractive little town of half-timbered houses and meandering cobblestone streets, Ystad is also home to the melancholy fictional detective Kurt Wallander in Henning Mankell's *Dogs of Riga*. But most visitors will find no trace of the morose in this pretty medieval town. Photogenic houses line Stora Östergatan: most are from the latter half of the 18th century, but the façade of the beautiful **Änglahuset** (Stora Norregatan) dates from around 1630.

The **tourist office** (☎ 577681; www.visitystad.com; 🍴 daily late Jun-late Aug, Mon-Fri late Aug-late Jun) is opposite the train station. Next door is the large **Konstmuseum** (Art Museum; ☎ 577285; adult/child Skr30/free; 🍴 Tue-Sun). Don't miss the tiny, ornate medieval **Sankta Maria kyrka** (Stortorget; admission free) or the historical **Ystads Stadsmuseum** (☎ 577286; St Petri Kyrkoplan; adult/child Skr30/free) in the old monastery church of Gråbrödraklostret.

One of Skåne's most intriguing attractions is **Ales Stenar** (adult/child Skr20/10), a ship setting made of 59 carefully arranged stones in the middle of a field 19km east of Ystad. The origins of the mysterious oval formation are most likely early Iron Age. It measures 67m along its long axis. Take bus No 322, and look for signs to Käseberga, the nearby village.

Those with their own wheels can choose B&B or cottage options along the scenic coastal roads east or west of Ystad; inquire at the tourist office.

The small **Stationen Vandrarm** (☎ 0708-577985; www.turistlogi.se; dm/s/d Skr195/250/390) is centrally located in a renovated railway building at Ystad's train station. The well-equipped **STF Kantarellen Vandrarm** (☎ 66566; www.turistlogi.se; Fritidsvägen; dm/s/d Skr195/295/345) is 2km east of Ystad in a beachside recreation area. Bikes can be rented here. Take bus No 572.

Hotell Bäckgården (☎ 19848; www.backagarden.nu; Damngatan 36; s/d from Skr590/720) is a cosy guesthouse in a 17th-century home behind the tourist office.

There are some lovely eating options among the historic buildings. For soup and sandwiches, seek out the charming **Book Café** (☎ 13403; Gåsegränd; 🍴 Tue-Sat) – inside there's a room full of mismatched furniture and books; outside is a leafy courtyard.

Bryggeriet (☎ 69999; Långgatan 20; lunch Skr75, mains Skr138-215) is an atmospheric restaurant and pub in an old brick brewery; there are copper beer kettles behind the bar, and cast-iron equipment lying around a garden-like central courtyard.

Buses depart from outside the train station. To get to Trelleborg by bus, first take bus No 303 to Skateholm then transfer to bus No 183. *Pågatågen* trains run roughly hourly to/from Malmö.

Ferries run regularly between Ystad and Poland, and to the Danish island of Bornholm (see p476 and p475, respectively). The ferry terminal is just south of the train station.

HELSINGBORG

☎ 042 / pop 84,500

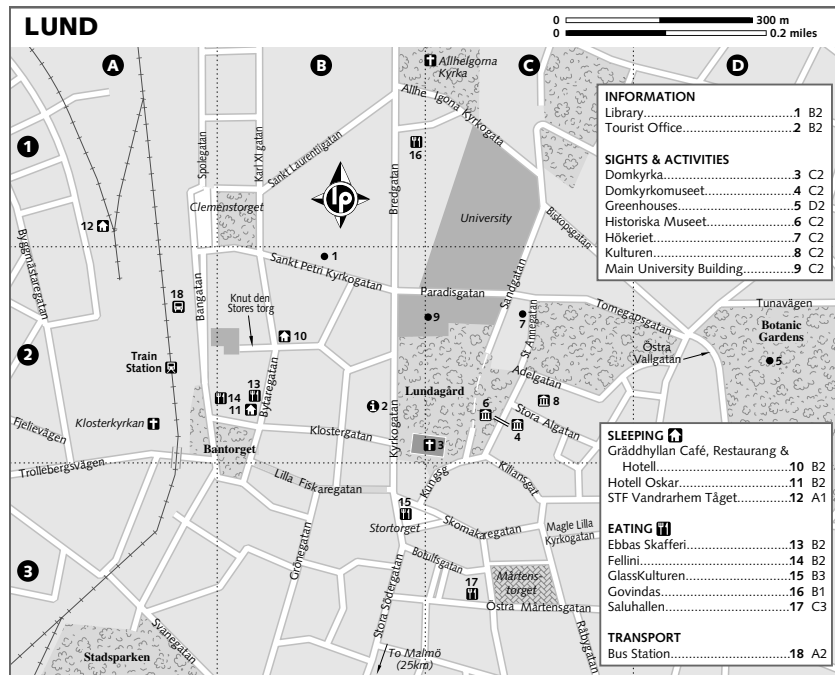
The busy port of Helsingborg is perched on the Öresund coastline, with Denmark only 20 minutes away by ferry. Many travellers leave town without seeing any more than the train station, but it's an appealing place with seaside character, quality budget accommodation and great parkland.

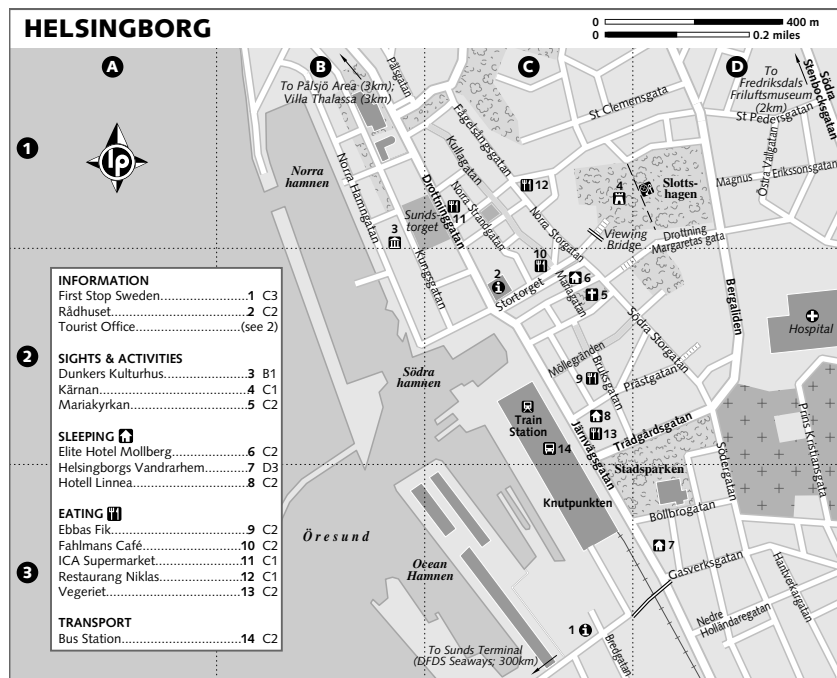
The **tourist office** (☎ 104350; Rådhuset; 🍴 daily May-Aug, Mon-Sat Sep-Apr) can help with inquiries. **First Stop Sweden** (☎ 104130; Bredgatan 2; 🍴 daily Jun-Aug, Mon-Fri Sep-May), near the car-ferry ticket booths, gives advice for new arrivals from Denmark.

Sights & Activities

The eye-catchingly modern **Dunkers Kulturhus** (☎ 107400; www.dunkerskulturhus.se; Kungsgatan 11; admission free; 🍴 10am-5pm Tue-Sun), just north of the transport terminals, houses the **town museum** and **art museum** (combined entry adult Skr70), plus a concert hall, restaurant and café. Take a stroll along the northern waterfront from here to admire the sleek apartment buildings and restaurants, all part of a successful harbour redevelopment project.

You can access the square medieval tower **Kärnan** (☎ 105991; adult/child Skr20/10; 🍴 daily Jun-Aug, Tue-Sun Sep-May) from steps near the tourist office. The tower is all that remains of a





14th-century castle; the view from the top (34m) overlooks Öresund to the Danish heartland.

Historic **Mariakyrkan** (Mariatorget) is worth a visit for its medieval features and choral and organ concerts.

Fredriksdals Friluftsmuseum (☎ 104500; admission free-Skr60) is off Hävertgatan, 2km north-east of the centre. It has a pretty manor, gardens, a café and a museum village – it's a lovely place for a stroll and is free or half-price in the low season. Highlights of the summer programme here include performances in the baroque open-air theatre. Take bus Nos 1 or 7.

North of the town, the **Pälssjö area** houses a fine park, the 16th-century Pälssjö Slott (closed to the public) and a nature reserve.

Sleeping

If you're visiting on a weekend or during summer, bear in mind that many upmarket hotels discount heavily at this time (double rooms around Skr800 to Skr900).

Villa Thalassa (☎ 380660; www.villathalassa.com; Dag Hammarskjöldsväg; dm Skr190, d from Skr440) This

recommended hostel, 3km north of the city centre, is 500m from the bus stop at Pälssjöbaden. The villa and gardens are a delight, and there are three sleeping options in modern annexes and wooden huts. Take bus No 219 from Knutpunkten.

Helsingborgs Vandrarhem (☎ 145850; www.hbgturist.com; Järnvägsgatan 39; dm/s/d Skr165/245/370) This central hostel, inside a nondescript building about 200m from Knutpunkten, has high-quality rooms and good facilities.

Hotell Linnea (☎ 372400; www.hotell-linnea.se; Prästgatan 4; s/d from Skr965/1120, discount Skr750/895) The pick of the town's midrange offerings is this charming central hotel, with pretty décor and friendly management.

Elite Hotel Mollberg (☎ 373700; www.elite.se; Stortorget; s/d from Skr1120/1390, discount Skr650/750) You'll find a large number of upmarket options on Stortorget; try this grand place.

Eating & Drinking

Vegeriet (☎ 240303; Järnvägsgatan 25; mains Skr49-75; ☎ Mon-Fri) Vegetarians will rejoice at this café-restaurant, with menu items such as soup, curry, lasagne, tortilla and stir-fried dishes.

WORTH A TRIP

Hovdala Slott & Restaurant Mikkelsen (☎ 0451-186 15; www.restaurangmikkelsen.se in Swedish, www.hovdalaslott.se; Hässleholm; starters from Skr65, mains Skr95-230) Most of Sweden's museums and attractions have a restaurant attached, but very few of them are up to this standard. Restaurant Mikkelsen, inside Hovdala Slott – itself a fascinating lesson in the successful restoration of a monument – has developed an ambitious menu that's served in an equally fine dining room. In both the food and the décor, history melds seamlessly into the modern. Simple dishes such as cured herring or *gravad lax* join more complicated takes on tradition – sautéed wild boar, leg of lamb, and a classic Skåne dish of egg custard with bacon and lingonberries. Ingredients are all locally sourced, and most of the herbs and spices used are taken from the castle's garden. There's a Sunday lunch buffet and a three-course set menu. The restaurant has gained a reputation as one of the top places to eat in Skåne; booking ahead is advised. The castle is just outside of Hässleholm; from the town center, head southwest along Hovdalavägen and look for signposts. Any tourist office in the region will have maps.

Restaurang Niklas (☎ 280050; Norra Storgatan 16; lunch from Skr89, bistro mains Skr170-250; ☎ Tue-Sat) This gastronomic temple – home of the popular TV cooking show host – is among Sweden's best restaurants, with cuisine inspired by the French, elegant modern décor, a wine bar, bistro and fine-dining area (set menus in the latter from Skr495 for four courses).

Ebbas Fik (☎ 281440; Bruksgatan 20; ☎ Mon-Sat) All done up in shocking turquoise rockabilly, Ebbas is a 1950s-style joint with a killer jukebox.

Fahlmans Café (☎ 213060; Stortorget 11) There are some cool cafés in town – this is the most traditional, serving sandwiches, quiche and pastries.

ICA supermarket (Drottninggatan 48) Self-caterers should head here.

Getting There & Away

The main transport centre is Knutpunkten; the underground platforms serve both the **SJ** (☎ 0771-757575; www.sj.se) and *pågatågen* trains departing for Stockholm, Göteborg, Copenhagen, Oslo and nearby towns. At ground level and a bit south, but still inside the same complex, is the bus station where regional **Skånetrafiken** (☎ 0771-777777; www.skånetrafiken.se) buses dominate, but daily long-distance services run to various destinations, including Göteborg and Oslo.

Knutpunkten is the terminal for frequent ferries across to Helsingor in Denmark, and there are regular ferries to/from Oslo; see p475 and p476, respectively, for full details of these services.

GÖTALAND

This region has a rich history and plenty to offer the visitor. For one, it's home to Sweden's second city, Göteborg (also known as Gothenburg), with an amusement park for the kids that's matched by a huge range of grown-up entertainment, from art museums to nightclubs. Norrköping, an urban-restoration achievement, is an industrial city that has turned its workmanlike heart into a lovely showpiece. Linköping's medieval cathedral is one of Sweden's largest, and in Vadstena there's the abbey established by the country's most important saint, Birgitta. If historic or cosmopolitan delights don't do it for you, there are also the quaint fishing villages and overwhelming natural beauty of the Bohuslän coast. The two largest lakes in Sweden – Vänern and Vättern – are also in Götaland, and are linked by the remarkable Göta Canal.

VARBERG

☎ 0340 / pop 53,100

A town built for sunsets, Varberg has plenty of hang-out space along the waterfront and some gorgeous views from the **medieval fortress** (☎ 82830; adult Skr30-50, child Skr10), which has guided tours and excellent museums. You might also want to brave the brisk Nordic weather and swim at **Kallhusbadet** (☎ 17396; adult/child Skr45/25; ☎ daily mid-Jun–mid-Aug, Sat & Sun mid-Aug–mid-Jun), a striking bathing house built in Moorish style on stilts above the sea. The **tourist office** (☎ 88770; www.turist.varberg.se; Brunnparken; ☎ daily Midsummer–mid-Aug,

Mon-Sat May-Jun & Aug, Mon-Fri Sep-Apr) is in the centre of town.

The top-notch **Fästningens Vandrarhem** (☎ 88788; vandrarhem@turist.varberg.se; dm/s/d from Skr175/260/435) is within the fortress and offers single rooms in old prison cells or larger rooms in other buildings. Call ahead, as reception hours are very limited. Most dining options are along the pedestrianised Kungsgatan, but the fortress café offers the best sea views in town.

Ferries from the Danish town of Grenå dock near the town centre (see p475 for ferry information). Trains and buses between Göteborg and Malmö (and on to Copenhagen) stop regularly at the train station.

GÖTEBORG

☎ 031 / pop 475,000

Göteborg (pronounced roughly 'yoo-te-bor', and sometimes called Gothenburg), Sweden's second-largest city, has a hip, cosmopolitan feel, an eminently strollable central boulevard and Scandinavia's biggest amusement park. If that's not enough fun for you, it's also surrounded by some of the prettiest stretches of coastline in Sweden. The city's heavy architecture gives it a wonderfully moody atmosphere, especially in grey weather. Best of all, it's diverse enough to offer plenty of options to the budget traveller.

Orientation

The heart of the city is bordered by canals, well suited to sightseeing cruises. A branch snakes its way to Liseberg amusement park in the southeast. The huge Nordstan shopping centre lies just north of the canal system, opposite Centralstationen and its modern neighbour, Nils Ericson Terminalen, the regional and long-distance bus station.

From the centre of the city, Kungsporsavenyn crosses the canal and leads southeast to Götaplatsen. Known as the 'Avenyn', this is the heart of the city with boutiques, restaurants, theatres, galleries and cafés.

The shipyards (now closed) and much of the heavy industry (including Volvo) are on the northern island of Hisingen, reached by bridge, tunnel and regular boat traffic.

Information

DISCOUNT CARDS & PACKAGES

The good-value Göteborg Pass gives free entry to Liseberg and a number of city at-

tractions, city tours, and parking and public transport. It costs Skr210/295 for 24/48 hours and is available from tourist offices, hotels, hostels and numerous Pressbyrån newsgents.

Göteborgspaketet (Göteborg Package) is a hotel package with prices from Skr485 per person per night, and including the Göteborg Pass for the number of nights you stay. Book the package in advance on the **Göteborg** (www.goteborg.com) site or with the tourist office.

EMERGENCY

Emergency (☎ 112) Free number for fire brigade, police and ambulance.

Police station (☎ 739 2000; Ernst Fontells Plats) Off Skånegatan, near Nya Ullevi stadium.

INTERNET ACCESS

IT-Grottan (Chalmersgatan 27; per hr Skr29-43; ☎ to midnight) Cheaper hourly rate before 6pm.

Sidewalk Express (www.sidewalkexpress.se; per hr Skr19) A chain of internet kiosks at central locations (Centralstationen, Landvetter airport, inside the 7-Eleven store at Vasaplatsen); vouchers are purchased from vending machines.

MEDICAL SERVICES

Apoteket Vasan (☎ 802 0532; Nordstan complex; ☎ 8am-10pm)

Östra Sjukhuset (☎ 343 4000) Large hospital near tram terminus No 1, northeast of town.

MONEY

Banks with ATMs attached are to be found scattered all over town, including inside the Nordstan complex and Centralstationen.

Forex (www.forex.se; Kungsporsavenyn 22; ☎ 9am-7pm Mon-Fri, 10am-4pm Sat) The exchange company has a number of branches throughout Göteborg, including one in Centralstationen.

TOURIST INFORMATION

Tourist offices (☎ 612500; www.goteborg.com) Branch tourist office (Nordstan; ☎ 10am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-4pm Sat, noon-3pm Sun); Main tourist office (Kungsporsplatsen 2; ☎ 9am-6pm daily Jun-Aug, 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat Sep-May)

Sights

LISEBERG

This **fun park** (☎ 400100; www.liseberg.se; admission Skr60, child under 7 free) is dominated by its futuristic spaceportlike tower. The ride to the

top, some 83m above the ground, climaxes in a spinning dance and a breathtaking view of the city. The other amusements and rides seem tame by comparison but there's no lack of variety. You can buy a pass for Skr270 that allows you to ride the attractions all day, otherwise individual rides cost between Skr10 and Skr50. There are often summer shows and concerts staged here. Opening hours are complex but the season generally runs from late April to early October (and also in the weeks leading up to Christmas) – check the website. Tram No 5 takes you there.

MUSEUMS

After Liseberg the museums are Göteborg's strongest attractions. If several take your fancy, purchase the Göteborg Pass.

By Liseberg is the striking **Universeum** (☎ 335 6450; www.universeum.se; Södra Vägen; admission Skr135-145; ☎ Tue-Sun mid-Aug–Apr, daily May–mid-Aug), a huge and impressive 'science discovery centre' featuring everything from rainforests to a shark tank. It has great displays and hands-on experiments, but it's not cheap to visit (use the Göteborg Pass).

The **Stadsmuseum** (☎ 612770; Norra Hamngatan 12; adult/under 20yr Skr40/free; ☎ daily May-Aug, Tue-Sun Sep-Apr) has archaeological, local and historical collections, including Sweden's only original Viking ship.

The main art collections are at **Konstmuseet** (☎ 611000; Götaplatsen; adult/child Skr40/free; ☎ Tue-Sun), with impressive collections of Nordic and European masters (notable for works by Rubens, Van Gogh, Rembrandt and Picasso) and touring exhibitions.

The excellent **Röhsska Museet** (☎ 613850; Vasagatan 37; adult Skr40; ☎ noon-5pm Tue-Sun) covers modern Scandinavian design and decorative arts, but also contains classical and Oriental items, and a design store and popular café.

Göteborgs Maritima Centrum (☎ 105950; Packhuskajen; adult Skr70; ☎ Mar-Oct), by the opera house north of the centre, says it's the largest floating ship museum in the world and usually displays 13 historical ships, including the submarine *Nordkaparen*.

The main museum of maritime history, **Sjöfartsmuseet** (☎ 612900; Karl Johansgatan 1; adult/child Skr40/free; ☎ 10am-5pm May-Aug, 10am-5pm Tue-Sun Sep-Apr), is near Stigbergstorget about 2km west of the city centre. There's an interesting aquarium attached. Take tram Nos 3, 9 or 11.

Just off Linnégatan in Slottsskogsparken, **Naturhistoriska Museet** (Natural History Museum; ☎ 775 2400; adult/child Skr80/20; ☎ 11am-5pm May-Aug, 11am-5pm Tue-Sun Sep-Apr), has a collection of some 10 million specimens of wildlife from around the world. Take tram Nos 1 or 2.

OTHER SIGHTS

Göteborg's churches aren't very old but they're a truer reflection of Swedish architecture than Stockholm's Italian imitations. The classical **domkyrkan** (cathedral; Västra Hamngatan) was consecrated in 1815 – two previous cathedrals were destroyed by town fires. One of the most impressive buildings in Göteborg, **Masthuggskyrkan** (Storebackegatan; ☎ Mon-Fri) was completed in 1914, and its interior is like an upturned boat. The church is also a great viewpoint for the western half of the city.

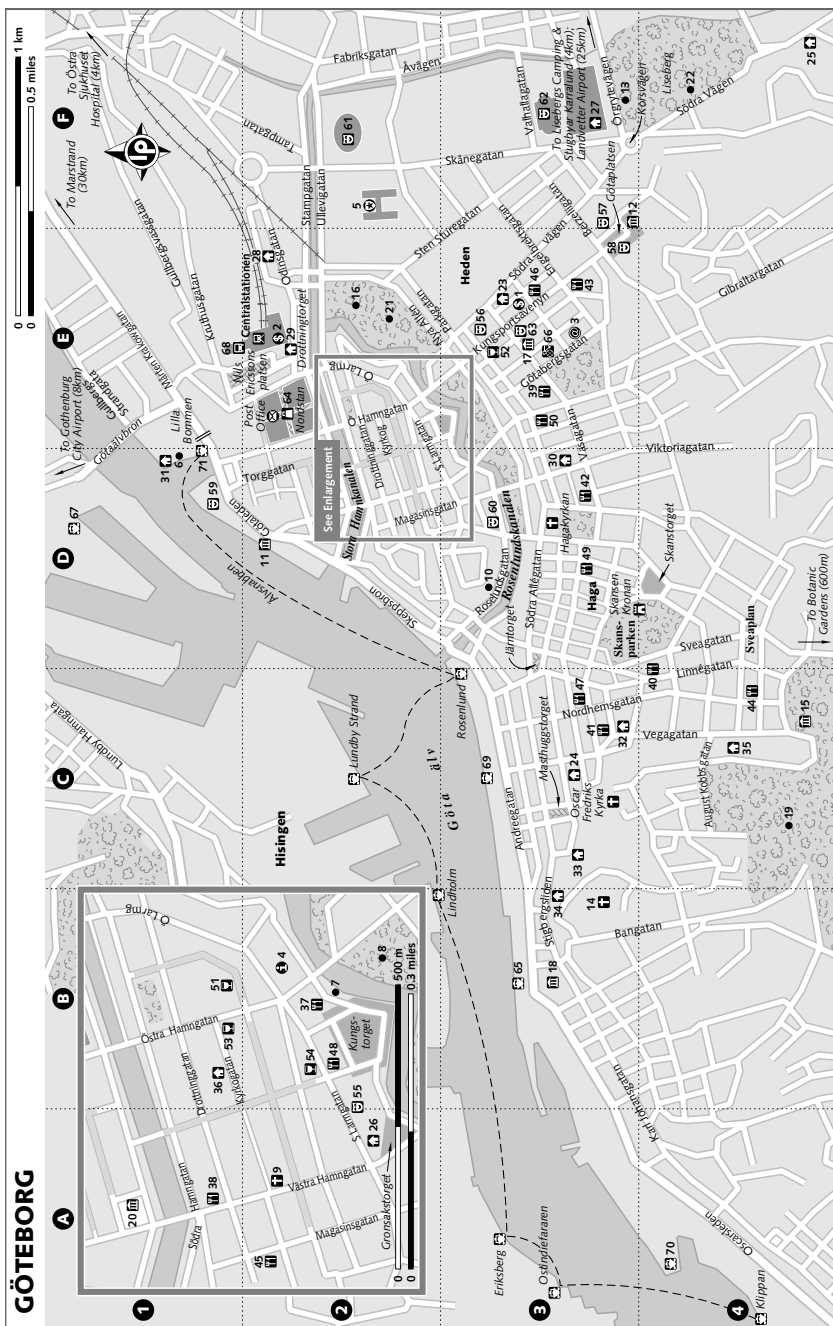
Feskekörka (Rosenlundsgatan; ☎ Mon-Sat Jun-Aug, Tue-Sat Sep-May) is called the Fish Church due to its curious appearance. It isn't a church at all – it's a fish and seafood market, and a perfect stop for lunch or a snack.

The **Haga district**, south of the canal, is Göteborg's oldest suburb, dating back to 1648. In the 1980s and '90s, the area was thoroughly renovated and now includes shops and restaurants.

There are some lovely green oases in the city, including **Trädgårdsföreningen** (Nya Allén; adult/child mid-Apr–mid-Sep Skr15/free, mid-Sep–mid-Apr free), laid out in 1842 and home to a couple of pretty cafés, a rosarium and a **palm house**. In Göteborg's southwest is **Slottsskogsparken**, the 'lungs' of the city; the **Botanic Gardens** – the largest in Sweden – are nearby.

Tours

Börjessons (☎ 609670; www.paddan.com) operates most sightseeing tours in and around Göteborg. From June to August there are one-hour city bus tours (adult/child Skr120/60), leaving regularly from outside Stora Teatern, across the canal from the tourist office, but perhaps the most popular way to pass time in Göteborg is to take a boat cruise on the Göta älv, or further afield to the sea. From May to September Börjessons' Paddan boats tour the canals and harbour from Kungsporsbron, near the tourist office. The 50-minute tours (adult/child/family Skr95/60/250) depart regularly from 10am; tours after 3pm are free for Göteborg Passholders.



SWEDEN

GÖTEBORG

SWEDEN

Holders of the Göteborg Pass also pay nothing to join a Börjessons' cruise from Lilla Bommen to the ruins of **Nya Älvsborg fortress** near the river mouth.

Sleeping

Göteborg has several exceptional hostels; most are clustered in the central southwest area, in apartment buildings that sometimes inspire little confidence from the outside, but inside offer accommodation of a high standard. All are open year-round.

Most hostels offer great discounts at week-ends and in summer. The tourist office can arrange **private rooms** (s/d from Skr175/225) for a Skr60 booking fee.

BUDGET

Lisebergs Camping & Stugbyar Kärralund (☎ 840200; www.liseberg.se; Olbergsgatan; camp sites Skr100-325) The closest camping ground to town, this one is geared for families. It has a wide range of cabins, cottages and hostel beds for rent. Prices have a ridiculously complex schedule of rates. Take tram No 5 to Welandergatan.

STF Vandrarhem Slottsskogen (☎ 426520; www.sov.nu; Vegagatan 21; dm/s from Skr165/305; ☎ 24hr;

☑) Slottsskogen is regarded as one of Sweden's best hostels, so book early. It's a friendly, social place with breakfast buffet, bike hire, laundry, sauna and lounge. Take tram Nos 1 or 2 to Olivedalsgatan.

Göteborgs Mini-Hotel (☎ 241023; www.minihotel.se; Tredje Långgatan 31; dm/d Skr130/360) This decent option has well-priced renovated rooms (all with TV and fridge) and shared bathroom facilities, plus laundry and self-catering kitchen.

Masthuggsterrassens Vandrarhem (☎ 424820; www.mastenvandrarhem.com; Masthuggsterrassen 10H; dm/s/d Skr170/290/440) A clean, well-run spot near the ferries to/from Denmark. Take tram Nos 3, 9 or 11 to Masthuggstorget and check the signs (upstairs, behind the supermarket).

STF Vandrarhem Stigbergsliden (☎ 241620; www.hostel-gothenburg.com; Stigbergsliden 10; dm/s/d Skr180/310/420) Another welcoming, well-run STF hostel, this time in a renovated 19th-century seaman's house. It has a good kitchen, laundry, TV room and garden, plus bike hire. Take tram Nos 3, 9 or 11 to Stigbergstorget.

Göteborgs Vandrarhem (☎ 401050; www.goteborgsvandrarhem.se; Mölndalsvägen 23; dm/s&d from Skr200/500) A well-equipped, well-run place,

INFORMATION		DRINKING ☑	
Apoteket Vasan.....(see 64)	Hotel Flora.....26 A2	Dubliner.....51 B1	
Branch Tourist Office.....(see 64)	Hotel Gothia Towers.....27 F3	Lounge(s).....52 E3	
Forex.....1 E3	Hotel Odin Residence.....28 E2	O'Leary's.....53 B1	
Forex.....2 E2	Hotel Opera.....29 E2	Öhallen 7:an.....54 B2	
IT-Grottan.....3 E3	Hotel Vasa.....30 D3		
Main Tourist Office.....4 B2	Hotell Barken Viking.....31 D1	ENTERTAINMENT ☑	
Police Station.....5 F2	Linné Vandrarhem.....32 C3	Avenyn 10.....(see 56)	
	Masthuggsterrassens Vandrarhem.....33 C3	Biopalatset.....55 B2	
SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES	STF Vandrarhem	Bubbles.....56 E3	
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Börjessons Paddan Boats.....7 B2	STF Vandrarhem Slottsskogen...35 C4	Göteborgs Stadsteatern.....58 E3	
Börjessons Sightseeing Bus	Vaniil Hotel.....36 B1	GöteborgsOperan.....59 D1	
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Domkyrkan.....9 A2	EATING ☑	Nya Ullevi.....61 F2	
Feskekörka.....10 D3	Aldardo.....37 B2	Scandinaviavium.....62 F3	
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Röhsska Museet.....17 E3	Den Lilla Taverna.....(see 44)	Catamaran Terminal.....65 B3	
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just south of Liseberg, which is convenient for the big attractions. Take tram No 4 to Getebersgång.

Linné Vandrarhem (☎ 121060; www.vandrarhem-met-linne.com; Vegagatan 22; dm/s/d Skr190/380/400) Down the road from STF Slottsskogen is another budget option – it looks huge and rather Soviet from the outside but has bright, clean rooms and good communal facilities. Take tram Nos 1 or 2 to Olivedalsgatan.

MIDRANGE & TOP END

Vanilj Hotel (☎ 711 6220; www.vaniljhotel.entersol.se; Kyrkogatan 38; s/d from Skr995/1145, discount Skr695/795) This is an excellent choice – a small, cosy and personal place above a lovely café and courtyard, situated along a narrow cobblestone street in the heart of town. There's typically Swedish streamlined décor, friendly staff, good breakfasts and shopping at the front door.

Hotel Odin Residence (☎ 745 2200; www.hotelodin.se; Odinsgatan 6; s/d apt from Skr1300/1500, discount s/d Skr895/995) This hotel, part of the Clarion Collection chain, has spacious apartments filled with the kind of decor and gadgets you'd kill for at home, and all rooms come equipped with everything you need for a long, happy stay, including a full kitchen, lounge, TV and stereo. Cheaper rates are offered for stays of longer than a week.

Hotel Gothia Towers (☎ 750 8800; www.gothia-towers.com; Mässans Gata 24; s/d from Skr1795/2095, discount Skr995/1095) This 23-storey, 704-room hotel (the largest in Scandinavia, and popular for conventions) is top of the tree in Göteborg. The interior is stylish and modern, and there are popular restaurants and bars on the premises. Summer and weekend prices are quite reasonable. The hotel is opposite Liseberg and only a few minutes' walk to Kungsporsavenyn; take tram No 5.

Hotell Barken Viking (☎ 635800; www.liseberg.se; Gullbergskajen; crew quarters s/d Skr595/850, officer's cabins Skr1395/1595, discount officer's cabins Skr995/1195) This is a fabulous boat hotel with lots of history and an interesting location (near Lilla Bommen and the opera house, best accessed by walkway from the northern part of Nordstan). Crew quarters have shared bathroom facilities and bunkbeds. You can pay extra for a little more luxury and private facilities in a surprisingly spacious officer's cabin. The deck is home to a restaurant and bar.

City Hotel (☎ 708 4000; www.cityhotelgbg.se; Lorensbergsgatan 6; s/d with shared bathroom from Skr495/595, with private bathroom from Skr795/995) If you want to taste the nightlife, this place is for you – it's within stumbling distance of Kungsporsavenyn. Weekend and summer discounts see rates reduced by Skr50 to Skr100.

Hotel Opera (☎ 805080; www.hotelopera.se; Norra Hamngatan 38; budget s/d Skr750/1150, discount Skr595/995, standard s/d Skr1095/1450, discount Skr695/1095) An appealing option, conveniently located close to the train station and bus terminal. Budget rooms are in an older part of the hotel and are small but perfectly adequate. All rooms have private facilities, TV and phone.

Hotel Vasa (☎ 173630; www.hotelvasa.se; Viktoriagatan 6; s/d from Skr895/995, discount Skr645/845) An attractive, family-run place handy to the cafés of Vasagatan. Rooms are pleasant and range in size and luxury (some have a Jacuzzi); winning features are the courtyard garden and very friendly owners.

Hotel Flora (☎ 138616; www.hotelflora.se; Grön-sakstorget 2; s/d Skr990/1195, discount Skr650/850) This comfortable, affordable hotel has just doubled its size and modernised many of its rooms. There's also a stylish ground-level restaurant-café.

Eating

Kungsporsavenyn is lined with all kinds of restaurants, cafés and bars, and alfresco dining is popular when the sun shines. Nearby, Vasagatan is close to the student heartland and has excellent cafés, Linnégatan (close to most of the hostels) has a great selection of eateries, and Magasingatan is a good place to check out the latest on the Göteborg scene.

CAFÉS

Brogylens Konditori (☎ 138713; Västra Hamngatan 2; snacks Skr30-52) Essentially a museum of pastry, this showpiece café and bakery is easy on the eyes and palate both. Linger over coffee and cake in a seat under the grand chandeliers.

Eva's Paley (☎ 163070; Kungsporsavenyn 39; meals Skr40-65; ☎ to 11pm) A huge corner place open late and serving good-value dishes including panini, baked potatoes, pasta, salads and seriously good muffins – an institution on Avenyn.

R.O.O.M. (☎ 606630; Magasingatan 3; dishes Skr35-90; ☎ Mon-Sat) Get inspired at this great interiors

store – and if your knees go weak from looking at the price tags, you can repair to the funky café and enjoy a more affordable Caesar salad or Thai curry soup.

Kalaya (☎ 123998; Olivedalsgatan 13; dishes Skr59-69) Not far from the hostel area, Kalaya has authentic Thai cuisine, including soup, noodle and curry choices.

Cafe Mio (☎ 133600; Vasagatan 24; dishes Skr55-65) Next door to Espresso House is this cozy little Italian café with filling meals at good prices.

For a quick snack while you stroll, **Café Garbo** (☎ 774 1925; Vasagatan 40; specials from Skr45) and **Espresso House** (☎ 39750; Vasagatan 22) are two of several comfortable hang-outs facing the leafy Vasagatan boulevard.

RESTAURANTS

Cyrano (☎ 143010; Prinsgatan 7; mains Skr75-200) A highly regarded French bistro-style restaurant, where three-course set menus cost from Skr155. There's also a selection of good French à la carte dishes, and simpler pizzas (Skr75 to Skr95).

Jöbären (☎ 711 9780; Haga Nygata 25; mains Skr99-239) This cosy spot in the rejuvenated Haga district offers well-prepared seafood in nautical surrounds (inside) or a pleasant courtyard garden. Opt for items in the 'Swedish classics' category such as *gravad lax* with potatoes, fish soup or seafood pasta.

Ruby Nuevo Latino Bar (☎ 7515400; Kungsporsavenyn 24; mains Skr89-195) A newish spot along the main drag, the Ruby is perpetually abuzz with diners and spectators; nestle into the 'red corner' for some tapas, or have a drink on the terrace and watch the human traffic go by. Food is served late.

Smaka (☎ 132247; Vasaplatsen 3; mains Skr89-195) Smaka (meaning 'taste') serves traditional Swedish *husmanskost* including classics such as herring, meatballs, or *gravad lax*.

Den Lilla Taverna (☎ 128805; Olivedalsgatan 17; mezes Skr35-65, mains Skr69-99) A welcoming place with authentic Greek dishes, plus a great array of *mezes* (starters) perfect for sharing.

Brasserie Lipp (☎ 105830; Kungsporsavenyn 8; mains Skr75-239) You're spoilt for culinary choice along Kungsporsavenyn, although prices can be higher than in other parts of town. Brasserie Lipp is a classic, classy eatery and has good light meals on its menu, including Caesar salad and a club sandwich, plus more substantial main courses.

QUICK EATS

Saluhallen (Kungstorget; ☎ Mon-Sat) This is a classic old market hall where you can buy a huge range of delicatessen foods. There are also superb budget eateries: Alexandras is renowned for its Greek soups and stews (Skr30 to Skr40) and Kåges Hörna serves up bargain meals – chicken salad, lasagne and burgers for Skr35 to Skr40.

Saluhall Briggen (Nordhemsgatan; ☎ Mon-Sat) Not as busy as the central Saluhallen but also housing a good array of lunch stalls is this place, not far from the hostel district.

Crepe Van (Linnégatan; crepes Skr25-45; ☎ 4-10pm Mon-Thu, 4pm-3.30am Fri & Sat) This takeaway van near McDonald's offers sweet and savoury crepes from afternoon until the wee hours.

Aldardo (☎ 132300; Kungstorget 12; snacks Skr25-55; ☎ Mon-Sat) Right by the tourist office, this busy deli sells authentic Italian fast food – pizza *al taglio* (by the slice) and pasta dishes.

SELF-CATERING

Hempök supermarket (☎ 8am-10pm) Self-caterers should head to this supermarket in the Nordstan complex.

Saluhallen (Kungstorget; ☎ Mon-Sat) This is the perfect place to put together your picnic pack. Outside Saluhallen you'll find fresh produce stalls and food vans.

Drinking

You'll find some good pubs and bars along the main thoroughfares. For more choices, stroll down Kungsporsavenyn and take your pick.

Ölhallen 7:an (☎ 136079; Kungstorget 7) Portraits of long-gone barflies haunt the walls of this well-worn Swedish beerhall, which hasn't changed in about 100 years and hopefully never will.

Dubliner (☎ 139020; Östra Hamngatan 508) This is as authentic an Irish pub as you'll find on the Continent. It has live music nightly in summer. Pints of Guinness flow, and bar meals include Emerald Isle staples such as fish and chips or beef-and-Guinness pie.

O'Leary's (☎ 711 5519; Östra Hamngatan 36) Opposite the Dubliner, this is an American-style sports bar with TV screens and bar snacks.

Lounge(s) (☎ 711 1541; Kungsporsavenyn 5; ☎ Thu-Sat) Muscle or flirt your way past imposing doormen in headsets to sip pretty cocktails in this chic lounge full of Göteborg's beautiful people.

Entertainment

Bioplatset (☎ 174500; Kungstorget) One of many cinemas around town, this 10-screener behind Saluhallen shows new releases. Showtimes are listed in newspapers.

Göteborgs Stadsteatern (City Theatre; ☎ 615050; Götaplatsen) Culture vultures should head to the end of Avenyn for dramatic performances (usually in Swedish) at the Stadsteatern.

Göteborgs Konserthus (Concert Hall; ☎ 726 5300; Götaplatsen) Home to the local symphony orchestra, this is at the other end of Avenyn.

GöteborgsOperan (☎ 131300; Christina Nilssons gata) It's worth investigating what's on at this striking opera house at Lilla Bommen harbour, which stages ballet, opera and assorted musical performances.

Nefertiti (☎ 711 1533; Hvitfeldtsplatsen 6) This cool venue near Feskekörka is a well-established location for live jazz, blues and ethnic music; it also has a nightclub, restaurant and café.

Göteborgers are avid sports fans. Outdoor stadiums include Nya Ullevi for football matches and Scandinavium for ice hockey.

Kungsporsavenyn is the place to go for clubbing. Popular options:

Avenyn 10 (Kungsporsavenyn 10-12) One of the biggest clubs in town.

Bubbles (Kungsporsavenyn 8) As descriptive a name as any nightclub ever had.

Valand (nr Kungsporsavenyn & Vasagatan) Vintage music hall blending silly and sophisticated, with its imposing architecture and hilarious pair of Greek statues guarding the door.

Getting There & Away

AIR

Landvetter airport (☎ 941000) is 25km east of the city with services to many European cities. **Göteborg City Airport** (☎ 926060; www.goteborgcityairport.se) is a minor airport 10km northwest of the city, used by **Ryanair** (☎ 0900-202 0240; www.ryanair.com).

BOAT

Göteborg is a major entry point for ferries, with several terminals. For more details on ferry services and fares to Denmark, Germany and the UK, see p475.

The **Stena Line** (☎ 704 0004; www.stenaline.se) Denmark terminal near Masthuggstorget (tram No 3, 9 or 11) has several daily departures for Frederikshavn.

Faster and more expensive is **SeaCat** (☎ 720 0800), with catamarans to Frederikshavn departing daily in summer from near Sjöfartsmuseet (tram No 3 or 9 to Stigbergstorget).

Near Chapmans Torg is the **Stena Line terminal** for car ferries to Germany.

DFDS Seaways (☎ 65 06 80; www.dfdsseaways.se) sails twice weekly to Norway and the UK from Skandiahamnen on Hisingen (tram No 6 to Frihamnen).

BUS

The modern bus station, Nils Ericson Terminalen, is next to the train station. **Eurolines** (☎ 031-100240; www.eurolines.com) and **Swebus Express** share an office here.

Swebus Express (☎ 0200-218218; www.swebusexpress.se) operates frequent buses to/from most major towns. There are services to/from Stockholm (concession/full price Skr250/360, six hours, up to 10 daily) and Oslo (concession/full price Skr160/225, 3½ hours, up to six daily).

Svenska Buss (☎ 0771-676767; www.svenskabuss.se) and **Säfflebussen** (☎ 0771-151515; www.safflebussen.se) also run on the major routes.

There's a **Tidpunkten office** (☎ 0771-414300; Nils Ericsson Terminalen) that gives advice and sells tickets for city and regional public transport.

TRAIN

Centralstationen serves **SJ** (☎ 0771-757575; www.sj.se) and regional trains, with direct trains to Malmö, Copenhagen, Oslo and Stockholm, plus other destinations in the southern half of Sweden. **Connex** (☎ 0771-260000; www.connex.se) night trains travel to the far north. Direct train services to Stockholm depart approximately hourly.

Getting Around

Buses, trams and ferries make up the city public transport system; there are Tidpunkten information booths inside Nils Ericson Terminalen, on Drottningtorget and at Brunnsparcken. The easiest way to cover lengthy distances in Göteborg is by tram. There are 11 lines, all converging near Brunnsparcken, one block from the train station. An individual transport ticket costs Skr20. 'Value cards' (Skr50 to Skr100) reduce the cost considerably. Holders of the Göteborg Pass travel free.

Cykelkungen (☎ 184300; Chalmersgatan 19) offers bike rental for Skr120/300/500 for one day/three days/one week.

MARSTRAND

☎ 0303 / pop 1300

Pretty **Marstrand** (www.marstrand.nu), with its wooden buildings, island setting and relaxed air, conveys the essence of the Bohuslän fishing villages that dot the coast from Göteborg to the Norwegian border, and provides an idyllic area for sailing, cycling or driving. Car traffic is banned on the island itself, so those with their own wheels should take the frequent passenger ferry from Koön, 150m to the east.

Like many other places along the coast, Marstrand has become an upmarket weekend destination for sailors and city slickers. The 17th-century **Carlstens Fästning** (☎ 60265; adult/child Skr70/25; ☹ Jun-Aug) fortress reflects the town's martial and penal history; entry price includes a guided tour.

Marstrands Varmbadhus Bätellet (☎ 60010; marstrandsvarmbadhus@telia.com; dm Skr295, d Skr625-775) offers simple hostel accommodation 400m from the ferry dock; the attached **restaurant** (☹ daily Jun-Aug, Sat & Sun Sep-May) serves lunch specials and à la carte selections, with a great view.

There are numerous eating options along the harbour, including fast-food stalls (one sells fresh fish and chips for Skr50), cafés and upmarket restaurants.

Marstrand is about an hour from Göteborg by bus and makes an excellent day trip. Take bus No 312 from Nils Ericson Terminalen (Skr50 one way), then cross to Marstrand by the passenger ferry (Skr15 return).

If you have your own transport and are heading north to Norway, get off the E6 and take Hwy 160 from Stenungsund for a pretty slice of Swedish coastal life.

STRÖMSTAD

☎ 0526 / pop 11,250

A model fishing village that's especially popular with Norwegians on holiday, Strömstad lies about 30km south of the border and has the relaxed atmosphere you'd expect to find in a seaside resort. There are good attractions, including museums, beaches and boat trips to nearby islands. The Koster islands, decorated with clusters of cute little red fishing huts, are the most westerly in Sweden and are popular for cycling.

The **tourist office** (☎ 62330; www.stromstadtourist.se; Torget, Norra hamnen; ☹ daily Jun-Aug, Mon-Fri

Sep-May) is between the two harbours on the main square. There are lots of camping grounds and cabins in the area, and the first-class **STF Crusellska Vandrarhemmet** (☎ 10193; www.crusellska.com; Norra Kyrkogatan 12; dm/s/d Skr205/345/490; ☹ Mar-mid-Dec) is deservedly popular – book ahead.

Try the fresh local *räkor* (shrimp) and delicious seafood in the many restaurants, or purchase from local fishmongers. Next to the tourist office is **Laholmens Fisk** (Norra Kyrkogatan), selling baguettes filled with seafood (around Skr50). Not far away is **Göstases** (☎ 10812; Strandpromenaden; mains Skr49-145), with cosy nautical décor, lots of outdoor seating and a good menu of local sea creatures.

Strömstad is the northern terminus of the local train system, with regular trains to/from Göteborg. **Swebus Express** (☎ 0200-218218; www.swebusexpress.se) buses between Göteborg and Oslo also stop here. There are regular ferries between Strömstad and Sandefjord in Norway; see p476 for details.

NORRKÖPING

☎ 011 / pop 122,900

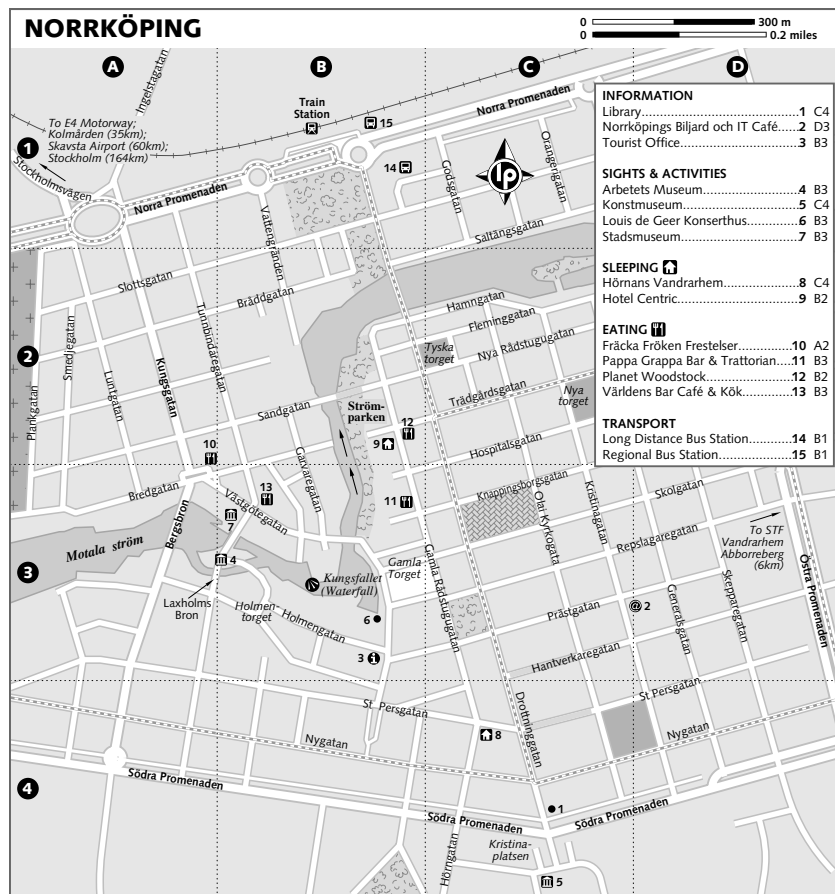
Norrköping has a peculiar industrial beauty, thanks to its 19th-century textile mills and factories along the Motala river. The architecture intermingles attractively with the city's canals, locks and waterfalls, and the rest of the downtown core has a pleasant old-fashioned feel as well.

The well-stocked **tourist office** (☎ 155000; www.destination.norrkoping.se; Dalsgatan 16; ☹ 10am-5pm Mon-Fri year-round, 10am-2pm Sat Jul), by the strikingly modern Louis de Geer Konserthus, can help with visitor information. The **library** (Södra Promenaden 105) has free internet access, or you can try the cheap **Norrköpings Biljard och IT Café** (Prästgatan 48; per hr Skr15; ☹ to 1am).

Sights

KOLMÅRDEN

With about 750 animals from all continents and climates, this **zoo** (☎ 249000; www.kolmarden.com; ☹ daily May-Aug, Sat & Sun Sep) is billed as the largest in Europe. The complex is divided into two areas: the main **Djurparken** (zoo; adult/child Skr215/120), with its enjoyable dolphin show; and **Safariparken** (adult/child Skr110/80), which you drive around. A separate **Tropicarium** (☎ 395259; www.tropicarium.se; adult/child Skr70/50) opposite the entrance



includes sharks, alligators and reptiles. A general 'maxi' ticket for the zoo and safari park costs Skr275/160 per adult/child. The **cable car** (Skr80/40) around the park gives a better view of the forest than of the animals.

You'll need all day to take in the zoo fully. Kolmården is 35km north of Norrköping, on the north shore of the bay Bråviken (regular bus Nos 432 or 433; Skr54). There's camping and hotel accommodation out here too – see the website for details.

OTHER SIGHTS

Pedestrian walkways and bridges lead around Norrköping's ingenious system of locks and canals along the riverside. The industrial past is exhibited at the city museum,

Stadsmuseum (☎ 152620; Västgötagatan 19-21; admission free; ☞ Tue-Sun). Sweden's only museum of work, the excellent **Arbetets Museum** (☎ 189800; admission free; ☞ 11am-5pm), is just across the bridge from the Stadsmuseum in a 1917 building designed to mirror the island it sits on; named Strykjärnet (flatiron), it has seven sides, seven floors and a total of 7,000 square metres of floor space. A modern addition to the riverside scenery is the extraordinary **Louis de Geer Konserthus** (☎ 155030; Dalsgatan 15), a concert hall and conference centre that's home to good restaurants.

The **Konstmuseum** (☎ 152600; Kristinaplatsen; adult/child Skr40/free; ☞ Tue-Sun), the large art museum south of the centre at Kristinaplatsen, has some important early-20th-century works.

Summer-only attractions include short guided tours on vintage trams; inquire at the tourist office.

Sleeping

Hörnans Vandrarhem (☎ 168271; Hörngatan 1; dm/s/d from Skr170/350/480) This hostel is in the heart of town, above a footy-friendly Scottish pub, and offers spacious, comfortable rooms, some with kitchenettes and all with cable TV.

STF Vandrarhem Abborreberg (☎ 319344; www.abborreberg.se; dm/s/d from Skr195/240/385; ☞ May-Sep) Beautifully situated by the coast 6km east of town, this hostel has beds in little cottages scattered through the surrounding park; there's also a café and a seaside pagoda that invites picnicking. Take bus Nos 101 or 111 to Lindö.

Hotel Centric (☎ 129030; www.centrichotel.se; Gamla Rådstugugatan 18; s/d Skr725/825, discount Skr465/675; ☞) This basic hotel is in a central location, and has slightly dated but comfortable rooms and good facilities including free internet access. There's parking available for Skr55.

Eating & Drinking

There are plenty of eateries in the shopping district along Drottninggatan, and also in the student quarter around Kungsgatan. This is also where you'll find supermarkets.

Fräcka Fröken Frestelser (☎ 238823; Kungsgatan 43; light meals Skr45-75; ☞ breakfast, lunch & dinner) The name is a tongue-twister but this cool café's great selection of sandwiches, light meals and cakes is easier to wrap your mouth around. It's also on a busy corner, making its large windows ideal for people-watching.

Världens Bar Café & Kök (☎ 134510; Västgötagatan 15; dishes Skr45-75) A funky and colourful restaurant-bar serving simple dishes – and music – from around the world. It's popular for lunch (from Skr45), and open until late (until 11pm or 1am); the wooden patio is a lovely hang-out on a warm summer evening.

Pappa Grappa Bar & Trattorian (☎ 180014; Gamla Rådstugugatan 26; mains Skr105-235; ☞ dinner Mon-Sat) It's worth booking a table for this cosy, low-lit cellar restaurant-bar, one of the town's best options and deservedly popular. It offers authentic Italian dishes and great desserts.

Planet Woodstock (☎ 188111; Gamla Rådstugugatan 11; dishes Skr40-70) This backpacker's dream was undergoing renovation and expansion at the

time of research, but it's known for a crunchy, granola-type atmosphere and reliably huge, inexpensive meals. There are several other inviting spots on the same corner.

Getting There & Around

The regional bus station is next to the train station in the north of town; long-distance buses leave from a terminal across the road. **Swebus Express** (☎ 0200-218218; www.swebusexpress.se) and **Svenska Buss** (☎ 0771-676767; www.svenskabuss.se) have frequent services to destinations including Stockholm, Göteborg, Jönköping, Kalmar and Örebro. Norrköping is on the main north-south railway line, and **SJ trains** (☎ 0771-757575; www.sj.se) run roughly hourly north to Stockholm and south to Malmö. Frequent regional trains and buses run south to Linköping.

Trams cover the city and are quickest for short hops, especially along Drottninggatan from the train station. The fare for trams and city buses is Skr18.

LINKÖPING

☎ 013 / pop 134,000

The highlight of a visit to this university city is the open-air museum Gamla Linköping. Another big draw is the medieval cathedral, an impressive standout amid the modern city with its emphasis on the aircraft industry.

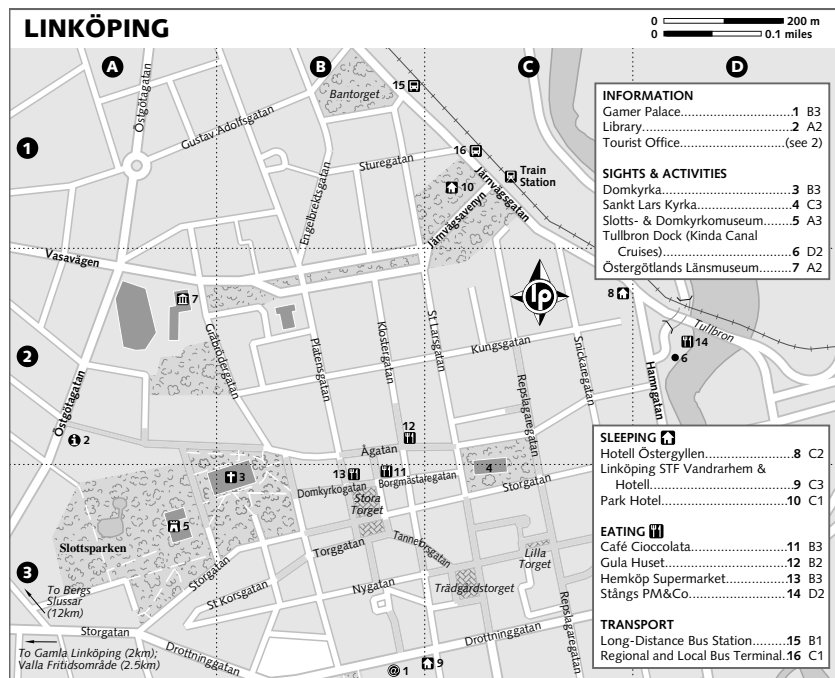
The **tourist office** (☎ 206835; www.linkoping.se) is inside the city **library** (Östgötagatan 5), not far from the cathedral; there's also free internet access here. **Gamer Palace** (Drottninggatan 36; per hr Skr19; ☞ 1pm-10pm Mon-Thu, 1pm-11pm Fri, 10am-midnight Sat, 1-8pm Sun) is an internet café conveniently close to the hostel.

Sights & Activities

The enormous, copper-roofed **domkyrka** (cathedral; ☞ 9am-6pm) with its 107m spire is the landmark of Linköping and one of Sweden's oldest and largest churches. Learn more about its history and architecture at the museum inside the castle just across the way, the **Slotts- & Domkyrkomuseum** (Castle & Cathedral Museum; ☎ 122380; adult/child Skr40/free; ☞ Tue-Sun late Apr-mid-Oct).

On the opposite side of the busy Stora Torget, down a pedestrianised street, is **Sankt Lars Kyrka**, which has live music concerts some evenings.

Just north of the cathedral, **Östergötlands Länsmuseum** (County Museum; ☎ 230300; Vasavägen;



adult/child Skr20/free; ☞ Tue, Wed, Sat & Sun) houses an extensive collection of art by a variety of European painters, including Cranach's view of Eden, *Original Sin*, and a collection of Swedish art reaching back to the Middle Ages.

The best attractions are just outside the centre. Some 2km west of the city is **Gamla Linköping** (☞ 121110; admission free), one of the biggest living-museum villages in Sweden. Among the 90 quaint houses are about a dozen theme museums, many handicraft shops, a small chocolate factory, a restaurant and a café. You can wander among the 19th-century buildings at will – the village and most museums are open daily. Just 300m through the forest behind the old village is the **Valla Fritidsområde** (admission Skr20), a recreation area with domestic animals, gardens, a children's playground, minigolf, a few small museums and many old houses. To get there take bus Nos 202 or 214.

Bergs Slussar, 12km northwest of Linköping (take bus Nos 521 or 522; Skr30) is one of the most scenic sections of the Göta Canal, with seven locks and a height gain

of 19m. It's a great excursion on a sunny day, and there are cafés and restaurants by the canal.

Linköping boasts its own canal system, the 90km **Kinda Canal**. There are 15 locks, including the deepest in Sweden. A variety of cruises from mid-May to September run along the canal. The trip on **M/S Kind** (☞ 0141-233370) leaves the Tullbron dock on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday from late June to early August and heads south to Rimforsa (Skr330; return by bus or train included).

Sleeping

Linköping STF Vandrarhem & Hotell (☞ 359080; www.lvh.se; Klostergatan 52A; dm/s/d Skr205/390/410, hotel s/d Skr675/780, discount Skr495/590) There's something for every budget at this bright, central youth hostel complex. As well as comfortable hostel rooms, there are good hotel rooms (many come with kitchenettes) and some excellent, spacious apartments (from Skr 600).

Hotell Östergyllen (☞ 102075; www.hotellostergyllen.se; Hamngatan 2B; s/d Skr450/750, with shared

bathroom Skr395/550) It doesn't look like much from the outside, but inside is a small, pleasant hotel with a lovely breakfast room. It's conveniently located about 150m from the train station.

Park Hotel (☞ 129005; www.fawlytowers.se; Järnvägsgatan 6; budget r from Skr490, s/d Skr890/1090, discount Skr590/790) A quirky place in a tily yellow house that claims it's 'Linköping's Fawly Towers', this hotel directly opposite the train station has friendly owners and good rooms, including a budget option with showers off the corridor.

Eating & Drinking

Most places to eat and drink are on the main square or nearby streets, especially along buzzing Ågatan.

Café Cioccolata (☞ 131880; Hantverkaregatan 1; snacks Skr35-55) A central café with cool interiors, outdoor seating, strong coffee and a great selection of panini or ciabatta sandwiches.

Gula Huset (☞ 138838; Klostergatan 19; lunch from Skr70, mains Skr79-219) On a warm day the courtyard area at the 'Yellow House' beckons. There are cheaper pasta and vegetarian options, plus a range of hearty Swedish fish and meat mains, including reindeer steak.

Stängs PM&Co (☞ 312100; Södra Stänggatan 1; lunch Skr75, mains Skr200-270; ☞ lunch Tue-Fri, dinner Tue-Sat) Down by the Kinda Canal dock, off Hamngatan in the city's northeast, is this highly rated waterside restaurant. The dinner menu here is impressive (with prices to match) and the lunch-time deal is excellent value.

Hemköp supermarket (Stora Torget) This supermarket in the basement of the Filbytersgallerian shopping complex.

Getting There & Away

The regional and local bus terminal (Järnvägsgatan) is adjacent to the train station. Long-distance buses leave from 500m north of the train station. Linköping is on the main north-south railway line and **SJ trains** (☞ 0771-757575; www.sj.se) stop roughly every hour.

Regional (and local) traffic is run by **ÖstgötaTrafiken** (☞ 0771-211010; www.ostgotatrafiken.se); there's an information office at the station. Journeys cost from Skr20; the 24-hour *dygnskort* (Skr110) is valid on all buses and local trains within the county

(buy this if you're travelling to Vadstena, opposite).

VADSTENA

☞ 0143 / pop 7600

Saint Birgitta was Sweden's most prominent saint – the published record of her 'celestial revelations' was a popular page-turner during the Middle Ages. In the 1340s she established an order of nuns here in Vadstena (confirmed by the Vatican in 1370), and the town remains completely devoted to her. The abbey competes for the visitor's interest with the equally impressive castle. The historic monuments, charming alleys and relaxed atmosphere in the old town (and by the lake) makes Vadstena one of the nicest spots in Sweden. The **tourist office** (☞ 31570; www.vadstena.com; ☞ daily mid-May–mid-Sep, Mon-Fri mid-Sep–mid-May) is inside the castle.

Sights & Activities

The Renaissance castle, **Vadstena Slott** (☞ 31570; Slottsvägen; adult/child Skr30/10), looks straight over the harbour and lake beyond. It was the mighty family project of the early Vasa kings and in the upper apartments there are some items of period furniture and paintings. There are daily tours from mid-May to mid-September. The superb 15th-century **Klosterkyrkan** (Abbey Church; Lasarettsgatan; admission free; ☞ mid-May–mid-Sep), consecrated in 1430, has a combination of Gothic and some Renaissance features. Inside are the accumulated relics of St Birgitta and medieval sculptures. Near the church is the **Sankta Birgitta Klostermuseum** (☞ 10031; adult/child Skr50/10; ☞ daily late May–mid-Sep, Sat & Sun mid-Apr–May & mid-Sep–mid-Oct), the old convent founded by St Birgitta.

The area around Vadstena is full of history and deserves a closer look. Cycling is an option as the scenic flatlands around Vättern lend themselves to the pedal. A series of ancient legends is connected with **Rökstenen**, Sweden's most impressive and famous rune stone, by the church at Rök, just off the E4 on the road to Heda and Alvastra.

Sleeping & Eating

STF Vandrarhem Borghamn (☞ 20368; www.borghamnsvandrarhem.nu; Borghamnsvägen 1; dm/s/d Skr195/325/440) This large complex is in a lovely, quiet lakeside setting 15km southwest of Vadstena. It's about

750m from the bus stop at Borghamn (take bus No 610), and bike rental is available, plus there's an on-site café.

STF Vandrarhem Vadstena (☎ 10302; www.va-bos-talle.se; Skänningegatan 20; dm/s/d from Skr225/325/405) This inviting central hostel is open year-round, but outside the high season (June to August) it's essential to book in advance.

27ans Nattlogi (☎ 76564; www.27ansnattlogi.se in Swedish; Storgatan 27; s/d Skr500/650, with private bathroom Skr600/790) This cosy B&B is nicely central and has simple, comfortable rooms (some with private facilities, some shared) and a courtyard with gardens.

Restaurang På Hörnet (☎ 13170; Skänningegatan 1; mains & snacks Skr40-100; ☎ Wed-Sun) This cool corner bar-restaurant at the end of the main drag has a checkered floor, pretty carved bar-back and great bar snacks such as buffalo wings, marinated feta cheese and calamari – not to mention a lot of beer on tap.

Mi Casa (☎ 14101; Storgatan 9; lunch specials Skr65-75, mains Skr109-139) Mi Casa is a bright, modern, family-friendly restaurant-café. There's a lunch-time buffet as well as the regular lunch menu of enormous pasta salads; in the evening there are bistro meals, tapas dishes (Skr20 to Skr35) and cheerful service. In summer there are a few outdoor tables in the back.

Old-style cafés line Storgatan for an afternoon pit stop, and there's a central supermarket on Rådhusstorget for picnic supplies.

Getting There & Around

Only buses run to Vadstena: bus No 661 regularly links the town with Mjölby, and from Mjölby you can catch trains to Linköping and Stockholm. **Swebus Express** (☎ 0200-218218; www.swebusexpress.se) bus No 855 runs on Friday and Sunday between Stockholm and Vadstena via Linköping.

Sport Hörnan (☎ 10362; Storgatan 8) rents bikes.

SMÅLAND

This is one of the nicest regions of Sweden to visit, especially if you have your own wheels – much of Småland consists of thick, forested wilderness interlaced with narrow roads and tiny villages. It's the home of glassmaking, and as such is perhaps the most scenic place in the country

to shop for dishware. There's also the pretty town of Kalmar, home to an impressive castle and an important point on Sweden's history timeline. From there it's a quick jaunt over to the long, skinny island of Öland, a popular summer destination full of camping grounds, hostels and windmills.

Småland was also the homeland of many emigrants to the USA, so it's an important destination for those tracing their Swedish roots.

See the **Småland** (www.visit-smaland.com) website for more about the region.

VÄXJÖ

☎ 0470 / pop 74,100

Växjö might be difficult (or impossible) to pronounce (try to say 'vex shoe' while sneezing), but it's easy to navigate, and it puts you right where you want to be for explorations of the Glasriket (opposite). It has supermarkets, shops, petrol stations – all the services you might need to stock up on before setting out. The **tourist office** (☎ 41410; www.turism.vaxjo.se; Stadsbiblioteket, Västra Esplanaden 7; ☎ daily Jul–mid-Aug, Mon-Fri mid-Aug–Jun) inside the library has maps and brochures and can advise travellers about what to see in the region.

Millions of North Americans have roots in Sweden, many of them in Småland. Those who return shouldn't miss **Svenska Emigrantinstitutet – Utvandrarhus** (House of Emigrants; ☎ 20120; www.swemi.nu; Södra Järnvägs-gatan; adult/child Skr40/5; ☎ daily May-Aug, Tue-Sat Sep-Apr), which has archives, information and historical exhibitions on the beckoning USA. It's just behind the train-and-bus station, close to **Smålands Museum** (☎ 704200; www.smalandsmuseum.se; Södra Järnvägs-gatan; adult/child Skr40/20; ☎ daily Jun-Aug, Tue-Sun Sep-May), with an absorbing exhibition of glass from Glasriket.

STF Vandrarhem Växjö (☎ 63070; www.vaxjovan-drarhem.nu; Evedals Brunn; dm/d from Skr155/400) is a lovely hostel 6km north of the centre, in a popular lakeside recreational area (take bus No 1C, which unfortunately only runs from June to August, Skr17).

First Hotel Cardinal (☎ 722800; www.firsthotels.com; Bäckgatan 10; d from Skr995, discount Skr695) is a large, well-equipped hotel in the centre of town, with a range of rooms and rates.

For sustenance, head to Storgatan or try the classy **Wibrovski** (☎ 740410; Sandgårdsgatan

19; mains Skr165-235; ☎ dinner Mon-Sat), where you can dine in an old timbered house or from a hanging basket chair on the patio. At Smålands Museum, **Café Momento** (☎ 39129; dishes & snacks Skr35-99) is a great lunch or coffee spot. There's an excellent selection of baguettes, salads and cakes, and a pretty courtyard.

Getting There & Away

Växjö lies between Alvesta and Kalmar and is served by **SJ trains** (☎ 0771-757575; www.sj.se) that run roughly hourly. Buses to other parts of the county also depart from the train station, with destinations including Oskarshamn and Kosta. **Svenska Buss** (☎ 0771-676767; www.svenskabuss.se) runs daily between Stockholm and Malmö via Norrköping, Linköping and Växjö.

GLASRIKET

One of the most impressive things to see in Sweden is traditional glass-blowing, and there's no better place to see it than here, in its birthplace, the so-called 'Kingdom of Crystal'. The rest of the scenery's not bad either – dense forests, quaint red houses and intricately winding roads. It's no surprise that the area known as **Glasriket** (www.glasriket.se) is the most visited area of Sweden outside of Stockholm. Visit the area anytime outside of the June-to-August high season, though, and you'll feel like the first person to discover it. There are at least 15 glass factories (look for signs saying 'glasbruk') scattered around the wilderness, but if you're short on time you should visit at least one or two of the big three – Kosta, Boda and Orrefors. Factory outlets offer substantial discounts on seconds, and most of the larger places offer a shipping service.

Nybro

☎ 0481 / pop 19,800

Nybro's **tourist office** (☎ 45085; www.nybro.se; Stadshusplan; ☎ daily Jun-Aug, Mon-Fri Sep-May) is inside the town hall and can help with information about the town and region. Of the glass factories in the immediate surrounds, traditional **Pukeberg** (☎ 80029; www.pukeberg.se) is a worthwhile stop for its quaint setting and high quality. About 2.5km west of the town centre is the 200m-long *kyrk-stallarna* building, old church stables that

now house the excellent folklore museum **Madesjö Hembygdsgränd** (☎ 17935; adult/child Skr30/5; ☎ mid-May–mid-Sep).

Nybro Läpprihotell & STF Vandrarhem (☎ 10932; Vasagatan 2; dm/s/d from Skr195/345/445; ☎ Mar–mid-Dec), south of the centre near Pukeberg, is the local STF hostel. It's clean and comfortable and has a kitchen on each floor. You can also rent bikes here (Skr50 per day).

The more upmarket, governmental-looking **Stora Hotellet** (☎ 51935; rumsbokning@telia.com; Mellangatan 11; s/d Skr1190/1450, discount Skr795/1090) is on Stadshusplan, just by the tourist office. It's home to the best eating options in town, with both a pub and a restaurant.

SJ trains (☎ 0771-757575; www.sj.se) between Alvesta and Kalmar stop here every hour or two. Regional bus No 131 runs regularly to/from Kalmar.

Kosta, Boda & Orrefors

These three tiny Småland villages are home to the three biggest names in Swedish glass production. Each namesake company is open daily and each factory complex has an outlet store, museum or gallery, glass-blowing demonstrations and tourist information for the area. Admission to most attractions costs Skr20, or free with the Glasriket Pass (Skr95).

Kosta is the largest village and is where Glasriket started in 1742. At times it looks like the biggest tourist trap in southern Sweden, but it can be appreciated if you concentrate on the finesse and quality of the local craftsmanship and not on the tourist buses and discount stores, or if you go between seasons, when you may well be the only visitor. Boda is a quaint little village with a large factory outlet, a few other homewares shops and little else. Founded in 1864, the Boda glass factory is now part of the internationally renowned **Kosta Boda company** (☎ 0478-34500; www.kosta-boda.com; ☎ 10am-8pm Mon-Fri, 10am-6pm Sat & Sun mid-Jun–Aug, 10am-6pm Mon-Fri, 11am-4pm Sat & noon-4pm Sun Sep–mid-Jun) Much the same range is available at these two factories.

Orrefors (☎ 0481-34195; www.orrefors.com; ☎ 0478-34500) was founded in 1898. The factory complex is impressive (make sure you check out the gallery) and there's a good hostel nearby.

Across the road from the factory in Kosta, **Kosta Vårdshus** (☎ 0478-50006; www.kostavardshus.com; Storavägen; s/d from Skr450/750) serves inexpensive lunches and offers simple, comfortable accommodation. There's also **Kafe Kosta** (meals around Skr50), inside the factory's outlet store, serving sandwiches, cakes and hot meals – nice if you're looking to try out some of that glassware before you buy.

STF Vandrarhem Boda (☎ 24230; boda.vanvandrarhem.telia.com; dm/s/d Skr185/215/345; ☞ May–mid-Sep) in Boda is not far from the factory and well signposted.

The friendly, well-equipped **STF Vandrarhem Orrefors** (☎ 30020; dm/s/d Skr165/275/365; ☞ May–Aug) in Orrefors is conveniently located near the factory area. At the factory complex you can dine at Orrefors Vårdshus (lunch and snacks available) but there's also a summertime stall selling hot dogs and ice cream. You can also get pizzas and kebabs from Pizzeria Alexandra in the village.

If you're here from June to August, ask about *hyttill* parties at the glass factories, where traditional meals are prepared using the furnaces and cooling ovens. The menu includes herring, smoked sausage, bacon and baked potatoes, as well as the regional speciality *ostkaka* (cheesecake). The cost starts at around Skr325 per person including drinks. Contact the regional tourist offices or the glassworks for more information.

Getting There & Around

Glasriket is fairly isolated and is not that easy to explore without transport. Bicycle tours are great if you follow the minor roads; there are plenty of hostels and you can camp almost anywhere in the countryside. From mid-June to mid-August bus No 138 runs a few times daily (not on Sunday) from Kalmar to Nybro, Orrefors and Kosta (and vice versa). Regular (year-round) bus No 139 connects Nybro and Orrefors; Kosta is served by regular bus No 218 from Växjö.

OSKARSHAMN

☎ 0491 / pop 26,200

There's not a lot to Oskarshamn (from a visitor's perspective) other than some important boat connections to Gotland. Hantverksgatan is one of the main streets, where you'll find the **Kulturhuset** (Hantverksgatan 18) housing the **tourist office** (☎ 88188;

www.oskarshamn.se; ☞ daily Jun–Aug, Mon–Fri Sep–May) and the town library, which has free internet access.

If you're staying overnight, the well-run **STF Vandrarhem Oskarshamn** (☎ 88198; vandrarhemmet@oskarshamn.se; Åsavägen 8; dm/s/d Skr250/350/455) is a few hundred metres from the train station and well positioned for the Gotland ferries.

Local trains run from Nässjö, and regional buses make a regular run on the coastal Kalmar–Oskarshamn–Västervik route (the Oskarshamn–Kalmar section is Skr70). **Swebus Express** (☎ 0200-218218; www.swebusexpress.se) has three daily buses between Stockholm and Kalmar that stop at Oskarshamn. Regular boats to Visby on Gotland depart from near the train station.

KALMAR

☎ 0480 / pop 35,000

For a long time the port of Kalmar was the key to Baltic power, and the short-lived Scandinavian union agreement of 1397 was signed at its grand castle. Kalmar was vital to Swedish interests until the 17th century and its cobbled streets and impressive edifices retain a strong historical flavour. It's also the gateway to the long, skinny island of Öland.

Information

IT-Caféet (Kaggensgatan 40B; ☞ 8am–4pm Mon–Thu, 8am–3pm Fri) Internet access.

Library (Tullslätten 4) Has free internet access.

Tourist office (☎ 417700; www.kalmar.se/turism; Ölandskajen 9; ☞ daily Jun–Aug, Mon–Sat May & Sep, Mon–Fri Oct–Apr)

Sights & Activities

The once-powerful Renaissance **Kalmar Slott** (☎ 451490; adult/child Skr75/20; ☞ Apr–Sep), which is located in a magnificent setting by the sea south of the railway, was the key to Sweden before the lands to the south were claimed from Denmark. The panelled King Erik chamber is the highlight of the castle's interior, while another chamber exhibits punishment methods used on women in crueler times. For art-lovers the nearby **Konstmuseum** (☎ 426282; Slottsvägen 1D; adult/child Skr40/free) is worth a look, while the pretty streets of the **Gamla Stan** area to the northeast of the castle are lovely for wandering.

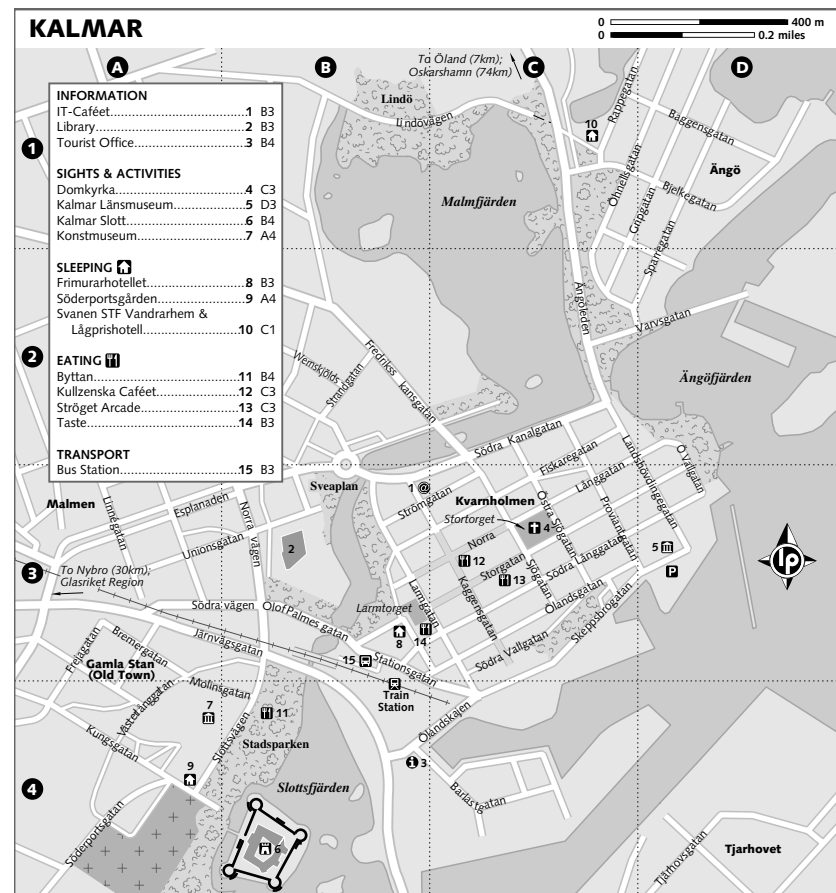
The highlight of **Kalmar Länsmuseum** (County Museum; ☎ 451300; www.kalmarlansmuseum.se; Skeppsbrogatan 51; adult/child Skr50/free), in the old steam mill by the harbour, is the exhibition of finds from the flagship *Kronan*, which sank controversially off Öland in 1676 – a disaster to match the sinking of the *Vasa*, which sank in 1628 and is now on show in Stockholm at the spectacular Vasamuseet (p399).

A few blocks away, in the imposing but somewhat empty main square, is the baroque **domkyrka** (Stortorget), which – like most of the buildings designed by Tessin, the leading 17th-century architect working for the Swedish crown – looks like a gigantic birthday cake.

Sleeping

Svanen STF Vandrarhem & Lågprishotell (☎ 12928; www.hotellsvanen.se; Rappegatan 1; dm Skr195, hotel s/d Skr520/625) In a lovely setting by the water, facing the city's appealing silhouette, Svanen is a well-equipped hostel and hotel on the island of Ängö (connected by road to the centre; take bus No 402). There are good, clean rooms available with or without private bathroom – the hotel rooms cost only a little more than the hostel, and breakfast is included. Canoe hire is available.

Söderportsgården (☎ 12501; www.soderportsgarden.se in Swedish; Slottsvägen 1; s/d Skr495/695, 3-/4-bed apt Skr950/1190; ☞ mid-Jun–mid-Aug) In a great location right by the castle, this student



residence offers good, simple, summertime-only accommodation. There's also a good café-bar here (with regular live music), and prices include breakfast.

Frimurarehotellet (☎ 15230; www.frimurarehotellet.com; Larmtorget 2; s/d Skr1040/1260, discount Skr720/895, summer Skr770/945) A pretty, older-style hotel with 34 en-suite rooms, a super friendly staff and free coffee and cookies in the foyer, this place is right in the heart of the action. Bike rental is available.

Eating

Kulzenska Kaféet (☎ 28882; 1st fl, Kaggsgatan 26; sandwiches Skr25-40) This place goes on forever, with room after room of tiny coffee nooks furnished with grandmotherly antiques but generally populated by students quietly doing homework. It's a charming place and one of Sweden's finest old-world cafés.

Ströget arcade (Storgatan 24) This arcade houses a small food hall, with a good selection of places offering lunch-time sustenance such as baked potatoes, baguettes and pizza. There are also lots of Thai and Chinese restaurants here, and an Asian grocery.

Taste (☎ 15565; Södra Långgatan 5; lunch Skr69, bistro mains Skr90-150) A fresh, modern café and restaurant-bar with good-value hot lunches and a bistro menu of classics such as Caesar salad, pasta and burger options.

Byttan (☎ 16360; Stadsparken; lunch Skr75, dinner Skr160-200; ☞ May-Sep) A classy restaurant in the park by the castle, Byttan offers wonderful views of the town's major attraction. Meal prices are less than you might expect to pay for such a location.

Getting There & Away

All regional traffic is run by **Kalmar Länstrafik** (☎ 0491-761200), including the Rasken long-distance services (Oskarshamn Skr70, Västervik Skr118) and buses to Öland. A one-way ticket costs Skr18 to Skr118 within the county; a **Turistkort** (Tourist Card) is available from June to mid-September and is valid on all buses and trains within the county for three/seven days (Skr200/400), allowing you to explore the coast and Öland. All buses depart from beside the train station on Stationsgatan, in the south-western part of the city grid.

SJ trains (☎ 0771-757575; www.sj.se) run every hour or two between Kalmar and Alvesta

(with connections to the main north-south line), and to Göteborg.

ÖLAND

☎ 0485 / pop 23,000

This has to be the easiest possible way to visit a Swedish island – you can actually drive to it. Öland acts as a long, skinny offshore camping ground – it's a popular summer holiday destination for Swedes, and it's full of camping grounds and hostels. Much of the island is designated a haven for nature. There are lighthouses dotting the key points at the northern and southern tips. But what it's really famous for are the windmills. You can play out your Don Quixote fantasies with abandon here, as there are about 400 of the characteristic wooden huts on rotating bases; there were once 2000.

On the southern half of the island, still mostly undeveloped, there are relics of human settlements and conflicts, including Iron Age fortresses and graveyards of all periods. It's now been added to Unesco's World Heritage List, recognised for its long cultural history and diverse landscapes.

The island stretches 137km (but is only 16km wide) and is reached from Kalmar via the 6km Ölandsbron, once the longest bridge in Europe. The bridge lands you on the island just north of Färjestaden ('ferry town' – the prebridge name), where there's a large **tourist office** (☎ 560600; www.olandstourist.se; ☞ daily May-Aug, Mon-Fri Sep-Apr) beside the road. The tourist office will book rooms or cabin accommodation throughout the island and offers numerous brochures and maps.

Buses connect all main towns from Kalmar (bus Nos 101 to 106 all cross the bridge to Färjestaden; Nos 101, 102 and 106 go to Borgholm). Kalmar-Borgholm costs Skr46.

Borgholm & Around

Borgholm, the 'capital' of Öland, is a pleasant small town with shops, cafés and an enormous ruined castle on the outskirts. The small **tourist office** (☎ 89000; Sandgatan 25; ☞ Mon-Sat Jun-mid-Aug, Mon-Fri mid-Aug-May) is at the bus station.

The town is dominated from the hill just to the south by the ruins of **Borgholms Slott**

(☎ 12333; adult/child Skr50/free; ☞ May-Sep). This castle was burnt out and abandoned early in the 18th century after being used as a dye works. There's a museum inside; the ruins are often used as a venue for summer concerts and festivals.

Sweden's most famous 'summer house', **Solliden Slott** (☎ 15355; www.sollidenslott.se; parks & pavilion exhibitions adult/child Skr60/30; ☞ mid-May-mid-Sep), 2.5km south of the town centre, is used by the Swedish royal family. It has beautiful parks and pavilion exhibitions, plus a café.

VIDA Museum (☎ 77440; www.vidamuseum.com; adult/child Skr40/free; ☞ daily May-Sep, Sat & Sun Apr & Oct-Dec) is a strikingly modern museum and art gallery in Halltorp, about 9km south of Borgholm on road 136, with graphics, textiles, paintings, sculpture and more from some of the best-known artists working in Sweden.

SLEEPING & EATING

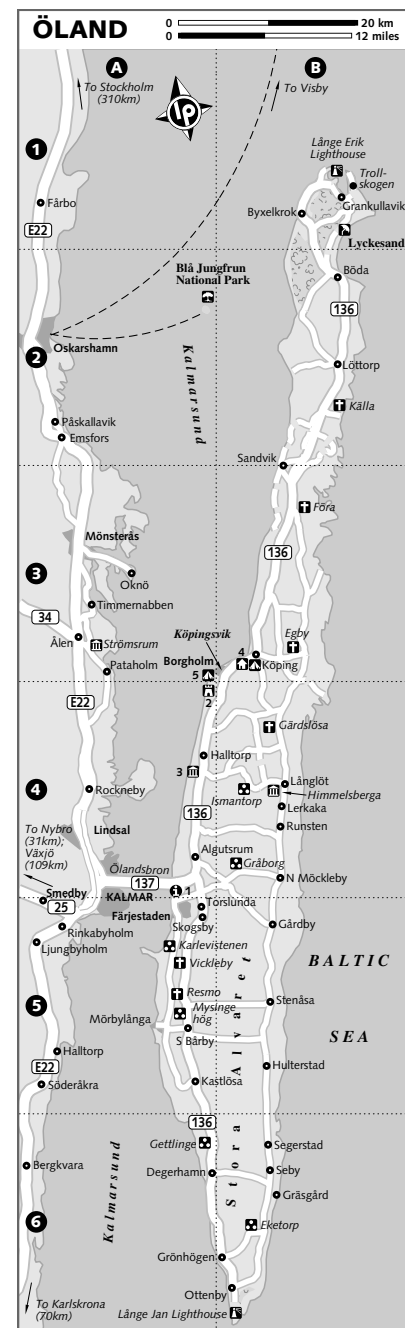
The tourist offices in Borgholm and Färjestaden can help you find inexpensive private rooms in the area.

Kapelludden Camping & Stugor (☎ 560770; www.kapelludden.se; Sandgatan; camp sites from Skr170; 6-person cabin Skr860-1220; ☞ late Mar-early Oct; ☞) This is the handiest camping ground to Borgholm, just north of the bus terminal. It's a huge place (with some 450 camp sites) and has five-star, family-oriented facilities, including a swimming pool.

Ebbas Vandrarhem & Trädgårdscafé (☎ 103 73; Storgatan 12; dm from Skr155) Just outside the centre of Borgholm is this well-equipped hostel, in a manor house set in a pretty garden.

Guntorps Herrgård (☎ 13000; www.guntorps herrgard.se; Guntorpsgatan; s/d Skr895/1095) A delightful old farmhouse east of town, near the

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STF hostel. There's quality accommodation on offer, plus the drawcard of an excellent-value smorgasbord (Skr175/75 per adult/child, open to all) from 6pm every evening, with a huge variety of traditional Swedish dishes.

The main square in town has the usual collection of fast-food stalls and ice-cream kiosks. **Pubben** (☎ 12415; Storgatan 18; ☎ from 6pm Sun–Thu, from 3pm Fri & Sat Jun–Aug, Wed–Sat Sep–May) is a classic English-style pub serving snacks, washed down with a choice of beers and whiskies.

KARLSKRONA

☎ 0455 / pop 60,600

Karlskrona was reconstructed in grand baroque style after a fire in 1790 and became Sweden's greatest naval port. It's now on Unesco's World Heritage List and offers a relaxing day or two checking out museums and exploring offshore islands.

Information

Public Library (Borgmästaregatan 8) Has free internet access.

Tourist office (☎ 303490; www.karlskrona.se/tourism; Stortorget 2; ☎ daily mid-Jun–mid-Aug, Mon–Sat mid-Aug–mid-Jun)

Video & Biljard Café (Admiraltetsgatan 4; per hr Skr20) Cheap internet access until 10pm or 11pm daily.

Sights & Activities

The finest attraction is the extraordinary offshore **Kungsholms Fort**, with its curious circular harbour, established in 1680 to defend the town, and the impregnable tower **Drottningkärr kastell**. From mid-June to mid-August there are daily four-hour guided tours to the fort, sailing from Fisktorget at 10am (adult/child Skr140/70); inquiries and bookings are made through the tourist office.

The striking **Marinmuseum** (☎ 53902; www.marinmuseum.se; Stumholmen; adult/child Skr50/free; ☎ daily Jun–Aug, Tue–Sun Sep–May) is the new national naval museum and has interesting ship and historical displays. Nearby is **Båtmanskasernen Konsthall** (☎ 303422; Bastionsgatan 8; admission free; ☎ Tue–Sun), once a sea-men's barracks and now an art gallery.

The extensive **Blekinge Museum** (☎ 304960; Fisktorget 2; adult/child Skr40/free; ☎ daily mid-Jun–mid-Aug, Tue–Sun mid-Aug–mid-Jun) features exhibits on fishing, quarrying and the local shipping

trade, plus there's a baroque garden, a lovely courtyard café and a host of other things.

Touring Karlskrona's **archipelago** is a pleasant way to spend a sunny afternoon. A three-hour tour taking in the eastern islands costs from Skr110/50 per adult/child; contact **Skärgårdstrafiken** (☎ 78330; Fisktorget) for timetables and information.

Sleeping & Eating

STF Vandrarhem Karlskrona-Trossö (☎ 10020; www.karlskronavandrarhem.se; Drottninggatan 39; dm/s/d from Skr175/275/370) Good central hostel with all the facilities you need, plus a decent outdoor area.

Hotell Siesta (☎ 80180; siesta.hotell@telia.com; Borgmästaregatan 5; s/d from Skr655/1050, discount Skr600/750) A good midrange option, right near Stortorget and offering fresh, modern rooms.

The northern side of the huge Stortorget and the street behind it, Ronnebygatan, are home to a good choice of eateries and lots of outdoor seating in fine weather.

Montmartre (☎ 311833; Drottninggatan 28; mains Skr65–140) A nice little Italian restaurant (with attached museum), serving pizza for around Skr70, plus a range of pasta, meat and fish dishes.

King's Crown (☎ 10088; Stortorget; lunch Skr70, bar snacks & light meals Skr35–140) Take a break from sightseeing at this English-style pub by the tourist office, and enjoy a bar meal of nachos, steak sandwiches or baked potatoes. There's also a more upmarket dining area, with a menu featuring items such as seafood and reindeer fillet (mains Skr150 to Skr230).

Getting There & Away

The bus and train stations are just north of the town centre, on Kungsplan. **Svenska Buss** (☎ 0771-676767; www.svenskabuss.se) runs services once daily except Saturday between Stockholm and Malmö via Öskarshamn, Kalmar and Karlskrona. Train connections are better, running regularly to Copenhagen via Kristianstad and Malmö. Regular trains also run to Emmaboda, and from there to Kalmar or Växjö and on to Göteborg.

Stena Line ferries to Gdynia (Poland) leave from Verkö, 10km east of Karlskrona (take bus No 6). See p476 for more information on this ferry service.

GOTLAND

☎ 0498 / pop 57,400

Historically rich and economically right on the money, Gotland is a budget traveller's dream. Cycling around the mostly flat island and camping free in forests is a truly wonderful way to see the island's hundred-plus medieval churches and prehistoric sites. Other attractions include the unusual **raukar** limestone formations (remains of 400-million-year-old coral reefs), particularly at the northern tip of Fårö. You can scarcely take three steps on Gotland without stumbling over a runestone or an ancient burial site (see p455), typically marked with large stones arranged into the shapes of Viking ships or piled up. There's also a great network of hostels scattered around the island – that's if you can be persuaded to leave its stunning port city of Visby, a walled beauty that's on Unesco's World Heritage List. You could easily pass a week here seeing the highlights, eating well in the high-quality restaurants and relaxing on a beach. Book ahead in summer, though, because it's also on the list of practically every holidaying Swede.

Good websites for travellers heading to Gotland include www.gotland.net and www.gotland.info.

VISBY

☎ 0498 / pop 21,400

Like a living museum, albeit a museum taken over by throngs of partying Swedes each summer, Visby is a labyrinth of cobblestone streets surrounded by medieval town walls. From mid-May to mid-August cars are banned in the old town, making it safer and more pleasant to stroll this gorgeous Hanseatic port city to your heart's content. The Hanseatic League was an alliance that held a trade monopoly over the Baltic region. It reached the height of its power in the 1300s.

The city's summer highlight is the costumes, performances, crafts, markets and reenactments of **Medeltidsveckan** (Medieval Week; www.medeltidsveckan.com), held during the first week of August. Book accommodation well in advance if you wish to visit at this time.

The **tourist office** (☎ 201700; www.gotland.info; Hamngatan 4; ☎ daily May–Sep, Mon–Fri Oct–Apr) can

help with brochures, maps and visitor information, but doesn't book accommodation. The **library** (Cramérgatan; ☎ Mon–Sat) offers free internet access.

Sights

The old town is a noble sight, with its **13th-century wall** of 40 towers. Set aside enough time to stroll the perimeter (3.5km), and meander around Visby's narrow roads and pretty lanes. Ask at the tourist office about guided walking tours, conducted in English a few times a week in summer (Skr85), or buy a copy of *Visby on Your Own* (Skr35) for a self-guided tour.

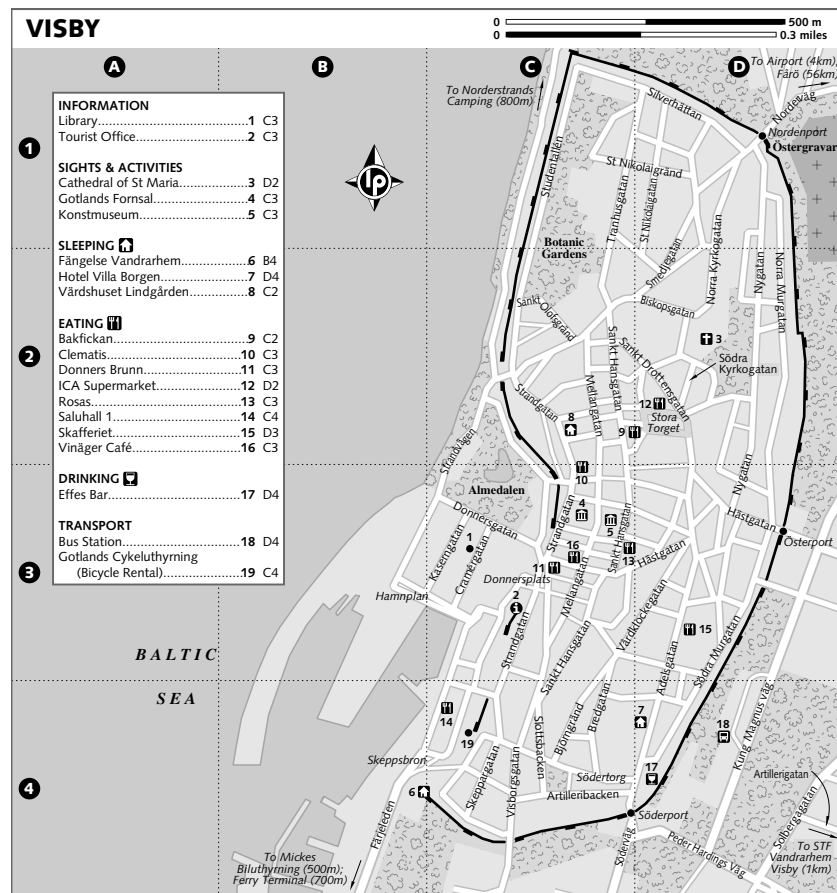
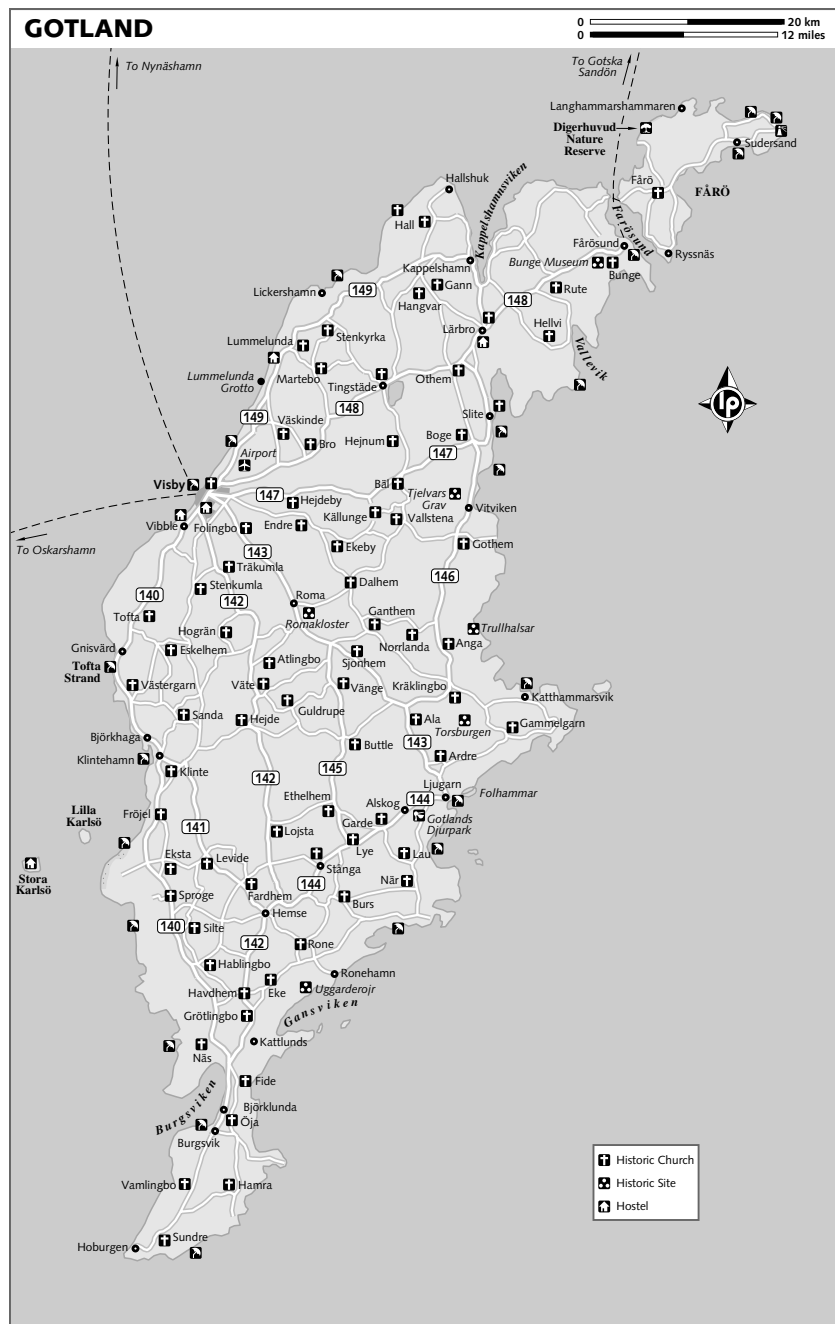
The **ruins** of 10 medieval churches are all within the town walls and contrast with the old but sound **Cathedral of St Maria**, north of Stora Torget. **Gotlands Fornsal** (☎ 292700; Strandgatan 14; adult/children under 16 Skr60/free; ☎ daily May–mid-Sep, Tue–Sun mid-Sep–Apr) is one of the largest and best regional museums in Sweden, with a notable collection of runestones and early grave findings. Extraordinary 8th-century, pre-Viking picture stones, human skeletons from chambered tombs, silver treasures and medieval wooden sculptures are highlights. Don't miss the display of a skull found with a hatchet stuck through it. Allow a couple of hours if you want to fully appreciate the displays. The nearby **Konstmuseum** (☎ 292775; Sankt Hansgatan 21; adult/child Skr40/free; ☎ daily May–mid-Sep, Tue–Sun mid-Sep–Apr) displays varying art exhibitions.

Sleeping

Moderately priced accommodation in and around Visby is in demand; we recommend booking well in advance if possible. Gotland's hotel prices work opposite to most hotel rates in Sweden: prices increase on summer weekends and in the peak tourist months.

It's possible to book all types of accommodation (hotels, hostels, cottages) and/or holiday packages for the entire island through large agencies such as **Gotlands Resor** (☎ 201260; www.gotlandresor.se) and **Gotlands Turistservice** (☎ 203300; www.gotlandsturistservice.com).

Norderstrands Camping (☎ 212157; www.norderstrandscamping.se; camp sites Skr100–175, 4-bed cabins Skr450–650; ☎ mid-Apr–mid-Sep) By the sea, 800m north of the ring wall (which is connected by a walking/cycling path), this camping ground is just at the edge of Visby and has killer views of the water.



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STF Vandrårhem Visby (☎ 269842; carl.tholin@tjelvar.org; Fältgata 30; dm/d from Skr175/475; ☹ mid-Jun–mid-Aug) This is southeast of the town centre off Lännavägen, in a school residence and therefore only open in the high season. Facilities include kitchen and laundry.

Fängelse Vandrårhem (☎ 206050; Skeppsbron 1; dm Skr200–300; ☹ May–Sep) A deservedly popular hostel near the harbour, this former prison has beds in converted cells. Facilities include kitchen, TV room and sauna, and an outdoor bar in summer.

Vårdshuset Lindgården (☎ 218700; www.lindgarden.com in Swedish; Strandgatan 26; s/d low season Skr750/900, high season Skr1070/1295) Right in the middle of town, with eight spacious ensuite bedrooms in a beautiful garden set-

ting, this hotel is also attached to a good restaurant with al fresco dining.

Hotel Villa Borgen (☎ 279900; www.guteinfo.com/villaborgen; Adelsgatan 11; low season s/d Skr890/1010, high season Skr1050/1260) Another reasonably priced option for central Visby, with pleasant rooms set around a pretty, quiet courtyard off a street filled with cafés and boutiques. The lowest prices are on weekends in the low season (Skr710/850).

Eating & Drinking

There's no shortage of quality restaurants, cafés and bars around the old town squares, on Adelsgatan or at the harbour.

Rosas (☎ 213514; Sankt Hansgatan 22; light meals Skr30–70) In a pretty half-timbered house with

sunny courtyard, Rosas makes a wonderful lunch spot.

Donners Brunn (☎ 271090; Donnersplats; mains Skr95-245; 🍷 dinner) Among the finest restaurants in town and good for a splurge. The Swedish and international menu (priced around Skr230) is adventurous and tempting, and there are cheaper vegetarian and *husmanskost* dishes; alternatively, opt for one of the set menus from Skr380 (for three courses). Book ahead.

Bakfickan (☎ 271807; Stora Torget 1; lunch Skr75, mains Skr75-198) The menu at this unpretentious, highly rated restaurant on buzzing Stora Torget features well-prepared fish and seafood including fish soup, salmon, prawns and herrings in a few different guises.

Clematis (☎ 210288; Strandgatan 20; 🍷 dinner mid-Jun–mid-Aug) In summer, step back in time some 700 years by visiting Clematis, a restaurant serving food cooked according to medieval recipes, accompanied by music and entertainers (including the occasional fire-eater).

Skafferiet (☎ 214597; Adelsgatan 38; light meals Skr45-65) An excellent café, as inviting as Rosas with its cosy interior and low ceilings, great sandwiches and cakes, and popular outdoor area.

Vinäger Café (☎ 211160; cnr Hästgatan & Mellangatan; lunch buffet Skr59) This stylishly modern, unsigned place is frequented by a young and fashionable crowd.

Saluhall 1 (Skeppsbron) Hang-outs around the harbour are popular on warm summer days and evenings. Do as the locals do and stop by here for an ice cream at one of Sweden's largest ice-cream parlours.

ICA supermarket (Stora Torget; 🕒 8m-8pm Mon-Sat, 10am-8pm Sun) There's this store for self-caterers. Alternatively, there are large supermarkets outside the town walls (head to Österväg, through Österport gate).

Effes Bar (☎ 215111; Adelsgatan 2; mains Skr60-130; 🍷 Wed-Mon) A unique pub-bar that's built into the town wall, this is a great place for a laid-back meal or drink; there's a bar menu, outdoor courtyard, pool tables and regular live music.

AROUND THE ISLAND

Renting a bicycle and following the well-marked **Gotlandsleden cycle path** is one of the best ways to spend time on the island. It loops all around the island, sometimes

joining the roadways but more often winding through quiet fields and forests. You can hire cycles at several locations in Visby (see opposite). There's an excellent hostel network along the cycle route, with particularly good facilities in **Bunge**, **Lummelunda**, **Lärbro** and the small northern islet of **Färö** (home of Ingmar Bergman! and lots of sheep). The passenger ferry to and from Färö is frequent and free; don't miss a chance to see the sunset from the elaborate rock formations at Langham-marshammaren.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Air

The island's **airport** (☎ 263100; www.lfv.se) is 4km northeast of Visby. A taxi from the airport to Visby should cost around Skr100.

Skyways (☎ 0771-959500; www.skyways.se) has regular scheduled flights between Visby and Stockholm's Arlanda and Bromma airports. The local airline is **Gotlands Flyg** (☎ 222222; www.gotlandsflyg.se in Swedish), which has regular flights between Visby and Stockholm's Bromma and Skavsta airports. The regular fare costs around Skr600 to Skr800 one way, but there are numerous discounts and deals which may offer fares as low as Skr300.

Malmö Aviation (☎ 0771-550010; www.malmoaviation.se) flies between Visby and both Malmö and Göteborg in summer.

Boat

Destination Gotland (☎ 0771-223300; www.destinationgotland.se) operates car ferries all year-round between Visby and both Nynäshamn and Oskarshamn. Departures from Nynäshamn are from two to six times daily (about five hours, or three by high-speed catamaran). From Oskarshamn there are one or two daily departures (about three hours).

Regular one-way adult tickets cost from Skr228/301 for the ferry/catamaran, but from mid-June to mid-August most crossings go up in price – some overnight, evening and early-morning sailings in the middle of the week retain the cheaper fares, and tickets booked via the internet are cheaper. There are child, student and senior discounts available, plus budget tickets (these must be booked at least 21 days before departure).

To transport a bicycle costs Skr40; a car usually costs about Skr300/400 on the ferry/catamaran, although on many crossings during the peak summer these prices increase, and the spaces fill up quickly – make sure you book well in advance if you're planning to travel with a car in the peak summer period.

GETTING AROUND

There are over 1200km of roads in Gotland, typically running from village to village through the pretty landscape. There's also a dedicated cycle path, the Gotlandsleden (see opposite for more information). Bicycle tours are highly recommended, and bikes can be hired from a number of places in Visby. **Gotlands Cykeluthyrning** (☎ 214133; info@gotlandscykeluthyrning.com; 🕒 mid-May–Aug), just behind Saluhall 1 not far from the harbour, rents bikes from Skr65/325 per day/week. For cycling/camping trips it also offers rental of three-person tents (Skr100/400 per day/week).

There are also a few car-rental agencies on the island if you prefer to drive around. **Mickes Biluthyrning** (☎ 266262; www.mickesbiluthyrning.se; Visby harbour) offers affordable rates (from Skr250/1500 per day/week) for older cars.

Kollektiv Trafiken (☎ 214112; www.gotland.se/kollektivtrafiken in Swedish) runs buses via most villages to all corners of the island. A one-way ticket costs between Skr12 (for a short journey of less than 4km) and Skr59 (for journeys of more than 51km). Carrying a bicycle on board the bus will cost you an additional Skr40.

ISLAND ATTRACTIONS

There are hundreds, perhaps thousands of prehistoric sites around Gotland, many of them sign-posted, including stone ship-settings, burial mounds and remains of hill-top fortresses. Keep your eyes open for the information boards along roadsides. You can visit these sites, as well as the numerous nature reserves, any time, free of charge.

Nowhere else in northern Europe are there so many medieval churches in such a small area. There are 92 of them outside Visby; more than 70 have medieval frescoes and a few have rare medieval stained glass. In addition, Visby has a dozen church ruins and a magnificent cathedral.

Each village had a church built between the early 12th and the mid-14th centuries, until wars ended the tradition. Each church is still in use, and all of the medieval villages still exist as entities. Most churches are open from 9am to 6pm daily, mid-May to late August. *The Key to the Churches in the Diocese of Visby* is a useful English-language brochure available free from tourist offices.

NORRLAND

Norrland, the northern half of Sweden, is remote enough that travellers here aren't likely to see the tour-bus crowd – or, for that matter, much of anyone else. The population is sparse – reindeer outnumber cars on the roads, and much of the landscape consists of deep green forest. It's a paradise for nature lovers who enjoy hiking, skiing and other outdoor activities. Some of the best long-distance hiking trails in Sweden are here, along with the most rugged of the country's national parks. Accommodation tends to be budget-friendly, too, leaning more towards camping and hostels than proper hotels.

The area has what amounts to its own separate identity from the rest of Sweden. It's associated with early pioneers' struggles to produce the timber and iron ore necessary for building the railways that opened up the region.

The north is home to the Sami, and it's here that you'll find the Äjtemuseum in Jokkmokk, one of the best places to learn about their culture. Several villages have well-preserved open-air museums that demonstrate traditional Sami culture.

For quirk-seekers, Norrland offers some true gems: a rarely glimpsed monster lurking in a lake, a disappearing hotel made of ice, and a golf course that flits between Sweden and Finland, to name a few. Inlandsbanan, the historic railway line from Mora to Gällivare via Östersund, Storuman, Arvidsjaur and Jokkmokk, is a fun if not particularly fast way to see the north (see p479).

SUNDSVALL

☎ 060 / pop 93,000

Much of Sundsvall was reduced to ashes by the great fire of 1888, but the town centre was rebuilt in grand style over the following 10 years. It's a pleasant place to spend a day or two, admiring the impressive architecture and enjoying one of Norrland's biggest and liveliest towns. It's also a convenient base for exploring the delightful Höga Kusten, especially with your own transport. The **tourist office** (☎ 610450; www.sundsvallturism.com; Stora Torget; ☹ Mon-Sat) can help with traveller inquiries.

Kulturmagasinet (☎ 191800; Sjögatan; ☹ Mon-Sat), down near the harbour, is a magnificent restoration of old warehouses. The buildings now contain a café, the town library and **Sundsvall Museum** (☎ 191803; adult/child Skr20/free), which has exhibits of local and natural history. The library here offers internet access.

Up on the hill **Norra Stadsberget** (150m), there's a viewing tower, walking tracks, and a typical **friluftsmuseum** (outdoor museum; admission free), a collection of old-fashioned local houses. The southern hill, **Södra Stadsberget** (250m), has an extensive plateau that's good for hiking, with trails up to 12km long. Buses run to each hill every couple of hours in summer.

Sleeping & Eating

The intersection of Nybrogatan and Rådhusgatan is a good area to go looking for reasonably priced hotels.

STF Vandrarhem Sundsvall (☎ 612119; www.noraberget.se; Gaffelbyvägen; dm/s/d from Skr150/250/300; ☑) This excellent hostel is above the town on Norra Stadsberget and has simple older rooms plus slightly more expensive rooms with en suite and TV. The uphill walk to the hostel is pleasant but not much fun with heavy bags; ask about buses when booking.

Baltic Hotel (☎ 140440; Sjögatan 5; s/d from Skr1100/1250, discount Skr525/700) This fairly stylish older building near Kulturmagasinet has bright, modern rooms in a great location and good weekend/summer discounts.

Café Tinells (☎ 56149; Sjögatan 7; mains Skr40-65) This sleek café serves traditional pastries, tempting sandwiches and quiche, and good coffee in chic, modern surrounds.

Saigon Palace (☎ 173091; Trädgårdsgatan 5; lunch from Skr65, mains Skr70-125) This comfortable place has a great lunch buffet and a huge menu of satisfying Chinese and Vietnamese dishes.

Getting There & Away

Buses arrive at and depart from the bus station, known as Navet, in the northern part of town near Kulturmagasinet. **Ybuss** (☎ 0771-334444; www.ybuss.se in Swedish) runs daily to Östersund, Umeå and Stockholm. **Norrlandskusten** (☎ 0771-511513) bus No 100 runs several times daily between Sundsvall and Haparanda via Umeå, Luleå and most northern coastal towns.

Trains run south to Stockholm via Uppsala and west to Östersund (and from there on to Trondheim, Norway); change at Ånge for northern destinations. The **train station** (Köpmangatan) is just east of the centre.

HÖGA KUSTEN

☎ 0613

One of the most attractive parts of Sweden's coastline, Höga Kusten (meaning the High Coast) is a hilly area with many lakes, fjords and offshore islands. Although in most parts the scenery is not as dramatic as the name might suggest, the region as a whole has been listed as a Unesco World Heritage Site, recognised as a unique area largely shaped by the combined processes of glaciation, glacial retreat and the emergence of new land from the sea (this retreat continues today at a rate of 0.9m per hundred years).

Höga Kusten stretches from north of Härnösand to Örnköldsvik, both pleasant but unremarkable towns with decent facilities. There's a **tourist office** (☎ 50480; www.hogakusten.com) inside Hotell Höga Kusten, just north of the spectacular E4 suspension bridge over Storfjärden (which is about 70km north of Sundsvall), where you can pick up information on attractions and accommodation options in the tiny villages; be sure to pick up a free map highlighting the scenic driving routes (marked with brown and white signs). There's also useful information on the internet at www.turist.info.kramfors.se.

Unfortunately, there's little by way of public transport (buses cruise along the E4 highway but don't make it into the region's villages). Hence, this area is virtually impossible to explore without your own set of wheels.

As well as the striking landscapes, the region's other major attractions are the many well-preserved fishing villages, the pick of

them being Barsta, Bönhamn and Norrfällsviken, and the lovely offshore islands, especially Högbonden and Ulvön, both accessible by boat.

Ferries to Högbonden (☎ 0706-818284; adult/child return Skr80/40) go from Barsta every two hours from 9.30am to 5.30pm, returning 45 minutes later, mid-June to mid-August, and from Bönhamn every two hours from 9.45am to 5.45pm mid-June to mid-August. **Ferries to Ulvön** (☎ 0613-10550; adult/child return Skr150/50) leave from Ullånger (9.30am), Docksta (10.15am) and Mjällomsländet (10.45am), arriving at 11.30am and returning at 3pm from Ulvöhamn, from June to August.

The odd attraction that is **Mannamine** (☎ 20290; www.mannamine.com; adult/child Skr40/free; ☹ daily Jun-Sep, Sat & Sun Oct-Nov & Mar-May), near tiny Häggvik, encompasses an eccentric collection of just about everything from farming to emigration and technology. There's also a good café – get the fried herring if they have it – and a handful of souvenir and craft shops. Walk up the steep hill behind the museum for the best view in the area (35 minutes return).

Skuleberget Naturum (☎ 40171; admission free; ☹ daily Jun-Aug, Mon-Thu Sep-May), by the E4 just north of the village of Docksta, has exhibitions and lots of information on the area. The steep mountain **Skuleberget** (285m) soars above the *naturum*; ask about hiking routes, the chairlift and rock-climbing routes.

Sleeping & Eating

There are a few cafés scattered throughout the region, but it's a nice idea to pick up supplies before setting off and take advantage of the scenic waterside picnic spots. There are supermarkets in Ullånger, Nordingrå, Docksta and Mjällom.

Norrfällsviken Camping (☎ 21382; www.norrfallsvikencamping.com; camp sites Skr120, cabins/cottages from Skr350/600; ☹ May-Oct; ☑) The idyllic village of Norrfällsviken has this well-equipped camping ground with cottages, plus the excellent fish restaurant and pub Fiskarfänget (☎ 21142), with a takeaway counter as well as service in a wood-panelled room or a large deck over the water – the kind of place you never want to leave.

Hotell Höga Kusten (☎ 722270; www.hotellhogakusten.se; s/d Skr845/1095, discount Skr500/750) Stay

at this large, modern hotel just off the E4. It's by the huge bridge and offers stunning views. There's also a café here and a restaurant, Bridge Brasserie & Bar, with a huge range of snacks (Skr40 to Skr100) and meals (Skr8 to Skr210), plus a kids' menu.

Mannamine (☎ 20290; www.mannamine.se in Swedish; s/d Skr250/500, cabin d/tr/q Skr300/350/400) As well as its bizarre assortment of museum exhibitions, Mannamine, near Häggvik, has B&B accommodation and cabins for hire. There's a café as well, and music and theatre performances in summer.

Vandrarhem Högbonden (☎ 23005, 23100; www.hogbonden.se in Swedish; dm Skr265-285; ☹ May-Oct) This is a superb getaway on the island of Högbonden, reached by boat from Bönhamn and Barsta (Skr80 return). There's a kitchen here (bring all supplies with you), and also a café in summer; breakfast is served for Skr70 but order it ahead of time. You'll need to book well in advance.

ÖSTERSUND

☎ 063 / pop 58,400

This pleasant town by Lake Storsjön, in whose chilly waters is said to lurk a rarely sighted monster, has good budget accommodation and is a relaxed and scenic place and an excellent gateway town for further explorations of Norrland. The **tourist office** (☎ 144001; www.turist.ostersund.se; Rådhusgatan 44; ☹ daily Jun-Aug, Mon-Fri Sep-May) is opposite the town hall, one block from the bus station.

Sights & Activities

Don't miss **Jamtli** (☎ 150100; www.jamtli.com; admission Skr60-90; ☹ daily Jun-Aug, Tue-Sun Sep-May), 1km north of the town centre. This is the highlight of Östersund, combining the lively exhibitions of the regional museum and a large museum village with staff in period clothing. The regional museum exhibits the curious **Överhogdal tapestry**, a Viking relic from around 1100 that's perhaps the oldest of its kind in Europe and may even predate the famous Bayeux tapestry.

Some of the attractions lie on the adjacent island of Frösön, reached by road or footbridge from the middle of Östersund (the footbridge is from the pleasant Badhusparken – nearby you can rent bikes, inline skates and canoes). The island features the animals at **Frösö Zoo** (☎ 514743; adult/child Skr150/80; ☹ mid-Jun-late Aug) and the restored,

late-12th-century **Frösöns kyrka** (☎ Jun-Aug), with its characteristic separate bell tower. For skiers there are slalom and nordic runs on the island at Östberget, where there's a **viewing tower** (adult/child Skr10/5; ☎ mid-May–mid-Sep) giving fine views.

Ask at the tourist office about monster-spotting **lake cruises** (Skr65-95; Jun-Sep). Take your binoculars.

Sleeping & Eating

STF Vandrarhem Jamtli (☎ 122060; vandrarhem.met@jamtli.com; dm/s/d Skr185/280/380) Take the opportunity to live among Östersund's major attraction: this small, quaint hostel is inside the Jamtli museum precinct. Catch bus No 2.

STF Vandrarhem (☎ 34130; micke2@algonet.se; Södra Gröngatan 36; dm/s/d Skr210/375/420; ☎ late Jun-early Aug) This second, summer-only STF hostel offers excellent apartments (all with bathroom, kitchen and TV) and is not far from the train station.

Vandrarhemmet Rallaren (☎ 132232; rallaren@hotmail.com; Bangårdsgatan 6; dm/s/d Skr175/225/380) For tired and weary Inlandsbanan passengers, this small, clean and modern hostel is very conveniently located next to the train station.

Pensionat Svea (☎ 512901; Storgatan 49; s/d from Skr450/550) A homey and affordable guest-house close to the heart of town. Bathroom facilities are shared, breakfast is included and there's also a guest kitchen. Check-in is at Hotel Jämtborg, opposite.

Paviljong Thai (☎ 130099; Prästgatan 50B; lunch Skr65, mains Skr75-149) There's a good lunch buffet and hefty portions of great Thai cuisine here, with all the favourite noodle, curry and seafood dishes on the menu.

Brunkullans Krog & Bar (☎ 101454; Postgränd 5; lunch Skr70, dinner mains Skr140-200; ☎ lunch Mon-Fri, dinner Tue-Sat) A classy eatery with friendly staff and an outdoor patio, this gourmet establishment serves an excellent-value lunch buffet.

Getting There & Away

The train station is a short walk south from the town centre, but the main **regional bus station** (Gustav III Torg) is central. Local buses usually run to both. Local bus Nos 1, 3, 4, 5 and 9 go to Frösön.

Bus No 45 runs south to Mora twice a day (5¼ hours). In summer the Inlandsba-

nan train runs once daily to Gällivare (14 hours) or Mora (six hours). Bus No 156 runs west to Åre and bus No 63 runs twice daily northeast to Umeå.

Direct trains run from Stockholm via Uppsala and Gävle, and some continue west to Storlien (from where you can catch trains to Trondheim, Norway). You can also catch a train east to Sundsvall.

ÅRE & AROUND

☎ 0647 / pop 9600

The **Åre** (www.skistar.com/are) area is arguably Sweden's top mountain-sports destination. The area has 40 ski lifts that serve 100 pistes and 1000 vertical metres of skiable slopes, including a superb 6.5km downhill run (day pass about Skr300). The skiing season is from November to early May, but conditions are best from February, when daylight hours increase; Easter is a hugely busy time. There are also cross-country tracks in the area, a big après-ski scene, and winter activities such as dogsledding, snowmobile safaris and reindeer sleigh rides.

When the weather warms up, Åre also offers great summer outdoor recreation, including hiking, kayaking, rafting, fishing and mountain biking. The area west of Åre is popular among fell walkers: there's a network of STF wilderness huts and lodges here for enthusiasts.

The **tourist office** (☎ 17720) is in the train station. Most facilities are around the main square, which you reach by walking through the park opposite the train station.

Sleeping

In winter it's best to book accommodation and skiing packages via **Åre Resor** (☎ 17700; www.skistar.com/are); the same company also organises summer packages, but independent travellers at this time of year shouldn't have too many problems finding accommodation. The low season, when almost all hotels and restaurants are closed, is after the snow has melted in May, and between the summer and winter seasons (October until around Christmas).

Like the hotels, many restaurants in the area are closed in summer, but there are still some good choices, primarily centred on the main square (where you'll also find supermarkets).

Åre Ski Lodge (☎ 51029; s/d/tr Skr190/290/390; ☎ May-Sep) On the E14 above the town, next to the fire station, is this cosy Austrian-style ski lodge offering great summer prices and facilities such as sauna and kitchen.

STF Vandrarhem Åre (☎ 30138; info@brattlands.garden.com; dm/s/d from Skr175/175/305; ☎ Jun-Sep & mid-Dec-Apr) This hostel is actually 8km east of Åre, signposted off the E14. It has good facilities and enjoys great views.

Åre Continental Inn (☎ 17170; www.arenn.se in Swedish; d from Skr800; ☎ May-Sep) This huge, 130-room complex offers reasonable summer rates for its fairly basic rooms. Facilities are first-rate, however, and include pool, sauna and gym as well as restaurants and bars. The hotel is about 5km east of Åre and operates a shuttle bus to town.

Villa Tottebo (☎ 50620; Parkvägen 1; mains Skr105-250) In a pretty red cottage opposite the train station, this is one of the leading restaurants in Sweden's north, and there's an inviting bar upstairs.

Getting There & Away

Regional bus No 156 runs from Östersund and connects Åre to the nearby winter-sports centre of Duved (much quieter and more family-oriented than Åre). Regular trains between Stockholm and Storlien, via Östersund, stop at Åre. Storlien is the terminus for **SJ trains** (☎ 0771-757575; www.sj.se); change here for Norwegian trains to Hell and Trondheim.

UMEÅ

☎ 090 / pop 105,000

Umeå is a big, bustling town that sticks out amid the quiet expanses of Norrland. The busy port has ferry connections to Finland. It's among the fastest-growing towns in Sweden and has some 22,000 students, making it an agreeable place to just hang out for a spell en route north. The **tourist office** (☎ 161616; www.umea.se/turism; Renmarkstorget 15; ☎ daily mid-Jun–mid-Aug, Mon-Fri mid-Aug–mid-Jun) can help with visitor inquiries and offers free internet access.

The **Gamllia** (☎ 171800; admission free; ☎ daily Jun-Aug, Tue-Sun Sep-May) complex, 2km east of the town centre, is home to several good museums and shouldn't be missed. It includes the cultural history and Sami collections of the regional **Västerbottens Museum** (adult/child Skr20/free); the open-air

Friluftsmuseet (admission free; ☎ mid-Jun–mid-Aug), with old houses and staff in period clothes; and the modern-art museum **Bildmuseet** (admission free).

There are interesting offshore islands plus a number of activities in the surrounding area, including fishing, white-water rafting, jet-boating and canoeing in or on the local rivers, horse riding and a variety of **walking trails** (from two hours to three days). The tourist office can help organise these.

Sleeping & Eating

Compared with other towns in the north, Umeå doesn't have much by way of central budget accommodation.

STF Vandrarhem Umeå (☎ 771650; info@vandrar.hemmet.se; Västra Esplanaden 10; dm/d Skr210/420) This place is run with militaristic precision and has a great central location.

Hotel Pilen (☎ 141460; Pilgatan 5; s/d Skr550/750, discount Skr450/550) A small, family-run place, with somewhat dated décor but comfortable rooms, in a quiet area some 600m from the town centre.

Royal Hotel (☎ 100730; www.royalhotellumea.com; Skolgalatan 62; s/d Skr1240/1440, discount weekends Skr650/880, discount summer Skr550/765) An upmarket option with great summer rates, the Royal has all the facilities you'd expect, with a highly regarded restaurant, Greta, on site.

Lottas Krog (☎ 129551; Nygatan 22; mains Skr108-198; ☎ Mon-Sat) A friendly, cosy restaurant-pub with something for everyone on the extensive menu, from great snacks under Skr100 to meals such as fish and chips, Mexican fajitas or roast lamb; Lottas is also a popular drinking spot.

Rex (☎ 12 60 50; Rådhusorget; mains Skr100-200) This fancy bar in the back of the town hall has an immensely long list of knowledgeably executed cocktails to go with its top-notch fare.

Blå (☎ 132300; Rådhusplanaden 14; mains Skr94-132) A large, glossy place with a menu of favourites, Blå turns into a fashionable bar and nightclub as the evening progresses.

Getting There & Away

The long-distance **bus station** (Järnvägsallén) is opposite the train station, just north of the centre. Umeå is the main centre for **Länstrafiken Västerbotten** (☎ 020-910019), the regional bus network. Direct buses

run to Mo i Rana in Norway; other daily destinations include Östersund and Luleå. **Connex** (☎ 0771-260000; www.connex.se) trains leave daily from Umeå to connect with the north-south trains between Stockholm and Luleå.

There are daily ferries between Umeå and Vaasa in Finland (see p475). A bus to the harbour leaves from near Umeå's tourist office an hour before ferry departures.

Local buses leave from Vasaplan on Skolgatan.

LULEÅ

☎ 0920 / pop 72,000

Luleå is the capital of Norrbotten, Sweden's largest county and accounting for one quarter of the country's total area. It may be an important transport hub on your journey north, and there are interesting diversions and good-value accommodation. Storgatan is the main pedestrian mall; the **tourist office** (☎ 293500; www.lulea.se; Storgatan 43; ☹ daily Jun-Aug, Mon-Sat Sep-May) will help with inquiries; and the **library** (Kyrkogatan) has free internet access.

The most famous sight in Luleå is the Unesco World Heritage Listed **Gammelstad**, or 'Old Town', which was the medieval centre of northern Sweden. The stone church (dating from 1492), 424 wooden houses (where the pioneers stayed overnight on their weekend pilgrimages) and six church stables remain. The open-air museum **Hägnan** (☹ Jun-Aug) and a nature reserve are nearby. There's a small **tourist office** (☎ 293581; www.lulea.se/gammelstad; ☹ daily Jun-late Aug, Tue-Thu late Aug-Jun) at Gammelstad, and it organises guided tours (Skr30) of the church village in summer. Take local bus No 6 to Kyrkbyn.

Norbottens Museum (☎ 243500; Storgatan 2; admission free; ☹ Tue-Sun) is worth a visit, particularly for the Sami section and some very interesting short films on the northern lights and Sami identity. In summer there are **boat trips** to the surrounding archipelago; schedules vary but are available at the tourist office.

Sleeping & Eating

Luleå Vandrarhem & Mini Hotell (☎ 222660; luleavandrarhem@telia.com; Sandviksgatan 26; dm/s/d Skr175/265/380) This budget option doesn't look like much from the outside, but

inside there's clean and comfortable accommodation. The large dorms are not so great (with tri-level bunks) – the twin rooms are a far better option. Bikes are available for hire.

Park Hotell (☎ 211149; www.parkhotell.se in Swedish; Kungsgatan 10; s/d from Skr500/700, discount Skr400/550) This small hotel offers pleasant but somewhat basic rooms. Prices given here are for rooms without bathroom – an extra Skr200 or so will get you a private bathroom.

Comfort Hotel Max (☎ 220220; www.choicehotels.se; Storgatan 59; s/d Skr1250/1350, discount Skr550/750) A huge bargain at weekends and in summer, this well-equipped business hotel offers discounted rates that include breakfast and a dinner buffet.

Roasters (☎ 88840; Storgatan 43; lunch Skr70, snacks Skr35-75) There are good cafés on either side of the tourist office, including this stylish spot with extensive lunch options, grilled focaccia and ciabatta, strong coffee and outdoor seating.

Corsica (☎ 15840; Nygatan 14; mains Skr60-98) This restaurant-bar is slightly dingy but full of character and has a huge menu of reasonably priced selections – pizza, pasta, kebabs, salads, fish and steak.

Getting There & Away

The **airport** (☎ 244900; www.lfv.se) is 9km southwest of the town centre. There are around a dozen flights daily between Stockholm and Luleå, with **SAS** (☎ 0770-727727; www.scandinavian.net) and **Nordic Airlink** (☎ 08-528 068 20; www.flynordic.com), and **Skyways** (☎ 0771-959500; www.skyways.se) flies directly to/from Göteborg. Take the airport bus from the bus station (Skr45).

Länstrafiken Norrbotten (☎ 020-470047; www.ltnbd.se) buses travel around the 100,000-sq-km county. Individual fares start at Skr17, travel cards are Skr270/410 for 20/40 trips, and bicycles are carried for Skr50. Bus No 100 is one of the most useful for travellers – it runs services between Haparanda, Luleå, Skellefteå, Umeå and Sundsvall four times daily. Bus No 21 travels up to Arvidsjaur, and bus No 44 to Jokkmokk and on to Gällivare.

Direct **Connex** (☎ 0771-260000; www.connex.se) trains from Stockholm and Göteborg run at night only. Most trains from Narvik and Kiruna terminate at Luleå.

HAPARANDA

☎ 0922 / pop 10,400

Considering that its very name sounds like something fun to do, it's no surprise that Haparanda is a gateway to some of the best outdoor activities in the north. The small settlement was founded in 1821 as a trading town to replace Sweden's loss of Tornio (spelt Torneå in Swedish) to Russia (now in Finland, p200). These days the two border towns function almost as one entity – both the krona and the euro are accepted at most places; Tornio is one hour ahead of Haparanda.

There is an extremely efficient and well-equipped joint Haparanda-Tornio **tourist office** (☎ 12010; infokiosk.haparanda.se; ☹ daily Midsummer–mid-Aug, Mon-Fri mid-Aug–Midsummer) on the 'green line' between the countries – look for the mess of flags sticking up near the bridge. A smaller summer tourist office operates inside Haparanda's Stadshotellet.

There are few sights in Haparanda and the church looks like a grain silo, but one noteworthy attraction is the unique golf course. The **Green Zone Golf Course** (☎ 10660) is right on the border of the two countries; during a full round of golf the border is crossed four times.

The scenic **Kukkolaforsen** rapids, on the Torne älv 15km north of Haparanda, are well worth a visit (take bus Nos 53 or 54). There's a **tourist village** (☹ Midsummer–mid-August) here that includes a camping ground and cabins, restaurant, café, fish smokehouse, sauna and a museum.

Vandrarhem Haparanda (☎ 61171; Strandgatan 26; dm/s/d Skr160/250/320) is an excellent hostel near the water and not far from the town centre. Some rooms have private bathroom, plus there's a sauna, laundry and self-catering facilities. Alternatively, you can opt for a meal at the on-site restaurant.

The large and once-grand **Stadshotellet** (☎ 61490; www.haparandastadshotell.se; Torget 7; s/d from Skr1090/1390, discount Skr650/850) is the focus of the town, and its pub-restaurant, the **Gulasch Baronen** (mains Skr70-120) offers reasonably priced meals in a convivial atmosphere. You can find some budget beds for about Skr300 here in summer.

A regular bus service connects Haparanda and Tornio (Skr15). There are regional buses from Luleå and towns further south, and daily bus No 53 travels north along

the border via the Kukkolaforsen rapids, Övertorneå and Pajala, then continues west to Kiruna.

ARVIDSJAUR

☎ 0960 / pop 7100

The settlement of Arvidsjaur, on the Inlandsbanan railway, was an early Sami market. **Lappstaden**, a well-preserved Sami church village, contains almost 100 buildings as well as forestry and reindeer-breeding concerns. Tours are Skr30/free for adults/children but operate only in July. The **tourist office** (☎ 17500; www.arvidsjaurappland.se; Östra Skolgatan 18C; ☹ daily Jun-Aug, Mon-Fri Sep-May), behind the main street, has useful information.

The town is buzzing in winter, when test drivers from around Europe put their cars through their paces in the tough weather conditions, and there are loads of cold-weather activities available, including dog-sledding and snowmobile safaris. Inquire at the tourist office for more details, and for information on the range of summer options, including hiking, excursions, steam trains and fishing.

Cosy **Lappugglans Turistviste** (☎ 12413; Västra Skolgatan 9; dm Skr150) and the stylish **Rallaren** (☎ 070-682 3284; Stationsgatan 4; r per person Skr150; ☹ Midsummer-Aug), both near the train station, have excellent accommodation; the latter is a restored wooden house adjacent to an artist's gallery.

Kaffestugan (☎ 10725; Storgatan 21; lunch Skr60) is a popular café by the main square, with good daily lunch specials plus an assortment of cakes, sandwiches and light meals.

The daily bus between Gällivare and Östersund (No 45) stops at the **bus station** (Storgatan). Bus No 200 runs daily between Skellefteå and Bodø (Norway) via Arvidsjaur. The Inlandsbanan train can take you north to Gällivare via Jokkmokk, or south to Mora via Östersund.

JOKKMOKK

☎ 0971 / pop 5900

The small town of Jokkmokk, also on the Inlandsbanan railway, is just north of the Arctic Circle and started as a Sami market and mission. Its primary attraction is a worthwhile one indeed – the best museum of Sami culture in Sweden.

Since 1605 the **Jokkmokk Winter Market** (www.jokkmokksmarknad.com) has taken place

here; the three-day event attracts some 30,000 people and starts on the first Thursday in February, when you can shop seriously for Sami handicrafts.

The **Jokkmokk tourist office** (☎ 22250; www.turism.jokkmokk.se; Stortorget 4; ☹ daily mid-Jun–mid-Aug, Mon–Fri mid-Aug–mid-Jun) can help with visitor information. The **Åjte museum** (☎ 17070; Kyrkogatan 3; adult/child Skr50/free; ☹ daily May–Sep, Sun–Fri Oct–Apr) is a highlight, providing the most thorough introduction to Sami culture anywhere in Sweden. It also offers exhaustive information on Lapland's mountain areas, with maps, slides, videos and a library. A visit is recommended for planning wilderness trips (there are good opportunities for trekking in the areas surrounding Jokkmokk).

Naturfoto (☎ 55765; ☹ Jun–Aug), at the main Klockartorget intersection, exhibits and sells work by a local wilderness photographer, Edvin Nilsson. There are a number of Sami handicraft studios around town – ask at the tourist office.

About 7km south of Jokkmokk you'll cross the **Arctic Circle**; on road No 45 there's a summertime café and camping ground here.

Sleeping & Eating

STF Vandrarhem Jokkmokk (☎ 55977; www.jokkmokkhostel.com; Åsgatan 20; dm/d Skr175/450; ☹) Behind the tourist office, this comfortable hostel has laundry, sauna, yard, internet facilities and bikes for rent. It's a favourite with Inlandsbanan travellers and worth booking in advance in summer.

Hotell Gästis (☎ 10012; www.hotell-gastis.com in Swedish; Herrevägen 1; s/d/tr Skr850/995/1200, discount Skr650/750/900) It doesn't look too promising from the outside, but this hotel offers decent value with pleasant but unremarkable rooms, sauna and a good restaurant, with lunch specials and à la carte dinners.

Åjte museum restaurant (Kyrkogatan 3; lunch from Skr65) A meal at the museum restaurant is recommended to reinforce the learning experience – you can try local and Sami specialities, including the fresh local fish or a sandwich with reindeer meat.

Café Piano (☎ 10400; Porjusvägen 4; lunch Skr65, mains Skr60–120; ☹ Mon–Sat) One of the town's best options, with a grand piano inside, a large garden outside and an extensive menu, including inexpensive pizza, pasta and wok meals.

Getting There & Away

Buses arrive and leave from the **bus station** (Klockarvägen). Bus Nos 44 and 45 run daily to/from Gällivare, and bus No 45 runs to Arvidsjaur once daily and further south to Östersund. Inlandsbanan trains stop in Jokkmokk; for main-line trains, take bus No 43 to Murjek (up to six a day) or bus No 44 to Boden and Luleå.

GÄLLIVARE & MALMBERGET

☎ 0970 / pop 19,700

The town of Gällivare and its northern twin Malmberget are surrounded by forest and dwarfed by the bald Dundret hill. It's not the most immediately appealing place for a stopover but is important as the northern terminus for the Inlandsbanan railway, and there are good opportunities for summer and winter activities.

The **tourist office** (☎ 16660; www.gellivare.se; Centralplan; ☹ Mon–Fri) is by the train station. **Dundret** (821m) is a nature reserve with superb views; you can view the midnight sun here from 2 June to 12 July. In winter there are four nordic courses and 10 ski runs of varying difficulty, and the mountaintop resort organises numerous activities including snowmobile safaris and northern lights tours.

In Malmberget, 5km north of Gällivare, **Kåkstan** is a historical 'shanty town' museum village dating from the 1888 iron-ore rush. Bus No 1 to Malmberget departs from opposite the Gällivare church. The Gällivare tourist office has details of tours to the **LKAB iron-ore mine** (tours Skr200; ☹ Midsummer–early Aug).

STF Vandrarhem Gällivare (☎ 14380; www.explorelapland.com; Barnhemsvägen 2; dm from Skr195) is across the footbridge from the train station. Accommodation is in well-equipped cabins; bikes can be hired and a variety of activities organised (multiday wilderness treks in summer, dogsled tours in winter; see the website for details).

The large **Quality Hotel Gällivare** (☎ 55020; Lasarettsgatan 1; s/d Skr1090/1450, discount Skr690/890), opposite the train station, is your best bet for dining in Gällivare – either at the restaurant (lunch for Skr68) or the cosier pub (mains Skr95 to Skr230). Both have a decent menu of cheaper dishes (pasta, burgers) and local specialities such as elk fillet or arctic char.

Getting There & Away

Regional buses depart from the train station. Bus No 45 runs daily to Östersund (Skr410) via Jokkmokk and Arvidsjaur; bus No 93 serves Ritsem and Kungsleden in Stora Sjöfallet National Park (from mid-June to mid-September only); bus Nos 10 and 52 go to Kiruna; and bus No 44 runs to Jokkmokk and Luleå.

Connex (☎ 0771-260000; www.connex.se) trains come from Luleå and Stockholm (sometimes changing at Boden), and from Narvik in Norway. More exotic is the Inlandsbanan, which terminates at Gällivare; the full journey from Östersund to Mora costs Skr762.

KIRUNA

☎ 0980 / pop 23,900

Kiruna is the northernmost town in Sweden and, at 19,446 sq km, it's the largest municipality in the country. The area includes Sweden's highest peak (Kebnekaise, 2111m), a remarkable attraction in the form of a hotel made from ice, and several fine national parks and trekking routes (see Abisko, p465). It's worth making the effort to get up here, especially for nature lovers, hikers or anyone interested in Sami culture.

This far north, the midnight sun lasts from 27 May to 14 July and there's a bluish darkness throughout December and New Year.

The helpful **tourist office** (☎ 18880; www.lapland.se; Lars Jansonsгатan 17; ☹ 8.30am–8pm Mon–Fri, 8.30am–6pm Sat & Sun May–Sep, closed Sun Oct–Apr) is next to the Scandic Hotel and has loads of detailed brochures, as well as a few computers for internet access. Staff can arrange various outdoor activities including Sami experiences year-round; rafting, hiking, horse riding, rock climbing and fishing in warmer weather; and ice-fishing, dogsledding and snowmobile safaris in winter.

The **library** (Biblioteksgatan), behind the bus station, offers free internet access.

A visit to the Ice Hotel (p464) is a must. Also worthwhile in Kiruna is a visit to the depths of the **LKAB iron-ore mine** (☎ 18880; tours adult/child Skr220/50), 540m underground. Two-hour English-language tours depart from the tourist office regularly from June to August, and during other months if there's enough interest. Make inquiries and book-

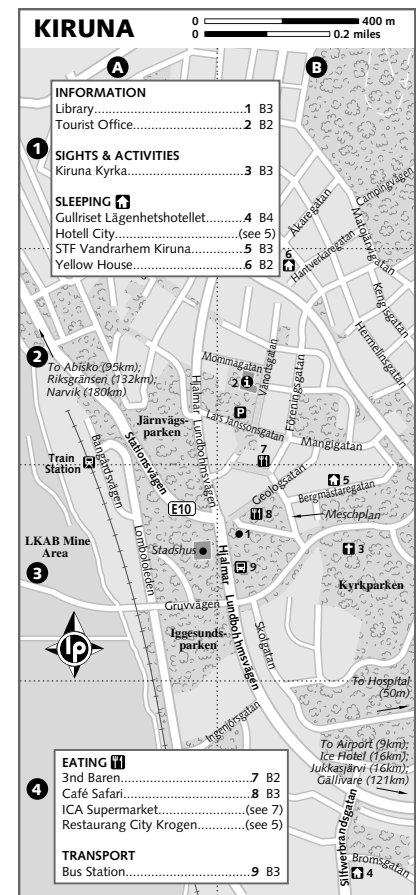
ings through the tourist office. **Kiruna kyrka** (Kyrkogatan), the town church, looks like a gigantic Sami tent; it's particularly pretty against a snowy backdrop.

Sleeping & Eating

Kiruna has lots of good-value accommodation options, especially in summer. The tourist office brochures include full details, including prices.

STF Vandrarhem Kiruna (☎ 17195; Bergmästaregatan 7; dm/s/d Skr205/345/470) This large, functional hotel has a central location, good facilities (including sauna) and an adjacent Chinese restaurant.

Yellow House (☎ 13750; www.yellowhouse.nu; Hantverkaregatan 25; dm/s/d Skr150/300/400) Another



good budget option, the more homey Yellow House has a comfortably worn-in feel, with facilities including sauna, kitchen, laundry and TV in each room. Breakfast is Skr50, and there's a garden to relax in if the weather holds.

Gullriset Lägenhetshotellet (☎ 10937; www.fabmf.se/gullriset in Swedish; Bromsgatan 12; apt Skr400-700) About 1.5km from the tourist office, this bargain option is perfect for self-caterers and those who fancy more space than a hotel room offers. Rent an apartment sleeping up to four people, with kitchen, bathroom and cable TV.

Hotell City (☎ 66655; www.hotellcity.se; Bergmästaregatan 7; s/d Skr750/850, discount Skr650/750) In the same building as the STF hostel, this new hotel has pleasant, modern rooms and affordable rates. Prices include breakfast, and there's also access to the hostel's kitchen.

Ice Hotel (☎ 66800; www.icehotel.com; Marknadsvägen, Jukkasjärvi; r from Skr2800) Staying at the Ice Hotel is a unique experience (see below), and if you have the cash it shouldn't be missed. Apart from ice rooms there are other options, including stylish hotel rooms, or three-bed cabins with skylights enabling you to watch the northern lights from your bed in winter. Winter is expensive but the novelty makes it worthwhile. Summer prices have escalated dramatically in recent

years, and don't represent good value given the range of affordable accommodation in Kiruna.

Ice Hotel Restaurant (☎ 66884; Marknadsvägen, Jukkasjärvi; mains Skr190-280) This quality restaurant opposite the accommodation complex in Jukkasjärvi specialises in local produce – try the arctic char or reindeer, and for dessert try the cloudberry mousse or elk cheese parfait! Some meals even come on plates made of ice. The lunch buffet (in summer) costs Skr95. It's open daily from June to September and at various times during the rest of the year.

3rd Baren (☎ 66380; Föreningsgatan 11; lunch Skr65, mains Skr69-189) At this moderately priced restaurant and lively drinking spot, you can try local specialities like reindeer, or play it safe with steak or pasta. There's a good outdoor patio to catch the late sunshine.

Café Safari (☎ 17460; Geologsgatan 4; light meals Skr20-60) Kiruna is not well endowed with great eateries. This is easily the nicest café, with good coffee, cakes and light meals such as sandwiches, quiche and baked potatoes.

Restaurang City Krogen (☎ 10900; Bergmästaregatan 7; lunch buffet Skr55, meals Skr92-140) This restaurant is attached to the STF hostel, offering classic Chinese dishes, cheap lunches, takeaway meals and kids' options.

ICA supermarket (Föreningsgatan; ☎ 9am-7pm Mon-Fri, 10am-4pm Sat, 11am-4pm Sun) There's a supermarket next to 3rd Baren.

Getting There & Away

The small **airport** (☎ 68000; www.lfv.se), 9km east of the town, has daily nonstop flights to/from Stockholm with **SAS** (☎ 0770-727727; www.scandinavian.net). An airport bus (Skr50) connects with most flights.

Regional buses in this vast region are run by **Länstrafiken Norrbotten** (☎ 020-470047; www.ltnbd.se). Buses operate from the **bus station** (Hjalmar Lundbohmvägen), opposite the Stadshus, and serve all major settlements. Bus No 91 runs two or three times daily to Riksgränsen via Abisko.

Regular trains connect Kiruna with Luleå, Stockholm (overnight) and Narvik (Norway). Trains to Narvik call at Abisko and Riksgränsen.

ABISKO

☎ 0980 / pop 180

This village is a hiker's dream, with access to some of the best wilderness trails in Sweden mere steps away. It also has one of the best viewpoints for catching a midnight sunset. On top of that, the village itself is welcoming and pretty, and there's an excellent hiker-friendly hostel here.

The 75-sq-km **Abisko National Park**, on the southern shore of scenic Lake Torneträsk, is well served by trains, buses and the scenic mountain highway between Kiruna and Narvik. It's the soft option of the northern parks – distinctly less rugged and more accessible. There are some great short hikes.

The popular **Kungsleden** (King's Trail) follows the Abiskojåkka Valley, and day trips of 10km or 20km are no problem from Abisko village. With planning and preparation, committed hikers can walk the entire Kungsleden, which extends 450km south from Abisko to Hemavan (with huts and lodges along most of the route) and offers diversions to the summit of **Kebnekaise** or the magical national park of **Sarek** (note that Sarek is rugged and for experienced hikers only; it has no huts and few bridges).

Waterproof boots are essential at any time of the year; the snow doesn't melt until June. July, August and September are recommended for hiking, although in July there's still some boggy ground where mosquitoes

breed. It can still get cold very quickly, despite the midnight sun. Winter escapades are too risky for the uninitiated due to blizzards, extreme cold and avalanches.

The **Naturum** (☎ 40177; www.abisko-naturum.nu), next to the STF lodge in Abisko, provides information on the region, including help with hike preparation.

The **Linbana** (return ticket Skr140; ☎ 9.30am-4pm) chairlift takes you to 900m on Njulla (1169m) for breathtaking views.

In Björkliden, 8km northwest of Abisko, the resort **Björkliden Fjällby** (☎ 64100; www.bjorkliden.com) offers a full range of summer and winter activities and even has a nine-hole golf course. Tours are also organised by STF at Abisko Turiststation (below); both places offer outdoor gear for hire.

Sleeping & Eating

Abisko Fjälltur (☎ 40103; www.abisko.net; dm Skr150) This small hostel is a backpackers' delight. It has simple, comfortable accommodation and a wonderful wooden sauna, but the treat is in the reasonably priced activities on offer. The friendly owners keep a team of sled dogs, and for Skr700 in winter you get a night's hostel accommodation plus the chance to drive a sled, pulled by dogs, for about 10km. There are also half- and full-day sled trips (Skr1000/1700), and popular week-long sled trips from late February to early April (Skr980 including meals and accommodation). Book early for longer trips. In summer you can take mountain walks with the dogs (Skr300 with a night in a dorm).

STF Abisko Turiststation (☎ 40200; www.abisko.nu; dm/s/d Skr290/620/980; ☎ Mar-Apr & mid-Jun-mid-Sep) Another excellent option, kept to the usual high STF standards. Trekking gear can be hired here, and there's a variety of accommodation options, guided tours, a shop with basic groceries, a pub and a restaurant (breakfast/lunch/dinner Skr75/75/195; half- and full-board arrangements are available). Accommodation prices are reduced by Skr100 for HI/STF members.

STF huts (dm members Skr185-275, dm nonmembers Skr285-375) Self-service huts along Kungsleden are spread at 10km to 20km intervals between Abisko and Kvikjokk; ask at Abisko Turiststation for information and take a sleeping bag. Day visitors are charged Skr40/50 for members/nonmembers, campers pay Skr60/80.

THE ICE HOTEL

It might not be as exciting as it once was, now that similar hotels exist in Canada, Alaska and Romania, but the Ice Hotel in Jukkasjärvi is still quite a spectacle. The **hotel** (☎ 66800; www.icehotel.com; Marknadsvägen; day visit adult Skr130; r from Skr2800), 18km east of Kiruna, is rebuilt each winter from ice carved out of the local river. There's a chapel, a bar – where you drink vodka from a glass made purely of ice – and an exhibition hall full of – surprise – ice sculptures. But the main draw, obviously, is the hotel itself. In rooms made of ice, guests lie on beds covered with reindeer skins and inside sleeping bags designed to keep you warm despite the -5°C to -8°C temperatures. (If that sounds chilly, keep in mind that outside the hotel it can be as low as -30°C.)

The hotel is usually open from mid-December to late April (weather permitting). Things to do in the area include snowmobile safaris, skiing, ice-fishing, dogsledding and other winter activities. There's also the **Ice Globe Theatre** (nonguests from Skr450, guests Skr300, ☎ mid-Jan-early Apr), a replica of Shakespeare's Globe Theatre that's – again, surprise – built out of ice.

It's almost as interesting to visit the site in summer, when the melted hotel has left behind its startlingly small, flat footprint. Day visitors who have missed the main attraction can still experience a little of the magic. Inside a giant freezer warehouse, called the **Ice Hotel Art Center** (adult/child Skr100/50; ☎ 10am-5pm Jun-mid-Aug), at a temperature of -5°C, some features of the Ice Hotel remain, including a bar and ice sculptures; a recent exhibit consisted of sculptures based on the mythological paintings of Swedish artist John Bauer. The entry fee includes warm clothing. Get there on bus No 501 from Kiruna.

See Sleeping & Eating (above) for accommodation and meal details.

Kebnekaise Fjällstation (☎ 55000; info@kebnekaise.se; dm/s/d from Skr320/850/1000; 🗓 Mar-Apr & mid-Jun-mid-Sep) The excellent 100km trek from Abisko to Nikkaluokta runs via this STF lodge. Meals are available, and guided tours to the summit of Kebnekaise are offered. HI and STF members pay Skr100 less than the prices listed.

There's a supermarket in Abisko village for self-caterers, and a café-restaurant nearby.

Getting There & Away

In addition to trains between Luleå and Narvik (there are stations at Abisko Östra and Abisko Turiststation), bus No 91 runs from Kiruna to Abisko. Bus No 92 travels from Kiruna to Nikkaluokta (two to three a day), at the Kebnekaise trail heads. Kvikvjokk is served by bus No 47 that runs twice daily on weekdays to/from Jokkmokk.

RIKSGRÄNSEN

☎ 0980 / pop 50

The best midnight (or daytime) skiing in June in Scandinavia awaits you at this rugged frontier area (Riksgränsen translates as 'National Border'), 132km from Kiruna. You can briefly visit Norway at full speed on downhill skis! Rental of downhill gear/snowboards costs from Skr285/315 per day, and a day lift pass is Skr300; the skiing season can run until Midsummer.

There's not much to the tiny settlement here, but you can visit Sven Hörnell's **wilderness photography exhibition** (☎ 43111; www.sven-hornell.se; 🗓 Feb-Sep) at his gallery and shop. The exhibition itself is free, and there's an audiovisual show for a fee (3pm daily mid-June to August, call for other times); commentary is in Swedish only, but you don't have to understand the language to appreciate the stunning Norrland photography.

Riksgränsen Ski & Spa Resort (☎ 40080; www.riksgransen.nu; r per person from Skr655; 🗓 mid-Feb-Sep) is a large resort that's popular with skiers and offers organised wilderness activities in both the skiing and summer seasons. Rooms and apartments are available.

From Kiruna, bus No 91 runs via Abisko to Riksgränsen (two or three a day). Three daily trains run on the Luleå-Kiruna-Narvik route, and Riksgränsen is the last train station in Sweden before the train rushes through tunnels and mountain scenery back to sea level at Narvik in Norway.

SWEDEN DIRECTORY

ACCOMMODATION

In this chapter, we have classified sleeping options as follows:

- Budget: a bed in these establishments (usually hostels and budget guesthouses) should cost under Skr300 per person.
- Midrange: Skr650 to Skr1500 for a double room on a weekday. This price range covers small, comfortable hotels in the major cities, but some more luxurious options in smaller towns.
- Top End: Skr1500 and upwards for a weekday double.

Cabins & Chalets

Daily rates for *stugor* (cabins and chalets, often found at camping grounds or in the countryside) offer good value for small groups and families, and range in both facilities and price (Skr200 to Skr800). Some cabins are simple, with bunk beds and little else (you share the bathroom and kitchen facilities with campers); others are fully equipped with their own kitchen, bathroom and even living room. Local and regional tourist offices have listings of cabins and cottages that may be rented by the week; these are often in idyllic forest, lakeside or coastal locations and offer the chance for a true Swedish holiday experience. See the **Stuga** (www.stuga.nu) website for further information.

Camping

Sweden has hundreds of camping grounds and a free English-language guide with maps is available from tourist offices. Some camping grounds are open in winter, but the best time for camping is from May to August. Prices vary with facilities, from Skr100 for a basic site to Skr200 for the highest standards. Most camping grounds have kitchens and laundry facilities, and many grounds are popular family holiday spots and have the works – swimming pool, minigolf, bike and canoe rental, restaurant, store etc.

You are required to have the (free) Svenskt Campingkort to stay at Swedish camping grounds. Apply at least one month before your journey to **Sveriges Camping & Stugföretagares Riksorganisation** (SCR; fax 0522-642430; Box 255,

SE-45117 Uddevalla), or on the internet at www.camping.se. If this isn't possible, you'll be given a temporary card on arrival. The annual stamp on your card costs Skr100 and is obtainable at the first camping ground you visit.

Visit www.camping.se for lots of useful information. See also the boxed text (p469) for advice on free camping in Sweden.

Hostels

Forget all your preconceptions about hostels being dingy, scruffy and the domain of noisy young backpackers. Swedish hostels are exceptional: clean, well equipped, nicely decorated (this is the land of Ikea, after all, so practical, attractive furniture is readily available) and very good value. Dorm beds, singles, doubles and family rooms are usually available; some rooms have a private bathroom and/or TV. The majority are nonsmoking establishments. There's almost always a kitchen for guests' use, and often a laundry (which is handy, as laundrettes are almost nonexistent in Sweden). Breakfast is often available (Skr50 to Skr70), but normally has to be arranged the night before. Linen is available for rent, but bring sleeping sheets, a pillow case and a towel from home to save money. You'll be expected to clean your room upon departure (if you don't want to do this, you can pay the hostel a 'cleaning fee').

Sweden has well over 475 *vandrarhem* (hostels) and some 315 are 'official' hostels affiliated with **Svenska Turistföreningen** (STF, Swedish Touring Agency; ☎ 08-463 2100; www.svenskaturistforeningen.se; Box 25, SE-10120 Stockholm), part of Hostelling International (HI). STF produces a free detailed guide to its hostels, but the text is in Swedish only (although the symbols are generally easy to understand). All hostel details are also found on the organisation's website, with some information in English. Holders of HI cards stay at STF hostels for between Skr100 and Skr280 per bed per night. Nonmembers pay Skr45 extra per night or can join up at hostels (membership costs Skr285 for adults, Skr110 for those aged 16 to 25, free for children). In this chapter we have listed the prices at STF hostels for nonmembers.

Around 160 hostels belong to the 'rival' **Sveriges Vandrarhem i Förening** (SVF; ☎ 0413-553 450; www.svf.se; Box 9, SE-45043 Smögen). No mem-

bership is required; rates and facilities are similar to those of the STF. Pick up the free guide at tourist offices or SVF hostels.

Also look out for other hostels that are not affiliated with either STF or SVF, and note that some camping grounds have hostels.

Hostels in Sweden have a unique and frustrating problem: they're hard to get into outside reception opening times. Most of the day (and much of the winter) the doors are firmly locked. The trick is to phone and make a reservation during the (usually short) reception hours. These vary, but are generally from 5pm to 7pm. You may have to write down the four-digit entrance door code and ask where the room key will be. Theoretically, you could stay overnight without seeing another person until you pay in the morning. From June to August you can expect longer reception hours, but a reservation is recommended during this busy period. May is also a busy time for hostels in major cities such as Stockholm and Göteborg.

Be careful in December and check that the hostel is open at Christmas and New Year. Not all hostels are open year-round – some are in student residences and only open for the seven-week summer break (from around Midsummer to early or mid-August). Others are only open in the busier months from May to September.

There are numerous mountain huts and lodges, especially in Lappland, run by STF. These are popular with hikers and outdoor enthusiasts; more information is available on STF's website.

Hotels

There are few cheap hotels in Sweden. However, almost all Swedish hotels offer good-value weekend and summer (mid-June to mid-August) rates, often below Skr800 for a quite luxurious double (up to 50% cheaper than their regular prices). See individual reviews for discount prices. All hotels have nonsmoking sections (most are entirely nonsmoking). Rates usually include a breakfast buffet. Some packages are good value if you plan ahead: Stockholm, Göteborg and Malmö offer cut-price 'packages' that include a hotel room, free entry to the major attractions of the city and free local transport (see the Information sections under each city). Tourist

offices and travel agents can usually provide details about package deals.

Ask at a tourist office for the free brochure **Hotels in Sweden** (www.hotelsinsweden.net), or check the website. Discount schemes for 'frequent stayers' are generally run by the big chains; eg **Radisson SAS** (www.radissonsas.com), **Scandic** (www.scandic-hotels.com), **First** (www.firsthotels.com) and **Elite** (www.elite.se). Appealing to those on a budget are the two cheapest (and somewhat characterless) hotel chains, **Formule 1** (www.hotelformule1.com) and **Ibis** (www.ibishotel.com). At the other end of the scale, **Countryside Hotels** (www.countrysidehotels.se) offers accommodation in historic establishments ranging from castles and mansions to monasteries and spas.

ACTIVITIES

The image of wholesome, outdoorsy Swedish people is pretty spot-on (well, except for all the coffee they consume and cigarettes they smoke). The Swedes are huge nature-lovers and are active year-round, on bike paths, forest jogging tracks, rivers and lakes, mountain trails, and the snow and ice.

Anyone getting out and about in the Swedish countryside should become familiar with Sweden's very democratic right of public access – see opposite.

Canoeing & Kayaking

Sweden's superb wilderness lakes and white-water rivers are a paradise for canoeists and kayakers. The national canoeing body is **Svenska Kanotförbundet** (☎ 0155-209080; www.kanot.com; Rosvalla, SE-61162 Nyköping). It provides general advice and produces *Kanotväg*, a free annual brochure listing the 75 approved canoe centres that hire canoes (averaging Skr200/800 per day/week) throughout the country. According to the right of common access, canoeists may paddle or moor virtually anywhere provided they respect the basic privacy of dwellings and avoid sensitive nesting areas within nature reserves. More good information is available on the **Kanotguiden** (www.kanotguiden.com) website, which also lists rental centres.

Hiking

Hiking is popular everywhere and the mountain challenge of the northern national parks is compelling. However, these parks are rarely snow-free and the jewel,

Sarek, is only for experienced hikers. Good equipment is vital.

Easy walking trails are common throughout Sweden. Many counties have a network of easy trails connecting sites of interest, and many municipalities have their own wilderness tracks (some off-the-beaten-track routes have free huts or shelters). The best hiking time is between late June and mid-September, but conditions are better after early August, when the mosquitoes have gone.

For information on organised group walks and the STF mountain huts, which are placed at intervals averaging about 20km along popular trails such as Kungsleden, contact STF (p467). You may stay the night (or camp nearby) for a fee which is slightly higher than STF hostel rates. There are also nine STF mountain lodges with shops, showers and restaurants. The free STF hostel guide includes details of mountain huts and lodges. Conditions are self-service, similar to STF hostels, and you should bring sheets (sleeping bags in huts).

Skiing

Cross-country (nordic) skiing opportunities vary depending on the snow and temperatures, but the northwest usually has plenty of snow from December to April (although not a lot of daylight in December and January). Practically all town areas (except the far south) have marked skiing tracks, often illuminated. There are large ski resorts catering mainly for downhill skiing in the mountainous areas of the west – Åre (p458) is the biggest and busiest (especially around Easter). The **Go Ski** (www.goski.com) and the **Alps** (www.thealps.com) websites have good pages reviewing the Swedish ski fields.

Other Activities

Opportunities for countless other activities exist, including cycling, rock climbing, mountaineering, fishing, horse riding, golf, sailing and rafting in summer; and skating, ice fishing, ice climbing, snowmobile safaris and dogsledding in winter. Tourist offices should be able to provide information, and you should check out the 'what to do?' pages on the **Visit Sweden** (www.visit-sweden.com) website.

BUSINESS HOURS

Businesses and government offices open from 8.30am or 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday, although they can close at 3pm in summer. Banks usually open at 9.30am and close at 3pm, but some city branches open from 9am to 5pm or 6pm. Post offices are usually open 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday and shorter hours Saturday; the office in Centralstationen in Stockholm has longer hours (varying by season).

Most museums have short opening hours and many tourist offices are closed at weekends in the low season, from mid-August to mid-June.

Normal shopping hours are 9am to 6pm Monday to Friday and 9am to between 1pm and 4pm on Saturday, but department stores are open longer and sometimes also on Sunday. Some supermarkets in large towns will open until 7pm or 9pm. In restaurants, lunch often begins at 11.30am and is over by 2pm, and the restaurant will reopen again at 6pm for dinner. Cafés are usually open long hours (from 8am or 9am sometimes through until 9pm).

Frustratingly, many hostels, especially those hostels belonging to the STF network, are closed between 10am and 5pm (see p467).

'Summer' in this chapter is generally used to refer to the busy, brief summer season that runs from around mid-June to early or mid-August. This is when Swedish schools and many industries and offices are closed, and the Swedes flock en masse to their summer houses, the beach, lakes, mountains etc. Even some restaurants in

larger cities are closed during this period. However, all is not lost – this is when hotels offer great bargains, with discounts of up to 50% on their standard rates (to fill rooms usually taken by business travellers).

CUSTOMS

Going through customs rarely involves any hassles, but rules on illegal drugs are strictly enforced. Duty-free allowances for travellers from outside the EU are: 1L of spirits or 2L of fortified wine; 2L of wine; and 200 cigarettes. The limits on goods brought into Sweden from another EU country are far more generous: up to 10L of spirits or 20L of fortified wine; 90L of wine; 110L of beer; plus 800 cigarettes. People aged under 20 years are not allowed to bring in alcohol. More information is on the website of the Swedish customs authority, **Tullverket** (www.tullverket.se).

DISABLED TRAVELLERS

Sweden is one of the easiest countries to travel around in a wheelchair. People with disabilities will find special transport services and adapted facilities of a generally high standard, ranging from trains and taxis to hotels and grocery stores. For information about facilities, contact the national organisation for people with disabilities, **De Handikappades Riksförbund** (☎ 08-685 8000; www.dhr.se; Katrinebergsvägen 6, Box 47305, SE-10074 Stockholm).

DISCOUNT CARDS

A HI membership card means discounts at STF hostels and mountain lodges (non-members pay an additional Skr45 per night,

RIGHT OF PUBLIC ACCESS

The right of public access to the countryside (called *Allemansrätten*) means that in Sweden, by law, you're allowed to walk, boat, ski or swim on private land as long as you stay at least 70m from houses and keep out of gardens, fenced areas and cultivated land. You can camp for more than one night in the same place, and you may pick berries and mushrooms. You must not leave any rubbish nor take living wood, bark, leaves, bushes or nuts. Fires may be set where safe (not on bare rocks) with fallen wood. Use a bucket of water to douse a campfire even if you think that it's out. Cars may not be driven across open land or on private roads. Close all gates. Do not disturb farm animals or reindeer.

If you have a bicycle or car, look for free camp sites around unsealed forest tracks off secondary country roads. Make sure your spot is at least 50m from the track and not visible from any house, building or sealed road. Dry pine forests are your best bet. Bring drinking water and food, although running creek water can be used for washing (don't pollute the water with soap or food waste).

or can join in Sweden). Students should bring an International Student Identity Card (ISIC) card, although a number of discounts only apply to people with a Swedish student card. Still, students receive discounts on many forms of transport (including some airlines, ferry operators and local public transport), and on admission to museums, sights, theatres and cinemas. Children under 16 and seniors (usually 65 and over) normally receive similar discounts.

There are good-value discount cards available in the major cities (Stockholm, Göteborg and Malmö) that cover all local transport and most sightseeing needs for visitors for a set period (usually up to 72 hours). See the Information sections under each city for details.

EMBASSIES & CONSULATES

Swedish Embassies & Consulates

A list of Swedish diplomatic missions abroad (and links) is available at **Sweden Abroad** (www.swedenabroad.com).

Australia (☎ 02-6270 2700; 5 Turrana St, Yarralumla ACT 2600)

Canada (☎ 613-241 8553; www.swedishembassy.ca; 377 Dalhousie St, Ottawa ON K1N 9N8)

Denmark (☎ 33 36 03 70; www.swedenabroad.com/copenhagen; Sankt Annæ Plads 15A, DK-1250 Copenhagen K)

Finland (☎ 09-6877 660; www.swedenabroad.com/helsinki; Pohjoisesplanadi 7B, 00170 Helsinki)

France (☎ 01 44 18 88 00; www.swedenabroad.com/paris; 17 rue Barbet-de-Jouy, F-75007 Paris)

Germany (☎ 030-505060; www.swedenabroad.com/berlin; Rauchstrasse 1, 10787 Berlin)

Ireland (☎ 01-474 4400; www.swedenabroad.com/dublin; 13-17 Dawson St, Dublin 2)

Netherlands (☎ 070-412 0200; www.swedenabroad.com/thehague; Jan Willem Frisoalaan 3, 2517 JS Den Haag)

New Zealand (☎ 04-499 9895; sweden@xtra.co.nz; 13th fl, Vogel Bldg, Aitken St, Wellington)

Norway (☎ 24 11 42 00; www.swedenabroad.com/oslo; Nobels gate 16, NO-0244 Oslo)

UK (☎ 020-7917 6400; 11 Montagu Place, London W1H 2AL)

USA (☎ 202-467 2600; www.swedenabroad.com/washington; Suite 900, 1501 M St NW, Washington DC 20005)

Embassies & Consulates in Sweden

The diplomatic missions listed here are in Stockholm, although some neighbouring countries also have consulates in Göteborg, Malmö and Helsingborg:

Australia (Map p402; ☎ 08-613 2900; 11th fl, Sergels Torg 12)

Canada (Map p402; ☎ 08-453 3000; 7th fl, Tegelbacken 4)

Denmark (Map p402; ☎ 08-406 7500; Jakobs Torg 1)

Finland (Map pp396-7; ☎ 08-676 6700; Gärdesgatan 9-11)

France (Map p402; ☎ 08-459 5300; Kommendörsgatan 13)

Germany (Map pp396-7; ☎ 08-670 1500; Skarpögatan 9)

Ireland (Map pp396-7; ☎ 08-661 8005; Östermalmsgatan 97)

Netherlands (Map p402; ☎ 08-556 933 00; Götgatan 16A)

Norway (Map pp396-7; ☎ 08-665 6340; Skarpögatan 4)

UK (Map pp396-7; ☎ 08-671 3000; Skarpögatan 6-8)

USA (Map pp396-7; ☎ 08-783 5300; Dag Hammar-skjöldsväg 31)

FESTIVALS & EVENTS

The Swedes love their traditional festivals and celebrate in style year-round.

Valborgsmässoafton (Walpurgis Night on 30 April) celebrates the arrival of spring with bonfires and choral singers. Upper-secondary-school leavers with their white caps are a common sight; the festivities have developed from a mixture of traditional bonfires on the eve of May Day and student celebrations at Lund and Uppsala.

The **National Day** is 6 June (Gustav Vasa was elected King of Sweden on 6 June 1523).

Midsummer (Midsummer) on the first Saturday after 21 June, is *the* festival of the year. Decorating and raising the Midsummer pole and dancing around it are traditional activities on Midsummer's Eve, and most people head for the countryside for this. For the folk touch, the Lake Siljan region (p422) is a good place to celebrate, but folk costumes, singing, music, dancing, pickled herring washed down with schnapps, strawberries and cream, and beer drinking, are common almost everywhere. At the other end of summer, **crayfish parties** in August celebrate the end of the season.

Luciadagen (the Lucia festival) on 13 December, is also popular. Oddly, it seems to merge the folk tradition of the longest night and the story of St Lucia of Syracuse. A choir in white, led by Lucia (who wears a crown of lit candles), leads the singing.

Many towns host popular Christmas markets in December. **Christmas Eve** is the main day of celebration during this season; it's when the gifts are opened and the big celebratory meal is taken.

If you're in Stockholm for Valborgsmässoafton, Midsommar, Luciadagen, Christmas or New Year's Eve, a great place to participate in the festivities is the Skansen open-air museum on Djurgården (p399) in Stockholm. Just don't plan on doing anything much on the days surrounding these holidays, as they are often claimed as 'squeeze days' and are effectively additional holidays.

Almost every Swedish town hosts a summer festival between May and September. Music, dancing, eating, drinking, competitions and fun for children are regular features of these events, which can last for up to a week. You can find more information on music festivals (opera, choir, folk, jazz and chamber music) online at **Svenka Musikfestivaler** (www.musikfestivaler.se).

GAY & LESBIAN TRAVELLERS

Sweden is famous for its liberal attitudes and there are laws allowing same-sex 'registered partnerships', which grant most of the standard marriage rights. The organisation concerned with equality for lesbians and gays is **Riksförbundet för Sexuellt Likaberättigande** (RFSL; Map pp396-7; ☎ 08-457 1300; www.rfsl.se; Sveavägen 57-59, Stockholm).

One of the capital's biggest parties is the annual **Stockholm Pride** (www.stockholmpride.org), a five-day festival celebrating gay culture, held in late July/early August and based mainly in Tantolunden, a large park in Södermalm.

A good source of information is the free, monthly magazine **QX** (www.qx.se) giving gay and lesbian information and listings (only in Swedish). You can pick up a copy at many clubs, stores and restaurants, mainly in Stockholm, Göteborg, Malmö and Copenhagen. Its website has some excellent information and recommendations in English.

HOLIDAYS

There are plenty of public holidays in spring and early summer. The Midsummer holiday brings life almost to a halt for three days: transport and other services are reduced, so plan ahead. Some hotels are closed from Christmas to New Year. Note: many businesses will close early the day before a public holiday and all day the day after.

Public holidays in Sweden:

New Year's Day 1 January.

Epiphany 6 January.

Good Friday to Easter Monday March/April.

Labour Day 1 May.

Ascension Day May/June (39th day after Easter).

Whitsunday & Monday Late May or early June.

Midsummer's Day First Saturday after 21 June.

All Saints' Day Saturday, late October or early November.

Christmas Day 25 December.

Boxing Day 26 December.

Christmas Eve, New Year's Eve and Midsummer's Eve are not official holidays, but are generally nonworking days for most of the population.

INTERNET ACCESS

Internet cafés typically charge around Skr30 to Skr40 per hour online. Facilities can be rare outside big cities, because many Swedes have internet access at home or school. Many internet cafés, where they do exist, are testosterone-filled amusement arcades rather than traveller hang-outs. Most tourist offices have a computer terminal available for visitor use (sometimes free but usually with a Skr10 to 20 charge per hour). Look out for the free 'drop-in' terminals at many libraries, available for 15 minutes at a time.

INTERNET RESOURCES

Most Swedish organisations have their own websites, and many of these have pages in English. Every town also has its own site – usually this is found by simply entering 'www.', then the town's name, followed by '.se'; eg **Örebro** (www.orebro.se) or **Luleå** (www.lulea.se).

Following are some helpful websites:

CityGuide Sweden (www.cityguide.se) Detailed information pages for nearly 80 Swedish cities.

Local (www.thelocal.se) Swedish news and feature articles written by locals, in English.

Naturvårdsverket (www.environ.se) Site of the Swedish environmental protection agency, with good coverage of the country's national parks.

Svenska Institutet (www.si.se) The Swedish Institute is a public agency entrusted with disseminating knowledge abroad about Sweden. This site is full of detailed information on countless topics.

Svenska Turistföreningen (www.svenskaturistforeningen.se) STF maintains a network of 300 quality hostels throughout the country.

Swedish Travel Tourism Council (www.visit-sweden.com) This site has loads of useful travel information in many languages.

Virtual Sweden (www.sweden.se) Svenska Institutet maintains this 'official gateway to Sweden' with excellent links in various categories (including culture, nature and environment, and sports and leisure).

MONEY

You should encounter few problems if you carry cash in any convertible currency or internationally recognised travellers cheques. The national ATM networks usually accept international Visa, Plus, EC, Eurocard, MasterCard or Cirrus cards.

Forex (www.forex.se), with branches in the biggest cities and most airports and ferry terminals, is one of the cheapest and easiest places to exchange money and charges Skr15 per cheque. Banks charge up to Skr60 per cheque. You can buy foreign notes for no fee at Forex.

Currency

The Swedish krona (plural: kronor), usually called 'crown' by Swedes speaking English, is denoted Skr and divided into 100 öre (prices are rounded to the nearest 50 öre). Coins are 50 öre and one, five and 10 kronor, and notes are 20, 50, 100, 500 and 1000 kronor.

Taxes & Refunds

The main additional cost for the traveller is *mervärdskatt* or *moms*, the value-added tax (VAT) on goods and services, which is included in the marked price. This varies but may be as much as 25%.

At shops that display the sign 'Tax Free Shopping', non-EU citizens making single purchases of goods exceeding Skr200 (including *moms*) are eligible for a VAT refund of 15% to 18% of the purchase price. Show your passport and ask the shop for a 'Global Refund Cheque', which should be presented along with your unopened purchases (within three months) at your departure point from the country (before you check in), to get export validation. You can then cash your cheque at refund points, which are found at international airports and harbour terminals. The *Tax Free Shopping Guide to Sweden* is available from tourist offices free of charge. Contact **Global Refund Sweden** (☎ 020-741741; www.globalrefund.com) for more information.

Tipping

Service charges are usually included in restaurant bills and taxi fares, but it's common to tip about 10% in a restaurant or round up the taxi fare (particularly if there's luggage). Cloakrooms usually cost about Skr20.

POST

Mailing letters or postcards up to 20g within Sweden costs Skr5.50, and Skr10 to overseas destinations. A package weighing 2kg costs Skr180/250 by airmail to Europe/outside Europe. Airmail will take a few days to reach European destinations, a week to most parts of North America, and perhaps a little longer to Australia and New Zealand.

In recent years **Posten** (www.posten.se), the Swedish postal service, moved to new premises all over the country; service outlets opened in some 3000 new venues, many in supermarkets and petrol stations. These outlets offer all that most travellers will need; eg stamps (*frimärken*), letter (*brev*) and package (*paket*) services. You can also buy stamps from many tourist offices, convenience stores, bookshops and newsagents; look for the yellow post symbol on a pale blue background, which indicates that some postal facilities are offered.

Receiving *poste restante* mail under the new postal system is difficult for travellers. As many of the large, old-style post offices have closed or relocated, there is no central 'holding place' in most towns. The person sending you mail will need to specify which post outlet you will be collecting mail from, with a specific address and postal code.

TELEPHONE

Travellers may notice a lack of public telephones in Sweden; some 70% of the population owns a mobile phone, so the number of public phones has dwindled in recent years (travellers might find it useful to bring their mobile telephone from home and buy an inexpensive Swedish SIM card and pay-as-you-go plan). There are scarcely any coin phones; all public telephones take Telia phonecards. These cards cost Skr35, Skr60 or Skr100 (giving 30, 60 or 120 credits, respectively), and even they can be hard to find outside of the major cities. Many

Telia booths also accept credit cards (with expensive rates).

For directory assistance dial ☎ 118118 (for numbers within Sweden) or ☎ 118119 (international), but note that these services aren't free. To place a collect call, dial ☎ 020-0018.

Phone Codes

Calls to Sweden from abroad require a country code (☎ 46) followed by the area code and telephone number (omitting the first zero in the area code). For international calls dial ☎ 00 followed by the country code and the local area code.

Swedish phone numbers have area codes followed by varying numbers of digits. You must use the area code when dialling from outside that area. Numbers beginning ☎ 020 or ☎ 0200 are free (but not from public phones or mobiles). Numbers beginning ☎ 077 are roughly the same price as a local call. Mobile phone numbers usually begin with ☎ 070.

TIME

Sweden is one hour ahead of GMT/UTC, but summer time (from the end of March to the end of October) is another hour ahead. The 24-hour clock is widely used.

TOILETS

Public toilets in parks, shopping malls, libraries and bus or train stations are rarely free in Sweden. Except at the larger train stations (where an attendant is on duty), pay toilets are coin operated, and usually cost Skr5. The exception is museums, where toilets usually are free and well-maintained.

TOURIST INFORMATION

The official website for the **Swedish Travel Tourism Council** (www.visit-sweden.com) contains a great deal of useful information in many languages.

Sweden has about 350 local tourist information offices. Most are open long hours in summer and short hours (or not at all) during winter, and a few exhibit nomadic tendencies. The offices in large towns stock brochures from all around Sweden. The **FörTur** (www.turism.se) website lists Sweden's tourist information offices and their contact details.

VISAS

Citizens of the EU, Norway and Iceland can enter Sweden with a passport or a national identification card (passports are recommended). Nationals of Nordic countries can stay and work indefinitely but others require residence permits for stays of between three months and five years.

Citizens of Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the US can enter and stay in Sweden without a visa for up to three months. Australian and New Zealand passport-holders aged between 18 and 30 can also qualify for a one-year working holiday visa.

Citizens of South Africa and other African, Asian and some Eastern European countries require tourist visas for entry; these are only available in advance from Swedish embassies (allow at least two months), and cost Skr225/275 for permits allowing a maximum 30/90 days. It may be hard to extend your stay once you're in Sweden.

Migrationsverket (☎ 011-156000; www.migrationsverket.se; SE-60170 Norrköping) is the Swedish 'migration board' and it handles all applications for visas and work or residency permits. Its website is full of useful information for visitors with visa questions.

TRANSPORT IN SWEDEN

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Air

The major international airport in Sweden is Stockholm's **Arlanda airport** (☎ 08-797 6000), with direct flights linking the country to major Scandinavian towns, European and North American cities, and a few Asian destinations. Göteborg's **Landvetter airport** (☎ 031-941000) and Malmö's **Sturup airport** (☎ 040-613 1000), as well as a few other minor airports, also have direct international flights (especially to/from large cities within Scandinavia). A wealth of information on airports and airlines is available at the website of Sweden's civil aviation authority, **Luffartsverket** (www.lfv.se).

When planning your travel, note that Copenhagen's airport (p112) is just 25 minutes by train from Malmö in southern Sweden.

The national carrier is Scandinavian Airlines System, better known as **SAS** (airline code SK; ☎ 0770-727727; www.scandinavian.net), with a very good safety record.

AIRLINES FLYING TO & FROM SWEDEN

Some of the main international airlines flying into and out of Sweden:

Aeroflot (airline code EI; ☎ 08-505653; www.aeroflot.com)

Air France (airline code AF; ☎ 08-519 999 90; www.airfrance.com)

Alitalia (airline code AZ; ☎ 08-237320; www.alitalia.com)

Austrian Airlines (airline code OS; ☎ 0200-727373; www.aa.com)

British Airways (airline code BA; ☎ 0770-110020; www.britishairways.com)

Finnair (airline code AY; ☎ 020-781100; www.finnair.com)

Iberia (airline code IB; ☎ 08-566 125 00; www.iberia.com)

Icelandair (airline code FI; ☎ 08-690 9800; www.icelandair.net)

KLM Royal Dutch Airlines (airline code KL; ☎ 08-587 997 57; www.klm.com)

LOT Polish Airlines (airline code LO; ☎ 08-243490; www.lot.com)

Lufthansa (airline code LH; ☎ 0770-727727; www.lufthansa.com)

Skyways (airline code JZ; ☎ 0771-959500; www.skyways.se)

SN Brussels Airlines (airline code SN; ☎ 08-797 9400; www.flysn.com)

Swiss (airline code LX; ☎ 08-587 704 45; www.swiss.com)

Thai Airways (airline code TG; ☎ 08-598 836 00; www.thaiairways.com)

Budget airlines also cover Scandinavian and continental European destinations:

Blue1 (airline code KF; www.blue1.com) Flights to Finnish destinations from Stockholm and Göteborg.

Fly Me (airline code; ☎ 0770-790790; www.flyme.com) From Stockholm to Helsinki, and Göteborg to Nice and Mallorca.

FlyNordic (airline code LF; ☎ 08-528 068 20; www.flynordic.com) From Stockholm to Copenhagen and Oslo.

Ryanair (airline code FR; ☎ 0900-202 0240; www.ryanair.com) From Stockholm, Göteborg & Malmö to London (Stansted) and other locations including Glasgow and Frankfurt.

SAS Snowflake (☎ 0771-661000; www.flysnowflake.com) From Stockholm to destinations in southern Europe incl Rome, Lyon, Athens and Lisbon.

Sterling (airline code NB; ☎ 08-587 691 48; www.sterlingticket.com) From Stockholm and Göteborg to European destinations including Barcelona, Paris, Milan and Prague.

Land

Direct access to Sweden by land is possible from Norway, Finland and Denmark (from Denmark via the remarkable Öresund toll bridge). Border-crossing formalities are nonexistent.

Train and bus journeys are also possible between Sweden and the continent – these vehicles go directly to ferries. Include ferry fares (or Öresund tolls) in your budget if you're driving from continental Europe.

Eurolines (☎ 031-100240; www.eurolines.com), the long-distance bus operator, has an office inside the bus terminals in Sweden's three largest cities: Stockholm, Göteborg and Malmö. Full schedules and fares are listed on the website.

CONTINENTAL EUROPE

Eurolines services run between Sweden and several European cities. The Stockholm to London service (from Skr1299, approximately 30 hours, two to five weekly) goes via Malmö, Copenhagen, Hamburg and Amsterdam or Brussels. There are also services from Göteborg to Berlin (Skr610, approx 12 hours, two daily).

Berlin Night Express (www.berlin-night-express.com) is a direct overnight train between Berlin and Malmö (Skr750/1100 or €85/120 for a couchette/bed one way, 8½ hours, three to seven times a week) via the Trelleborg–Sassnitz ferry. Trains connect with points north of Malmö or beyond Berlin. See the website for booking details, or in Sweden book through **SJ trains** (☎ 0771-757575; www.sj.se).

DENMARK

Eurolines (☎ 031-100240; www.eurolines.com) runs buses between Stockholm and Copenhagen (Skr538, nine hours, two to four daily), and between Göteborg and Copenhagen (Skr280, 4½ hours, three to five daily). **Swedish Express** (☎ 0200-218218; www.swedishexpress.se) and **Säfflebusen** (☎ 0771-151515; www.safflebusen.se) both run regular buses on the same routes, and have discount fares for travel from Monday to Thursday. All companies offer student, youth (under 26) and senior discounts.

Trains are the quickest option, especially from southern Sweden, and run between Copenhagen and Malmö (from Skr85, 35 minutes, every 20 minutes) via the Öresund bridge.

The Swedish national rail company, **Sveriges Järnväg** (SJ; ☎ 0771-757575; www.sj.se), runs X2000 trains between Copenhagen and Stockholm (from Skr447, five hours, up to 14 a day) via Norrköping, Linköping, Lund

and Malmö. Three high-speed services operate between Copenhagen and Göteborg (3½ hours) via Helsingborg, Lund and Malmö (slower InterCity trains take 4½ hours, seven daily). Prices vary dramatically depending on when you buy your ticket – for best prices, purchase at least one day before departure.

For drivers, tolls across the Öresund bridge are Skr285 one way for a car up to 6m. See the **Öresundbron** (www.oeresundbron.com) website for more information, and if the prices seem too steep, consider taking a ferry between Helsingborg and Helsingør (right).

FINLAND

There are seven crossing points along the river border. Bus services on the Swedish side are run by **Länstrafiken Norrbotten** (☎ 020-470047), who also run the 'Bothnian Arc X-press', a daily bus service along the northern coast into Finland, from Skellefteå or Luleå on to Haparanda, Tornio and Kemi, finishing in Oulu.

Tapanis Buss (☎ 0922-12955, 08-153300; www.tapanis.se) runs overnight coaches between Stockholm and Tornio via Haparanda (Skr515, 15 hours, twice weekly).

NORWAY

The major bus companies operate on routes connecting Stockholm and Oslo, and Göteborg and Oslo (many of the services from Oslo to Göteborg continue on to Malmö and Copenhagen).

Eurolines (☎ 031-100240; www.eurolines.com) has regular daily services between Oslo and Copenhagen via Göteborg, Helsingborg and Malmö. Göteborg to Oslo costs from Skr220 (four hours).

Swedish Express (☎ 0200-218218; www.swedishexpress.se) runs services between Stockholm and Oslo (from Skr392, 7½ hours, three daily) and between Göteborg and Oslo (from Skr230, four hours, up to six daily). **Säfflebusen** (☎ 0771-151515; www.safflebusen.se) runs the Stockholm–Oslo route (from Skr305, five daily), and Göteborg to Oslo (from Skr180, 10 daily).

Many *länstrafiken* (regional transport networks) run buses to within a few kilometres of Norway's border. **Länstrafiken Norrbotten** (☎ 020-470047) operates services between Kiruna and Narvik in summer (Skr241, 2½ hours, one or two daily).

Sea**BALTIC COUNTRIES**

Tallink (☎ 08-666 6001; www.tallink.ee) sails daily between Sweden and Estonia on two routes: Stockholm–Tallinn (from €45, 15 hours) and Kapellskär–Paldiski (from €28, 10 to 11 hours). Tallink also sails daily between Stockholm and Riga in Latvia (from €29, 17½ hours).

Lisco Line (☎ 0454-33680; www.lisco.se) sails between Klaipeda in Lithuania and Karlshamn, near Karlskrona in southern Sweden (from Skr625, 14 hours, three to six weekly).

DENMARK

The quickest and most frequent services are between Helsingør and Helsingborg (Skr20 to Skr22, 20 minutes). Three companies operate on this busy route: **HH-Ferries** (☎ 042-19 8000; www.hhferries.se), **Scandlines** (☎ 042-186300; www.scandlines.se) and **Sundsbusarna** (☎ 04238 58 80; www.sundsbusarna.se).

Stena Line (☎ 031-704 0000; www.stenaline.se) has five to 10 sailings daily between Göteborg and Frederikshavn (from Skr130, 3¼ hours). Stena Line also sails three or four times daily between Grenå and Varberg (from Skr115, four hours). It's cheaper to travel between 10pm and 6am, or from Monday to Thursday. Prices also increase in summer.

Bornholmstrafikken (☎ 0411-558700; www.bornholmstrafikken.dk) sails from Ystad to Rønne (Bornholm) from €22. There are conventional (2½ hours) and fast (70 minutes) services, two to nine times daily.

FINLAND

Daily services throughout the year are available on Stockholm to Turku and Stockholm to Helsinki routes (all via the Åland islands). Note that Helsinki is called Helsingfors in Swedish, and Turku is known as Åbo. There are two major ferry operators, and it's considerably more expensive to travel either from Thursday to Saturday, or in peak season. Both ferry companies offer bus services to and from their ports.

Silja Line (☎ 08-222140; www.silja.com) sails daily (overnight) from Stockholm to Helsinki (from €92, around 15 hours) and to Turku (from €18/36 day/night crossing, 11 hours).

Viking Line (☎ 08-452 4000; www.vikingline.fi) operates a daily service on the same routes. An overnight trip from Stockholm to Helsinki costs from €33. Stockholm to Turku sailings cost from €14/19 for a day/night crossing.

Further north, **RG Line** (☎ 090-185200; www.rgline.com) operates a connection from Umeå to Vaasa (Skr450, four hours, daily).

GERMANY

Scandlines (☎ 0410-65000; www.scandlines.se) sails between Trelleborg and Rostock (from Skr185, 5¾ hours, three daily) and Trelleborg and Sassnitz (from Skr120, 3¾ hours, three daily).

Stena Line (☎ 031-704 0000; www.stenaline.se) offers overnight cruises between Göteborg and Kiel (from Skr390, 13½ hours) every day of the week.

NORWAY

Color Line (☎ 0526-62000; www.colorline.com) operates ferries between Strömstad and Sandefjord (from €16, 2½ hours, two to six daily).

DFDS Seaways (www.dfdsseaways.com; Göteborg ☎ 031-650650; Helsingborg ☎ 042-266000) runs overnight ferries between Copenhagen and Oslo, via Helsingborg. Fares between Helsingborg and Oslo (14 hours) vary according to the season and day of the week, starting at €44.

POLAND

Polferries (☎ 040-121700; www.polferries.se) operates between Świnoujście and Ystad (from Skr490, seven to nine hours, daily) and also between Gdańsk and Nynäshamn (from Skr560, 18 hours, three weekly). Children under seven ride free. **Unity Line** (☎ 0411-556900; www.unityline.pl) also operates on the Świnoujście–Ystad route (from Skr550, nine hours, daily).

Stena Lines (www.stenaline.se; ☎ 031-704 0000) operates ferries to Gdynia from Verkö, 10km east of Karlskrona. A car and five people costs from Skr750; the passenger-only fare is from Skr365.

UK

DFDS Seaways (☎ 031-650650; www.dfdsseaways.com) sails from Göteborg to Newcastle (from €29, 25 hours, twice weekly) via Kristiansand (Norway).

GETTING AROUND

Although Sweden takes time and money to travel through, public transport is well organised using 24 different *länstrafik* (regional networks); they're heavily subsidised and offer good bargains. The general confusion of having so many operators is partly solved by the **Resplus system** (☎ 0771-878787; www.resplus.se), where one ticket is valid on trains and on *länstrafik* buses. Handy local timetables are available on the website and for free or at nominal cost from tourist offices or the operators.

Air

Sweden's half-dozen domestic airlines mostly use Stockholm's Arlanda airport as a hub (p473), although Stockholm's Bromma airport also sees some domestic action. The domestic network is extensive and local airlines are safe and very efficient, but full-fare tickets can be quite expensive. Substantial discounts are available, such as for internet bookings, student and youth fares, off-peak travel, or return tickets booked at least seven days in advance. Major domestic flight destinations include Stockholm, Göteborg, Malmö, Luleå, Kiruna and Visby (on Gotland). Fares for popular routes such as Stockholm–Göteborg can be found for as little as Skr195 with the budget airlines.

AIRLINES IN SWEDEN

Fly Me (☎ 0770-790790; www.flyme.com) Flies from Stockholm to Göteborg and Malmö (and Helsinki).

Malmö Aviation (☎ 0771-550010; www.malmoavia-tion.se) Flies between Stockholm (Bromma), Göteborg, Malmö and Umeå, and to Gotland in summer.

Nordic Airlink (☎ 08-528 068 20; www.flynordic.com) Flies from Stockholm to Göteborg, Umeå and Luleå (and to Oslo and Copenhagen).

SAS (☎ 0770-727727; www.scandinavian.net) Has daily domestic flights serving the country from Malmö to Kiruna (all through Stockholm Arlanda).

Skyways (☎ 0771-959500; www.skyways.se) Runs a larger network than SAS, including a few direct flights between northern and southern destinations that don't fly via Stockholm (eg Göteborg direct to Umeå or Luleå).

AIR PASSES

If you're flying into Sweden from continental Europe with SAS, you can buy Visit Scandinavia Airpass flight coupons (up to a maximum of eight) allowing one-way travel on direct flights between any two

Scandinavian cities serviced by SAS and other affiliated operators. Fare schedules under the pass are complicated but it takes all flights within and between Scandinavian countries to around €70 to €80. Non-European residents can participate in a similar scheme, the Visit Scandinavia/Europe Airpass. See p496 for more details on these passes.

Bicycle

Sweden is a flat country and it's ideal for cycling, with Skåne and Gotland particularly recommended. Cycling is an excellent way to look for points of interest and quiet spots for free camping. The cycling season is May to September in the south, and July and August in the north.

You can cycle on all roads except motorways (green sign, with two lanes and a bridge) and roads for motor vehicles only (green sign with a car symbol). The reasonably quiet and safe secondary roads are good for cycling.

You can take a bicycle on some *länstrafik* trains and most regional buses (free, or up to Skr50), and bikes are transported free or for a small fee on many ferries. Long-distance buses usually do not accept bicycles, and nor does SJ.

You'll find bike-rental outlets in most major towns; multigear bikes can cost up to Skr200/800 per day/week. Some country areas, towns and cities have special cycle routes – check with local tourist offices for information and maps. The well-signposted, 2600km-long Sverigeleden is the national route (extending from Helsingborg in the south to Karesuando in the north), linking points of interest with suitable roads (mostly with an asphalt surface) and bicycle paths.

Boat

Sweden's national road authority, Vägverket, operates dozens of car ferries across short stretches of water, but many are slowly being replaced with bridges. These ferries are part of the road network and are free.

An extensive boat network opens up the attractive Stockholm archipelago, and boat services on Lake Mälaren, west of Stockholm, are busy in summer (see p415). Boat passes are available for exploration of the

Stockholm archipelago. Gotland is served by regular ferries from Nynäshamn and Oskarshamn (see p454), and there are summer services to many other small islands off the coast.

The canals provide cross-country routes linking the main lakes. The longest cruises, on the historic Göta Canal from Söderköping (south of Stockholm) to Göteborg, run from mid-May to mid-September and take at least four days. The **Göta Canal Steamship Company** (☎ 031-806315; www.gotacanal.se) operates three old ships over the whole distance with fares from Skr12,995/17,990 for singles/doubles, including full board and guided excursions. The company also offers two-day cruises on probably the most picturesque section of the canal, from Motala to Söderköping (from Skr4675/6750 per single/double). Other companies offer day trips and short cruises on sections of the canal – tourist offices in the area can help (Linköping and nearby Söderköping are good places to inquire).

Bus

Sweden has a safe, reliable and extensive bus network. Travellers heading to the north of the country, in particular, will rely heavily on this form of transport to get around. You can travel by bus in Sweden either on national long-distance routes, or using any of the regional *länstrafik* networks.

LONG-DISTANCE BUS COMPANIES

The following companies operate on long-distance routes. If you're under 26, a student or a senior (over 65), it's worth asking for a discount, but most transport companies will only give student prices to holders of Swedish student cards (the exception is Swebus Express, where you can use ISIC cards). Advance bookings are required for all but Swebus Express – it always guarantees a seat.

Säfflebusen (☎ 0771-151515; www.safflebusen.se) A small network, running daily on major routes (eg Stockholm–Malmö, Stockholm–Göteborg, Göteborg–Malmö). Also serves Oslo, Copenhagen and Berlin. Fares are 30% cheaper from Monday to Thursday.

Svenska Buss (☎ 0771-676767; www.svenskabuss.se) This network connects many southern towns with Stockholm.

Swebus Express (☎ 0200-218218; www.swebus.express.se) Has the largest 'national network' of buses, but only serves the southern half of the country (as far north as Mora in Dalarna). Fares for journeys over 100km are 30% cheaper between Monday and Thursday most weeks (not public or school holidays).

Ybuss (☎ 0771-334444; www.ybuss.se) Daily journeys from Stockholm north along the coast as far as Umeå (via Uppsala, Gävle, Sundsvall), and to Östersund.

BUS PASSES

Länstrafik is usually complemented by the regional train system, and one ticket is valid on any bus, local or regional. Rules vary but transfers are usually free within one to four hours. Most counties are divided into zones; travel within one zone will cost from Skr15 to Skr20. Every time you enter a new zone, the price increases, but there's usually a maximum fare.

Timetables explain all the various discount schemes. There are good-value daily or weekly passes and many regions have 30-day passes for longer stays, or a special card which is valid for travel from Midsummer to mid-August (the major school holiday period). The *Värdekort* (Value Card), which you can 'top up' at any time, is also quite good value: you pay, say, Skr200 for over Skr250 worth of travelling. Always ask how the regional discount pass works: you may have to run the ticket through a machine, press buttons, tell the driver where you want to go, get your ticket stamped or something else of that kind.

Car & Motorcycle

Sweden has good roads and there are no public toll roads or bridges in the country. You usually only need a recognised full driving licence, even for car rental. If bringing your own car, you'll need your vehicle registration documents. Insurance Green Cards are recommended. Fuel and spare parts are widely available, but may be pricey.

Parking can be tricky to find (and very expensive) in the larger cities. Look for parking signs: times (using the 24-hour clock) will indicate when an *avgift* (payment) is required. *Billettomat* (automatic ticket machines) usually cost from Skr5 to Skr15 per hour during the day, but may be free in the evenings and at the weekend. Cities have

multistorey car parks (*P-hus*) that charge between Skr15 and Skr40 per hour.

AUTOMOBILE ASSOCIATIONS

The Swedish national motoring association is **Motormännens Riksförbund** (☎ 020-211111, 08-690 38 00; www.motormannen.se; Sveavägen 159, SE-10435 Stockholm). In case of an emergency, it can help you contact your home club or to find assistance locally.

HIRE

To rent a car you normally have to be at least 18 (sometimes 25) years of age, you need to show a recognised licence (in some cases, an International Driving Permit) and you may be required to pay by credit card.

International car rental chains are expensive, with prices starting from around Skr600 per day for smaller models, but shopping around can turn up some reasonable deals. Fly-drive packages can bring some savings, and weekend or summer packages may also be offered at discount rates. All the major firms (for example Avis, Hertz, Europcar) have desks at Stockholm's Arlanda airport and offices in major cities.

Mabi Hyrbilar (☎ 020-110 1000; www.mabirent.se in Swedish) is a good national company with branches in many major cities and competitive rates. Rates for the smallest car are Skr160 per day plus Skr1.60 per kilometre, or Skr320 per day including 150km. For weekly rentals, prices start at Skr1995, including 1000km. Motorcycles can also be rented through Mabi.

Cars can be hired from many large petrol stations (look for signs saying *hyrbilar* or *biluthyrning*) at reasonable rates, but must be returned to the hiring point. **OK-Q8** (☎ 020-850850; www.okq8.se in Swedish) has small cars from Skr315 per day (including 100km allowance) or Skr550 per day (unlimited kilometres). Weekend rental makes sense for travellers wishing to explore areas not well served by public transport (eg Glasrieket from Kalmar, Bohuslän from Göteborg or Høga Kusten from Sundsvall); prices start at Skr595 (including 300km allowance) or Skr895 (with unlimited kilometres) for a whole weekend. **Statoil** (☎ 0770-252525; www.statoil.se in Swedish) has similar prices. Websites for these companies are in Swedish

only, but you'll probably be able to navigate through to *priser* or *prislister* (prices) for *hyrbilar*.

ROAD HAZARDS

In the northern part of Sweden, privately owned reindeer and wild elk are serious road hazards, particularly around dawn and dusk. Look out for black plastic bags tied to roadside trees or poles – this is a sign from local Sami that they have reindeer herds grazing in the area. Report all incidents to police – failure to do so is an offence. Sandboxes on many roads may be helpful in mud or snow. Also, if driving in Göteborg and Norrköping watch out for trams.

ROAD RULES

The basic rules of the road conform to EU standards. In Sweden, you drive on and give way to the right. Headlights should always be dipped, but must be on at all times when driving. Seat belt use is obligatory for the driver and all passengers. The maximum blood-alcohol limit is a stringent 0.02%, and random breath tests are not uncommon. The maximum permitted speed on all motorways and remote highways is 110km/h. Other speed limits are 50km/h in urban areas, 70km/h outside urban areas and 90km/h on motorways. The speed limit for cars towing caravans is a maximum of 80km/h. Police often use hand-held radar equipment and cameras to detect speeding, and will impose on-the-spot fines.

On many highways you will see broken lines defining wide-paved edges. The vehicle being overtaken is expected to move into this area to allow faster traffic to pass by safely.

Local Transport

In Sweden, local transport is always linked with the regional *länstrafik* – rules and prices for city buses may differ slightly from long-distance transport, but a regional pass is valid both in the city and on the rural routes. There's usually a flat fare of around Skr15 to Skr20 in towns.

Stockholm has an extensive underground metro system, and Göteborg and Norrköping run good tram networks. Göteborg also has a city ferry service.

Train

Trains are certainly the fastest way to get around, although many destinations in the northern half of the country cannot be reached by train alone.

The national network of **Sveriges Järnväg** (SJ; ☎ 0771-757575; www.sj.se) covers most main lines, especially in the southern half of the country. Its flag carriers are the X2000 fast trains running at speeds of up to 200km/h, with services from Stockholm to major destinations. InterCity (regional and inter-regional) trains also run on many of these routes; InterCity fares are cheaper and the journey times longer. **Connex** (☎ 0771-260000; www.connex.se) operates train services in the far north and offers services from Stockholm and Göteborg north as far as Kiruna and across to Narvik in Norway. In addition, several counties run small regional train networks as part of their *länstrafik* service.

There are huge variations on fares depending on time of travel, type of service and concession rate and how far in advance you book your trip. Full-price tickets are expensive, but you'll receive a substantial discount for booking at least a day before departure (ask for the '*just nu*' fare). Students (with a Swedish CSN or SFS student card if aged over 26) and people aged under 26 get up to a 30% discount on the standard adult fare. All SJ ticket prices are reduced in summer, from late June to mid-August, and also during off-peak travel times (10am to 2pm and after 7pm Monday to Thursday, Friday and Sunday until noon, and all day Saturday). On X2000 and InterCity trains, an adult passenger can be accompanied by two children, at no extra charge. X2000 tickets include a seat reservation. Bicycles can be carried on many *länstrafik* trains and on Öresund trains (running between Malmö and Copenhagen), unlike on SJ trains (which won't carry them).

INLANDSBANAN

From mid-June to early August, **Inlandsbanan** (Inland Railway; ☎ 0771-535353; www.inlandsbanan.se) offers one of the great rail journeys in Scandinavia. The 1067km route stretches from Mora to Gällivare; travel is slow (the train travels at 50km/h) and it takes six hours from Mora to Östersund (Skr379)

and 14 hours from Östersund to Gällivare (Skr762). A special card allows two weeks' unlimited travel on the route for Skr1395 (mid-June to mid-July) or Skr1195 (mid-July to early August). InterRail Card users under 26 can travel free, while ScanRail card-holders receive a 25% discount on the two-week pass (but not on individual tickets).

TRAIN PASSES

The Sweden Rail Pass, Eurodomino tickets and InterRail, Eurail and ScanRail passes are accepted on all SJ train serv-

ices and most other operators, such as regional trains. Exceptions to this include the local SL *pendeltåg* trains which run around Stockholm, and the Inlandsbanan train (although some passholders get a discount on Inlandsbanan – see left for more information).

X2000 and overnight trains require all rail passholders to pay a supplement, usually about Skr50 extra (including an obligatory seat reservation). The reservation supplements for non-X2000 trains aren't obligatory, and there are no supplements required for regional *länstrafik* trains.