1 Gamla Stan (Old Town)

Dating from the 1200s and crammed with must-see sights, attractions, cafés, authentic restaurants, and boutique shops, the area of Gamla Stan (Old Town) is a living-breathing museum in its own right. For many, this is the first stop on their journey of exploration. Certainly there's no better way to instantly absorb the feel of Stockholm and get to grips with the city's culture. Plenty of souvenirs and gifts are available in the Old Town, and you will find yourself transported back to medieval times as you meander through a bewildering labyrinth of tiny, winding streets. Mysterious vaults and ancient frescoes lurk behind picturesque facades. If visiting in winter, be sure to take in the marvellous Julmarknad (Christmas Market), an experience akin to being in a fairy tale. Stockholm Cathedral, the Nobel Museum, and the Royal Palace are all located here and should be high up on any sightseeing itinerary. If visiting the Royal Palace be sure to catch the changing of the guard.

## 2 Vasa Museum

The incredible Vasa battleship was intended to be the pride of the Swedish Imperial fleet, yet in a forerunner of the *Titanic* disaster centuries later, sank on its maiden voyage in 1628. An amazing salvage operation took place in 1961, and now you can marvel at this glorious time capsule, 95 percent of which is entirely original. The three masts on the roof of the museum are not just a tourist draw; they were reconstructed to the exact height and specifications of the original masts. This is the most visited museum in [Sweden](https://www.planetware.com/tourist-attractions/sweden-s.htm), and rightfully so. More than one million people a year come here to enjoy the different exhibitions and watch the movie on the ship's history. Entry is free if you are under 18 years of age.

Address: Galärvarvsvägen, 1411521 Stockholm

## 3 Djurgården

## A tranquil oasis in the heart of the city, the island of Djurgården draws tourists and locals alike, particularly during the summer months of long lazy days and short nights. The park forms part of the Royal National City Park, and it's a perfect place for a stroll and picnic as well as being home to several of Stockholm's top museums and other attractions. Scattered about are pleasant cafés, restaurants, snack-bars, and hotels. You can hire bicycles to explore the forest trails or, if you're feeling adventurous, take to the waterways in a canoe. The popular Vasa Museum and Abba the Museum are located here, as is the open-air museum Skansen and Gröna Lund amusement park. A fun way to arrive is by ferry from Gamla Stan or Slussen (both on the T-Bana). Alternatively, jump on a tram from Norrmalmstorg, take the bus, or stroll from the city center (15 minutes). Drop by the Djurgården visitor center for more information.

## 4 Skansen Open-Air Museum

## The oldest open-air museum in the world, Skansen, on the island of Djurgården, is a wonderful attraction for families, particularly those with young children. Not only will you be treated to an authentic taste of Sweden as it once was, but also the wonderful Skansen Aquarium and the Children's Zoo. More than 150 different buildings and houses were collected from all around the country and reassembled here. On display are distinct town districts, including manor houses, a bakery, the beautiful Seglora timber church, and a pottery, all brought to life by costumed staff. At the zoo are moose, bears, lynxes, wolves, and seals. You can visit the aquarium for an extra fee and see more than 200 different animals from around the world, including many species of monkeys. For traditional Swedish Smörgåsbord pay a visit to the Solliden Restaurant.

5 The Royal Palace (Sveriges Kungahus)

A visit here could be a day out in itself. Located by the water's edge on the periphery of Gamla Stan, this is the official residence of the King of Sweden. Interestingly, the Queen's residence lies elsewhere, on the beautiful island and UNESCO World Heritage Site Drottningholm (Queen's island), about a 45-minute ferry ride from Stockholm and an easy day trip. A rich taste of the once mighty Swedish Empire, the palace is one of the largest in [Europe](https://www.planetware.com/europe-travel.htm) boasting in excess of 600 rooms and several museums. Dating from the 18th century and Baroque in style, the palace houses many gems. Here, you can see Queen Kristina's silver throne and visit the Museum of Antiquities, the Armoury, the Tre Kronor (Three Crowns) Museum, and Treasury. Don't miss the daily changing of the guard.

Location: Gamla Stan

## 6 Fotografiska

Fotografiska is Stockholm's museum of contemporary photography and hosts an eclectic mix of exhibitions throughout the year. The complex encompasses a cafe, restaurant, store, and gallery, and from the top floor, you can enjoy one of the most enviable views over the city. In recent years, the museum has seen a huge increase in visitor numbers and is now acknowledged as one of the world's premier photography venues. Serving organic, sustainably-produced cuisine, the restaurant on the top floor is acclaimed as one of the city's coolest eateries (weekend brunch is particularly popular with locals). The gallery also hosts cutting-edge live and club music throughout the year.

Address: Stadsgårdshamnen 22, 11645 Stockholm

## 7 The City Hall (Stadshuset)

Nestled at the water's edge and topped by three golden crowns, the City Hall is one of Stockholm's most iconic buildings and stars in countless images and postcards of the city. Dating from 1923, the hall opened on that most Swedish of dates Midsummer's Eve. Housed within are assembly rooms, offices, works of art, and the machinery of civil democracy. The prestigious annual Nobel Banquets are held here. Recipients dine first in Blå hallen (The Blue Hall) and then move on to the formal ball in Gyllene salen (The Golden Hall), which has no less than 18 million mosaics adorning its walls. A particular treat is the chance to view the city from the famous tower.

Address: Ragnar Östbergs Plan 1, 11220 Stockholm

## 8 Boat Tours

## The sea flows through the arteries of Stockholm, and during the summer months, the city is quite literally awash with boats of all shapes and sizes. Many city-dwellers own summer houses on the islands of the skärgården (archipelago) and spend, if not the entire summer there, then most weekends. It all makes for a Friday evening commute like no other. Bearing all this in mind, to experience Stockholm from the water is surely a must-do for any visitor. Take a trip under the bridges of Stockholm or while away an hour or two on the Royal Canal Tour. There are also hop-on, hop-off options with a valid ticket lasting 24 hours.

## 9 Moderna Museet

At Moderna Museet, you can dip your toes into one of Europe's foremost collections of art from the 20th century to today, featuring works by artists such as Picasso, Dali, Derkert, and Matisse. The museum exhibits everything from modern classics to contemporary art, including film, photography, drawings, prints, and whimsical outdoor sculptures. On picturesque Skeppsholmen island, the building of Moderna Museet was designed by Rafael Moneo, a Spanish architect. The museum offers a world-class program of temporary exhibitions, a children's workshop, a shop, a library, and a pleasant restaurant with beautiful views of Djurgården and Strandvägen. Guided tours are available. The museum's second gallery lies in [Malmö](https://www.planetware.com/tourist-attractions-/malmo-s-skn-mal.htm).

Address: Exercisplan 2, 11142 Stockholm

## 10 Royal National City Park

## The right-to-roam (allemansrätten) is an indelible part of the Swedish psyche. The Royal National City Park is a six-mile-long, 27 square-kilometer green space surrounding and snaking into Stockholm and encompassing three royal parks: Djurgården, Haga, and Ulriksdal. This, the world's first national urban park, is where tourists and locals flock to unwind. The forest harbors moose, foxes, deer, and many winged beauties, including rare birds. Fun things to do include enjoying the museums, castles, theaters, sports facilities, and historic homes. Nature lovers will be in heaven exploring wilderness areas with centuries-old oak trees, streams, lakes, marshes, enticing swimming spots, and craggy hilltops. It truly is hard to believe you're in the middle of a thriving capital city.

## 11 Östermalm

## If it's Stockholm designer chic you're after, then look no further. Östermalm is the most exclusive district in the city. Exclusive international labels rub shoulders with high-class Scandinavian design. On Biblioteksgatan, there's an abundance of flagship shops and designer boutiques, while the neighborhood around Stureplan offers plenty of posh shops - some with sky-high price tags. Lovers of art and interior design will enjoy Svenskt Tenn and Malmstenbutiken, at the beginning of Strandvägen near Nybroviken. Many of Sweden's top antique dealers lie around the Kommendörsgatan neighborhood. Be sure to drop by Östermalmshallen for the absolute best in Swedish fresh food and produce.

## 12 SkyView: The Globe

Situated on Stockholm's southern fringe, SkyView takes you to the top of the world's largest spherical building, the Ericsson Globe, one of Stockholm's modern landmarks. From 130 meters above sea level, you'll be treated to an unforgettable view over the entire city. Tours aboard the gondolas take about 30 minutes and depart every ten minutes, but be prepared for long lines at peak times of the day. After the trip, sightseers can visit the restaurant and souvenir shop.

Address: Globentorget 2, 12177 Stockholm