**Stockholm**

**Tours: HOHO (https://www.redbuses.com/our-tours/hop-on-hop-off-bus-stockholm/?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIl5rmnLjJ3AIVjCSGCh09ywmgEAAYAiAAEgK53\_D\_BwE)**

* 24 / 72 hour hop on hop off ticket with unlimited travel.
* Our hotel is 300 meters from Stop 3
* Price per person: EUR 55
* Discover the beautiful city of Stockholm with Red Buses in Open Air Double-Decker buses! Hop on and off as much as you like at any of our over 20 conveniently-located stops around the city.
* With our Red Boats, you can hop-on and hop-off at the various stops as often as you like. Stops include places, such as the Royal Palace, the Vasa Museum (Also nearby other popular “must see” attractions), Old Town, Nybroviken (downtown area with shopping and restaurants).
* Hop-On Hop-Off Boats depart every 20 minutes 10 am – 6 pm.
* Royal Bridges and Canal Tour departs daily every hour 10 am – 5 pm from Royal Palace and 10 minutes after from Nybroplan

**Gamla Stan (stop 8) – old town**

**Free walking tour**

You’ll hardly be the first to go there, but no visit to Stockholm would be complete without wandering the cobbled medieval streets of Gamla Stan (Old Town). Since this is the original heart of the city it’s also a fitting place to start your trip.

Aside from the predictable souvenir shops there are also a number of unusual and interesting stores in this area. Fair trade toys, Swedish candy canes and handicrafts made by blind artisans are among the items on sale here, but you’ll need to head off the main drag (Västerlånggatan) and explore the alleyways and parallel streets to find them.

**Ostermalms Saluhall (stop 18 – 1.1 kms from this stop)**

**1.1 km from hotel**

Dating back to 1888, this food hall was considered one of the best in the world when it opened – a title it continues to hold today. It retains many of its original details with each stall having a carved wooden stand and sign and remains THE place in Stockholm for food lovers.

Many stallholders have been selling their wares for here for generations and you’ll find fresh fruit and vegetables, meat and seafood with the emphasis on high quality and organic produce. You can also choose from a dizzying variety of fresh bread, cheeses, speciality teas and coffee and those with a sweet tooth (all of us?) are well catered for with a barely resistible array of chocolate goodies.

When you’re done shopping (or browsing) there are plenty of places to sit down and eat a tasty lunch or snack.

**Stadshuset (City Hall) (stop 21)**

**10 am to 3 pm**

**SEK 110 per person**

This huge brick building on the waterfront was originally intended to be painted blue, but fortunately the architect had a change of heart after seeing how good his creation looked in the sunlight. It’s an impressive place with a 106m high tower offering great views (open summer only).

You can take a guided tour all year round during which you can follow in the footsteps of past Nobel Prize winners. They get to enjoy a banquet in the Blue Hall which unfortunately is missing from the tour agenda, but that is perhaps a little too much to expect. After dinner the recipients, guests and royalty dance the night away in the Golden Hall, so called because its walls are covered in 18 million gold mosaic tiles showing scenes from Swedish history. Stadshuset is not even a hundred years old – it opened in 1923 – but its design, based on the city hall of Siena in Italy gives it a Renaissance look. On top of the tower you can see three gold crowns (Tre Kroner) – Sweden’s national coat of arms. Free entry with Stockholm Card.

**The Nobel Peace Prize is awarded in Oslo, Norway and the Nobel Prizes in Physics, Chemistry, Physiology or Medicine and Literature and the Prize in Economic Sciences are awarded in Stockholm, Sweden.**

**Vasa Museum (stop 13) – 3 kms from hotel**

**8:30 am to 6 pm**

Next it’s time for some nautical history. Jump on a ferry (or take the bus, tram, walk or cycle) to the Vasa Museum for a lesson in the perils of vanity. The story of the Vasa warship is not quite as glorious as its wonderfully-preserved appearance might suggest.

She was built in 1620 for the Swedish king in his war with Poland. With 64 cannons over two gun decks the warship was the biggest in the fleet but fatally unstable. Despite nearly capsizing during testing with only 30 men she was put to sea, only to list to one side after a few minutes and sink having travelled just 1,300 metres.

A third of the crew perished – many more would have died if the Vasa had made it to its planned stop in the archipelago to pick up another 300 soldiers. Discovered in 1956 and raised in 1961, a custom-designed museum became her final resting place in 1991. The Vasa is the best-preserved and biggest ship of its kind on the planet as the water in which she lay is a hostile environment for shipworm – the usual suspect in the destruction of wooden ships on the ocean floor.

Come early in the high season to avoid the queues, watch the film first then have a look at this flawed masterpiece, and remind yourself of the fate of its crew by viewing the skeletons exhibited near the base of the ship. If you need refreshment after all that there is an excellent café/restaurant here too. Free entry with Stockholm Card.

**Rosendals Trädgård (Rosendal’s Garden)**

**Stop 14 – 2 kms walk**

Continuing on the food theme, Rosendals Trädgård is one of Stockholm’s unique treasures. It’s a classy garden centre located on the leafy island of Djurgården and you’ll soon forget how close to the city you actually are. The highlight here is the café, which sells some of the city’s best cakes, sandwiches, pastries, soups and salads all made on the premises from organic and biodynamic ingredients, many of which come from the garden itself (if in season). It’s a popular place in the summer months with plenty of room to sit in the sun.

**Fotografiska (**Bus: 500m from stop 5 / Boat: stop 7)

**120 SEK**

**9 am to 11 pm**

One of the more recent additions to Stockholm’s cultural scene, Fotografiska is also one of its best. After a grand opening in 2010 the national museum of photography has rapidly become a world-class centre for modern photography.

Some of the international names to have already exhibited at Fotografiska include Annie Leibovitz, Lennart Nilsson and Robert Mapplethorpe. Rather than just hanging pictures on walls, the museum encourages debate and interaction with courses and seminars and also houses an academy.

Again, there is an excellent café and restaurant here with spectacular views (it is right on the waterfront) and if you have a Stockholm Card (see below) admission is included so it’s basically a no-brainer. Free entry with Stockholm Card.

**Hermans (130 m from stop 5)**

Vegetarians are catered for in a big way at Hermans, but carnivores should head over here too for both the excellent food and the amazing view over the city and waterfront. The fixed price buffet is top value (possible one of the best dining deals in Stockholm) and is available for both lunch and dinner. If the weather permits, the restaurant adds a barbeque out on the terrace in the evening.

Hermans does a great job in promoting vegetarian food by providing such a choice; fifteen different salads, three warm dishes, rice, potatoes and bread – each weekend sees a different theme so the buffet will have an Indian, Middle Eastern, Mediterranean, Mexican or Scandinavian flavour.

**The Royal Palace (stop 9)**

**The Royal Guards Ceremony at the Royal Palace of Stockholm lasts about 40 minutes. It starts at 12:15pm in the palace outer courtyard on weekdays, and at 1:15pm on Sundays.**

Like any good European Capital, Stockholm boasts a beautiful Royal Palace. Located on Stadholmen in Gamla Stan is open to visitors (but check the schedule before visiting, when I was there it was closed Mondays). Although the Palace is not the actual residence of Swedish Royalty (you can find them in Drottningholm palace), the Royal Palace is still considered to be a working palace as it where the offices for the Royal Family and the Royal Court of Sweden are located. In a nutshell, this means they have guards. Why is this exciting? Because the guards for the Swedish Royal Palace will actually talk to you, unlike many of their European counterparts (ahem England). Go ahead and say ‘hi’ – I dare you!

**Free Tour Stockholm**

**500 meters from hotel - For timings ask the hotel help desk**

Stockholm is another city taking advantage of their tips-only city tours, and being one of the top rated things to do in the city, it’s definitely worth your time. Tours meet at Sergels Torg and run about 1 hr 30min or so. I took the Old Town tour where we spent our time learning about the city’s dark history, finding traces of Viking history, and checking out ABBA’s old home. Check the schedule online to find tour times and dates.