

Title:

Copenhagen - Of Elephants and Ice Rinks

Word Count:

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Summary:

On my first visit to Denmark, I fell in love with the country and the city of Copenhagen. Contrary to my guidebook, you could see elephants and experience ice hockey in the dead of summer.

Keywords:

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Article Body:

On my first visit to Denmark, I fell in love with the country and the city of Copenhagen. Contrary to my guidebook, you could see elephants and experience ice hockey in the dead of summer.

The Hanson Brothers

Upon arriving in Copenhagen, I was burned out from backpacking and looking forward to a good nap. I was traveling with three other Americans and we became distressed as each subsequent hostel told us all beds were sold. After asking around [okay, we were in a bar], we were given a lift by a local to a "hotel" guaranteed to have space.

I could only sigh as we pulled up to the ice rink for the local professional team. Since we were "high and dry", we entered and booked our beds. Left face off dot. Yes, our beds were arranged around the left face off dot. To make a little extra money during the summer, the rink melted the ice and set up beds everywhere. The scene can best be described as a giant collection of cubicles in an office with beds instead of desks. It was cheap, dry and had a communal feel since you could hear everything. If you've seen the movie "Slap Shot", it was like living with a few hundred Hanson Brothers.

Danish Elephants

Okay, there was one Danish elephant. Okay, it was made out of wood. And poured beer. From its trunk. Ah, let me start at the beginning.

Having been befriended by some local Danes, we were asked in hushed tones if we would like to see real Danish elephants. Yes, we'd be able to touch them. No, they weren't dangerous. We could even ride them? Wow, this was going to be a great entry in my Nomad travel journal.

We were picked up at the ice rink that evening and taken to the center of town. We stopped in front of what looked like all the world to be a small tavern. This is where they keep the elephants? We walked into a small tavern with...a life-sized, wood elephant.

As it turned out, the elephant was the world's biggest and best beer dispensing unit. Put your glass under the trunk and pull down on a tusk to dispense your beverage of choice. Each tusk provided a different beer, but I investigated the mechanism far too often that evening and don't recall the brands. Unfortunately, there didn't appear to be an aspirin elephant anywhere to be seen the next morning.

If you're going to be visiting Copenhagen and don't give a hoot about privacy, the ice rink hotel can't be beat for price and a communal spirit. Well, maybe by the Danish elephants, but don't tell anyone I told you.