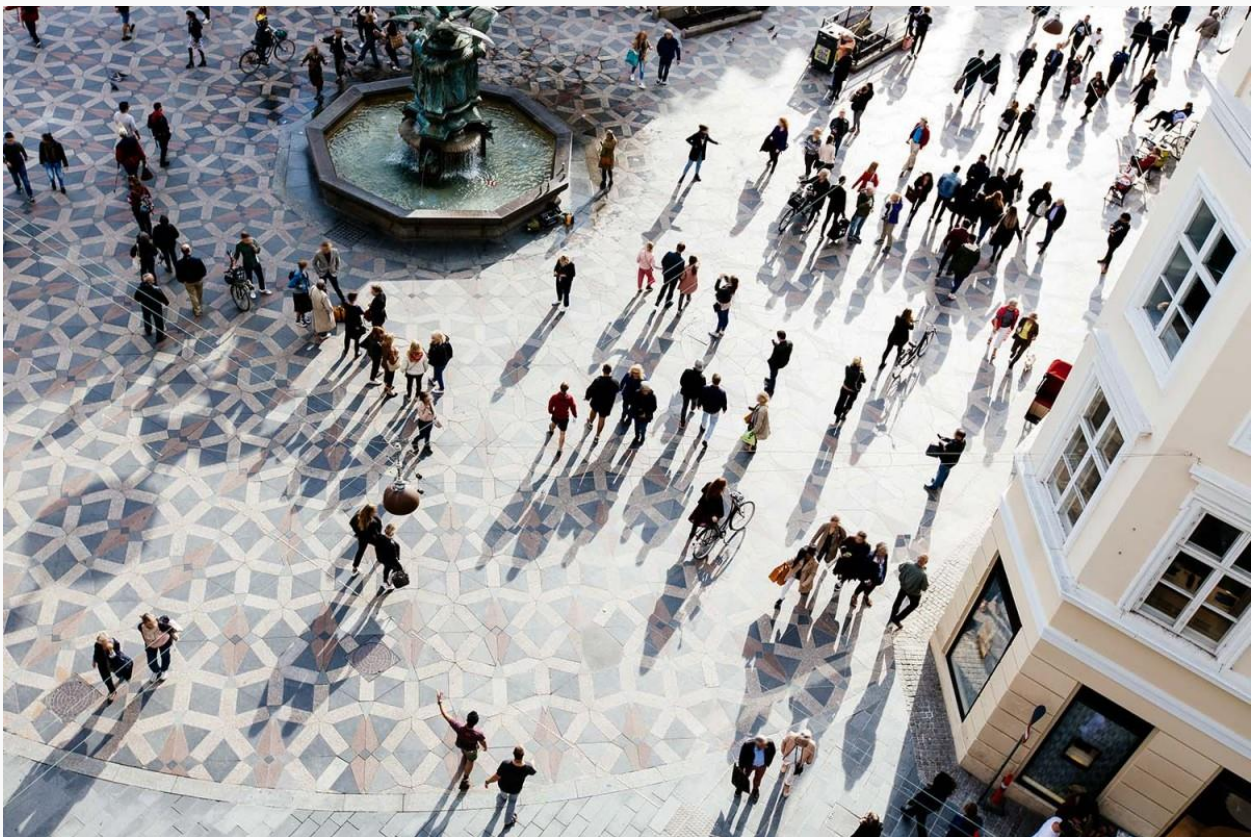


InsideHook

Scandinavian Cities Are Seeing More Tourists As Global Temperatures Rise

Trading France for the fjords



Tourists are flocking to Copenhagen

BY AMANDA OGLE

A long week in Paris strolling through the city's arrondissements. Pub crawling through London. Meandering through Barcelona in search of incredible architecture. These are all typical vacations people take. But as the global temperature continues to rise every year, more and

more tourists are choosing to skip Paris and London in the summer months, as cities that were once mild in the summer are now too hot to handle.

In the past 30 years, temperatures across Europe have increased at more than twice the global average — the highest of any continent in the world, according to the **World Meteorological Organization**. Last summer, cities across Europe **set triple-digit records** that left tourists frolicking in water fountains for a bit of respite from the heat, and in the summer of 2019, train commuters faced **severe delays** as engineers struggled to fix damaged rail lines that buckled and expanded under stress from high temperatures.

And while Scandinavian countries are no exception to rising global temperatures, tourists are now flocking to places like Norway, Denmark and Finland in pursuit of their comparatively cooler weather and a break from the heat. It's a phenomenon dubbed "climate tourism," according to a hotelier I spoke with on a recent trip to Norway, who told me tourists are eager to explore less-visited Scandinavian countries rather than balmy cities like Paris, Rome, Berlin and London. And data is backing up these claims, too. According to a **recent report** from Travel Weekly, summer bookings with EF Go Ahead Tours to Scandinavia are up 50% this year compared with summer 2019, and Kensington Tours reports Finland sales are up 71%, while Norway's have gone up 45%. They've also seen tourists gauge a

"Travelers from traditionally warmer locations, such as Dubai, Shanghai, Miami and even New York, are now more cautious to book city destinations like Rome, Paris and London due to the rising summer temperatures these destinations are experiencing," says Robert Holan, General Manager at **The Thief** hotel in Oslo, Norway. He also notes that many travelers are aware of the cooler temperatures places like Norway offer, and that travelers are always looking for something they can't experience at home. "We see that many visitors to Scandinavia look at weather as a vital part of their journey. They want

to see powerful clouds, feel colder winds, take a dip in ice-cold glacier water or even have an excuse to buy a new down feather jacket.”



Stroget in Copenhagen Getty

Another perk of traveling to a less-touristed locale is the expectations that tend to come with it. Of course, a Roman holiday to see the Colosseum and toss a coin in the Trevi Fountain are bucket-list checks for most travelers, but how enjoyable can that be in 100-plus degree weather with tourists packed together tightly, dousing themselves with water to stay cool while sweaty and miserable? It can damper a once-in-a-lifetime experience that you put high expectations on, souring something you built up to be great. But Scandinavian countries don't generally have the mass-touristed landmarks like the Eiffel Tower and Stonehenge that draw in huge crowds, meaning visitor expectations can sometimes be lower, with tourists being more open to how to experience these countries. Holan notes that he and his team have noticed that many travelers to Norway have less expectations when

visiting compared to a Parisian or Roman vacation, which leaves more room for those “wow” moments.

“The mighty fjords and northern lights have and still are major highlights for many tourists, but recently, we are seeing an increase in more active and adventure-based experiences such as ice bathing and sauna, fishing in Lofoten, ocean kayaking or cold-water surfing on the west coast,” he says. “Travelers are also seeking more authentically local experiences, and the possibility of experiencing a wow moment in Norway, for example, is highly likely. We see many visitors leaving with once-in-a-lifetime memories.”

Whether you choose to visit the larger cities like Helsinki and Oslo or escape to smaller seaside towns and Arctic Circle locales, adventure awaits those looking for cooler weather out of a summertime vacation in Scandinavia. **Below, a few recommendations on places to dine, stay and frolic in Scandinavia:**



The Oslo Opera House Getty

Oslo, Norway

As the capital of Norway, Oslo is a haven for city lovers and a great starting or ending point for Nordic exploration. It's walkable, full of world-class museums and art, and has lots of happening neighborhoods to explore.

Where to Stay: *Amerikalinjen*

In the city center of Oslo, **Amerikalinjen** (meaning America Line) is a lively boutique hotel that was once the headquarters for Amerikalinjen: the steamship line that took Norwegians across the Atlantic to the U.S. for a new life and new opportunities in the early 20th century. One hundred years later, the doors of Amerikalinjen are open again and the spirit of a century past lives inside the walls. Sip a cocktail from the same glassware that was used on the steamships. Pick up your room telephone and a man tells you stories from 100 years ago. Rooms are modern with large windows looking out over the city and fjord, and on-site dining options represent Norwegian and American cuisine. Don't miss a night of jazz at Gustav, located in the basement.

The Thief

Located on Thief Island, a once run-down area of town home to criminals and bad news that has since been revitalized, **The Thief** offers rooms with private balconies overlooking the Oslofjord. Relax with a spa treatment and lounge in the spa facilities at leisure, then grab dinner at Thief Restaurant or Thief Rooftop, where dishes like smoked salmon with trout roe and pickled apple puree, Skagen toast, and Norwegian brown crab amaze guests and locals alike. Take a walk through the property to see carefully curated international art pieces, and don't miss rooftop live music.

Where to Eat:

TAK Oslo

On the rooftop of the **Sommerro** hotel, **TAK Oslo** serves Nordic-Japanese fusion made from local and seasonal products.

Anne Pa Landet, Hølse-Lovisa's House

Located next to a waterfall, this small house-turned-café is a cozy and quaint stop for fresh and simple dishes. The chicken soup is phenomenal and served year round, as are the waffles, which come from a recipe more than 150 years old.

Mathallen Oslo

If you want to sample a range of dishes at once, **Mathallen** food hall is the way to go. Sample tacos, pasta, Korean corndogs, cheeses, Norwegian dishes, tapas, and more.

What to Do:

KOK Oslo

Scandinavia's sauna culture comes to Oslo in the form of KOK's floating saunas. Take a plunge right from the dock in the center of Oslo, or cruise out into the fjord while periodically jumping in during stops. The hot stove within the sauna keeps you warm in between frigid dips, and you can even dive from the sauna's roof if you wish.

SNO Oslo

Bring the outdoors in with Snø Oslo, where you can ski, snowboard, and even ice climb all under one roof. Gear rentals are available, and eateries are on site for post-ice climb lunch.

Museums

Oslo is full of world-class museums, including the **Munch**, which is dedicated to the works of Norwegian artist Edvard Munch and contemporary art; the **Norsk Folkemuseum**, full of restored buildings, folk costumes, photos, and artifacts; and the new **National Museum**, which holds Norway's largest collection of art, design, and architecture.



Copenhagen Getty

Copenhagen, Denmark

Denmark's capital city is beloved for its bike culture, green living, colorful history, and modern architecture. Grab a bicycle and explore the city on two wheels for the most authentic Copenhagen experience.

Where to stay:

Villa Copenhagen

Conveniently located right next to the train station, Villa Copenhagen brings the old Central Post and Telegraph Head Office building back to life. Vintage charm meets modern luxury here, where guests enjoy coffee and cocktails under the glass ceiling of the Courtyard Bar, a sustainably produced meal from Kontrast (try the fish with champagne sauce), or a pastry from on-site bakery Rug.

Where to Eat:

Restaurant Koefoed

This former coal cellar turned restaurant serves up classic Scandinavian plates and design. Meals include open-faced sandwiches of herring, smoked salmon, chicken salad, and more, plus Danish cheese plates and the must-try infused aquavits.

Kødbyens Fiskebar

Seafood has never been fresher than at Kødbyens Fiskebar in the Meatpacking District. Dine on oysters and scallops for the table, then share a whole fish or lobster fresh from the sea.

What to Do:

Canal Boat Tour

See Copenhagen's colorful Nyhavn canal from the water with **Hey Captain**, where you'll play tourist from the comfort of a small boat while cruising past the Royal Palace, the free town of Christiania, or the city's hidden gems. Seasonal drinks are available for purchase.

CopenHill

One of the best views of Copenhagen is from the roof of CopenHill, a waste management center with an artificial ski slope and hiking area on the roof. Head to the top for sweeping views, or strap on some skis or hiking boots and trek down the slope. There's also two cafés on site for post-adventure snacking.

Tivoli Gardens

A classic Copenhagen experience, Tivoli Gardens first opened in 1843 and is the world's second-oldest amusement park. It's where Walt Disney found inspiration for Disney World, and today entertains the young and young at heart with rides, theaters, a concert hall, a food hall, and lots of on-site bars and restaurants.



Helsinki Market Square Getty

Helsinki, Finland

Finland's southern capital boasts quirky yet impressive architecture, a prime seaside location on the Gulf of Finland, and plenty to offer in the form of outdoor spaces, museums, restaurants, and more.

Where to Stay:

Hotel St. George

In the heart of Helsinki, Hotel St. George is housed in the former printing house for the first Finnish newspaper. Rooms and suites offer all the modern necessities, and the glass-domed Wintergarden Bar is the perfect place to unwind with a cocktail or afternoon tea.

Where to Eat:

Ekberg Café

As Finland's oldest bakery, Ekberg Café is usually packed with patrons stopping in for a quick coffee and pastry. Lunch options include fresh salads and soups, plus quiches and seafood sandwiches.

Kuurna

Local is the name of the game at Kuurna, where the menu changes every three weeks according to what's in season. Offerings could include things like pepper steak, pike perch and steak tartare.

What to Do:

Suomenlinna

Take the ferry over to Suomenlinna, an 18th-century sea fortress with defensive walls and UNESCO World Heritage Site designation. Restaurants, museums, and shops cater to visitors, leaving you plenty of options for an afternoon of exploration.

Löyly

Experience Finland's saunana culture at Löyly, where you can sweat it out in public and private saunas, then take dips in the sea between sauna sessions. Don't miss the restaurant here either, as it's a top choice in the city serving up everything from burgers and salmon soup to flank steak and fresh fish.

Amos Rex

An art museum combining contemporary and Modernist works, Amos Rex is located underneath Lasipalatsi square. The building consists of concrete domes with skylights that allow natural light to penetrate the galleries below, creating a very Instagrammable experience.