

NORDIC DIVINE TOURS 2009 – ITINERARY 15 DAYS

Day 1. Copenhagen

Wonderful, wonderful Copenhagen. The capital of Denmark and Scandinavia's second largest city. One of Europe's oldest and most wonderful capitals. Copenhagen has a welcoming, continental and international atmosphere. It is, as the Danes say, a "dejlig" (beautiful) city.

There are numerous world-famous attractions, including the Little Mermaid, the Tivoli Gardens, the Royal Palace (Amalienborg), the Opera House, and Nyhavn (New Harbour).

The programme begins at 14.00 at Hotel D'Angleterre in the centre of the city.

Welcome champagne and introductory information about your Nordic Divine Tour

Short afternoon tour of the city comprising:

Walk along Strøget from Kongens Nytorv (King's New Square) to Rådhuspladsen (City Hall Square).

Dinner at Hotel D'Angleterre – six-course tasting menu

Accommodation at Hotel D'Angleterre (www.dangleterre.com)

- *Kongens Nytorv was founded by King Christian V in 1670, the same year he ascended the throne. The square is modelled on Place Vendôme in Paris. The King decreed that only houses of distinction should be built round the square. A number of palaces were built there in the following years, including Charlottenborg (see below) and Thott.*
- *Strøget is the collective name for the streets around the famous pedestrianised shopping area, including Frederiksberggade, Vimmelskaftet, Amagertorv and Østergade. Strøget is perfect for shopping, with its many unique stores offering a wide range of designer clothes, glass, china and jewellery. Prestigious department stores Illum and Magasin are also located in the area.*
- *Copenhagen's City Hall gives its name to Rådhuspladsen. Strøget begins here. The square is home to a large statue of Hans Christian Andersen, the well-known Danish author and poet famous for fairy tales such as The Steadfast Tin Soldier, The Snow Queen, The Little Mermaid and The Little Match Girl. The square is often a venue for public gatherings and street performers.*

Day 2. Copenhagen

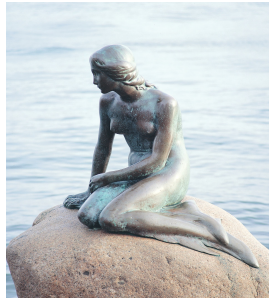
Sightseeing including: The Little Mermaid, Nyhavn, Amalienborg Palace, Rosenborg Palace and Christiansborg Palace.

Lunch on Strøget.

Afternoon free for shopping.

Evening at Tivoli Gardens including Dinner.

Accommodation at Hotel D'Angleterre.



- *The Little Mermaid. In one of his famous tales, Hans Christian Andersen tells the story of a little mermaid who is the daughter of the great Sea King. She is half human, half fish, and is forced to sit on her rock for 300 years before she is allowed to enter the world of humans. The Little Mermaid was created by sculptor Edvard Eriksen and placed on her rock in Copenhagen Harbour in 1913.*



- *Nyhavn began as a busy trading harbour in 1673. Ships from all over the world anchored here and life in the harbour area was dominated by seamen, public houses, parties and girls. The new harbour became known as Nyhavn. The quaint, crooked, old houses have been carefully renovated into colourful, cosy, indoor and outdoor restaurants. A wonderful atmosphere fills the harbour with life and captivates the nostalgia.*



- *Amalienborg Palace is the winter residence of Queen Margarethe and her husband Prince Henrik, their son Crown Prince Frederik and his wife Crown Princess Mary. The Palace comprises four buildings constructed round an octagonal courtyard by four prominent noblemen at the request of King Frederik V in the middle of the 13th century. In 1794 the Royal Family moved into the four palace buildings. The Palace is considered to be one of Europe's greatest architectural masterpieces. The Changing of the Guard takes place at the Palace every day at 12.00.*
- *Rosenborg Castle was planned and built at the beginning of the 17th century by King Christian IV. It came to be his summer residence. It was used as a Royal residence until around 1710, when Christian IV's great grandson, Frederik IV, gave it up in favour of other, more up-to-date, summer residences. Rosenborg then became the setting for the Royal collections – the Crown Jewels and the Crown Regalia. After the reign of Frederik IV, Rosenborg was only used as a Royal residence twice – and both times were emergencies; when Christiansborg Palace burnt down in 1794 and during the British attack on Copenhagen in 1801.*
- *Christiansborg Palace is the most significant building in Denmark. It is the home of Danish democracy, Folketinget (the Danish Parliament), the Supreme Court and the Royal Reception Rooms. Kings and queens have been crowned and married here for many centuries. The Palace has burnt to the ground and been rebuilt twice, in 1794 and again in 1884.*



- *Tivoli Gardens is one of the most famous amusement parks and pleasure gardens in the world. The park opened its gates for the first time in 1843. Tivoli is a fairytale world, with impressive gardens containing many thousands of flowers, fairy light illuminations, and everything from carousels to theatres and gourmet restaurants.*

Day 3. Louisiana–Helsingör–Helsingborg–Mölle

On the way to Louisiana, Museum of Moderna Art, a visit to Karen Blixen Museum is planned. Continue by coach to Helsingör and Kronborg Castle.

Lunch in the quaint streets of Helsingör.

Ferry to Helsingborg in Sweden where we will visit Sofiero Palace and Gardens and have coffee.

We will continue on to Kullaberg – Mölle where we will have dinner and accommodation at Grand Hotel. (www.grand-molle.se)

- *The Karen Blixen Museum opened in May 1991. It occupies the house in which Karen Blixen was born, Rungstedlund, and to which she returned in 1931 following 17 years as a farmer in Africa. She lived at Rungstedlund until her death in 1962 and it was here that she wrote all her internationally renowned stories. Rungstedlund is situated in North Sealand, on the shores of the Öresund Strait, and behind the house itself there are 40 acres of land comprising garden, meadow and grove. In accordance with Karen Blixen's wishes, the area is preserved as a bird sanctuary, but is open to visitors. Karen Blixen was buried in the grounds, at the foot of Ewald's Hill.*
- *Louisiana Museum of Modern Art has a panorama view over the Öresund Strait between Copenhagen and Helsingör. The museum is set in its own sculpture park. The unique interaction of art, landscape and the museum's architecture makes Louisiana one of Denmark's most popular cultural attractions. Louisiana is internationally renowned for its exhibitions and its permanent collection of modern art. (www.louisiana.dk)*



- *Helsingör is situated in Denmark at the narrowest part of the Öresund Strait. The town's history can be traced back to 70 AD. Kronborg Castle in Helsingör is one of Denmark's most famous attractions. It was built in Dutch Renaissance style and has a superb location at the gateway to Öresund. An aerial view shows that the defences form the shape of a crown. The play Hamlet, written by William Shakespeare and set in Kronborg Castle, has contributed greatly to the castle's fame. The Castle was added to the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2000.*
- *Helsingborg is one of Scandinavia's oldest towns. Fleets of Viking ships often passed through the Öresund Strait and in order to secure the crossing between Sealand (Denmark) and Scania (Sweden) a simple fortification was built on the Landborgen cliffs, probably as early as the end of the 10th century. The official founding date of the town is acknowledged to be 21 May 1085.*
- *Sofiero Palace was built in 1864. The Palace has served as a summer residence for Swedish kings and queens. It is surrounded by spectacular gardens containing more than 10 000 rhododendrons and azaleas.*



Photo: Christer Akerberg

- *The Kullaberg Nature Reserve provides a magnificent natural environment which has been awarded three stars in the prestigious Guide Michelin's guidebook to Swedish sights. On the tip of the Kullaberg peninsula lies Kullen Lighthouse, which has the most powerful lighthouse beam in Scandinavia. The dramatic rocky landscape and rare flora and fauna attract botanists, birdwatchers, divers and climbers alike. The area is very popular and a favourite tourist destination.*
- *Mölle-by-the-Sea lies at the foot of Kullaberg. An ancient fishing community with traditions dating back to the 17th century. During the 19th century, Mölle developed into an exclusive bathing resort conforming to the ideals of the era. At the beginning of the 20th century, it became renowned for its 'scandalous' mixed-sex bathing and the village's reputation as a den of iniquity for the jet-set spread throughout Europe. Its popularity increased rapidly. New hotels were built and people made pilgrimages to the resort to bathe, walk and socialise. There was even a direct train from Berlin to Mölle. Nowadays Mölle is a much-loved holiday resort, famous for its special white light, wonderful natural environment and fine golf course.*

Day 4. Mölle–Oslo

A visit to the lighthouse – Scandinavia's most powerful beacon with a spectacular view.

We continue to Krapperup Manor.

Coach to Oslo in Norway, approximately 5 hours. Lunch break on the way.

Early evening sightseeing, Karl Johan's Gate (Karl Johan Street) with dinner at Theatercaféen.

Accommodation at Grand Hotel. (www.grand.no)



Photo: Cecilia Thell

- *Krapperup Manor has been in existence since the Middle Ages. It is one of Scania's oldest and most influential manor houses, dating back to the 13th century. At that time, the Krapperup Estate was responsible for administering the community of Mölle.*
- *Oslo, previously known as Kristiania and Christiania, is the capital of Norway. The city's roots can be traced back to around 1000 and in 1299 the city became the country's capital. Central Oslo is surrounded by ranges of wooded hills to the north-west, north, north-east and south-east. The most famous of these is Holmenkollen to the north-west of the city.*



Photo: Nancy Bundt, Innovation Norway

- *Karl Johans Gate runs through central Oslo from Central Station in the south-east to the Royal Palace in the north-west. Oslo Cathedral, Stortinget (Parliament), the National Theatre and the original buildings of Oslo University – including the University Hall with murals painted by Edvard Munch – all lie along Karl Johans Gate. The shops along this street offer shopping in all price categories and there is also a wide selection of restaurants. After he moved back to the Norwegian capital in 1891, poet and playwright Henrik Ibsen used to sit at his regular table at the classic Grand Café in the traditionally elegant Grand Hotel.*

Day 5. Oslo–Myrdal–Flåm

The day begins with a visit to Munch Museum to view the artistic works of Edvard Munch, including the famous *Scream*.

At midday we start round trip “Sognefjord in a nutshell” with a five-hour train journey from Oslo to Myrdal, a journey providing amazing scenery along the way. Lunch on the train.

(www.fjordtours.com)

In Myrdal, we change trains for the Flåm Railway and embark on a breathtaking one-and-a-half-hour train journey.

Dinner and accomodation at Fretheim Hotel in Flåm. (www.fretheim-hotel.no)

- *The Munch Museum is an art museum dedicated solely to the life and works of Edvard Munch. The museum opened in 1963 – one hundred years after his birth – and was purpose-built to house the unique collection of his works that he bequeathed to the City of Oslo on his death in 1944. The Scream (Skrik, in Norwegian) is an expressionist work painted by Munch in 1893. Many consider it to be his greatest.*



Photo: Jens Henrik Nybo, Innovation Norway

- *Sognefjorden is Norway's longest and deepest fjord. This king of fjords lies in the middle of Fjord Norway and stretches more than 200 kilometres inland to the foot of the Jotunheimen Mountain. The dramatic landscape is surely one of the most beautiful travel destinations in the world. This round trip combines a beautiful boat journey on the Sognefjord with a spectacular train journey on the Flåm Railway.*
- *The Flåm Railway descends slowly and the views of sheer cliff faces make it hard to believe that you can take a train through this landscape. In the village of Flåm, which nestles in the innermost corner of the Aurlandsfjord, there is time to eat and take a short walk. If you want to spend more time in Flåm, we recommend a visit to the Flåm Railway Museum.*

Day 6. Flåm–Sognefjord–Bergen–Stockholm

We take an express boat out to Sognefjord and then on to Bergen.

Free time in Bergen before flight to Stockholm, Sweden.

Dinner and accomodation at Grand Hotel. (www.grandhotel.se)

- *On the journey by express boat out to Sognefjord we pass magnificent high mountains along Aurlandsfjord. Out towards the sea, the scenery becomes more open and there is rich and varied birdlife. Sognefjord is Norway's deepest (1.309 m) and longest (204 km) fjord.*
- *Bergen is Norway's second largest city and Gateway to the Fjords. It replaced Trondheim as Norway's capital in 1217 and became one of the most important*

members of the Hanseatic League towards the end of the 13th century. Bergen was also the home of Edward Grieg, the composer who introduced the world to music inspired by the Norwegian landscapes. The city's old quayside, Bryggen, is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

- *Stockholm – ‘the capital of Scandinavia’. The city of Stockholm is built on 14 islands that are connected by 57 bridges. The city takes its unique character from a blend of the 13th century Old Town and high-tech modern architecture. Stockholm's islands border on Lake Mälaren to the west and the Baltic Sea to the east, where the archipelago and its 30 000 islands await exploration. Stockholm is a city of contrasts – water and islands, history and innovation, small town and big city, short winter days and long, light summer nights – with a dazzling array of impressions. Stockholm is considered to have one of the cleanest environments of all Europe's capital cities.*

Day 7. Stockholm

Walk or coach to Djurgården with a visit to Skansen. Lunch will be at Ulla Winblad followed by a short walk in the city centre around Norrmalmstorg, Biblioteksgatan and Kungsträdgården.

Afternoon is free.

Dinner (concert, if possible). Further information to follow

Accommodation at Grand Hotel.



Photo: Richard Ryan

- *Djurgården is a large area of parkland and forest, officially called Royal Djurgården (Royal Game Park). Historically, the island of Djurgården was used for hunting, hence its name. It contains many footpaths and waterfront promenades, and a number of museums and historical buildings. Since 1994, much of Djurgården has been part of Ecopark, the world's first national park to exist within city limits.*
- *Skansen is a zoo and outdoor museum on Djurgården, founded in 1891 by Artur Hazelius. The name originates from the 'skans' (a kind of fortification) that King Karl XIV Johan had constructed for his son Oscar I to use as a playground. The museum*

contains some 150 historical buildings from every part of Sweden, the oldest dating from the 13th century.

- *Ulla Winbladh is a well-known inn that has been situated on Djurgården since the 1950s. It was named after Carl Michael Bellman's character Ulla Winbladh.*

Day 8. Stockholm

Coach to Gamla Stan (Old Town) – sightseeing, the narrow cobbled streets and the Royal Palace including lunch.

After lunch a visit to Stadshuset (City Hall), where the Nobel Prize festivities take place.

Boat to Drottningholm Palace, the private residence of the Royal Family.

Dinner and accommodation at Grand Hotel.



Photo: Richard Ryan

- *Gamla Stan, known until 1980 as Staden mellan broarna (Town between the Bridges), is the historical centre of Stockholm. For centuries, Gamla Stan was Stockholm. Stockholm was founded in the 13th century and was built under the protection of a fortification that Birger Jarl constructed as a 'lock' to Lake Mälaren to defend it from invading enemies. Rådhuset (Town Hall) and behind it Bykyrkan (Village Church) – the oldest part of Storkyrkan (Great Church) – were built in the town's main square, Stortorget. Streets led off the square towards the town gates; the most important, Köpmansporten (Merchant Gate), led down to the harbour at Lake Saltsjön (Salt Lake).*
- *Stockholm Palace, or the Royal Palace, is situated by Norrström in the northern part of Gamla Stan. The Palace is the official residence of the Swedish monarch and there have been fortifications on this site since the Middle Ages.*
- *Stadshuset is considered one of Sweden's foremost structures in National Romantic style. Behind the magnificent facade, there are offices, meeting rooms and banqueting halls. Inspired by Italian Renaissance palaces, Ragnar Östberg built Stadshuset round two piazzas – Borgargården (City Hall Courtyard) and Blå hallen (Blue Hall). The Blue Hall is not, in fact, blue. When Mr Östberg saw the beautiful red brick, he decided to leave it in its original form and not cover it with blue plasterwork as he had originally intended. The Hall is perhaps best known for the glittering festivities that take place here every year when the Nobel Prizes are awarded.*



Photo: Richard Ryan

- *Drottningholm Palace is a royal country residence situated in Drottningholm on Lovön Island in Lake Mälaren. It has been the Royal Family's private residence since 1981. The Royal Family live in the Palace's south wing. Drottningholm Palace is the finest palace building of Sweden's Great Power Era and is now a World Heritage Site. The Palace was named as far back as 1580, during the reign of King Johan III. The Palace grounds are open to the public all year round.*

Day 9. Stockholm–Visby

Morning free until 14.00

Coach to Bromma Airport in the afternoon for flight to Visby, Gotland

Early evening tour of the old town of Visby.

Dinner at Donners Brunn.

Accommodation at Wisby Hotel. (www.wisbyhotel.se)



Photo: Mats Jansson

- *Gotland is Sweden's largest island, but in many respects it is regarded as a completely separate country. It offers an exciting and varied environment, a meeting place between land and sea, nature and culture, past and present. The distances are short on the island, and rich and exciting experiences abound. Gotland is also known as the Island of Roses.*



Photo: Mats Jansson

- *Visby is Gotland's capital, a pearl in the Baltic Sea that gained World Heritage status in 1995. For thousands of years, kings, merchants, landowners, and noblemen have visited Visby. The town grew rich as a member of the Hanseatic League, and became one of the leading towns in the Baltic Sea region in the 12th and 13th centuries. The medieval architecture and the merchant houses with their elegant stepped gables and Gothic facades give the town a unique skyline. Old Visby is surrounded by a medieval wall that is 3.5 kilometres long and is the best preserved ring wall in northern Europe.*

Day 10. Visby–Lummelunda Caves–Lickershamn–Furillen–Visby

Coach trip to Fabriken Furillen via Lummelunda Caves and Lickershamn.

Arrive at Furillen

Optional cycle tour

Wine tasting and lunch.

In the afternoon we return to Visby.

Evening is free.

Accommodation at Visby Hotel.

- *Lummelunda Caves – an exciting underground world of beautiful dripstones and fascinating fossils. Experience the show cave and travel back 400 million years in time.*



Photo: Mats Jansson

- *As well as being famous for its fine bathing beach, Lickershamn on northern Gotland is also known for Jungfrun, the highest rauk (natural limestone formation) on Gotland. A walk along the clifftop is to be recommended – it's well worth the climb when you see the view!*
- *Away from residential Visby in an old limestone quarry on northern Gotland lies a disused factory that has not been used as such for more than thirty years. It has been the subject of a bold renovation project to turn it into an exclusive hotel, restaurant, bakery, and conference centre. The raw industrial environment in the austere limestone quarry meets modern design. The mix has attracted wide attention among interior designers and architecture and lifestyle magazines worldwide. Fabriken Furillen is perhaps the most talked-about design hotel in Europe.*

Day 11. Visby

Tour of the town's ancient ruins and the medieval wall that is 3.5 kilometres long and is the best preserved ring wall in northern Europe.

Afternoon free.

In the evening, concert and dinner in St Nicholas' Church Ruins.

Accommodation at Wisby Hotel.

- *St Nicholas' Church Ruins are what remain of the St Nicholas' Monastery Church and nowadays cultural performances are staged in the ruins. The church was built around 1230 in honour of St Nicholas, patron saint of sailors and merchants, and was given to the Dominican Order. Although he wrote in Latin and not Swedish, Petrus de Dacia is considered to be Sweden's first author. He was Prior of St Nicholas at the end of the 13th century.*

Day 12. Visby–Helsinki

Flight to Helsinki via Stockholm-Arlanda Airport.

Short afternoon tour of the city.

Dinner and accommodation at Kämp Hotel. (www.hotelkamp.com)

- *Helsinki was founded in 1550 and has been the capital of Finland since 1812. Helsinki is home to around half a million of Finland's 5 million inhabitants. Around 6% are Swedish speaking, which is a relic from Sweden's influence on Finnish culture through the 600-year union with Sweden. Helsinki has a coastline almost 100 kilometres long and there are many beautiful places and buildings to see. Perhaps this could be because of all the great architects who have worked here, two of the best known being Aalvar Aalto and Eliel Saarinen. Finnish 'sisu' (determination) permeates the city's cultural pulse. The city is also perfect for shopping, exotic culinary experiences and perhaps also a traditional sauna.*

Day 13. Helsinki

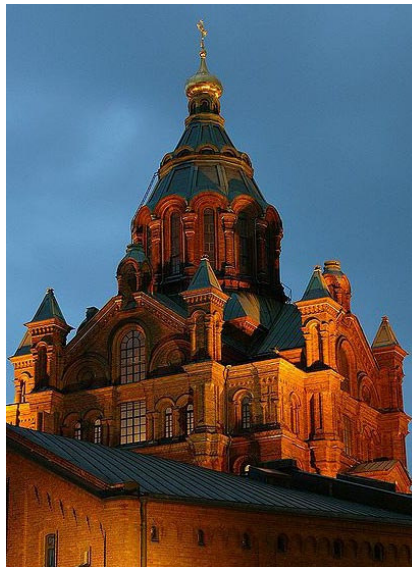
Walk to the harbour and the small marketplace. Round boat trip to Sveaborg. Onwards to Uspenski Cathedral (and mass, if possible). Thereafter, walk to Senatstorget (Senators' Square) and up to Fredriksgatan (Fredrik Street) and Klippkyrkan (Rock Church).

Lunch at Senatorstorget

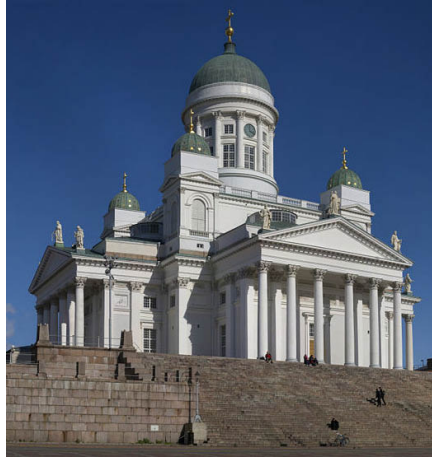
Free afternoon and evening
Accommodation at Kämp Hotel.



- *Sveaborg was built as a defence against the Russians attacking from the east. The fortification is one of the world's largest sea fortresses and is known as 'the Gibraltar of the North'. The Sveaborg fortress is a must for tourists visiting Helsinki and is today on the UNESCO World Heritage List.*



- *Uspenski Cathedral is an Eastern Orthodox cathedral dedicated to the Dormition of the Theotokos (Death of the Virgin Mary). Its name comes from the Russian word uspenie, which denotes the Dormition. Designed by the Russian architect Alexey Gornostaev (1808–1862), construction of the cathedral was begun after his death and completed in 1868. The cathedral is set on a hillside on the Katajanokka peninsula overlooking the city. At the back of the cathedral, there is a plaque commemorating Russian Emperor Alexander II, who was the sovereign of the Grand Duchy of Finland during the cathedral's construction between 1862 and 1868.*



- *Senatstorget. The large white cathedral in Senatstorget is, in fact, the first thing you see when you arrive in Helsinki by ferry. This incredibly beautiful church was created by Carl Ludvig Engel. He had been commissioned by Alexander I to rebuild Helsinki after a great fire in 1809 when a large part of the town was destroyed. Many of the buildings around Senatstorget were designed by this great German architect. Here you will also find his cathedral (formerly St Nicholas' Church) and also the University, the University Library and the Government Palace. Sederholm House, the oldest house in Helsinki, is also situated on this square. The house was one of the few that survived the terrible fire in 1809.*
- *Another must in Helsinki is the Temple Square Church, otherwise known as the Rock Church. This church was designed by Timo and Tuomo Suomalainen in 1969. The church lies underground and its walls are of natural rock. The Temple Square Church is one of the most popular attractions in Helsinki and is visited by around half a million people each year. The exterior of the church provides no clue as to what to expect but once inside, a great experience awaits!*

Day 14. Helsinki–Hvitträsk–Helsinki

Coach to Hvitträsk and museum visit including lunch.

Afternoon is free.

Farewell dinner at Kosmos (www.ravintolakosmos.fi)

(Concert in the evening, if possible)

Accommodation at Kämp Hotel.





- *Hvitträsk Museum was built between 1901 and 1903 by the architects Herman Gesellius, Armas Lindgren och Eliel Saarinen. The main building, designed in National Romantic style, was both studio and home to the Lindgren and Saarinen families. Hvitträsk is also the boyhood home of the world famous architect Eero Saarinen (Eliel's son) who made his reputation primarily in the United States designing buildings and monuments such as Gateway Arch in St Louis, Missouri. Eliel Saarinen designed the railway station in Helsinki. He also designed the first bank notes after Finland became independent. The three friends Eliel, Herman and Armas, lived there together for a time and Herman, who died in 1916, is buried at Hvitträsk. There are a number of rock paintings on an impressive sheer cliff facing the lake at Hvitträsk. The best preserved of these is unique among Nordic rock paintings. It was composer Jean Sibelius who stumbled across the rock paintings while on a visit to the manor.*

Day 15. Departure from Helsinki

The Nordic Divine Tour ends in Helsinki, Finland.
Fly home anytime.