

# STOCKHOLM BY DANNY SEO

The natural beauty of a city built on 14 islands connected by 57 bridges in the middle of the Baltic Sea is hard to resist. Add to that a rich history of Scandinavian design and you've already got a visually stunning destination.

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**S**TOCKHOLM'S SUSTAINABLE CULTURE MAKES IT ALL THE MORE ATTRACTIVE. The Swedes are efficient recyclers; only 1% of their garbage ends up in landfills, and the rest is incinerated for heat. Stockholm is also one of the leading destinations for eco-labeled hotels in Europe. Its vast bike-sharing network and the city's inherent walkability make it easy to get around without leaving a big carbon footprint. In fact, the majority of residents (and tourists) take the public transit system. All this

and more earned Stockholm a European Green Capital designation in 2010 by the European Commission. After you hit tourist destinations—like ABBA The Museum (with its slogan: "Walk in. Dance out.") and the Vasa Museum, where you can see an intact Viking ship and learn a little history—check out our insider's guide for ideas on how best to experience this exceptional city. We recommend you tour by foot, hop on a ferry or rent a bike so you can discover for yourself why Stockholm is so Naturally alluring.



# MISS CLARA

Swedish-modern design converges with the city's architectural history at this boutique hotel, located in the heart of cosmopolitan Stockholm. Housed in a 1910 Art Nouveau building, which was once home to a girl's school with the namesake headmistress Miss Clara, the interiors feature herringbone parquet floors, high ceilings and original oversize windows, which flood the rooms with gracious Swedish light. You'll be swept away to another time while enjoying all the comforts of modern amenities. The charming street-side Swedish brasserie and the hotel bar's lively cocktail menu make Miss Clara more than just a place to rest your head.

**HOTEL SKEPPSHOLMEN**  
This waterfront hotel exemplifies adaptive reuse at its best. Stylish and uber-comfortable, the Hotel Skeppsholmen was built in 1699 as marine barracks. In its latest incarnation the friendly staff wear clothing from Acne Studios, the top-selling Swedish brand; the sleek restaurant serves some of the best Swedish meatballs in town; and the location, on a quiet island that's just a 20-minute walk from the city center, is photo ready for postcard-worthy views of this beautiful city.



# DO

## ROSENDALS TRÄDGÅRD

Located on Stockholm's greenest island, Djurgården, this biodynamic garden with a farm-to-fork café is an organic wonderland that's just a ferry-ride away from the city center. A favorite destination for chefs who grow produce there and locals who cherish a stroll through the park (replete with an apple orchard), it's also a place to experience historic Stockholm and tour the Empire-style Rosen-dal Palace. Everything served at the café is grown on-site, and the bread and baked goods are made in a wood-fired stone oven. During spring and summer flowers bloom in raised beds for a you-pick experience. But the best way to experience Rosendals Trädgård is to partake in the Swedish tradition "Fika" (coffee break), savor a buttery cardamom-laced pastry called a kardemummabullar, then take a long stroll and enjoy the beauty, naturally.

## VISIT THE ARCHIPELAGO

No trip to Stockholm is complete without a sojourn to the Archipelago. The ferry ride to this cluster of 30,000 islands in the Baltic Sea is naturally gorgeous, and island life is conducive to biking, hiking, camping, swimming and exploring. You can day-trip to islands like picturesque Vaxholm, with its medieval fort and charming village, or enjoy some modern art at Artipelag (an exhibition space founded by the BabyBjörn creator), set in the

fields and forests on the island of Värmdö. We suggest you check in to the eco-friendly Island Lodge for a couple days, where glamping gets a sophisticated Swedish spin. With seven geodesic dome tents sited strategically amidst a pine forest with stunning views of the water, the Island Lodge keeps your footprint small with big style. There's no electricity (kerosene lamps provide light); heat is generated from wood-fired stoves; and you'll eat only locally sourced or foraged food. But you won't feel like you sacrificed any creature comforts—unplugging never felt, or looked, so good.

## MONICA FÖRSTER SHOWROOM

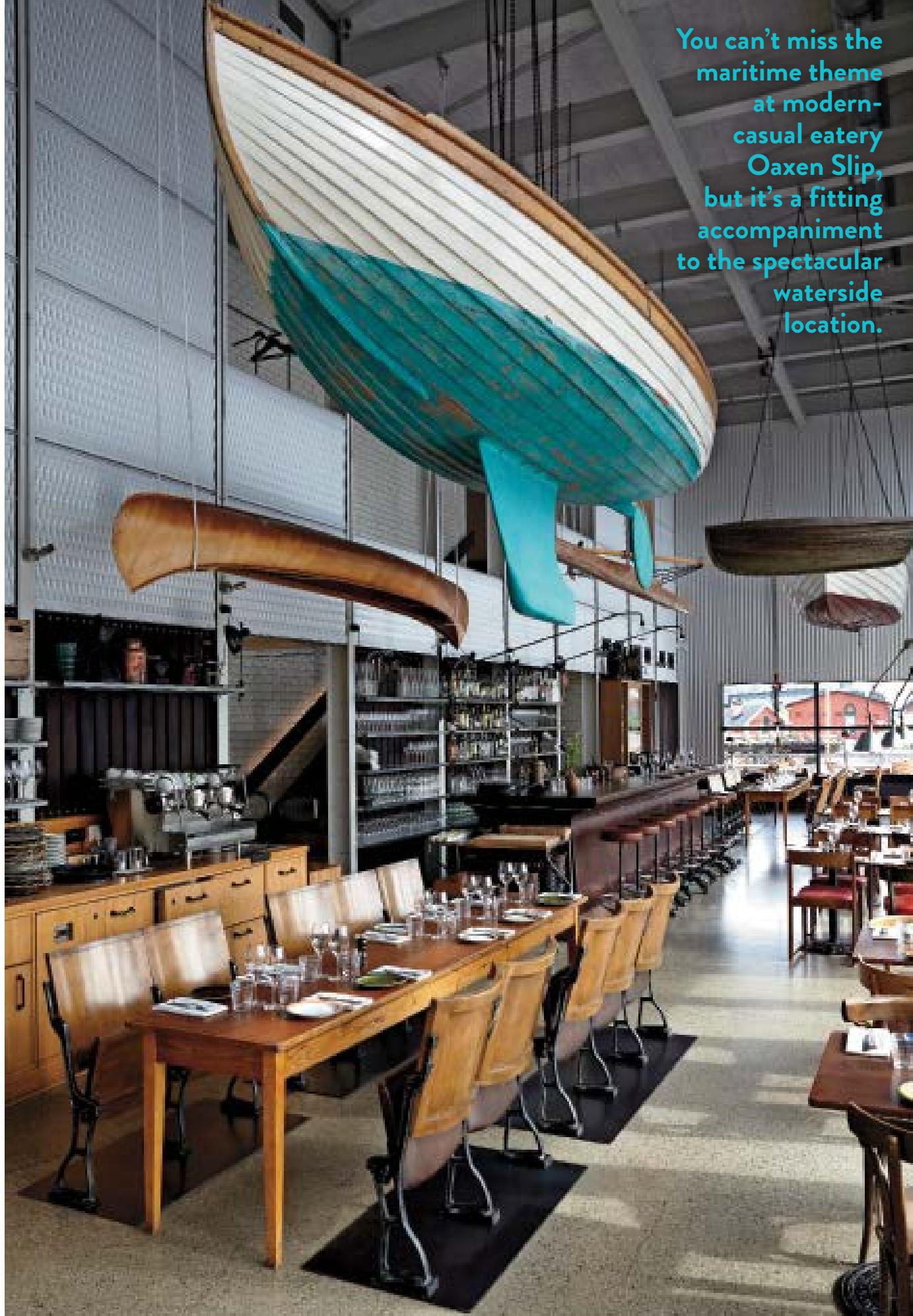
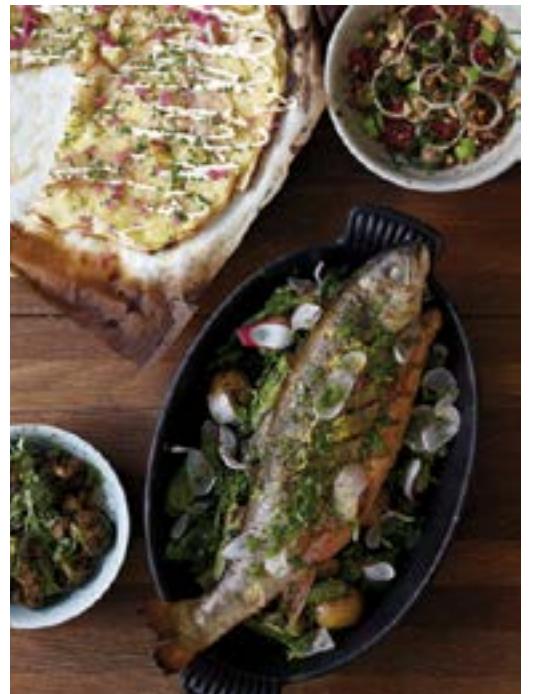
Stockholm is known for its design heritage, which you can experience firsthand when you visit Monica Förster's showroom. Not only will you have a rare opportunity to view and purchase the work of an award-winning, internationally acclaimed design celebrity who has collaborated with brands like Alessi and Cappellini, but Förster will likely be there to talk about her latest creations. Inside the sleek storefront, which is open to public Wednesday through Friday, you'll find her thoroughly modern interpretations of traditional craftsmanship. Whether you take a seat in one of her chairs, admire her latest textile designs or experience the silky smoothness of a Förster-designed bowl handmade in Bosnia, you'll get

an inside look at how one design workshop turns concepts into beautiful realities.

## PÄRLANS KONFEK TYR

Inspired by her passion for 1930s and '40s swing dancing and an era when handmade caramels were a popular Swedish treat, Lisa Ericson opened Pärlans Konfektyr as homage to both. Made of organic cream, butter and the best class of sugar all boiled up in copper kettles, these preservative-free confec-tions come in an endless array of traditional and modern flavors: rosemary and hazelnut, vanilla and sea salt, a very Scandinavian salty licorice, and of course, chocolate. The factory is on-site, so take some time to see how the confections are made. Step into the shop and you've entered a time warp—employees wear a perfect, glamorous red lip and authentic vintage outfits. The nostalgic styling and the delicious confections are a sweet escape.

**Stockholm boasts a modern lifestyle that's still in sync with its natural splendor and cultural ancestry.**



You can't miss the maritime theme at modern-casual eatery Oaxen Slip, but it's a fitting accompaniment to the spectacular waterside location.

# EAT

## EKSTEDT

At his namesake Stockholm restaurant, well-known Swedish chef and author Niklas Ekstedt employs low-tech cooking techniques from Scandinavian kitchens of 200 years ago. That means no electric cookers and no gas burners. Instead, the food is cooked over open flames with smoke, coals and fire courtesy of local birchwood. The approach may be rustic, but the surroundings are elegant—as are seasonal dishes like langoustine topped with pickled onion, Torbay sole cooked on a burning piece of oak, and morel mushrooms with almond crème and red wood sorrell. Dishes are served tableside in a space with traditional Swedish copper and handmade oak floors that feels as accessible as a friend's living room. The four- to seven-course meals aren't cheap, but they have earned Ekstedt a coveted Michelin star. But we promise, it won't put you in debt—and the experience is worth every smoky bite.

## OAXEN SLIP

This casual eatery, attached to a two Michelin-starred fine dining restaurant, is worth a visit just for its stunning setting. Located on a dock that used to house a shipyard, this Nordic bistro features floor-to-ceiling windows and a marina view. Husband and wife team Magnus Ek and Agneta Green (he's the chef; she's the sommelier) have created a menu with dishes that are encouraged to be shared, and food that emphasizes fresh seafood—think smoked prawns, pickled baby herring and grilled crab—accompanied by seasonal vegetables, all served on vintage Scandinavian dinnerware upcycled from local thrift stores. The bar stools are from the 1920s, the community tables were once school desks and the turquoise-bottomed boat hanging from the ceiling is an artful remnant from 1905. But there's nothing old-fashioned about this thoroughly modern testament to Stockholm's vibrant dining scene.

## SPECERIET

Chefs Jacob Holmström and Anton Bjuhr have known each other for nearly 15 years, and in 2011 they opened their critically acclaimed, Michelin-starred fine dining restaurant, Gastroligik. Their latest collaboration, Speceriet, is a casual, more wallet-friendly alternative, with a scrupulous commitment to sourcing local ingredients and a seasonal approach. With only 20 seats, no reservations and communal tables, it's also a place to make conversation (most Swedes speak English) as you savor, for example, a simple rotisserie chicken, pizza with potatoes, pickled onions, smoked pork cheek, or a whole grilled arctic char with radish, asparagus and spinach. There's also a small grocery in the restaurant where you can pick up local artisanal foodstuffs. Chances are you'll be able to sneak a peek at Holmström and Bjuhr in their chef coats as they ready themselves for the next meal service.



In our fave Stockholm discoveries, quality and tradition are never sacrificed for quick commerce.



## GRANDPA

With two locations in Stockholm, Grandpa carries sustainable Scandinavian and international fashion lines that favor quality with a conscience. Add to that their curated mix of vintage furniture, home goods and books, and you've got a great destination to discover new brands that showcase a modern Stockholm aesthetic that's clean, composed and always accessible.

## SWEDISH HASBEENS

Swedish Hasbeens started when Emry Blixt stumbled upon 300 pairs of vintage 1970s clogs and bought the whole lot. The designs were inspired interpretations of the classic Swedish

shoe traditionally worn by farmers. As she slowly sold off her inventory to friends, the former teacher realized she had an opportunity to launch a brand that's classic, fashionable and sustainable. Blixt, who founded the company in 2006 and continues to be the creative director, has since grown it into an internationally recognized brand sold in 20 countries. Swedish Hasbeens are the antithesis of fast fashion; they're handmade in Sweden using natural grain, chromium-free leather, wood and staples. One look at her flagship Stockholm shop and you quickly see that Blixt's simple, quality-first philosophy inspires a colorful rainbow of variety and style.

## MANOS

If you're searching for a handmade artisan souvenir, Manos in the Södermalm neighborhood is your spot. The shop, opened by ceramicist Karin Eriksson, who also teaches classes at her on-site studio, has a fresh feel that's both minimal and rich. A table of rustic glazed dinnerware with clean lines shares space with original artwork and a variety of small-scale production objects made from wood and clay. She also carries Swedish soaps, candles, textiles and kitchenware. Don't be surprised if Eriksson expresses her friendly Swedish hospitality by offering you a cup of coffee as you browse and chat.