

LIVING

Why Sweden's Second City—Gothenburg—Is a Must-Visit

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by MATILDE WERGELAND



Gothenburg City

Photo: Courtesy of Dino Soldin / @dinosoldinphoto



Sweden's second-largest city is often overshadowed by the capital, Stockholm. But the popularity of Gothenburg—birthplace of Volvo (and Alicia Vikander), home to Michelin-star restaurants, picturesque architecture, sophisticated bar culture, renowned galleries and art museums, and designer shops—has exploded in the last few years. Being the the second city allows Gothenburg the freedom to be more

relaxed than her older sibling, a feeling that's aided by the refreshing sea air. When you come for a visit, wind your way down the cobblestone streets or take one of the charming blue and white trams (though almost everything is walkable) as you peruse these Gothenburg gems.



Strömmingsluckan and Beijing 8

Photo: Courtesy of Matilde Wergeland / @matildew ; Photo: Courtesy of Maja Hagald / @majahagald

Restaurants

During the last several years, Gothenburg's restaurant scene has grown by leaps and bounds. One of the brightest stars would have to be Toso, a pan-Asian pearl in the heart of the city, known for its ingenious cocktails and eclectic menu. Other notable favorites include dim sum spot Made in China, which is revered for its steamed buns; Beijing8, the place to revel in divine dumplings; and Moon Thai Kitchen, with cuisine that's part Thai and part Swedish.



Sjömagasinet and Cyrano

Photo: Courtesy of Niklas Bjärhed / @bjarhed ; Courtesy of Isabelle / @isabelleontheway



The legendary Sjömagasinet is the place to go for updated takes on traditional Swedish cuisine. For Swedish seafood on the fly, fried herring at the food truck Strömmingsluckan, in the heart of trendy street Magasinsgatan, will tickle anyone's taste buds. For burger lovers who prefer turf over surf, a few doors down, the Barn offers wallet friendly, high-quality hamburgers, as well as mouthwatering sides like sweet potato fries and truffle mayonnaise. If there is such a thing as upscale fast food, Cyrano, with its wood-fired pizzas, seems to have found the formula.



Kafé Magasinet and Juicekällan

Photo: Courtesy of Kafé Magasinet / @kafemagasinet ; Courtesy of Juicekällan / @juicekallan



Cafes

Gothenburg's first cafe was established around 1770, and today, the city offers several hundred places to partake in a traditional Swedish fika (a cup of coffee accompanied by a small snack). Step into the old world of fika at Brogyllen, where one can enjoy handmade sandwiches and one of the heavenly pastries. The winner of 2015's Cafe of the Year competition was Da Matteo, famous for its sourdough bread and cinnamon buns.

One traditionally associates fika with sweet treats, but some cafes are putting a healthy spin on the snack. Kafé Magasinet serves salads, acai bowls, and raw food cakes. If a liquid munch is all you desire, stop at Juicekällan. Its creative blends of organic juices and smoothies will make you a regular in no time. If all you dream of is your next cup of coffee, the Italian hole-in-the-wall Bar Centro is your spot.

Drinks

If you plan on exploring Gothenburg by night, a glass of bubbly in the lush and romantic outdoor garden at Champagnebaren Forssén & Öberg is a delightful way to start your evening. In need of a stiffer adult libation? Putra Madre's bar

offers the largest selection of tequila in Scandinavia (327 different choices, to be precise). Before hitting the sheets or painting the town red, order a cocktail at the outdoor Bar Himmel, steps from most of the night clubs on the boulevard Avenyn.



Style by Mouche

Photo: Courtesy of Style by Mouche



Shops

The upscale and popular shopping gallery Nordiska Kompaniet, or NK, has a little bit of everything, from beauty products to housewares. Nearby is Grace, a small store with a wonderfully curated selection of both international brands and Scandinavian designers. Mouche's the Apartment, a concept store with panache, looks more like a Parisian home and carries a multitude of fashion-forward brands.



Artilleriet and Hotel Pigalle

Photo: Courtesy of Artilleriet ; Photo: Courtesy of Elsa Billgren / @elsabillgren



If you're looking for something to spruce up your home, enter Artilleriet at your own risk, as your mind will race to find space at home for the scented candles, high-quality kitchenware, printed cushions, and exclusive bed linens. Another design temple is Tinna, which carries the quintessential Swedish brand Svenskt Tenn, as well as famous designs by Josef Frank and Skultuna. Looking for the quirky side of Swedish design? Peruse Antikhallarna, Gothenburg's antique arcade filled with tiny, charming stores bursting with antique jewelry, vintage stamps, and china.

Indoor food markets are aplenty in Gothenburg. Saluhallen is full of vibrant food stands and restaurants. Directly across the way is another of Gothenburg's favorites, Aldardo, which predominantly offers Italian delicacies like fresh handmade pasta, aged Parmesan cheese, and antipasti. Bring your shopping day to a close at the flower shop Floramor & Krukatös and grab a bouquet of peonies.

Hotels

The Clarion Hotel Post is the perfect mix of old and new. The hotel is housed in an old post office building and offers a splendid rooftop pool, a spa, and two excellent restaurants. Dorsia Hotel, known for its avant-garde interior, also offers a wonderful menu in its restaurant. Hotel Pigalle, a luxury boutique hotel, transports you to turn-of-the-century Paris, while her sister hotel, Hotel Bellora, located blocks away, feels transported from the 1960s Italian Riviera, complete with a rooftop bar that's been named as one of the world's best.



Hagabadet

Photo: Courtesy of Matilde Wergeland / @matildew



Places to Visit

To recharge your battery after all the shopping, fika, and restaurants, spend an afternoon at Hagabadet, an exclusive spa located in the picturesque district Haga.

If you prefer nature instead, take a stroll among blossoming flowers and lush trees in the park Trädgårdsföreningen, one of Europe's most well-preserved parks from the 17th century.

Not many shutterbugs would say no to a visit to the photo exhibitions at the Hasselblad Foundation at Gothenburg Museum of Art in Götaplatsen, which features both established international photographers as well as young Swedish artists. For more design and art experiences while in town, head to Röda Sten Konsthall for inspiring exhibitions and workshops. Don't forget to leave a mark on the graffiti wall, the only legal place for graffiti in Gothenburg.