Visit Sweden News Room

Sweden, the land of IKEA, ABBA, Meatballs and…Mythology?

Over a half (59%) of Brits connect Sweden with Eurovision legends ABBA.

- ***Brits are missing out on Sweden's rich culture, with only a fifth (21%) aware of Swedish folklore and less than a sixth (14%) of the nation's mythological heritage.***
- ***Over half (57%) take walks in nature to escape everyday life.***
- ***Visit Sweden invites travellers to the forests of Sweden to discover the home of the nation's folklore with chilling new audio story by international bestselling author John Ajvide Lindqvist.***

28th September 2022: New research from Visit Sweden reveals that IKEA, pop group ABBA and meatballs, are what Brits associate most with Sweden.

However, there is more to Sweden than just delicious food and great music, and according to the study, many are unaware of Sweden's rich culture and heritage. With only a fifth **(21%)** aware of Swedish folklore and less than a sixth **(14%)** of the nation's mythological heritage - many travellers are missing out on experiencing centuries of captivating tales from trolls to the huldra – all born in Sweden's vast, deep forests.

The research also revealed that Brits are rekindling their love for the great outdoors, with over half **(57%)** taking walks in nature whilst almost a quarter **(24%)** listen to podcasts or audiobooks to escape everyday life. Nature is also a source of inspiration, with **22%** claiming that being amongst nature fuels their imagination or creativity.

To bring the nation's mythology and folklore to life and to connect travellers with their passion for getting into nature, Visit Sweden has collaborated with international bestselling author John Ajvide Lindqvist, to create the spellbinding audio story *'Kiln'* available only in the Swedish forest. The audio story aims to create a new experience for travellers to help them escape in new ways, bringing mythic Swedish nature to life, and seducing listeners deeper and deeper into the forest.

"The supernatural has always played an active role in Swedish culture. It is more than just a backdrop to the crime stories and Nordic noir movies that have made the country famous. Now, the world is welcome to discover it for themselves in a truly immersive experience. As a horror author, when I enter a forest, I only need a glimpse of the dark side of a stone or the knots of a tree to trigger my imagination. Nature seems to come alive and lures you to come after it," **says author, John Ajvide Lindqvist.**

"We want to inspire the world to reignite their imagination and come and experience something completely different. With 70% of Sweden covered by forest, it's no wonder they are home to many fascinating and creative creatures. Now we want to introduce the world to their spellbindingly beautiful home... if you dare," **says Nils Persson, Chief Marketing Officer, Visit Sweden.**

The story is experienced in the first person, inviting listeners to walk in the footsteps of a character who encounters the enchanting huldra, a forest nymph from Swedish folklore. However, those looking to experience the spooky story for themselves can only do so if present in the Swedish forest. A geo-restriction has been applied to make the story fully immersive, inviting the listener to discover the mystery of Sweden with all their senses.

For those who dare, the audio story is available for free on Visit Sweden's website, accessible from within Sweden.

Return flights from London to Stockholm are available from £63.50 on Norwegian and London to Gothenburg from £76 with British Airways.

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Notes to Editors

Censuswide research of 2,000 Brits conducted in September 2022.

Brits top 10 associations with Sweden:

- IKEA
- ABBA
- Meatballs
- Beautiful nature
- Healthy lifestyles

- Forests
- Friendly people
- Folklore
- Fishing
- Progressive lifestyle

Download imagery here: Spellbound by Sweden and Imagebank Sweden

Video available here: https://youtu.be/X2nLmi6dCIE

About the author, John Ajvide Lindqvist

International bestselling author, John Ajvide Lindqvist is often referred to as the “Swedish Stephen King”. His most prominent works include Let the Right One In – now a NEW TV series - and Border, which were both made into films that received top honours at film festivals, including Tribeca Film Festival and Cannes Film Festival. His thrilling stories mix Nordic noir, social realism and supernatural horror and have captured audiences in more than 30 countries. Since his debut novel in 2004, Let the Right One In, he has published 20 novels, short stories and dramatic works. His books are published in 33 countries, including Australia, China, Brazil, Denmark, Germany, Russia, United Kingdom, France, and United States.

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About Visit Sweden

Visit Sweden has the official national assignment from the Swedish government to market Sweden as a tourist destination.

Our vision is that Sweden by 2030 is the world's most sustainable and attractive travel destination built on innovation.

Now more than ever, purposeful travel needs to be meaningful, conscious, and creating lasting value with regards to our guests, for the local community and our planet. Welcome to Sweden.

Additional assets available online: Photos (1)

https://press.visitsweden.com/2022-09-28-Sweden,-the-land-of-IKEA,-ABBA,-Meatballs-and-Mythology