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The Five Best Hiking Cottages For a Free Night In Sweden

Although only a one-night stay is allowed, there are more than 200 cottages and cabins across Sweden where you can sleep for free for one night. A fact that very few people know about, even among Swedes. They can be old forest and mountain huts or pretty cottages, which used to be continuously inhabited and have now been preserved as a cultural monument, or newer buildings which local authorities want to use to encourage an active outdoor lifestyle. The standard of them and how well equipped can vary from very simple to quite comfortable. What they all have in common, however, is their proximity to nature, an interesting local cultural history, space for several guests to sleep and accessibility to new encounters and experiences. Much like the UK boothy system, these cabins cannot be booked in advance.

Here are five of the most beautiful free one-night cabins across Sweden:

1. Blommastugan (The Flower Cottage) – sleeps 2 with an outhouse. This simple forest worker's hut is in the southern Swedish region of Kalmar län between Degerhyltan and Törnemåla in Torsås municipality. It was inhabited right up until 1987 when it then passed to the local heritage association, which lovingly restored it. The cabin, which is located on the Gullaboleden cycling and hiking trail about five kilometres from Torsås, is equipped with propane gas cooking rings and two beds. Adding to the sense of adventure and disconnect is that there is no running water.

2. Åbergs fäbodar – outhouse, fireplace, firewood and drinking water

The cottage was built at the beginning of the 19th century and was used right into the 20th century. It is named after Jonas and Britta Åberg from Ockelbo. Although it is kept locked the key is freely available only a phone call away.

3. Lafallshöjden – sleeps 2, outhouse and wood-burning stove.
This cabin is located in central Sweden in the western part of Värmland in Norra Gunnarskog. It is managed by the Gunnarskog Heritage Association and is surrounded by fantastic countryside that was farmed until the 1970s. The hut can be reached by either car, bus from Arvika to Gunnarskog or on foot via the hiking trail from Larstomta.

Photo

4. Fresketäppa - 4 beds, outhouse, and fireplace

This cottage, which was permanently inhabited until 1948, is also in Norra Gunnarskog, but there has never been a road here. Instead, the approximately 13-kilometer hiking trail leads here from Larstomta - alternatively, there is a bus from Arvika to Gunnarskog. The cabin sat vacant for 50 years before being restored by the local heritage association.

Photo

5. Hjortronbergsmossen - Sleeps 6 to 8, outhouse, fireplace and firewood.

Also in central Sweden is the Hjortronbergsmossen log cabin. Located in the Djupdalshöjden nature reserve near Örebro north of Kopparberg. This substantial log cabin is managed by the municipality and was purpose-built as an overnight cabin to encourage an active outdoor lifestyle. The standard is impressive: there are solar panels on the roof and a full range of kitchen utensils and crockery. The cabin can only be reached on foot – either from the Kopparberg bus stop (14 km away) or from the Älvhöjden car park (5 km away). Drinking water is available 100m northeast of the cabin.

How to find these lonesome jewels. There aren´t many ways of discovering the locations of the cabins, but here are three:

- Contact local authorities: Reach out to the county administration, municipality, and tourist association in the area you will be travelling to in Sweden. Ask them about the availability of any free cabins in the vicinity and ask for directions on how to reach them.

- Read "Stuglandet":

"Stuglandet" is a remarkable book created by journalist Kjell Vowles and photographer Moa Karlberg. This invaluable guide showcases over 200 exquisite overnight cabins and huts scattered across Sweden, offering free accommodations for travellers.

Beyond its captivating photographs, the book serves as an exceptional resource, providing comprehensive details on how to reach these delightful cabins effortlessly and safely. It exclusively features cabins equipped with bunks or sleeping facilities, ensuring a comfortable night's stay. Shelters that only offer a few hours rest without beds have been omitted.

For those seeking cost-free lodging options for overnight adventures in Sweden, "Stuglandet" stands as the ultimate go-to guide. The only drawback is that, regrettably, the book is currently available exclusively in Swedish.'

- Use the Vindskyddskartan App:

By visiting the Vindskyddskartan website or downloading their app, you unlock access to maps featuring over 3000 shelters scattered throughout Sweden.

Unlike Stuglandet, the Vindskyddskartan app encompasses not just cabins but all types of hiking shelters available. However, it does offer valuable information for most of the listed shelters, enabling you to determine in advance whether or not you can spend the night there.

While the app is not entirely free to use, you do have the opportunity to try it out for a brief trial period at no cost. If you decide it's not for you, you can easily cancel the trial anytime without incurring any charges.

Additional assets available online: Photos (4)

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