# Celebrating the Winter Blues: Surviving Christmas and Winter the Swedish Way

## Winter Blues of a Different Nature, Discovering ´Mys´ and ´Fika´ in Sweden

**To avoid the winter blues, Swedes have traditions and customs that are essential to enjoying the winter season, such as "Mys" - the Swedish way of cocooning. In a country known for its marked contrasts, cosy interiors and warm, friendly traditions help balance the dramatic winter climate. Rather than fearing this time of year, Swedes celebrate the season by lighting candles and decorating their homes in a way that exudes warmth. They come together for "fika," the famous Swedish coffee break.**

The concept of 'mys', associated with a cosy atmosphere and attitude, is a fundamental part of the Swedish way of life, bringing warmth, light and positivity during the winter. Based on the same principles of cocooning and sharing, the 'fika' break is a major tradition in Sweden. A social coffee break, the fika is an opportunity to take a break and share time with friends, family or colleagues in a relaxed atmosphere, with a coffee and something sweet. Anti-blues effect guaranteed!

Here are a few Swedish traditions linked to the Mys concept:

**"Fredagsmys"** (Cosy Friday) - A rather modern tradition of snuggling up on the sofa with loved ones, wrapped in a blanket, watching a good movie and enjoying sweet and savory treats with candlelight, to celebrate the end of the week.

**Saturday sweets** (Lördagsgodis) - A weekend tradition that allows children and adults to treat themselves to as many sweets as they like, usually bought by weight and taken away, with each family member able to add their own favorite treats.

**Fika - Outdoor fika** at this time of year can include hot drinks such as rosehip and blueberry tea/soup. Glögg (mulled wine), julmust (Christmas soda), julöl (Christmas beer) and spiced aquavit are all typical festive drinks enjoyed during December. Once Christmas is over, coffee, hot chocolate and tea will replace them in the thermos flasks.

To see the recipes for the pastries that traditionally accompany the fika,click here.

**Advent Sundays** - In December, Sweden has very few hours of sunshine. The first Sunday in Advent is eagerly expected to bring light and relaxation. The Swedes decorate their windows with Advent stars and electric candlesticks. The four Advent candles are lit, one on each Sunday during the four weeks leading to Christmas.

**Glögg Party** - Throughout December, Swedes gather to drink glögg - a spiced mulled wine with blanched almonds and sultanas - and enjoy pepparkakor (ginger biscuits).

Want to learn more about Swedish traditions?https://visitsweden.com/what-to-do/culture-history-and-art/swedish-traditions/

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