Swedish town of Borås – one of Europe's fastest growing tourist destinations

From trending dystopia to visitor success, the town of Borås in West Sweden has become a tourist hotspot as one of Europe's fastest growing tourist destinations according to statistics from Eurostat. Research reveals the number of visitor bookings in the town has increased by 336 per cent since 2018.

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- 'We are extremely pleased,' says Thomas Walfridsson, CEO of Borås destination company TME.

In 2018, Borås was ranked eighth among Sweden's ugliest cities, and four years later it was trending on social media as a dystopian place, where churches were on fire and zombies roamed the streets. The municipality responded and wanted to hit back against the failing image that was being portrayed. I guess you could say it was a successful move.

Standing out in the statistics

It seems that Borås may be vindicated. According to new statistics, the town stands out as one of the fastest-growing tourist destinations, ranking seventh in terms of the most popular city in Europe.

Since 2018, Eurostat, the EU's statistics office, has produced 'experimental statistics' which looks at the number of bookings on websites such as Airbnb, Booking.com and Tripadvisor.

Up to 2023, the number of accommodation bookings in Borås has increased by 336 per cent, which compares with Gothenburg's 61 per cent or Stockholm's 17 per cent, writes local newspaper Göteborgs-Posten, which has looked at Eurostat's statistics.

"It´s trendy to be out in nature"

Thomas Walfridsson, CEO of Borås destination company TME, believes that the increase in the number of visitors is a mixture of changing travel patterns, accessibility and successful communication efforts by the municipality.

- "It has become trendy to be out in nature, and the countryside around Borås is very scenic. We are strategically located near Gothenburg International airport, which helps to attract more foreign visitors, and we cooperate closely with Gothenburg," says Thomas.

Whether the image of Borås as a dystopia has changed, or whether the new figures vindicate the city, Thomas does not want to speculate.

- "We are just extremely happy with the new figures," he says.

The classic tourist destinations of France, Germany, Italy and Spain still top the statistics. However, Sweden is one of the countries in Europe where digital booking platforms have led to the largest increases in overnight stays, writes Göteborgs-Posten.

Top things to do in Borås – the art and textiles town

Knitted dress made of 100 per cent paper from Swedish forests. Produced by Smart Textiles at the University of Borås in collaboration with a number of Swedish companies within the project Design for Recycling. The project is part of the Swedish strategic innovation programme BioInnovation

- A good place to start would be to take aroad-trip to see the gardens, culture and shopping between Gothenburg and Borås
- Head to Sandwalls plats, in the heart of Borås, the town's piazza, with swaying palms and local restaurants, cafes and wine bars. Sit on the steps leading down to the Viskan, listen to the buzz from the outdoor serving areas and admire the flower beds in the town park on the other side of the river.

- Check out Textilmuseet and the Textile Fashion Center, international centers for fashion, textiles and design.
- Take a guided street-art tour. It's impossible to miss all the street art filling Borås. It feels like almost every wall is decorated with creative graffiti or a mural, and there's a sculpture in every square and open space. Go on a guided tour around the town or follow the art map on the West Sweden Street Art Trail.
- If this has inspired, pop by Borås Konstmuseum, and explore three floors of contemporary art.
- Any visit wouldn´t be complete without Swedish Fika. Tasty creation and good coffee are to be had at Utbult Borneby & Co
- For something more substantial book a table at NOR Brasserie where Nordic cuisine is celebrated with a European twist. The focus is on local ingredients while updating their dishes with central European flavours.
- Just outside the town sits the gorgeous Bruket I Wiared. The perfect boho place to pop in for fika, a meal or stay over in one of their villa rooms or glamping suites.

Fly to Gothenburg directly from London, Manchester and Edinburg airports in the UK with Ryanair, British Airways and Norwegian.

Borås is a 30-minute drive east of Gothenburg Landvetter airport by public transport or hire car.

More information on Borås: https://boras.com/en/

Further information on both Gothenburg and West Sweden: https://www.vastsverige.com/en/

Eurostat Source: Short-stay accommodation offered via online collaborative economy platforms

Visit Sweden has an official assignment from the Swedish government to market Sweden as a destination. Our vision is that Sweden by 2030 is the world's most sustainable and attractive destination built on innovation. Now more than ever, purposeful travel needs to be meaningful, conscious and creating lasting value with regard to our guests, the local community and our planet.

Welcome to Sweden, a destination of a different nature.

https://corporate.visitsweden.com/om-oss/en/

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