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Sweden's Cities in 2025 – Climbing the Ranks, Redefining the City Break

With Stockholm now ranked among Europe's top 10 cities by Resonance Consultancy's prestigious Europe's Best Cities ranking* and a significant increase in global search interest for Gothenburg and Malmö, Sweden's major cities are capturing global attention. New data reveals a surge in interest driven by their unique blend of urban experiences, Swedish culture and lifestyle, and easy access to nature**. With no extra fees beyond public transport and ferries, Stockholm, Gothenburg, and Malmö offer autumn escapes that exceed expectations. Autumn city break or nature adventure? Why choose when you can have it all? Here's what autumn 2025 has in store for each city.

Stockholm – Between Cobblestones and Pine Trees

Stockholm climbed from 16th to 10th place among Europe's top cities by Resonance Consultancy's prestigious Europe's Best Cities ranking in 2025*. With over 48 million global searches annually, it solidifies its status as Sweden's capital and cultural heart. This growth is driven by an interest in cultural events like the Stockholm Marathon (+1563%) and attractions such as the ABBA Museum (+814%) and a remarkable 2031% increase in searches for flights to Stockholm.***

Autumn transforms Stockholm's downtown 14-island landscape into a canvas of gold. Within just 30 minutes, travellers can be exploring the Stockholm Archipelago's magic season, with thousands of islands perfect for a quick nature escape.

Autumn Highlights:

- **Nämdö Archipelago National Park, Sweden´s first marine national park in the Baltic Sea opening September 5, 2025**: the purpose is to preserve a marine archipelago landscape representative of the Baltic Sea in an unchanged state. Encompassing 25,300 hectares (mostly water, with only 840 hectares of land), it will offer protected coastal trails easily accessed by city ferries, ideal for day escapes.
- **House of Q**: Stockholm's new cultural hub in Värtahamnen, located in a former industrial building in the Harbour Blocks of Stockholm. The new venue is set to be a meeting place for queer and LGBTQ culture, with 3400 square meters of bars, restaurants and event spaces.
- The city's culinary scene continues to gain recognition with **new Michelin distinctions**, including **Ergo** (1 star) and **ÄRLA** (Bib Gourmand).
- **Hagastrand**: a new destination hotel in northern Stockholm. It will feature several activities, a spa and wellness section, and conference rooms. Located on the banks of Brunnsviken Lake, in Hagaparken, it is just a short walk from Haga Palace.

Top reasons to visit Stockholm in Autumn:

- **Fika then forest and culture:** enjoy cinnamon buns indoors by candle light at charming Café Ektorpet in the park of the art museum, Prince Eugen's Waldermarsudde followed by a walk among flaming autumn leaves in Royal Djurgården, the world's first national city park that hosts some of the greatest museums of Stockholm, such as the Vasa Museum, ABBA The Museum or Skansen.
- **Museum to marina:** tour a royal palace or one of Stockholm's main museums, then kayak along tranquil canals within sight of the city skyline.
- **Island-hopping escapes:** visit hidden coves and coastal hikes such as Stockholm Archipelago Trail in the Stockholm archipelago, all accessible by commuter ferry.
- **Golden-hour glamour and contrasts:** start your day in the Old Town's cobbled streets, visit the Nobel Museum, then continue with Nobel glamour at Stockholm City Hall, and end it with a sauna and sea view in Nacka.
- **Metro and art gallery:** featuring artworks by over 150 artists, the metro is often referred to as the world's longest art exhibition. Perfect for a rainy day!

More about a city break in Stockholm here.

Watch the city break video here.

Gothenburg – Sweden's Green Coastal Star

Gothenburg has also experienced a significant rise in global interest, with 9,8 million annual searches, and an increase in both "botanical garden Gothenburg" (+317%), "museum Gothenburg" (+241%) and a staggering 3002% spike in interest for flights to Gothenburg***.

Known for its laid-back atmosphere, innovative restaurants, and easy access to the stunning Swedish west coast, Gothenburg is also among the world leaders in green living and sustainability.

Autumn in Gothenburg brings tranquil coastal charm from downtown to the archipelago. Ferries still run to the nearby islands of Brännö and Vrångö, with fika by the sea. Slottsskogen's broad avenues offer deer sightings and strolls in the crisp coastal air, while the Kattegattleden trail becomes a scenic cycle ride without the summer crowds.

Autum Highlights:

- **Kusthotellet Styrsö** opens late summer. In the heart of Gothenburg's archipelago, a homage to the simple life that has characterised this island for generations. A genuine archipelago feeling blended with stylish elegance and a coastal spa retreat, accessible by ferry.
- Gothenburg's culinary scene keeps shining with **new Michelin-starred restaurants: Signum** (from 1 to 2 stars and a Green Star), and **Hoze** (1 star)
- **Food Fest Gothenburg, 12-21 Sept:** a ten-day festival where the city's gastronomy comes to life in unexpected settings—offering immersive food experiences, learning, and unique encounters
- **Göteborg International Biennial for Contemporary Art (GIBCA), 20 Sept-30 Nov:** a platform for international contemporary art. Each biennial consists of several exhibitions and public programs hosted by leading art institutions in Gothenburg, independent initiatives, and in public spaces.
- **Island of Light in Smögen, 5-14 Sept**: an international Light Art Festival placed on the beautiful granite Island of Smögen on the Swedish West Coast, 1 hr. 30 min. drive north of Gothenburg, with the most gorgeous surroundings.
- **Lights in Alingsås, 3 Oct-2 Nov**: a 2.5 km long lighting trail featuring six workshop installations and several highlights spread out through the heart of the small town of Alingsås, 30 minutes train from Gothenburg.

Top reasons to visit Gothenburg in Autumn:

- **From design to islands:** start with design boutique browsing on Magasinsgatan and a visit to Röhsska, the Museum of Design and Craft, then trade city streets for pine-scented trails on the islands of Styrsö or Vrångö — just a 30-minute tram and ferry ride away.
- **Urban sauna, island calm**: warm up in Frihamnen's "floating" sauna, surrounded by river mist and city lights.
- **Enjoy the Lobster season:** join a lobster safari on the island of Hönö at the start of the season on the first Monday after September 20th. Or simply enjoy a lobster dinner on dry land in town, at the legendary **Feskekörka fish market.**
- **From fika to pilgrim trail:** sip coffee and eat Sweden's biggest cinnamon roll in the old and cosy Haga district before heading on an easy historical hike on parts of The Pilgrim Path Göta Älv starting at Masthuggskyrkan Church in Gothenburg centre.
- **Gamlestaden after dark:** end the day in Gothenburg's rising creative district, where heritage warehouses host breweries, bistros, and live music.

More about a city break in Gothenburg here.

Watch the city break video here.

Malmö – Youthful Spirit Meets Seashore Design

Malmö, Sweden's youngest city demographically, shows the highest growth in trend index (+29%), with 8,9 million annual searches and rising interest in local attractions like Saluhallen Malmö (+173%) and Folkets Park (+311%), reflecting the city's emerging status as a food and cultural destination. Malmö's search interest is increasingly localised, with terms like "restaurant Malmö" (1.53M) and "hotel Malmö" (865.9K) dominating. ***

Autumn highlights Malmö's design-forward architecture and bikeable shoreline. Stroll the coastal promenades to admire the autumn light—the same that inspires local design festivals.

Autum Highlights:

- **Hotell Baltzar**: Strawberry, one of the largest hotel companies in Scandinavia, opens its smallest hotel in Sweden this autumn, in central Malmö. With 45 newly renovated rooms and tower suites, the goal is to create "Malmö's cosiest hotel".
- Malmö's culinary scene is recognised with a **Michelin Bib Gourmand** for **Västergatan**
- **Moderna Museet Malmö celebrates 15 years: the exhibition Best regards by Lee Mingwei, 26th Sept 2025–11th Jan 2026**. The artist transforms the places he visits and goes beyond the usual museum logic as he mends clothes and drinks tea with the visitors.
- **Swedish Beer Festival, 13-14 Sept:** meet 100 Swedish craft beer breweries, taste a range of beers and get inspired, joining beer lovers from all over the country and beyond at Slagthuset in central Malmö.

Top reasons to visit Malmö in Autumn:

- **From street food to wellness**: enjoy multicultural street food and fika at Möllevången or Malmö Saluhall, then bike to Ribersborg beach to warm up in the sauna at Ribersborgs Kallbadhus, right on the shoreline, and dare to take a cold dip in the sea!
- **Design tour by bike:** visit Form/Design Center, hop on your bike and explore the eco-designed district of Västra Hamnen where seaside boardwalks meet bold architecture like the neo-futurist twisted skyscraper Turning Torso. Then cycle to the beach through autumn-coloured parks. End the day at Malmö Konsthall or with a sunset over the Öresund Strait.
- **One bridge, two city escapes:** combine Swedish calm with a quick cross-border adventure — Copenhagen is just 30 minutes away thanks to the Öresund Bridge.
- **Embrace local tradition and celebrate Mårten Gås, 10th Nov:** Mårten Gås (St. Martin's Eve), is a tradition that dates back to the 16th century. This feast is commonly served at guest houses in Skåne and includes: Black Soup, usually made from goose blood and spices. It might even come with a side of rich liver pâté and sweet plums. Oven-baked goose, served with potatoes, Brussels sprouts, oven-baked apples, plums, and rich gravy; followed by delicious apple pie with vanilla cream.
- **Malmö music by night**: enjoy an intimate jazz session at Victoriateatern, dive into Malmö's electronic underground at Plan B, or experience a contemporary concert at the, Malmö Live Concert Hall – autumn nights here, come alive with sound.

More about a city break in Malmö here.

Watch the city video here.

* https://www.worldsbestcities.com/reports/2025-europes-best-cities/

** International search volume 2024, Bloom Consulting, D2 Digital Demand ©

*** International search volume between April 2023 and May 2025, MyTelescope

More about city breaks in Sweden: https://visitsweden.com/where-to-go/city-break-in-sweden/

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