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Michelin ‘keys’ for the most outstanding hotels: two for Stockholm’s Grand Hotel

The **Grand Hotel Stockholm** is one of the four hotels in the Nordics awarded two ‘keys’ by the inspectors of the Michelin guide.

Similar to the stars for restaurants, the keys reward excellence. Excellence for hotels is judged across five categories, including architecture, character, and quality and consistency of service.

The Grand Hotel deserves its two keys for its location, classic decoration, “almost comical decadence” and impeccable service, according to the Michelin guide.

Grand Hotel aside, **ten Swedish hotels are among the one-key hotels in the Nordics** All are located in the capital, Stockholm – with one exception. The **Arctic Bath** in the tiny village of Harads in northern Sweden is “unlike anywhere else,” the Michelin inspectors find.

Arctic Bath accommodates their guests in cabins that float on a river during the summer and are frozen into it during the winter, the architecture bearing tribute to the region’s timber heritage and resulting in a “sense of deep, elemental immersion.”

More resources:

- The first Michelin Key Hotels in the Nordic Countries (Michelin Guide)
- Where to stay in Sweden (Visit Sweden)

National Geographic Traveller picks Stockholm Stadshotell as one of the best in the world

Not only were Sweden’s first Relais & Châteaux hotel, Stockholm Stadshotell, awarded aMICHELIN Key, they also made it to The world’s 30 best hotels list by National Geographic Traveller UK.

“One of the most exciting openings of the year,” say National Geographic Traveller’s editors about Stockholm’s Stadshotell. The hotel wins in the category “clever conversion,” celebrating heritage buildings that have been reborn as unique hotels.

The hotel started as a shelter for widows after it was commissioned by Queen Josefina of Sweden and Norway in honour of her deceased husband, King Oscar I. It was then run as a home, a hospital, a school, and offices before lying dormant for 16 years until the city of Stockholm sold it under the condition that it be of public use. Architectural designs, like ceiling paintings, mirrors and stuccoed plaster, not only remain from the old days in what is now a modern hotel with 32 rooms, two restaurants, a spa and sauna – no, these details are ‘restored and reimagined to glorious effect,” praises the travel magazine.

More resources:

- Hotel Awards 2025: The world's 30 best hotels (National Geographic Traveller UK)
- Stockholm Stadshotell
- Top Hotels in Stockholm (Visit Sweden, last updated January 2025)

New accommodation from creators of world-famous Tree Hotel opens just before Christmas

If you like Tree Hotel in the heart of Swedish Lapland, then the new, 400 square meter villa opening on 21 December 2025 is likely for you. It sees Jenny Isaaksson at the helm, daughter of the Tree Hotel founders.

The villa, called **Villa Äng**, offers elegant and comfortable accommodation that connect visitors to the landscape ('äng' meaning 'meadow' in Swedish) and stories of northern Sweden.

Panoramic views of the meadows and the nearby river, and of course a sauna and an outdoor hot tub are part of the package.

More resources:

- Villa Äng website
- 10 extraordinary accommodations close to Swedish nature (Visit Sweden)
- Tree hotels in Sweden – the most unusual places you ever stayed (Visit Sweden)

Sweden's Hyssna Forest Resort third among the 25 "most delightful, stress-busting forest stays"

The British newspaper The Times has looked around for the 25 most restorative hideaways in Europe this autumn and Sweden's Hyssna Forest Resort comes in third. At a 45-minutes-drive distance from the second biggest city of Gothenburg, the resort itself lies in the midst of a pristine forest.

The success story began only two years ago with two brothers and a family-owned forest. Oscar and David Johansson, both carpenters, thought they might just try to build cabins that people would actually want to rent.

"We set to work on the cabins without even telling our closest friends," Oscar Johansson told the Swedish newspaper 'Expressen.'

"We opened when we had completed three cabins." Two more cabins are to follow in 2026.

"It is the nature experience that attracts people to our resort," he said, and The Times observes that most guests "squirrel themselves away in luxuriously leafy seclusion."

More resources:

- 25 of Europe's most delightful, stress-busting forest stays (The Times)
- Hyssna Forest Resort
- Extraordinary accommodations close to Swedish nature (Visit Sweden, updated Nov. 2024)

New Apple TV show offers glimpse behind Michelin starred restaurants – including Sweden's Knystaforsen

24 October is a big day for a small village in southern Sweden. That is because the new Apple TV show ‘Knife Edge: Chasing Michelin Stars’ then runs its episode on the restaurant Knystaforsen, one of Sweden’s Michelin-starred diners.

The restaurant is located in an old sawmill in the midst of a forest, and just by a river. The menu celebrates these surroundings – think fish from nearby rivers and lakes, meat from moose or deer hunted in the forest, berries and mushrooms picked there, plus locally grown vegetables.

Aside from its Michelin star for high-quality cooking, Knystaforsen also has a Michelin Green Star, recognising it for being at the forefront of sustainable gastronomy. At Knystaforsen, ‘sustainability’ also means preparing meals outdoors, and over an open fire – honouring the slowness and the sense of community arising from this kind of cooking.

More resources:

- About the Knife Edge show (Apple TV press release)
- Sweden’s Michelin-starred restaurants (Michelin Guide)
- What’s cooking in Halland (Visit Halland)

UN recognizes Sweden for leading as a sustainable destination

What do mussels, crabs and seaweed-pickled cabbage have to do with Sweden leading as a sustainable destination?

They are all locally grown at Sweden’s west coast, around the second-largest city Gothenburg – and they are part of the city’s new sustainable signature dish, ‘Gothenburg Royale.’

Renowned chef Marcus Samuelsson conceived the dish and prepared it during an event of the recent United Nations (UN) General Assembly in New York. The event marked the selection of Gothenburg as the UN’s new global hub for sustainable lifestyles, on 25 September.

Gothenburg has long been a frontrunner on sustainability. It came second in the recently released 2025 Global Destination Sustainability Index, having been top ranked in several previous years.

Now, the UN selected the city as its new global hub for sustainable lifestyles. This new initiative launching in 2026 wants to drive progress towards sustainable lifestyles, from tourism and culture to fashion and food.

“Sweden is globally recognised for its progressive approach to sustainability, and Gothenburg brings that mindset to life,” said Susanne Andersson, CEO, Visit Sweden.

Marcus Samuelsson’s signature dish also brings that mindset to people’s plates. Samuelsson grew up in Gothenburg but now lives in New York City. He became known through his award-winning restaurants, best-selling cookbooks, and appearances on TV shows (“The Inner Chef” and “The Next Iron Chef”).

He is also well known for speaking out on how foods must adapt to dietary needs and the realities of climate change. His Gothenburg signature dish, therefore, celebrates typical Swedish West Coast produce and highlights how simple, local food can be a delicious force for sustainability.

More resources:

- Gothenburg selected new global UN hub for sustainable lifestyles (Visit Sweden newsroom)
- Sustainable Travel (Visit Sweden)
- 9 sustainable Swedish food and drink experiences (Visit Sweden)

Hot off the press: One of the world's top 50 bars lies in Stockholm

The World's 50 Best just came out with this year's ranking of bars around the globe, and among them is 'Röda Huset' in Stockholm as number 35, up from 45 in 2024.

The bar and restaurant pursue a Nordic style with Swedish ingredients and seasonal tastes at its heart.

"It means a lot that we have climbed higher on the list," said founder and bar chef Hampus Thunholm in a press release. "It proves that our philosophy of creating something genuinely Nordic can still appeal to a global public."

Another Stockholm bar, Tjoget, did not make it into the top 50. Ranked #76, Tjoget still deserves a mention (not only from us at Visit Sweden, who worked with Tjoget and other bartenders on drink recipes for our open air bar experience, A Drinkable Country).

Coinciding with the World's Best 50 release, Vogue Scandinavia celebrated the bar for being more than that – a "cultural hub", rather, and a "prime examples of the region's ability to blend innovation and tradition."

More resources:

- The World's Best 50 about Röda Huset
- Vogue Scandinavia about Tjoget
- Nightlife in Stockholm (Visit Sweden, updated Dec. 2024)
- The Drinkable Country (Visit Sweden, updated May 2023)

Coming up:

31 October, 2025:

Trick-or-treating for Halloween is nothing new, and certainly not unique to Sweden – but the eery tales of sorrow and unrest that lie behind the beautiful facades of castles and manor houses here certainly are.

An itinerary of nine haunted places you can actually stay in includes a parsonage awarding a 'ghost certificate' for those brave enough to sleep through the night even as furniture moves on its own and shadowy figures creep in the hallways. But visitors may prefer a castle in which the ghost of Lady Ramborg appears at night when the castle clock strikes thirteen, her pale face visible in one of the tower windows. Or another castle, this one roamed by the ghost of a former royal horse. It would take special witchcraft or wizardry to fit visiting all haunted venues into just the haunted eve of Halloween – but they might also put a spell on the visitor, compelling them to visit Sweden again, and again, and again.

More resources:

- 9 haunted castles and manor houses you can actually stay in
- (Visit Sweden, updated 7 October, 2025)
- Downloadable press image of haunted castle Borgvattnet

10 December, 2025:

On the day of Alfred Nobel's death, the laureates of the Nobel Prizes in physics, chemistry, physiology/ medicine, literature,

and economics receive their prizes in Stockholm. The city celebrates the occasion with a week filled with special attractions and meals.

More resources:

- A Nobel Way to discover Stockholm (Visit Stockholm)
- The Nobel prize – over a century of innovation (Visit Sweden)

Under 2026:

The interests of the tourism industry and those of indigenous communities may often conflict with each other – not so in the case of the Swedish ski resort Idre fjäll and the Sami people there. The Idre ski resort, located in the region of Dalarna, is expanding (snow remains abundant here, where it's become scarce in other parts of the world) but sees its future becoming closer to nature, which is also central to the Sami peoples' culture. A new facility for reindeer herding and a visitors' centrum is set to open in 2026.

More resources:

- Read more about this story (in Swedish)
- Discover Sami culture (Visit Dalarna)

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