Visit Sweden News Room

Coolcation 2026: Sweden sees rising demand as UK travellers seek cooler summers

In 2026, more and more holidaymakers will be drawn to places where summer is refreshing instead of exhausting. Thus, Coolcation is becoming more and more popular – and Sweden remains the coolest choice.



Photo: Markus Holm/Visit Sweden (Download)

Travel behaviour continues to change – away from hot destinations and towards pleasant temperatures. *Condé Nast Traveler* counted Coolcation as one of the most important developments in tourism as early as 2024. As each year becomes hotter than the one before, many travellers are rethinking: Instead of glowing asphalt and crowded beaches, the focus is on moderate temperatures, nature and water.

An emerging trend of shifting demand

According to WTM´s 2025 Global Travel Report, cooler destinations are being sought, and an emerging trend of shifting demand from the peak summer season to shoulder or off-season periods is emerging. More and more people are being drawn to Sweden and its northern neighbours – **foreign bed nights in the Nordic countries increased more strongly during the summer months than in the Mediterranean countries (June-August 2025 compared to 2024)*** - as they impress with pleasant summer temperatures, plenty of space and a relaxed holiday atmosphere.

A more sustainable tourism industry.

We also know tourism to Sweden is now increasingly distributed throughout the year. Summer (June–August) accounts for 43% of the year's guest nights, while 57% occur during the other months of the year, a proportion that has increased since 2019. In fact, growth is most evident outside the summer season in Sweden, especially for foreign bed nights, which contribute to a more even occupancy and more stable demand throughout the year.

Google searches for Sweden are up

With an average temperature of 20–25 °C in the south, fresh mountain air in the north, the most islands of any country in the world at over 267,500 and more than 100,000 lakes, the country offers the best conditions for summers without heat stress. Regions with direct access to water, such as western Sweden, Skåne, Stockholm, Blekinge and Småland, are particularly in demand. But Norrbotten, high up in the north, with its combination of coast and fell, is also seeing increasing visitor numbers. **It's no wonder that Google searches for Sweden from the UK increased by 5% year-on-year between June and August 2025**. The reasons are obvious: Sweden combines a lot of space, few people, spectacular nature, and extra-long (holiday) days thanks to the midnight sun.

Here are 5 tips for a summer that really refreshes:

1. Kayoga in West Sweden – Kayak meets Yoga
Kayaking between archipelagos, then yoga on a small island: a combination that sounds like pure relaxation – until your back pulls and your legs go numb. Kayoga provides a remedy: First, you paddle through the breathtaking coastal landscape of western Sweden, then follow a yoga session especially for paddlers' hips. A certified Yoga teacher leads through targeted stretches for the back, legs and shoulders - perfect for relieving tension and staying smoothly on course in the next wave. The tour lasts four hours, relaxation guaranteed, sore muscles not excluded. Whether it's calm seas or sporty surf, the archipelago coast around Fjällbacka and Orust offers perfect conditions for this unusually relaxed adventure.

2. Fell snorkelling – swimming with trout
Snorkelling is only possible in the sea? Wrong. In Sweden's mountains, you dive through crystal-clear mountain streams, accompanied by trout and surrounded by dramatic mountain landscapes. Instead of corals, there are rugged rocks, and instead of tropical heat, there is a refreshing 10-15 °C water temperature – a real nature experience without mass tourism. Providers like Borgagården in Borgafjäll or Klimpfjäll Adventures offer guided tours where you can float weightlessly through the ice-clear water equipped with a wetsuit. While trout scurry past below, the snow-capped peaks are reflected in the water above. A summer experience that is guaranteed to wake you up.

3. Ice-cold experiences – Icehotel 365 & Icebar Stockholm
An ice hotel in summer? Sounds crazy, but it's reality – in Kiruna. This is where the world's first ice hotel is located, which has been letting guests sleep in artistically designed suites made of snow and ice since 1989. Thanks to state-of-the-art cooling technology, the Icehotel 365 all year round. While the midnight sun outside provides 30-degree days, it remains a constant frosty -5 °C inside. They sleep in style on reindeer skins and in thermal sleeping bags, which warm better than many a Swedish summer night. If a whole night on ice is still too bold for you, you can approach it slowly - with a drink in the Icebar Stockholm, where everything consists of frozen Torneälven river water: counters, glasses, benches. Temperature? Of course, -5 °C. Warm jackets are included with the drink.

4. Ski & Raft – Winter and Summer in Värmland
Winter in the morning, summer in the afternoon – and in the same place? In Torsby in Värmland, this is exactly what is possible. In the Torsby Ski Tunnel, the first of its kind in Sweden, there are perfect cross-country skiing conditions all year round at a constant -3 °C. Here, professionals train side by side with amateur athletes who miss the snow in the middle of summer. After the sporty cooling, it's time for the complete contrast program: Raft on the Klarälven. Here, the boat is not rented, but first built – from tree trunks and ropes, just like hundreds of years ago when wood was transported on this river. Once the raft is ready, you can drift leisurely through the untouched nature of Värmland, with nothing but water, forest and silence all around you. The tours last between one and eight days, depending on how far you want to drift.

5. Swimming without the sun lounger battle – Sweden's lake district
100,000 lakes – if you can't find a place by the water in Sweden, you've definitely taken a wrong turn. With 5,500 km², Lake Vänern is more an inland sea than a lake, with islands, castles and plenty of space for swimming. Lake Vättern shines in Caribbean turquoise, but is guaranteed to remain seaweed-free. Lake Hornavan, Sweden´s deepest at 221 metres, not only offers a deep dive, but also solitude – an Arctic Sweden idyll without the annoying beach neighbours. And then there is Lake Siljan, formed by a meteorite impact, which offers a postcard panorama as well as a geological curiosity. And the best part? Enough space for everyone – without towel chess on the beach.

More cool tips:

https://visitsweden.com/what-to-do/nature-outdoors/coolcation/

Press Images:

https://imagebank.sweden.se/my-selections/u7g50fjr7

Sources:

- **TourMIS Database* https://www.tourmis.info/index_e.html
- **Bloom Consulting** *D2 Digital Demand © 2025 report shows that British travel-related and holiday searches for Sweden remained at the same level (+0%) across the year. However, searches during June-August 2025 from the UK increased by 5% compared to the same period the previous year.
- More details on British travellers´ internet search behaviour can be found HERE

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