Visit Sweden News Room

Five Travelers Win Their Own Swedish Island After Global Rush to Escape the Crowds

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — A global search for the custodians of five secluded Swedish islands has come to an end, with winners selected from 2,242 entries submitted across 100 countries. The campaign, Your Swedish Island, attracted applications from more than half the world's nations and tapped into a growing international desire for quieter, nature-driven travel experiences.

Launched earlier this year by Visit Sweden, the initiative invited travelers to apply for the chance to care for and experience one of five remote Swedish islands for a year — not as owners, but as temporary custodians of places defined by simplicity, stillness, and access to nature.



Bathing off a tiny island in the Stockholm archipelago at sunset. Photo: Anders Klapp/imagebank.sweden.se Download)

Sweden's islands answer growing demand for quiet travel

The scale of interest reflects a broader shift in traveler priorities. Increasingly, travelers are looking for destinations that offer space, silence, and a break from overcrowded tourism hotspots.

According to a YouGov survey commissioned by Visit Sweden, 44% of global respondents said they would happily escape crowds by retreating to their own island. For U.S. travelers especially, the campaign taps into rising interest in low-impact travel, outdoor escapes, and destinations that feel restorative rather than overstimulating.

"The response from around the world shows how strongly people are craving nature, quiet, and a different pace of travel," says **Susanne Andersson**, CEO of Visit Sweden. "With Your Swedish Island, we wanted to highlight a side of Sweden that feels increasingly valuable today — open space, simplicity, and the freedom to experience nature responsibly."

Meet the five new island custodians

The winners selected by Visit Sweden's jury are:

- **Bronwen Bird (Canada)** — Storberget, Stockholm Archipelago
- **Eric Holmer (USA)** — Skötbådan, Stockholm Archipelago
- **Miriam Wiskemann (Germany)** — Marsten, Halland, Southwest Sweden
- **Freek van Heertum (Netherlands)** — Medbådan, Västerbotten, Swedish Lapland

- **Jonathan Scyboz (Switzerland)** — Tjuvholmen, West Sweden

Each winner receives:

- A one-year right to use one of the five selected islands
- A travel voucher for two to Sweden
- A diploma recognizing them as official island custodians
- Information about responsible nature access and stewardship in Sweden

Read more about all the winners and their competition entriesHERE on visitsweden.com, and HERE on Instagram.

The islands remain public land and accessible under Sweden's Right of Public Access, *Allemansrätten*, which allows everyone to enjoy nature while protecting and respecting it for others.

Developed together with the National Property Board (SFV), the initiative was designed to showcase a different side of Swedish travel: remote yet reachable places where travelers can disconnect without disconnecting entirely from local culture and community life.

For those who did not win, the message remains the same: with more islands than any other country in the world, Sweden's island landscape remains open to everyone — from tiny rocky outposts in the archipelago to forest-fringed lake islands across the country.

More information

Your Swedish Island campaign:
https://visitsweden.com/your-swedish-island/

Winning videos and press images:

- The winning entry videos and press images of the US winner
- The winning entry videos and press images of all winners
- Your Swedish Island press imagery and video
- Select destination images

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Notes to editors

Survey methodology:
The survey was conducted by YouGov between June 24 and July 3, 2025, among more than 9,000 respondents aged 18+ across Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, the UK, and the USA.

About Visit Sweden:
Visit Sweden is a marketing company owned by the Swedish government. It acts as the national tourism organisation to promote the destination of Sweden, increasing the country's attractiveness to contribute to tourism consumption and employment. Visit Sweden works with the Swedish tourism industry to reach target groups seeking long-term sustainable tourism. visitsweden.com

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