

Swedish Design Heaven:

Two Days in Stockholm

Allow us to indulge in a spot of mind reading. When you read the words 'Swedish design', you think IKEA. Our two-day itinerary, flat-packed and ready to go, will re-educate you, leading you to the best design in the European capital of cool. No Allen key required.

OBSCURE OBJECTS OF DESIRE

Start the day with a *lussekatt* (saffron bun) and coffee at **Thelins Konditori** (St Eriksgatan 43; www.thelinskonditori.se) then spend a couple of hours at the **Moderna Museet** (Exercisplan 4; www.modernamuseet.se) on Skeppsholmen island. Its world-class collection of modern art includes all the big names of the era, from Dalí to Rauschenberg (check out his sheep-in-a-tyre creation *Monogram*). Colourful figures created by Jean Tinguely and Niki de Saint Phalle dance in the outdoor sculpture garden. The gift shop stocks an eye-popping selection of art books and monographs, and the upper-level café with its panoramic windows offers a beautiful view over the water.

In an extraordinary building next door to the Moderna Museet, the **Arkitekturmuseet** (www.arkitekturmuseet.se) has displays on Swedish and international architecture. Its permanent exhibition covers 1000 years of Swedish architecture, from cabins to castles. Complete the Skeppsholmen design trilogy by popping into **Svensk Form Designcenter** (Holmamiralens väg 2; www.svenskform.se) and picking up a copy of the magazine *Form* to read over lunch.

Catch the *tunnel-bana* to Fridhemsplan and head to **R.O.O.M.** (Alströmergatan 20; www.room.se). Interior-design heaven for newlywed yuppies with cash to burn, R.O.O.M. is equally entertaining as a furniture-trends museum. If your knees go weak from looking at the

price tags, repair to the café for lunch and test those clean-lined Swedish chairs for yourself.

The afternoon should be spent browsing the design shops in Östermalm. Of particular note are **Carl Malmsten Inredning** (Strandvägen 5B; www.c.malmsten.se), **DIS Inredning** (Humlegårdsgatan 19; www.disinredning.se), **Nordiska Galleriet** (Nybrogatan 11), **Modernity** (Sibyllegatan 6; www.modernity.se) and **Svenskt Tenn** (Strandvägen 5; www.nordiskagalleriet.se). If you've had enough of minimalist style and perfect order, lose yourself down the contorted back alleys of **Gamla Stan**.

At this point a pre-dinner drink or two is in order. Aim your sights at **gondolen** (Stadsgården 6; www.gondolen.com), a bar-restaurant located in a bridge at the top of Katarinahissen, an elevator dating back to 1883. It's hard to beat the view from up here – you can sip a cocktail and pretend to be king or queen of all you survey, which amounts to most of Stockholm.

For dinner, glide into **Metró** (Götgatan 93; ☎ 442 03 20; www.metrosthlm.com) in Södermalm, Stockholm's bohemian district. A sprawling, multi-level space with gorgeous, over-the-top '60s-influenced design, Metró was opened by chef Kim Bjälvenäs, who spent some time in the kitchen of New York's famed Swedish restaurant Aquavit. The attached Moulin Rouge-style bar has a DJ most nights.

Suitably fortified, head to Norrmalm and Vasastaden to check out the cream of Stockholm's nightlife: try glacial **Icebar** (inside Nordic Sea Hotel, Vasaplan 4), opulent **Berns Salonger** (Berzelli Park) and **Café Opera** (Operahuset), or hip DJ bars **Fredsgatan 12** and

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Storstad (Odengatan 41). If the night is yet young, try and persuade the bouncers to let you into club-of-the-moment **Spybar** (Birger Jarlsgatan 20) or shake some moves at **Mondo** (Medborgarplatsen 8).

BEAUTY FOR ALL

Sore head and guilty conscience? You'll need the solace offered by **Rosendals Trädgård** (Rosendalsterrassen 12; www.rosendalstradgard.com) in Djurgården, an idyllic spot for a fruit pastry and coffee. If the weather is ugly, skulk around the gardens and greenhouses, look moody and pretend you're Strindberg.

Spend the rest of the morning at **Thielska Galleriet** (Sjötullsbacken 6). The green-and-white mansion, completed in 1907, was purpose-built for the tycoon Ernest Thiel, a patron and friend of several Swedish artists. It now contains Thiel's notable collection of late-19th- and early-20th-century Nordic art. The highlight is a substantial collection of Edvard Munch paintings and sketches, including his enormous portrait of Strindberg (and one of Thiel).

For lunch, tuck into smoked reindeer at **Wärdshuset Godthem** (Rosendalsvägen 9; www.godthem.se), an early 20th-century-style restaurant located in a strange grey building complete with octagonal tower.

Sacrifice the rest of the afternoon to the gods of design retail with a trip to **Hornspuckeln**. The conglomeration of well-established galleries and shops along Hornsgatan has the best selection of fine art for sale. Many of the galleries here are members of Svenska Galleriförbundet, an association that produces a quarterly exhibitions listing (pick one up at any of the galleries).

Two giants of Swedish interior design are to be found on nearby Götgatan. **DesignTorget** (No 31) collects the work of independent up-and-comers and brings it to a wider market. You'll find new Swedish design of all types, from toys and textiles to furniture and storage systems, created by the future stars of the Stockholm design scene. **10 Swedish Designer** (No 25; www.tiogruppen.com), started in 1970 by a group of then-maverick textile artists, sells classic Swedish design. It's a great place to browse for small gifts or household items,

including handbags and distinctively patterned serving trays and draperies.

Join the proles for dinner at **Folkhemmet** (Renstiernas Gata 30), a madly popular bar and restaurant named after the Social Democratic Party's conception of a welfare state ('the people's home'). Wind down on the terrace of nearby **Mosebacke** (Mosebacketorg 3; www.mosebacke.se), a fantastic place to relax with a drink and gaze out over Gamla Stan. If you have weather to escape from, cosy up at candlelit **Östgötakällaren** (Östgötagatan 41), a brick-lined bar that invites serious lingering.

SLEEPING

Budget:

Långholmen Hotell (www.langholmen.com; ☎ 720 8500) A former prison; the dorms and private rooms are located in the old cells.

Midrange:

Clarion Hotel (www.clarionstockholm.com; ☎ 462 1000) With minimalist rooms, this hotel is so sleek and stylised it's like walking into a copy of *Wallpaper** magazine.

Top End:

Nordic Light (www.nordichotels.se; ☎ 5056 3000) Excelling in modern design, the hotel features black-and-white colours; the single most important element is light.

For more reviews of Stockholm accommodation, check out the Sleep section on www.lonelyplanet.com/accommodation.

By Amanda Canning

For the complete guide to Stockholm grab a copy of *Lonely Planet's Stockholm* guide, available online at shop.lonelyplanet.com.

