

# Stockholm Lesbian Guide





PHOTO: JEPPE WIKSTRÖM

What if there was a city where the water was clear and the air was fresh? What if this city was full of history, beautifully preserved houses and an abundance of culture? And what if such a city was also one of the most open-minded gay and lesbian friendly places on earth? Located in the very heart of Scandinavia, where lake meets sea and nature meets modern life, that city exists: Stockholm.

In the Old Town of Stockholm, you will immediately notice two things: clear water surrounding you and rainbow flags decorating many of the buildings. Chances are high that your third discovery will be a gay couple going for a drink at Torget or two girls kissing in the street. It's that easy to be out in Stockholm.

Sparkling with city life yet close to nature, it's not strange that so many visitors have found their way back over and over again. "Beauty on Water", "The Capital of Scandinavia" – when people fall in love with a city, they tend to rename it. Stockholm can offer not only a rich variety of shops, restaurants and hotels, vibrant nightlife and a wide range of cultural activities, but also an active LGBTQ community.



PHOTO: ELISABETH DUNKER



PHOTO: STOCKHOLM PRIDE

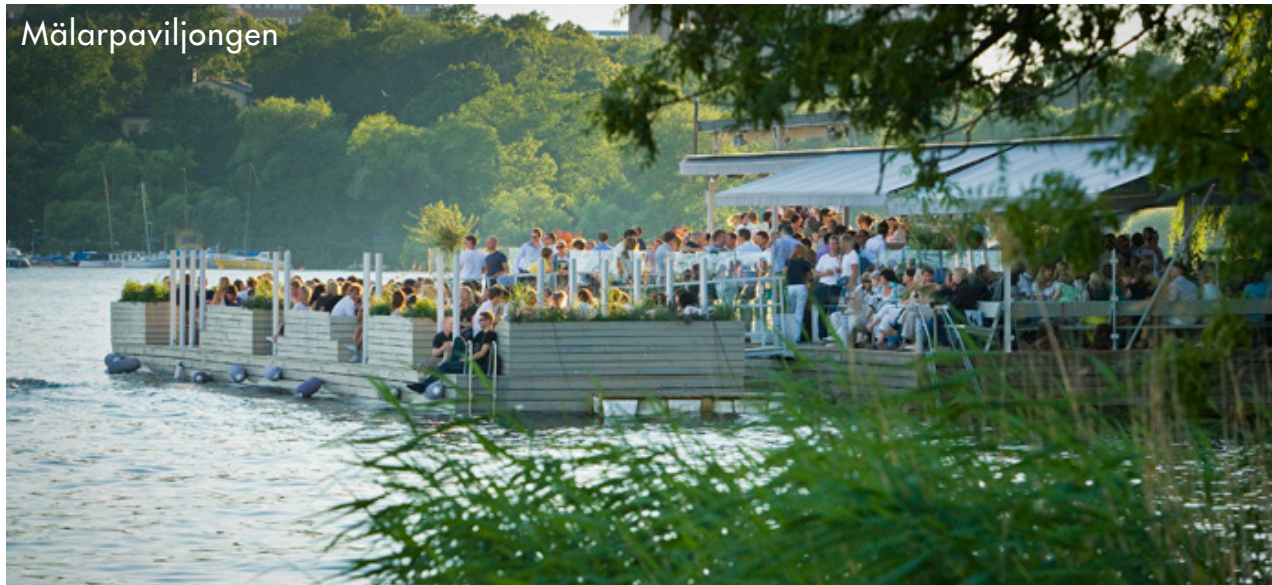


PHOTO: MIKAEL SJÖBERG

## Girls' night out

If in some countries you have to look for a “gay friendly” bar to dare hold your girlfriend’s hand, in Stockholm you can skip that step. Straight clubs not only tolerate but welcome gays and lesbians to join the party. There are several watering holes exclusively for the lesbian community, most of them located in SoFo, the more bohemian part of Södermalm, referring to its location south of Folkungagatan street. Bars such as [Momma](#) and [Roxy](#) are crowded with girls flirting over beers on the weekend. Girl parties are frequently held all over Stockholm, attracting women of different ages and styles, all in the mood for dancing – and love. One of the more traditional places for lesbian parties is [Kolingsborg](#), hosting girl clubs RedLight, Mouse Club and Club Caliente.

The lesbian leather club hosts parties every month. Like in all the other girl clubs in Stockholm, transgender and otherwise trans-identified people are welcome, and the setting is cozy and friendly. (Curious visitors and lost tourists will not be scared!) To keep updated about parties and other activities coming up, be sure to check QX Magazine’s online gay guide at [www.qx.se](http://www.qx.se). Along with all the latest LGBT news, its gaymap of Stockholm is essential.



## Out in the queer city

Stockholm bubbles with happenings characterized by a queer, progressive spirit of DIY. [Högkvarteret](#) (“The Headquarters”) is a bar/workshop/party/seminar and coffee place where you can dance queer lindy hop one day and attend lesbian speed dating or listen to philosophers the next. Another natural meeting place for queers, academics and activists is the bookstore Hallongrottan, named after a raspberry pastry with a funny tongue-in-cheek wink to female genitalia. Just steps away from Hallongrottan is the lesbian-owned café [Copacabana](#), beautifully located by – you guessed it – the water. Close by you’ll find Tantolunden Park, where people of all ages like to spend summer afternoons relaxing with picnics and games.



Although gay and lesbian activities bustle year round, the calendar culminates in late July/early August at Stockholm’s biggest celebration, the [Stockholm Pride festival](#). During Pride Week – or ten days if you choose to include all the “pre-Pride parties” arranged for those eager to get the fun started – you will find activities all over town.

At the Pride House, you can choose from literally hundreds of seminars, theatre performances, lectures, discussions and workshops. In the Pride Park you can mingle with thousands of other revelers, listening to one of the many daytime concerts before night turns Stockholm into a giant Pride party. The park is also the final destination of the spectacular Pride Parade, with about 50,000 participants and more than 500,000 spectators gathering to watch the colorful march of gay and lesbian nurses, Gay Police of Sweden, Viking Bears, Proud Parents of Homosexual Children, politicians and performers.



## Insights Out

City or nature? On land or on water? Stockholm offers plenty of choices for the discerning sightseer. Be sure to pick up your [Stockholm Card](#) that allows free admission to 80 attractions and cultural sites, unlimited public transportation, free bike and hop-on hop-off boat sightseeing in summer plus other discounts in 24- to 120-hour increments. If you're looking for guided sightseeing, [Stockholm Sightseeing](#) cruises the waterways with uniquely designed itineraries, including a gay-themed tour during the Pride festival.

First of all, no trip to Stockholm is complete without a visit to the [Vasa Museum](#). Inside a purpose-built shell of a building stands a near perfectly preserved galleon that sunk on its maiden voyage in 1628 and was salvaged 333 years later. Adults will enjoy the exhibits on seafaring life and naval warfare, while the ship itself is a treat for kids of all ages.



Millesgården



Fotografiska



Hallwyl Museum

If medieval fashion and splendor – rather than old wooden boats – gets you going, you’ll find a (golden) opportunity to behold them at the [Royal Armory](#). From gilded carriages to medieval weaponry, 500 years of dynastic royal history are carefully preserved in the cool cellars of the Royal Palace, a stone’s throw, by the way, from the perennially popular gay café [Chokladkoppen](#).

Or explore the queer quirkiness of the [Hallwyl Museum](#), a gorgeously preserved turn-of-the-20th-century mansion. Rumored lesbian Countess Wilhelmina von Hallwyl devoted her life to cataloguing her life’s everyday objects, from toothbrushes to oil paintings to silver chalices and shocks of her husband’s beard, creating both a historical slice-of-life of Stockholm aristocratic elite and an eccentric tribute to monomania.

If, instead of looking at art in a museum, you are looking for a more authentic experience, you might enjoy a visit to [Millesgården](#), the well-preserved home of world renowned artist Carl Milles. This is not only where he made his best works, but also where he and his wife Olga created a unique terraced sculpture park known for its architectural beauty and boldness. The beautiful home that was once the main motif in Carl’s paintings is now one of the most visited and loved Swedish attractions for art lovers.



PHOTO: MAX PLUNGER



PHOTO: SUSANNE HALLMAN

Some say that there are two kinds of people in this world, those who have fallen in love with author Stieg Larsson's fictional character Lisbeth Salander and those who have yet to read the Millennium books. Millions of people all over the world have followed the life and thrilling adventures of Lisbeth, once described as the new, updated punk version of Pippi Longstocking. Now the [Stockholm City Museum](#) lets you walk in her footsteps and mix in Stockholm history on the Millennium Tour, guided in nine different languages.

Do not miss a visit to [Fotografiska](#), one of the world's largest meeting places for contemporary photography. Fotografiska presents four unique major exhibitions and about 20 smaller exhibitions annually. In addition to the large exhibition space, Fotografiska houses a book and souvenir shop, a restaurant and a photo gallery. In the bar on the top floor you will find one of Stockholm's very best vantage points.

Beautiful nature and cultural heritage are also to be seen at [Skogskyrkogården](#) ("Woodland Cemetery"). Founded in the beginning of the 1900s, the aim was to create something special, something original, a cemetery blending nature and architecture into a seamless whole. Today Skogskyrkogården is considered one of the most important creations of modern architecture, and is even inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List. Pay respects to Greta Garbo and stroll amongst 250 acres of pine forests and grassy slopes.



Berns Hotel



Grand Hôtel



Sheraton Hotel Stockholm



Hotel Stureplan

## Lights Out

From old-world opulence to minimalist makeovers, Stockholm sleeps every scene.

Art deco meets pop art at the chic boutique [Berns Hotel](#), a self-proclaimed “Designer Hotel for people tired of designer hotels”. Past guests Marlene Dietrich and Diana Ross would certainly agree.

For those who like to dream of the splendor of a bygone era, [Hotel Stureplan's](#) combination of two 19th buildings brings traditional Swedish craftsmanship and intimate class to a neighborhood renowned for shopping and nightlife. The [Grand Hôtel](#) is a superbly elegant building opposite the Royal Palace that oozes with heritage and tradition. Top your hotel stay with a visit to the stocked new gym, full-service spa or their bar, which offers the best view of Stockholm.



Hotel Hellsten



Clarion Hotel Stockholm



Hotel Skeppsholmen



Hilton Stockholm Slussen

At gay-managed [Hotel Skeppsholmen](#), a slick, serene renovation turns two 17th-century naval barracks into an amenity-laden island of culture and calm, literally. Ensclosed in nature next to the Modern Art and Architecture Museums, its central waterfront location is a captivating choice for a discerning crowd. Condé Nast Traveler agrees: it's the only Scandinavian hotel listed on its 2010 Hot List!

Rightly described as “Stockholm’s Art Hotel No.1”, the [Clarion Hotel Stockholm](#) showcases a stellar collection of works in a living gallery of light and space. Whether you’re in town for business or indulging in a romantic weekend, save time for a drink and the fantastic skyline view at its trendy Upstairs Bar.

[Hotel Hellsten](#) has a feel of cosy charm. From individually decorated rooms to breakfast in the exquisite conservatory, it's a gem prized by discerning travelers. Commanding views, commanding breakfasts (voted “best of” so many times it's not allowed to run anymore) and cleverly designed rooms with swirling marble bathrooms make [Hilton Stockholm Slussen](#) a unique option for business and leisure. Or head to the just-renovated [Sheraton Hotel Stockholm](#), five-star service and a popular happy hour mere steps from the train station draw a choice crowd to the central business district.



PHOTO: RESTAURANT J NACKA STRAND

## Check It Out!

Capital of Scandinavia, Heart of the North – as you sync with the pulse of the city, don't be surprised if you give it your own loving name. This is a place to be free, to relax, to be inspired and to enjoy life. Join the joyride, come to Stockholm!

Follow our blog for daily updates and news on LGBT Stockholm [www.visitstockholm.com/gay-lesbian](http://www.visitstockholm.com/gay-lesbian)  
You can also find us on twitter, Facebook and Flickr. Please visit our blog for details.