

Hotel Review from Euan's Guide (website for people with disabilities)

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## Hotel Rival

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3 Mariatorget, Stockholm, 118 48, Sweden | [+46 8 545 789 00](#) | [Website](#)



T.H  
London



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**Outstanding in every aspect - Highly Recommend**

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Visit date: August 2019

This review is especially helpful for those who have or use the following: **Walking Aid**

## Overview

I loved staying at the Hotel Rival. I originally booked as it has really easy to find, detailed disabled access information, which includes pictures, on its website. The hotel has outstanding disabled access, it's step free, there's lifts, automatic doors, accessible rooms and communal accessible toilets. The Rival could teach other hotels a thing or several about accessibility and inclusivity, as the hotel is extremely stylishly accessible and full of glamour. It was a joy to stay somewhere where accessibility is a key feature and not an after thought, and beautifully designed. The hotel gets everything else perfectly right as well, it's beautiful, exceptionally well maintained and has amazing service. Their staff are utterly outstanding and genuinely take an interest in their guests. It's located in a beautiful part of Stockholm, with excellent transport links or a short walk to Gamla Stan (the old town). It was perfect for me.

## Transport & Parking

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The Rival is in Mariatorget, a beautiful garden square. It has excellent public transport links. From Arlanda Airport, the easiest way is by the commuter train, as this will involve only one train to Sodra Train Station and then a 5 - 8 minute level walk, down one street until you reach the garden square at the end and then the hotel is on the right hand side of the square. There are 2 trains per hour to Sodra and the train journey takes about 40 minutes. This is the route I travelled by. Please note that the trains to Sodra depart from Arlanda Central Station in Sky City, although you remain indoors, this is a quite a walk from the airport terminus. On the way from the airport I had special assistance, which was excellent, they took me to buy my ticket and then took me onto the platform and advised me of the time of my next train. On the way to the airport I didn't notice the assistance call buttons at Arlanda Central Station and with my case and crutch it took me a good 10 minutes to walk to my terminal. I would advise if you book special assistance to make yourself known at Arlanda Central Station and wait for your assistance to arrive. The final thing to note about this route is that even if you have a pre-paid travel card you have to pay a supplement of 120 SEK (2019) to travel on this route. It was explained to me that this is because it is a train line owned by a different company and you pay an additional charge at the start or end of your journey to cover these charges. Please don't let this up you off, as it is the easiest way to travel. The alternative from the airport is using the Arlanda Express, it is nearer the airport terminal, and it leaves every 15 minutes and is quicker, taking 20 minutes. However it goes to Stockholm Central Station and from there you will need to change and use the local Metro. For the Metro from Stockholm City it is 3 stops to Mariatorget on the red line number 13 or 14. (The Metro is quite easy to use, each line has 2 numbers, one for each direction of travel, and additional numbers if the line splits, so you just need to know the direction you are making for and find what number that line is on, which I found easier than than trying to remember the names). Mariatorget Metro station is literally round the corner from the hotel. It's on the same road as Sodra station but nearer to the hotel, with a two minute walk. For both the commuter trains and Metro there were lifts (Hiss in Swedish) and in the carriages there were priority seats. I didn't notice any designated wheelchair spaces but I was always making for the nearest carriage, so I feel unable to comment on that. On board there are announcements in Swedish, and occasionally in English, there is also a board in each carriage and an announcement for the next stop. The board shows or announces *nasta* (which is Swedish for next) and then it says the stop. Public transport is excellent and frequent.

## Access

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The Rival has level entrance with both revolving and separate automatic door. Reception desks are at standing height. The bar and accessible toilet are also on the ground floor. There are two lifts or stairs to the hotel rooms. I stayed in room 310, an accessible room which I had requested at time of booking. The room was perfect. It was spacious and well laid out. The bed was

comfortable but firm, which made transfers easy. The wardrobe space was well thought out. Lights came on automatically when you opened the wardrobes. There was ample storage space and a clothes rail at wheelchair user height. There was a DVD/ CD player and a mini library. There was a seat area, desk and an outdoor balcony with seating. The bathroom was so glamourist, the best accessible bathroom ever, I felt like a movie star everytime I walked in. However, it was also very functional with white grab rails and movable shower chair. There were speakers in the bathroom, so I was able to shower with Abba, although it was a bit of a tight squeeze for all 5 of us :)

## **Toilets**

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My accessible room 310 had an accessible toilet. The grab rails were a little different from home as at the hands they were padded and when I pressed down to get up, the rails would press down a bit, this was extremely comfortable as it took took pressure on the pressing down but also felt safe. There was a telephone in the bathroom. The communal accessible toilet on the ground floor also had grab rails, but these were static and didn't move when I pushed down. There was an automatic door to enter and exit. Both accessible toilet areas were spacious and clean with grab rails.

## **Staff**

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The staff were amazing, helpful and very friendly though out my stay. Everytime I passed reception I was welcomed and asked how I was. They answered my questions and offered suggestions. A special thank you has to go to Sean Naughton, Rival's concierge, who was incredible. In just speaking to him for 5 minutes I had answers to things I had spent 100 hours trying to find out about access on the internet. Sean listened about what my access needs were and then provided brilliant information. I was wanting to visit Fjaderholmarna, one of the islands off Stockholm and I was unsure if it was accessible. He gave me a map of the island and marked off an accessible route, advised what there was to do and provided information about the boat service to/from the island. Talking to Sean gave me the confidence to visit, I will be doing a seperate review for Fjaderholmarna. We also had a detailed discussion about Gamla Stan, the old town, as some of it is very hilly, and again he drew me a map and advised an accessible route, again giving me the confidence to visit. We also talked about public transport and where I could walk in the evening along the waterfront, which would be an easy journey from the hotel. Sean made a wonderful holiday extra special. When I returned to the hotel he asked me how I got on and he talk me he had left some accessible public transport information in my room, along with a letter, which I have attached as a photograph, saying he had spoken to his manager and they had decided to update the hotel's website to include more general accessible information about the area. I can not thank Sean enough for taking this issue up and for his support to me during my stay. I really appreciate it.

## **Anything else you wish to tell us?**

I loved Rival and I'm missing my room 310. The hotel and its staff are outstanding. Breakfast is included in the room rate. It's self service but staff were available if you needed help. There was a lovely selection of cereal, fruit, cheese, meats, pastries, bread , cooked food and drinks. There was also the option to order additional cooked food with no additional charge. When I was researching Stockholm at first I wasn't sure how central the Mariatorget area was. After staying there I would say it is very central. It is on it's own island, Stockholm is made up of islands. The hotel is a 10 minute walk to Gamla Stan, the old town, which is on another island. Most of this walk to there is level but there is a gentle slope to cross the bridge. There is also building work going on at the moment. There is also the option to take the metro to Gamla Stan directly from Mariatorget, which is only 2 stops away. Also in Gamla Stan you can pick up the accessible ferry boat that go to Djurgarden, where the Vasa and ABBA Museums are, see seperate reviews. The ferry leaves reguarly in the summer season and takes about 15 minutes. There are also ferry

boats to Fjäderholmarna, the nearest archipelago island to Stockholm. The journey time is about 45 minutes and there are two boats per hour, and this will provide you with a very pleasant but different experience from being in the city centre. A further couple of stops and one change of train on the Metro and you can be at Kungsträdgården, an elegant garden square, next to the Opera House and again, thanks to Sean's recommendation, you can walk along to the bridge at Skeppsholmen taking in stunning waterfront views of the Opera House, Parliament building, Royal Palace and Gamla Stan, the old town, and take seat and watch the world go by. The Rival is on Mariatorget, a garden square with fountain, benches and lawn, which is a nice place to sit out. Mariatorget itself is a lovely area. From getting off the train you arrive in a beautiful and peaceful residential district. The area has a good selection of good quality local cafes, coffee shops, restaurants, bars and shops, rather than big corporate chains. Round the corner from Rival, is Swedenborgsgatan, a semi pedestrianised road, as bikes and the odd car drive down it. This street has some lovely cafes with outdoor seating. It has a local rather than a tourist vibe and for me it was perfect after a day's sightseeing. This is an accessible hotel which ticks all the boxes and shows that accessibility can be fun, fabulous as well as practical. I loved the Rival and I would stay there without hesitation again.