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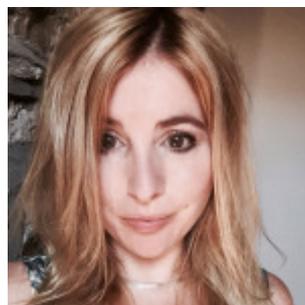
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Best hotels in Stockholm

Shaped by the Baltic Sea, Stockholm has a room for every mood and moment from five-star grandes dames to intimate boutique sleeps in gorgeous art nouveau conversions



Main photo: Hotel Rival



Kerry Walker

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Stockholm is a place of many names. “Venice of the North”. “Beauty on the water”. You can see how it got them, but they all fall short when it comes to summing up this city on the edge of a 30,000-island archipelago in the Baltic Sea. With its crisp light,

vast outdoor spaces, clean designs, contemporary art and love of sustainable living, [Stockholm](#) is the world as seen through a sharper, more progressive lens. There are flickers of big city life: Michelin-starred restaurants, luxury hotels, palaces, galleries, museums and Nobel banquets. But the Swedish capital's real trump card is nature. This is a city on the fringes of wilderness, where you can hike and ski, kayak to your own deserted island. And it's this space and freedom that gives the Swedish capital its laid-back edge, especially when you deviate from Gamla Stan's old-town streets and dip into less-touristy neighbourhoods: creatively hip Södermalm, chic and cultured Östermalm.

Hotel-wise, there's a lot happening. In recent years, Stockholm has played master of reinvention: transforming glorious baroque and art nouveau buildings into intimate boutique hotels, enlisting top-name architects and designers to inject new life into former prisons, factories and schools, which now wow with minimalist-cool rooms, film-noir cocktail bars, micro spas and roof terraces perched high above the water-webbed glimmer of the city. Here are some of the very best.

Main photo: Hotel Rival

This article contains affiliate links.

Hotel Ruth

1. Hotel Ruth

Lovers of Hotel Frantz will be delighted by the arrival of the Pettersson family's boutique stunner. Tucked away in the refreshingly untouristy neighbourhood of Sibirien just north of central Stockholm, Ruth really nails the hotel-as-home concept. The travel-loving sisters who run the place have managed the delicate act of combining the pared-back feel of a Swedish apartment with period details like high ceilings, stucco and parquet, subtle florals, eye-catching design pieces and richly tiled bathrooms. Breakfast is prepared with a lot of love too, with lots of homemade goodies and alcohol-free fizz.

Spa N

Pool N

Price ££

2. Hotel Tapetfabriken

Architects waved a magic wand on this old wallpaper factory built in 1906, transforming it into one of Stockholm's coolest digs. The building's original flair has been kept in red brick, soaring glass and high ceilings, but the rooms themselves are an ode to muted, minimalist Swedish design, with parquet floors, a palette of soft blues and creams, and avant-garde furniture. A lot of thought has gone into making stays seamless: room rates include an excellent breakfast, Swedish fika (coffee and cake) and dinner, and there's a gym and sauna for relaxing moments between sightseeing. It's located southeast of town in the Sickla shopping district, near the ski slopes of Hammarbybacken, with trams and buses trundling into central Stockholm in half an hour or so.

Spa N
Pool N
Price ££



Hotel Rival

3. Hotel Rival

Just as playful and cool as you might expect a hotel owned by Abba's Benny Andersson to be, the Rival was the first boutique hotel to rock up on Stockholm's hotel scene. And it remains one of the most distinctive: lodged in a converted art deco cinema in the hot neighbourhood of Södermalm, with views across the gardens of Mariatorget. Rooms are special, with bold colours, Kasthall woven rugs on oak floors, large blown-up photos of scenes from Swedish movies and... you knew it was coming... an Abba *Gold* CD to play at full blast while you're in the shower. There's a great bakery, bistro and cocktail bar, but it's the 735-seat theatre, plushly reupholstered in red velvet, that impresses most.

Spa N
Pool N
Price ££-£££

[BOOK A STAY](#)

4. Langholmen Hotell

Being locked up in a cell might not sound like much fun, but this 19th-century prison on Langholmen Island has been reborn as a keenly priced hotel (and we all know how rare these are in Stockholm). The converted cells are clean, bright, unfussy, functionally modern and perfectly comfortable. If you want to save krona, bag a dorm

in the hostel instead. Cycling, walking and jogging trails crisscross the island, leading to parks and beaches where you can brave an early morning dip. Bike rental is available at reception. Housed in a 17th-century manor, the restaurant is highly regarded locally for its sustainable, season-driven Nordic cuisine.

Spa N
Pool N
Price £

Villa Dagmar

5. Villa Dagmar

Next to Stockholm's gourmet food hall in Östermalm, this boutique newcomer has pinched the best of Nordic and Italian design. Cue a courtyard and skylit atrium for pre-dinner cocktails, a concept store with florist, carefully curated exhibitions of Swedish art, and a Scandinavia-meets-the-Med restaurant headed up by two of the city's most on-the-ball chefs, Daniel Högländer and Niclas Jönsson. There is the faintest whisper of the Italian villa in the rooms and suites, with intricate wallpapers, monochrome hues, marble bathrooms and bed linen as silky-soft as a cloud. Expect an intimate spa, with treatments swinging from classic Swedish massage to chakra-cleansing and sound baths.

Spa Y
Pool N
Price ££-£££

The Sparrow Hotel (Andy Liffner)

6. The Sparrow Hotel

A graceful nod to the pied-à-terre, with its fin-de-siècle architecture and Juliet balconies, the Sparrow brings a dash of Parisian flair to Östermalm in central Stockholm. Abstract art, antiques, soft pastels and moody blues, parquet floors, geometric prints and crystal chandeliers pull off the French look in high-ceilinged rooms drenched in natural light. The top-floor "nest" rooms are cute and quiet but tiny. A glass of red in the wine bar swiftly leads into dinner in the bistro, where chef Mathias Dahlgren puts a light touch on French classics from steak au poivre to tarte au chocolat.

Spa N
Pool N
Price ££

7. At Six

Gunning for the title of Stockholm's hippest and most happening hotel, At Six has really shaken things up on brutalist Brunkebergstorg Square, with an outstanding collection of contemporary art, a roof terrace with dress-circle city views and a roster of events from DJ sets to gigs and film screenings. The rooms go in for a clean urban aesthetic, with oak-clad bay windows, a palette of moody charcoals and greys,

marble desks, luxe Swedish designed beds and drink cabinets. Kick off your evening over aperitifs at Blanche & Hierta bar before dinner at the excellent Dining Room, putting imaginative riffs on rustic Swedish flavours in dishes like pan-fried venison with quince purée, kale and fermented apple. You're incredibly central here — the Royal Palace is just a ten-minute walk away.

Spa N

Pool N

Price ££-£££

Miss Clara (*Beatrice Graalheim*)

8. Miss Clara

Miss Clara is what you get when you let Swedish starchitect Gert Wingardh loose on an old girls' school. Named after former head mistress Clara Strömberg, this hotel is all gorgeous art nouveau curves and arched windows, monochromes and chicly understated spaces. Sunlight streams into rooms with dark herringbone parquet floors, beautifully crafted furniture and limestone bathrooms with frosted glass walls. There's a gym and sauna for letting off steam, a concierge to fine tune your stay, an international restaurant and a bar delivering expertly mixed cocktails. Breakfast is terrific, with homemade breads, granola and jams. Location-wise, you're just north of town, a 20-minute walk from Gamla Stan.

Spa N

Pool N

Price ££

Grand Hotel (*Andy Liffner*)

9. Grand Hôtel

Presiding over the waterfront, with front-row views of Gamla Stan and the Royal Palace, Stockholm's fanciest five-star pad is a class act. Since opening in 1874 and dishing out Nobel Prize awards (from 1901 to 1929), the Grand Hôtel has welcomed a flurry of A-listers from Einstein to Greta Garbo. It's dressed in dove greys and champagnes, rooms and suites swing from plush and contemporary to palatial, with chandeliers, marble bathrooms and ornate details — a wall frieze here, a starburst mirror there. It's way up there on the city's food scene too, with Veranda for its legendary smorgasbord, Matbaren for its modern, season-led cuisine, and Rutabaga for gourmet vegetarian plates. The spa is one of Stockholm's most fabulous, with a hydromassage pool, sauna and treatments inspired by the Baltic Sea.

Spa Y

Pool Y

Price £££

Hotel Frantz

10. Hotel Frantz

Hidden down a lane on the northern cusp of Stockholm's coolest island neighbourhood, Södermalm, Frantz is an easy hop from the medieval buzz of Gamla Stan. Run by two well-travelled sisters, it's a deliciously intimate affair, named after

the tailor who built the place in 1647. Fashions have changed, but the look here is timeless and pulled off tastefully: rooms with hardwood floors and accents of dusky blue, pink and green, rich velvet fabrics, abstract art, beds draped in snowy white linen and glam metro-tiled bathrooms. There are plenty of restaurants in the vicinity, but few better than the one right here, which spotlights organic vegetables and sustainably sourced fish and meat in punchily flavoured small plates like pulpo with chanterelles and aioli.

Spa N

Pool N

Price ££

Bank Hotel

11. Bank Hotel

A glorious art nouveau bank on Stockholm's historic waterfront has been sent winging into the 21st century at the Bank Hotel, which cleverly mixes up original features like bronze doors, stucco, polished mahogany and marble with attention-grabbing contemporary art and design pieces. You're but a joyous stroll from the parks, boutiques and opera house in Östermalm, and the big-hitter sights of Gamla Stan here, but then again it's tempting to stay put in your skyline-facing room or suite isn't it? As the city begins to twinkle, head up to the vogueish rooftop bar for cocktails before an oyster-and-steak dinner in Bonnie's brasserie, the Bank Hotel's skylit centrepiece.

Spa N

Pool N

Price £££

12. Freys Hotel

What a pleasure it is to find this sweet, simple, eco-conscious hotel in central Stockholm's Normalm district. Just a couple of minutes' walk from the Central Station, this is a great pick if you're rocking up in town late at night or just fancy a no-fuss double room for less than £100 (budget beds are gold-dust rare in pricey Stockholm). Spending extra gets you one of the top-floor superior rooms, which are bigger, more modern and have balconies. Besides a cheery welcome, you'll find a gym and sauna and a restaurant-bar where you can grab a Belgian beer and bowl of mussels.

Spa N

Pool N

Price £

Hobo Hotel

13. Hobo Hotel

Overlooking the brutalist square of Brunkebergstorg in central Stockholm, Hobo Hotel bears the playful imprint of Berlin-based designer Werner Aisslinger, who combines

industro-cool spaces with abstract art, foliage and colours that pop to great effect. Rooms are cleverly streamlined, with cool touches like Swedish-designed Anders Hilding beds, steel lattice headboards that convert into desks and peg walls. The upper level suites have cracking skyline views. The whole place is aimed squarely at the tech-savvy, well-travelled millennial, from the basement gym to the roof terrace bar, weekend club nights, art exhibitions and a restaurant blending Scandi ingredients with Japanese cooking techniques.

Spa N

Pool N

Price ££

Ett Hem

14. Ett Hem

Ett Hem fittingly translates as “a home”. Snuggled away in a gloriously restored Arts and Crafts townhouse in a quiet corner of Östermalm, it’s run with love and astonishing good taste by owner Jeanette Mix, who enlisted the help of British interior designer Ilse Crawford in creating what is surely Stockholm’s most hygge retreat. The aim? To take luxury to a more personal level. There are just 12 rooms (seven of which are suites), full of dreamy light, oak wood, dove greys and golds, sheepskins and thoughtfully chosen art. Romance-wise, the chandelier-lit suites have the edge, with four-poster beds, tiled ovens and marble tubs. You are positively encouraged to make yourself at home here, whether that means a run in nearby forests, a sauna followed by a Swedish massage, or a beautifully prepared dinner in the library. And because this is home, you can help yourself to a complimentary drink or slice of homemade cake in the kitchen whenever you please.

Spa N

Pool N

Price ££-£££