



PHOTO: ROSANNA ANDERSSON

Winter in Stockholm

Planning to visit Stockholm this winter? Stockholm has a lot to offer no matter the season. From centuries-old traditions, to cozy candlelit cafés and a wide range of activities for any age – a bit of snow has never stopped Stockholm from having a good time.

Traditions of light

As the city gradually becomes darker, cooler and blanketed in fresh snow – something magical begins to happen. Streets are draped in bright strings of light, while windows start to warmly glow with Advent candles and lanterns, as the city transforms into a cozy winter wonderland. They also mark the anticipated countdown to Christmas.

Aside from Advent, there are many traditions practiced by Swedes to keep darkness at bay, though none are as famous as Lucia Day. Early in the morning on December 13th, Lucia and her maidens begin their procession of light. Wearing a crown of candles, Lucias sings carols and serves saffron-flavored buns (lussekatter), sweet mulled wine (glögg) and gingerbread biscuits (pepparkakor) to all those in need of a bit of light. But don't worry if you happen to miss the procession – you can still find these treats all winter long.

Walk then wander

Consider starting the day wandering through the cobblestoned alleys of **Gamla Stan**, Stockholm's well preserved old town. In winter this district feels like something from a storybook, serving as home to a Stockholm's most famous Christmas market, an array of cultural landmarks and many quaint cafés. But keep your eyes peeled – some of the best places to stop for a fika are down in cozy candlelit cellars.

Another option is visiting one of Stockholm's most popular areas, **Royal Djurgården**. The island collects many of Stockholm's must-see attractions in one place and all within walking distance from each other. The greenhouse at **Rosendals Trädgård** and **Skansen**, the world's oldest open-air museum, are particularly beautiful when decorated for the season.

Catch a glimpse

One of the best ways to get a view of Stockholm is by boat. Head to the port at Strömkajen and take the Stockholm Winter Tour. This 75-minute boat tour will take you along the coast of Djurgården and

around the islands of **Fjäderholmarna**. If you're lucky there will be plenty of ice on the water for the ship to break through. Boat times available on stromma.se.

Dress warm

Only 15 minutes away from Slussen station stands **Hellasgården**, a popular recreational area at one of Sweden's finest nature reserves. Here visitors can ski, skate, and take part in the Swedish winter tradition of alternating between sauna and ice baths. Don't want to get wet? Take a stroll around the reserve and heat up with some soup at restaurant Storstugan. Plan your trip at hellasgarden.se.

Looking for something more adventurous? **Ice Guide** offers guided package ice-skiing tours including skating- and safety equipment, clothing, lunch, and transportation. Book a private tour or choose from any of their scheduled tours during the winter months. iceguide.se

Still want to skate, but not looking to leave the big city? Gliding around the ice rink at **Kungstädgården** is a must for many winter visitors to Stockholm. winter-activities-in-stockholm

A tranquil escape

Stockholm Archipelago with its 30 000 islands, islets and rocks is known as a summer paradise but it's also magic off-season. Winter is the time of year when you can truly experience the peace and luxury to have the archipelago to yourself. Only around 200 islands are inhabited all year round.

Walk along the waterfront, hike in the forest and enjoy an outdoor picnic or challenge yourself with a winter swim. Explore the winter side of the Stockholm archipelago by kayak followed by a wood burning sauna retreat. **Skärgårdens Kanotcenter** offers adventures all year round. kanotcenter.com