

THIS IS SWEDEN

Population: 9.2 million — about 0.1 percent of the world's population
Languages: Swedish, Sami, Finnish, Meänkieli (Tornedalen Finnish), Yiddish, Romany
Size: 450,000 sq.km, almost the same size as Spain or France, and bigger than California
Length: 1,574 km, almost the same distance as Seattle to Los Angeles (1,548 km) or Berlin to Madrid (1,866 km)
Forests: 53 percent
Mountains: 11 percent
Lakes and rivers: 9 percent
Highest mountain: Kebnekaise (2,103 meters above sea level)
Biggest lake: Vänern (5,585 sq.km)
Religion: 80 percent of Swedish citizens belong to the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Sweden. Islam is the second biggest religion in Sweden
Most important exports: Electronic and telecom equipment, machinery, passenger cars, paper, pharmaceuticals, iron and steel
Most important imports: Electronic and telecom equipment, machinery, foodstuffs, crude oil, textiles, footwear and passenger cars

66° 33' 39"
Arctic Circle



The borders of Sweden, Finland and Norway cross at Treriks-röset. A large stone marks the exact spot where all three countries meet.

At 2,103 meters above sea level, Kebnekaise is Sweden's highest mountain.

Near Kiruna you will find the Esrange Space Center. Research balloons and rockets are launched from here.

Sweden is home to about 20,000 Sami, a people native to northern Europe. They have inhabited the Arctic region for thousands of years. The Sami have their own language and flag.

There are between 2,300 and 2,800 brown bears in Sweden. In the winter they hibernate. There are no polar bears.

Skiing in the mountains is popular during the winter holidays. Children get a weeklong sports break from school.

Pite Havsbad is a seaside resort outside Piteå known for its long sandy beaches. In the summer the water can be quite warm. There is no swimming in the winter though — then you go ice-skating instead.

The elk is known as "the King of the Forest". It is the largest animal in Sweden and can grow to over two meters tall (from shoulder blades to front hoof).

Many Swedish houses are built of wood and often painted red and white. The Swedish flag is yellow and blue, and raised several times a year, one occasion being Sweden's National Day on June 6.

Swedes celebrate midsummer by throwing a big party. They make maypoles from flowers and leaves and dance around them.

There are about 180 wolves in Sweden, and they constantly wander back and forth over the Norwegian border. Their favorite food is elk.

From Sweden you can take the ferry to many other countries, including Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Denmark, Germany, Norway and Britain.

Horseback riding is popular in Sweden. There are more horses in Sweden than in many other European countries.

Globen is the biggest concert arena in Scandinavia. Britney Spears, Justin Timberlake, Beyoncé and many other stars have performed here. The building is almost completely round.

Almost half of all movies made in Sweden are filmed in Trollhättan. Well-known actors and actresses from all over the globe come here to shoot films.

The town of Gränna is known for *polkagrisar*, a hard peppermint candy. Many Swedes like licorice, which is either salty or sweet.

On the island of Gotland there are many houses from the Middle Ages. If you visit during Medieval Week it's like going back 700 years in time.

The world's largest youth soccer tournament is held every year in Gothenburg. More than 1,500 teams from all over the world take part.

By law, everyone under the age of 15 must wear a helmet when cycling in Sweden.

The Swedish king and queen, Carl XVI Gustaf and his wife Silvia, have three children. During the summer, the royal family stays at Solliden Palace on the island of Öland.

In Malmö you will find one of Sweden's largest skateboard parks.

The Öresund Bridge connects Malmö and Copenhagen, the capital of Denmark. The 15.9 km-long connection is both a superhighway and a railway.