

Animals. Not possible as charter guests.

It is possible to bring pets to Sweden from other EU and EFTA countries. However, visitors are recommended to start the planning process well in advance since several permissions must be obtained.

Read more about the rules and how to apply at the [Swedish Board of Agriculture](#) web site.

## Banking & shopping hours

### Banking hours

Monday-Friday 10.00 am - 3.00 pm

Thursday 10.00 am - 4.00/5.30 pm

In some cities banks may stay open until 6 pm. All banks are closed at weekends and on public holidays. Banks at airports, ports and main railway stations are generally open longer.

### Credit cards

Major credit cards are widely accepted throughout Sweden (some restriction may apply to American Express). **Please note!** In order to pay or withdraw cash with your credit card it requires that you have a card with chip and PIN (Personal Identification Number). The older magnetic-stripe cards won't work.

You can get cash with your Visa, MasterCard, Maestro or Cirrus card at any "Bankomat" or "Utagsautomat" ATM.

### Shopping hours

Monday-Friday 9.30 am - 6 pm

Saturday 9.30 am - 2/4 pm

In larger towns, department stores remain open until 7.00 pm or longer. Some are also open on Sundays between approx. 12 noon and 4.00 pm. Shops generally close early the day before a public holiday.

## Fall for Sweden's watery charms

So what does tap water in Sweden taste like? Pretty delicious actually, almost wherever you are in Sweden - and at least as good as the bottled variety that you have to pay for. If you prefer your water flavoured, add a slice of your favourite fruit. Add up the pros; Swedish tap water is clean, tasty and free and doesn't come in a plastic bottle, against the cons; bottled water is expensive, it comes in a plastic bottle and is harmful to the environment.

It's a done deal - Swedish tap water wins. So when you come to Sweden bring a bottle, fill it to brim and enjoy it for free. And if you're out in the Swedish mountains you can enjoy the water from flowing mountain streams and brooks.

This is the country of 100,000 lakes, some of them very large (Vänern, Vättern and Mälaren) and you can't go very far in Sweden without almost falling into one.

Summertime in Sweden, lakes are for basking beside, for swimming, for fishing and for boating. Wintertime, the lakes farther north freeze over and play host to skaters and ice fishing enthusiasts. Just witness the people swimming and fishing in Lake Mälaren in the middle of Stockholm, the water is clean (almost drinking quality) and you can catch salmon and other fish species here. And they are edible, just as the tap water in Sweden is very drinkable.

## Eating out

Sweden has attained an international reputation for culinary excellence in recent years and standards are high at all levels. Emphasis is placed on high-quality natural ingredients - notably fresh, pickled and smoked seafood (particularly herring, crayfish, salmon, eel) and game meats such as elk and reindeer.

The famous Swedish smörgåsbord is rather less common these days, but most hotels offer a smörgåsbord-style breakfast and if you are there before Christmas you may wish to sample the traditional "[julbord](#)" (Christmas buffet).

Today's multicultural society has also resulted in a wide variety of ethnic restaurants and an exciting "crossover" style in which traditional Swedish dishes are reinvented with new foreign influences.

You will also find all the usual fast-food outlets and pizzerias, and if you are after a good value, tasty snack, you're never far from a hot-dog stand selling the popular "varmkorv" (from just SEK 10).

A three-course meal with wine would cost approximately SEK 300-700 in a medium-priced restaurant. A "Dagens rätt" (dish of the day) is available in most restaurants at lunchtime, which is served from about 11am to 2pm. It costs from about SEK 60-90 for a main course (often with a choice), bread and butter, salad, soft drink and coffee. There are plenty of cafés and cafeterias for lighter snacks.

Major credit cards are widely accepted throughout Sweden at restaurants.

Read more about [Food & Drink](#) in [Stockholm](#), [Gothenburg](#) and [Malmö](#).

## Smoking restrictions

Smoking is not permitted in most public indoor areas or onboard domestic aircrafts or other public transport. Smoking is not permitted in stores, shops, restaurants, bars or other public buildings. Some hotels offer special rooms for smokers.

## Credit cards

Major credit cards are widely accepted throughout Sweden at restaurants (some restriction may apply to American Express).

**Please note!** In order to pay or withdraw cash with your credit card it requires that you have a card with chip and PIN (Personal Identification Number). The older magnetic-stripe cards won't work.

You can get cash with your Visa, MasterCard, Maestro or Cirrus card at any "Bankomat" or "Utagsautomat" ATM.

## Tipping

An outstretched hand in Sweden more often welcomes a handshake than a tip. A service charge is automatically included in most Swedish hotel bills. Tipping for special services provided by hotel staff is fine, but is not expected and is simply a matter of personal taste. At restaurants, a service charge is included in the bill, but a small gratuity is expected for evening meals. Taxi drivers should be given a few extra kronor. Porters and cloakroom attendants often charge fixed fees. Door men at hotels and restaurants are tipped modestly.

## Electrical appliances

### Electric current

The normal electric current in Sweden is 220 volts AC in 50 cycles, and plugs and sockets may differ from those in other parts of the world, so travellers should bring adapters or transformers for electrical appliances such as hairdryers and shavers.

Some hotels and shops in larger cities can supply adapters

### Electronic equipment

Laptop computers that are made to work on both 110 and 220 volts can be used in Sweden with an adapter.

For laptop computers working on 110 volts only, transformers are also necessary.

## Foreign exchange

**FOREX** exchange offices are usually centrally located in the larger cities. Branches may also be found at major airports, major ferry terminals and railway stations.

**X-Change** Exchange shops are centrally located at various cities in Sweden and may also be found at major airports.

## Health & medicare

Emergency phone calls Dial **112** for emergency assistance from police, fire brigade, ambulance etc. Emergency calls from pay phones are free of charge.

## Medical treatment

The general practitioner system does not apply in Sweden. Instead, you visit the nearest hospital clinic ("Akutmottagning" or "Vårdcentral"), taking your passport and European Health Insurance (EHIC) with you or you will be charged the full cost of the treatment. With an EHIC, you will still have to pay part of the cost, which is not refundable. You will also have to pay the full cost of dental treatment up to a fixed limit, and most of the cost above this limit. Any reductions will be made before you get your bill.

Most hotels and other accommodations in Sweden maintain contact with a nearby doctor who can be summoned quickly in case of illness. Municipal authorities supply emergency medical care, and hotel staff can direct guests to local emergency centers or hospitals.

Citizens from North America and other countries from outside the EU/EEA countries must pay for the medical treatment. Make sure that you are covered by your health insurance and bring necessary documents on your trip.

Citizens from within EU/EEA countries and some other countries with which Sweden has a special agreement are entitled to the same medical services as the Swedes.

You can go to any public hospital. In-patient care is free, but you will have to pay part of the cost of any outpatient care. There is a fixed, non-refundable daily charge.

### Stockholm

Information on healthcare is available from [The Stockholm Health Care Guide](#)

Tel: +46 (0)8 320 100

## Pharmacies

Prescriptions are dispensed at pharmacies ("Apotek"), which are generally open during normal shop hours. A 24-hour service is available in the major cities.

You will have to pay the full cost of any prescription drugs up to a limit, and part of any costs above this limit. [Further information on buying medicines on prescription.](#)

If you are on medication, make sure you have an adequate supply before leaving for Sweden.

## Dentists

Dental surgeries or clinics are indicated by "Tandläkare" or "Folktandvård" signs. An emergency service is available in major cities out of hours.

## Phone, post & internet services

Post offices are nowadays a service integrated in various shops; grocery stores, kiosks, gasstations etc. The opening hours therefore differ according to the specific store. Generally the post offices are open during normal shopping hours, but local variations may apply. Look for the blue postal sign.

Letters and postcards of up to 20 grams cost SEK 6 within Sweden and SEK 12 internationally.

Stamps are available for sale at post offices, most newsstands and supermarkets with postal service.

There are two different types of mailboxes. The blue box is for local deliveries only, and the yellow box for national and international deliveries.

### Telephones/cards

When calling Sweden from abroad please dial + 46 followed by the area code (omitting the initial zero) and the number required.

When calling abroad from Sweden: dial 00 plus the country code, followed by the area code and phone number.

Pay phones in Sweden require either a prepaid phone card, credit/debit card and Swedish or Euro coins. Phone cards are available almost everywhere from newsagents' shops or kiosks (e.g. Pressbyrån) to supermarkets.

### Wireless phone services

Wireless phones are widely used in Sweden. You can link up to the [Telia](#), [Tele2](#), [3](#) or [Telenor](#) GSM networks ( 900 & 1800 Mhz).

Maps showing the coverage of these networks can be accessed on the internet.

Wireless phones cannot necessarily be used for emergencies - in the mountains, for example, there is no coverage!

### Mobile services

Mobile telephones are widely used in Sweden. You can link up to the [Telia](#), [Tele2](#), [3](#) or [Telenor](#) GSM networks ( 900 & 1800 Mhz).

Maps showing the coverage of these networks can be accessed on the Internet.

Mobile phones cannot necessarily be used for emergencies - in the mountains, for example, there might be no coverage!

The price for a call from Sweden to another European country varies from SEK 3.90 - 9 per minute.

### Internet & mail services

Most airports, train stations, public libraries (free) and hotels will offer the service of computers with Internet access. There are also various cafés with internet terminals in most cities.

More information can be found at the [local tourist agencies](#).

## Public holidays

### Public holidays 2013

New Year's Day	Jan 1
Epiphany Eve	Jan 5
Epiphany Day	Jan 6
Good Friday	March 29
Easter Sunday	March 31
Easter Monday	April 1
May Day	May 1
Ascension Day	May 9
Whit Sunday	May 19
Sweden's National Day	June 6
Midsummer's Eve	June 21
Midsummer's Day	June 22
All Saints' day	Nov 1
Christmas Eve	Dec 24
Christmas Day	Dec 25
Boxing Day	Dec 26
New Year's Eve	Dec 31

