



Experience the Big Apple through a
Scandinavian lens at these cultural attractions,
restaurants and shops.

BY TAYLOR HUGO

New York City has long been lauded as a melting pot, welcoming people from different countries and encouraging them to share their cultures with others. Since immigrating to the United States, most heavily in the late 19th century, Scandinavians have made and continue to make their mark on the Stort Eple (“Big Apple”) — whether it be through historic cultural attractions, restaurants churning out Nordic food or stores peddling goods that bring hygge to our lives.

“In New York, we thrive on our diversity and multiculturalism,” says Lori Fredrickson, communications and outreach manager for cultural center Scandinavia House: The Nordic Center in New York. “Because we do have a strong Scandinavian presence in the U.S., it’s great to have people in the city interact with our culture and learn about our roots and heritage.”

The next time you find yourself planning a trip to New York, consider adding these stops to your itinerary to experience the city through a Scandinavian lens.



PHOTO BY PATTI MACCONVILLE / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO



◀ SWEDISH COTTAGE MARIONETTE THEATRE

Constructed in Sweden in 1875, the Swedish Cottage was brought to the United States as part of the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876, and found its permanent home in Central Park in 1877. Formerly a tool house, library and laboratory, today the cottage is a marionette theater, putting on performances of children’s classics — and modern twists — like “Hansel & Gretel’s Halloween Adventure.” W. 79th St., Central Park, New York, 212-988-9093, cityparksfoundation.org

SCANDINAVIA HOUSE

Scandinavia House is the leading center for Nordic culture in the United States. Since it was opened by the American-Scandinavian Foundation in 2000, about 2 million people have walked through the doors to experience its art exhibitions, films, concerts and more — all celebrating the heritage of Norway, Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Sweden. Scandinavia House also features a shop carrying products from prominent Nordic design houses — think Orrefors and Royal Copenhagen — as well as Smörgås Chef restaurant, so you can make a day out of your trip. 58 Park Ave., New York, 212-779-3587, scandinaviahouse.org

NORWEGIAN SEAMEN’S CHURCH

New York’s Norwegian Seamen’s Church (Sjømannskirken) is not only a place of worship, but also a cultural gathering hub for Norwegians. Stop by to enjoy a concert by a Scandinavian artist, whip up a blanket during a knitting night or borrow a book from the Inger and William Ginsberg Library on the second floor. Whether you’re a regular or a tourist, the waffles and coffee are always hot, and the welcome is always warm. 317 E. 52nd St., New York, 212-319-0370, sjomannskirken.no/new-york

▼ GREAT NORTHERN FOOD HALL

Those who want to sample a little bit of everything New York Nordic cuisine has to offer should visit the Great Northern Food Hall in Grand Central Terminal. Backed by Danish food entrepreneur Claus Meyer, Great Northern, which opened in June 2016, features stations of smørrebrøds, Danish hot dogs, housemade porridges, Nordic-inspired cocktails and more. If you don't want to grab-and-go, nab a table in the hall's restaurant, where waiters serve food from any of the stations, or you can order from a refined menu of items like *kanelnurrer* (cinnamon swirl) at breakfast or smoked salmon at dinner. Grand Central Terminal, Vanderbilt Hall West, 89 E. 42nd St., New York, 646-568-4020, greatnorthernfood.com

AQUAVIT

In November 2017, Aquavit celebrated 30 years of serving world-class modern Nordic cuisine to midtown Manhattan dwellers and visitors. Taking inspiration from Stockholm's famous Operakällaren restaurant, Aquavit offers both a casual bistro and formal dining room. At the helm is chef Emma Bengtsson, who crafts menus that honor the bounty of Sweden's natural resources of water and trees. Expect to find items like gravlax, Norwegian king crab and Scandinavian bouillabaisse, all washed down with housemade Aquavit liquor. 65 E. 55th St., New York, 212-307-7311, aquavit.org

SOCKERBIT

For the people of Scandinavia, smågodis, or "little candies," are special treats reserved for lördagsgodis ("Saturday sweets"). But at Sockerbit, every day is lördagsgodis, as the Greenwich Village sweets and Scandinavian import shop — whose name comes from the Swedish word for "sugar cube" — encourages its patrons to mix their own candy bags. Start with some Fruxo Klubba lollipops, add in chokladfudge and top it off with Rosa Kubik strawberry marshmallows. 89 Christopher St., New York, 212-206-8170, sockerbit.com

DINE



SHOP



◀ MARIMEKKO

Finnish design company Marimekko is known for its fun patterns and vibrant colors. Founded in 1951 in Helsinki, the brand found instant success in the United States when soon-to-be First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy purchased seven dresses during the 1960 presidential campaign, and donned one of them on the cover of Sports Illustrated. Today, the company's New York City flagship store on Fifth Avenue carries many of the original patterns that made it famous, in the form of clothing, accessories, bags and home décor. 200 5th Ave., New York, 212-843-9121, marimekko.com

FJÄLLRÄVEN

Appealing to adventure-seekers since 1960, Fjällräven was established when a young boy from Sweden invented a more comfortable, efficient hiking backpack with a wooden frame. Today Fjällräven has stores worldwide, including two flagship locations in New York City, and carries everything you need for a Viking-worthy outdoor adventure — from jackets and backpacks to tents and sleeping bags. 262 Mott St., New York, 212-226-7846; 38 Greene St., New York, 646-682-9253, fjallraven.us



FLYING TIGER COPENHAGEN

Denmark is often called out for being one of the happiest countries in the world, and if the shop Flying Tiger Copenhagen is any indication of the Danes' way of life, it's easy to see why. The Copenhagen-founded shop — which now operates three locations in Manhattan — boasts an ever-changing array (300 new products a month!) of colorful, creative items ranging from home décor and party supplies to kids' toys and fun gadgets, all meant to bring a smile to anyone who walks through the door. 920 Broadway, New York, 212-777-1239; 424 Columbus Ave., New York, 646-998-4755; 1282 3rd Ave., New York, 917-388-2812, flyingtiger.com

