

dining under



A view of Christiansborg Palace, seat of the Danish Parliament and former royal palace.

the nordic lights

Story | KATHRYN HUNTER

On a stroll through the cobbled streets of Copenhagen's city center, each turn brings a compelling new scene: a grand palace, a green garden filled with statues and sunbathers, a flurry of cyclists wearing everything from jeans to business skirts and high heels. Colorful old buildings nestle snugly shoulder to shoulder like walls of friendly giants, creating a tunneled maze through a remarkably compact and picturesque cityscape. Originally settled by Vikings, Copenhagen is now home to some of the world's most interesting examples of contemporary architecture and environmental sustainability. The culture is a thriving contradiction—simultaneously relaxed and fast paced, refined but unpretentious, 800 years old and yet refreshingly new.



copenhagen CUISINE

Ranked the world's happiest country by the United Nations in a 2013 report, Denmark takes its superlatives seriously, and food is no exception. In 2014, noma was named the world's best restaurant for the fourth year by *Restaurant Magazine*, and this year 16 Michelin stars were awarded to 14 other Copenhagen restaurants. If the glass is always half full in Denmark's buzzing capital, there's good reason—countless opportunities for an unforgettable gourmet meal await. For the food-loving traveler, the best way to experience this urban utopia is with fork in hand.



The Danish attitude toward history—a strong respect for tradition, yet no sense of being rigidly bound to it—is reflected in the cuisine. The New Nordic movement was Denmark's food revolution, a way of both resurrecting “mormor's” (grandma's) cuisine and completely re-envisioning it. The focus is on time-honored preparations such as pickling, curing, drying and smoking. Local, seasonal ingredients represent forest, field and sea—from Nordic langoustine and foraged currants to more exotic fare like reindeer moss, sea urchin, bone marrow, musk ox and even ants. Some restaurants focus strictly on the “New Nordic Manifesto,” while

others show its influence with more of an international flare, but most emphasize creativity and sustainability, delving deep into the roots of Danish cooking. The result is a casual, deeply natural sophistication.

The New Nordic movement got its start under chefs René Redzepi and Claus Meyer at **noma**, which should be the first stop on your list...that is, if you can get a table. noma seats 44, and the waiting list for any Saturday night can easily number over 1,000. Fortunately, other New Nordic-inspired options abound, and many are considerably more economical: try **Geranium**, **Höst**, **BROR**, **no. 2**, **Uformel**, **Kadeau** or **Manfreds**.



cold weather exotic: NORDIC FARE

a taste of THE TOWN

Tårnet is a new addition to **Christiansborg Palace**, seat of the Danish Parliament. The restaurant is set high in the tower with a bird's eye view of the city, and its bricked walls, grand statues and tall ceiling give one the sense of dining inside a royal vault where the currency is precious cuisine. The menu highlights contemporary Nordic fare, and Tårnet boasts its own organic chocolate harvested from wild cocoa trees in the Amazon jungle.

Tivoli Gardens is one of Copenhagen's most classic attractions—the circa 1840s amusement park and gardens is the whimsical setting that inspired Walt Disney to build Disneyland, though Tivoli is as much for adults as children. Duck in for high tea at hotel and gourmet restaurant **Nimb** for an enchantingly presented selection of sandwiches, pastries and petits fours.

Established in 1755, **Hotel d'Angleterre** is Copenhagen's grande dame hotel. The Michelin-starred, ground-floor restaurant **Marchal**, specializing in French-Nordic cuisine, brings the same centuries-old elegance to the table.

Alberto K, located on top of the **Radisson Blu Royal Hotel**, is a boon for Arne Jacobsen fans. Everything in the restaurant, from the chairs to the pepper mills, displays the handiwork of the famous Danish designer and architect.



Tårnet



Tivoli's Moorish-inspired palace, built in 1909 and home to the Nimb hotel and restaurants.



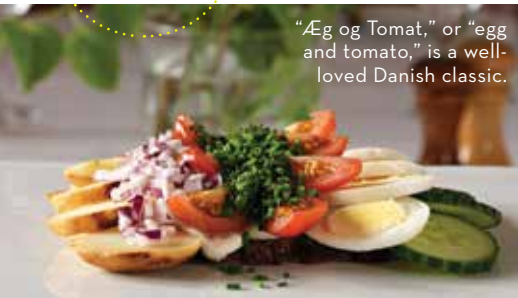
Marchal



Tårnet's vault-like interior is characterized by light and space.

A nighttime view of the Radisson Blu Royal Hotel from Tivoli Gardens

escape



“Æg og Tomat,” or “egg and tomato,” is a well-loved Danish classic.



gourmet market
Torvehallerne



“Kartoffelmad,” made with potatoes, lovage and flavored lard on rye bread.

in search of the perfect SANDWICH



A view of
Copenhagen from
above



GoBoat picnic

Once the workingman’s lunch, smørrebrød—an open-faced rye bread sandwich—has become edible art available in a thousand gourmet permutations, found everywhere from top restaurants to sidewalk cafés and outdoor markets. Customize your own, or try classic combinations like smoked eel with scrambled eggs or the “veterinarian’s night

snack” (liver paté, corned beef, onions and the Danish meat aspic sky).

Restaurant **Øl & Brød** adds a modern twist to the old favorite, as well as perfectly paired beers from Mikkeller and a wide selection of akvavits. **Lumskebugten**, talk of the town since the early 1900s, is an elegant lunch stop for traditional varieties of the Danish specialty.



Lumskebugten's
beef tartare

LUMSKEBUGTEN | GOBOAT | JACOB SCHJØRRING & SIMON LAU | CHRISTIAN ALSING



Lidkoeb's whiskey bar

SKÅL!



The words of famous Danish writer Hans Christian Andersen hang above a shop in gourmet market Torvehallerne.

Skål (pronounced “skoal”), the Danish word for “cheers,” is important vocabulary. The best wines from around the world find their way to Copenhagen, and though Carlsberg is the best known of Denmark’s beers, microbreweries and brewpubs are also popular. Akvavit—a potato or grain liquor typically seasoned with caraway or dill and served well-chilled in a small shot glass—is

an accompaniment to many traditional meals. If you’re a whiskey connoisseur, don’t miss the third floor of **Lidkoeb**, which serves 200-plus whiskeys in a truly “hyggelig” setting. Tucked away in a back alley in the district of Vesterbro, the beautifully renovated, half-timber structure offers a relaxed atmosphere well off the beaten track. “Hygge” is an inescapable aspect of Danish culture, a word for a type of blissful coziness (think a roaring fire and thick sweater on a bitterly cold day). What sets Copenhagen’s nightlife apart is the number of establishments where you’d want to linger over a drink long into the evening. Hygge is embodied in the plush chairs, the good company, the feeling of space and the perfect balance of light—a friendly, candlelit kind of joie de vivre.

Copenhagen is a world leader in sustainability, aiming to become completely carbon neutral by 2025. **GoBoats** are evidence of the city’s green goals. The silent, solar-powered picnic boats require no special license or knowledge to operate. Be your own captain on a leisurely, self-guided tour of Copenhagen’s scenic canals with room for up to eight passengers. Picnic baskets are available, or you can plan out your own menu. Shop at gourmet market **Torvehallerne** for every manner of international delicacy, from bakery breads and fresh produce to tapas and sushi.



Explore Copenhagen's canals on a solar-powered GoBoat.



Torvehallerne

solar-powered PICNICKING