

Sweden

Imagine going to Sweden!

Where you can enjoy long bright summer evenings - even sunshine in the middle of the night!

Where you will find the Arctic Circle, but can still enjoy a fairly warm climate, thanks to the Atlantic Gulf Stream.

Where the coast has a unique archipelago, consisting of thousands of little islands - islands, where you can anchor your boat without any kind of permit!

Where nature belongs to every-one. Go hiking, put up your tent anywhere - except in somebody's garden! Pick wild berries and flowers anywhere without permission!

Where you will find wide-open spaces, varying nature with snow-covered mountains, forests, lakes and farmland in abundance, small towns and villages, and big cities.

Where nature is clean. You can even take a swim from the steps of City Hall in Stockholm, the capital of Sweden!

Where you can enjoy sailing, horse-back riding, fishing, swimming, boating, golfing, hiking, skiing, skating, soccer, volleyball, basketball, hockey, tennis and many other sports!

Where you can enjoy all kinds of music - from traditional Swedish folk music to Swedish pop.

Where you can find relics from the Viking Age and from other old, exciting, historical periods.



Sweden

Where nature is clean



Enjoy
The four seasons

Area: Sweden is the fourth largest country in Europe, with an area of 450,000 km² (173,000 sq mi), which is about the same size as the U.S. states of Illinois and Indiana combined; or slightly larger than Paraguay. The population density is low and many people enjoy the vast expanses of nature. The terrain is flat or gently rolling in southern and central Sweden, and mountainous in the north. Lakes cover 10% of the country; forest 50%.

Climate: Although Sweden is situated at approximately the same latitude as Alaska, it has a relatively mild climate due to the warming influence of the Atlantic Gulf Stream.

Sweden has four different seasons. Winter lasts December - March; spring, April - May; summer, June - August and fall, September - November.

Since Sweden is spread out, covering various latitudes, temperatures vary quite a bit. In Stockholm, there is an average summer temperature of +15 to +25 degrees Centigrade - in winter, generally between -10 and 0. In central Sweden, the hours for sunrise and sunset are approximately - during the winter: 9 a.m.-3 p.m.; during the summer: 4 a.m.-10 p.m.

You will enjoy the long, bright summer evenings - maybe even the Midnight Sun! And you will also enjoy the white snow that lights up the winter darkness.

Population: There are approximately 8.5 million people, 83% of which live in cities. The population density is low. The "Lapps" are a small ethnic minority of indigenous people living in northern Sweden.

History: The Viking period lasted from 800 to 1000 AD. Scandinavia was united in 1397 under the Queen of Denmark. Sweden became an independent country in 1523 with Gustav Wasa as its ruler. During the 17th century, Sweden was one of the Great Powers of Europe and its territories included Finland and parts of the Baltic states of Poland and Germany. In 1818, Jean-Baptiste Bernadotte, one of Napoleon's marshals, founded the present Swedish dynasty. The last war in Swedish history was fought in 1814. During the 19th century, Sweden started a process of democratisation and industrialisation and since then has experienced a very stable political development compared with most other European nations.

Economy: Sweden is essentially an industrial country. Agriculture, forestry, and fishing make up only about 5% of its gross national product and employ only 10% of the labour force. Farmers work on small mechanised farms. Energy, electricity and nuclear power is also an important part of the nation's economy.



Population

8.5 million people



Viking Relics

Education: This is the big adventure - to be a year student in Sweden - to stay in Sweden for a whole year, living like a real Swede, and going to school there!

You will be able to enjoy all the things mentioned for the summer students - but you will also have the opportunity to attend a Swedish upper secondary school, the "Gymnasium", where you can choose a "line", i.e. a certain combination of subjects that would interest you.

You may wonder about the Swedish language - most students do! But believe it or not most exchange students speak rather fluently by Christmas! You will get help to learn Swedish. First you'll receive a language course in the mail several months before you leave. Then you'll attend an Orientation and Language Camp at your arrival. Then you also get extra Swedish lessons during your first semester. By Christmas you will manage the Swedish language beautifully!

Your school year will last from mid-August till mid-June the next year, divided into two semesters.



Language: The national language is Swedish, an old North Germanic tongue related to Danish, Norwegian and Icelandic. The nomadic Lapps speak their own language.

Swedish

Gommorron.....	Good Morning
Godnatt.....	Good Night
Hej.....	Hello
Jag heter.....	My name is
Välkommen till Sverige.....	Welcome to Sweden
Jag kommer från.....	I come from
Prata långsamt.....	Talk slowly
Tack.....	Thank you
Hej då.....	Bye bye

Family life: The importance of family unity is not emphasised in Sweden as much as it was in former times, but close family ties and loyalties are still common and important. Women often work outside the home, leaving their pre-school children at day care centres. The average family size in Sweden is only 2.6 people, the lowest in the world. Many couples have only one child, and a third of all couples in Sweden are childless.

Sweden is an industrialised country with a very high standard of living. The majority of Swedes are middle class and poverty is almost non-existent. Most exchange students will live with middle class families



Stable
Political development



Enjoy sailing
And many other sports

Recreation: All Swedes enjoy at least five weeks' annual holidays (vacation). They are athletic, outdoor people, and their country has some of the finest recreational facilities in the world. Lakes and streams provide excellent fishing. Golf is popular, along with tennis, sailing, and swimming. The major team sports are soccer and ice hockey. The mountains in central and northern Sweden is ideal for hiking and skiing.

Swedes also watch a lot of TV and enjoy reading. Sweden is world-famous for the quality of its operas and theatre.

YFU Host Families: Hosting exchange students is very popular in Sweden. There is an abundance of lovely, caring host families, all waiting for their exchange student. This means YFU Sweden can find just the right family for you! Your interests and hobbies will be well matched with the ones in your host family. Since most Swedes are fond of music, sports, nature and outdoor activities, your host family will probably have some of those interests, too.

Once you have applied and been accepted on the YFU Program to Sweden, you will soon have information about your host family and you can start corresponding right away -well in advance of your arrival in Sweden!

All year families must submit an application and have a home visit from the district representative before being chosen as a host family. Some families become involved with YFU because their own son or daughter has been or will be a YFU exchange student, but there are many families who simply have a broad interest in other countries and want another son or daughter in the family.

Host families are given written information before the students' arrival and are invited to attend pre-arrival orientations.

YFU Activities: A few months before arriving in Sweden, all year students will receive a self study language course with tapes and books.

Year students arrive in the beginning of August and in January to allow enough time to settle in with their host families before school starts. Students will come together for an orientation and language program upon arrival at the Stockholm Airport.

A regional meeting is held towards the end of September, bringing all year students in the region together with the regional representative and host families.

In January students will be invited by their regional representative to attend a mid-year orientation.

Re-entry orientation is held at a camp in the Stockholm area. In addition to workshops, students will be able to visit some of the sights of the city. Optional trips are offered to St. Petersburg, Russia and to Abisko, a Swedish mountain region. These trips take place in June, allowing students to see Sweden's midnight sun.

You will see Sweden, not as a tourist would, from the out side, but live like a Swede! While learning to understand the cultural differences, you will be having an exciting exchange gaining self-confidence and many new close friends!

