

# Central Jutland



Easily the largest and most varied of all Danish regions, Central Jutland encompasses dramatically different features, from the calm beaches of the sheltered east coast to the wild and woolly west coast, battered by North Sea winds. Lying in between, offering visual stimulation among the flatness, is the green and lovely Lake District, home to the country's longest river and highest mountains (which may seem more like molehills to those of you from less height-challenged terrain). This is Mother Nature at her most gentle, so it's the perfect place to leave your worries behind and float down a river.

It's true, you may never have heard of Århus, Jutland's main city and Denmark's second-largest metropolis. That's not to say that you shouldn't have. Århus has much of the appeal of big-sister Copenhagen, but without any big-city stresses. It's wonderfully walkable, and has embellished its rich history with the vibrant atmosphere of a university city, humming with great restaurants, bars, boutiques and plenty of live music. This is a city worthy of a few days on your itinerary, and you'll most likely come away impressed with its attitude and attractions, which include a new art museum that would be the envy of larger cities around the globe.

City appeal aside, the beauty of this region is that you can skip between themes depending on your mood. Fancy some Viking history? Set sail for Hobro. How about religious history? Off to Jelling. Want to explore the great outdoors? Head for Rold Skov or Silkeborg. Are you really up to tackling nature's forces? Let loose on the waters of Hvide Sande. And ok, you've suppressed that inner child long enough – make a beeline for plastic-fantastic Legoland, and beware the accompanying pangs of childhood nostalgia.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Exploring the cool neighbourhoods of **Århus** (opposite), then eating superbly and drinking plentifully while sampling the buzzing nightlife
- Revelling in the great outdoors on a gentle canoe trip in the **Lake District** (p276)
- Marvelling at microcosmic Miniland at **Legoland** (p281) before jumping on a few rides
- Feeling the wind in your hair – and sails – while learning to windsurf on the wild **west coast** (p291)
- Feeling the weight of history at **Jelling** (p279), the spiritual home of the Danish royal family



## ÅRHUS

### pop 300,000

Sure, Århus (pronounced *oar-hus*) may be Denmark's second-largest city, but it feels more like a relaxed and friendly big town, shy and a little bashful in the shadow of its more glamorous, attention-seeking big sister, Copenhagen.

Regular visitors will notice Århus' growing confidence. The stunning new art museum, AROs, is a prime example of the city demanding to be noticed. Further evidence can be found in the redevelopment of the Å river through town (once buried under concrete but now flowing again in the public eye), and the boulevard of sleek restaurants that has sprung up alongside it (from the school of obvious names, that would be called Åboulevarden). The city's huge population of students continues to enliven Århus' parks and cobblestone streets (and fill its impressive number of bars). And with the introduction of cheap flights from various points in Europe, savvy travellers are coming to know and appreciate the city's unique charms. The secret is certainly getting out.

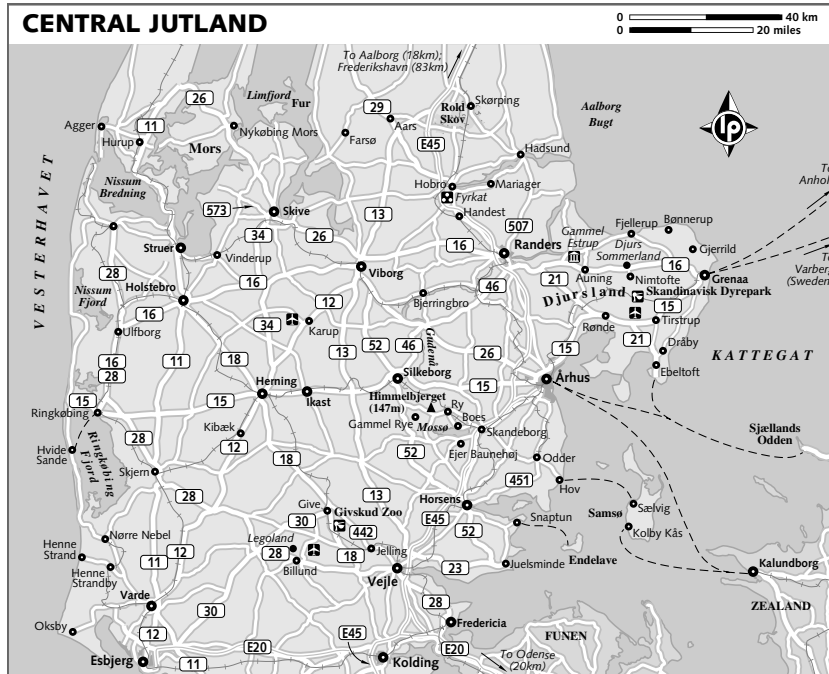
## HISTORY

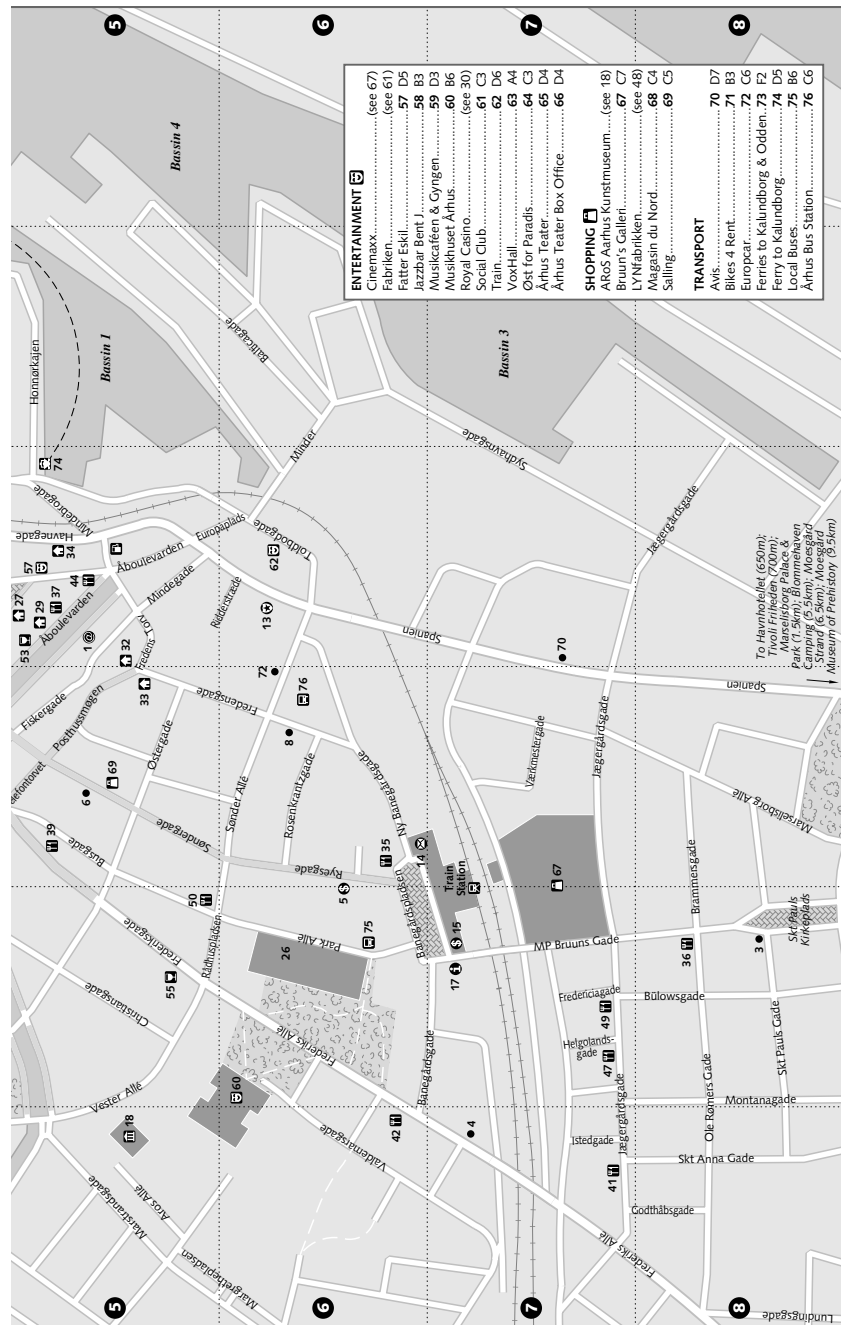
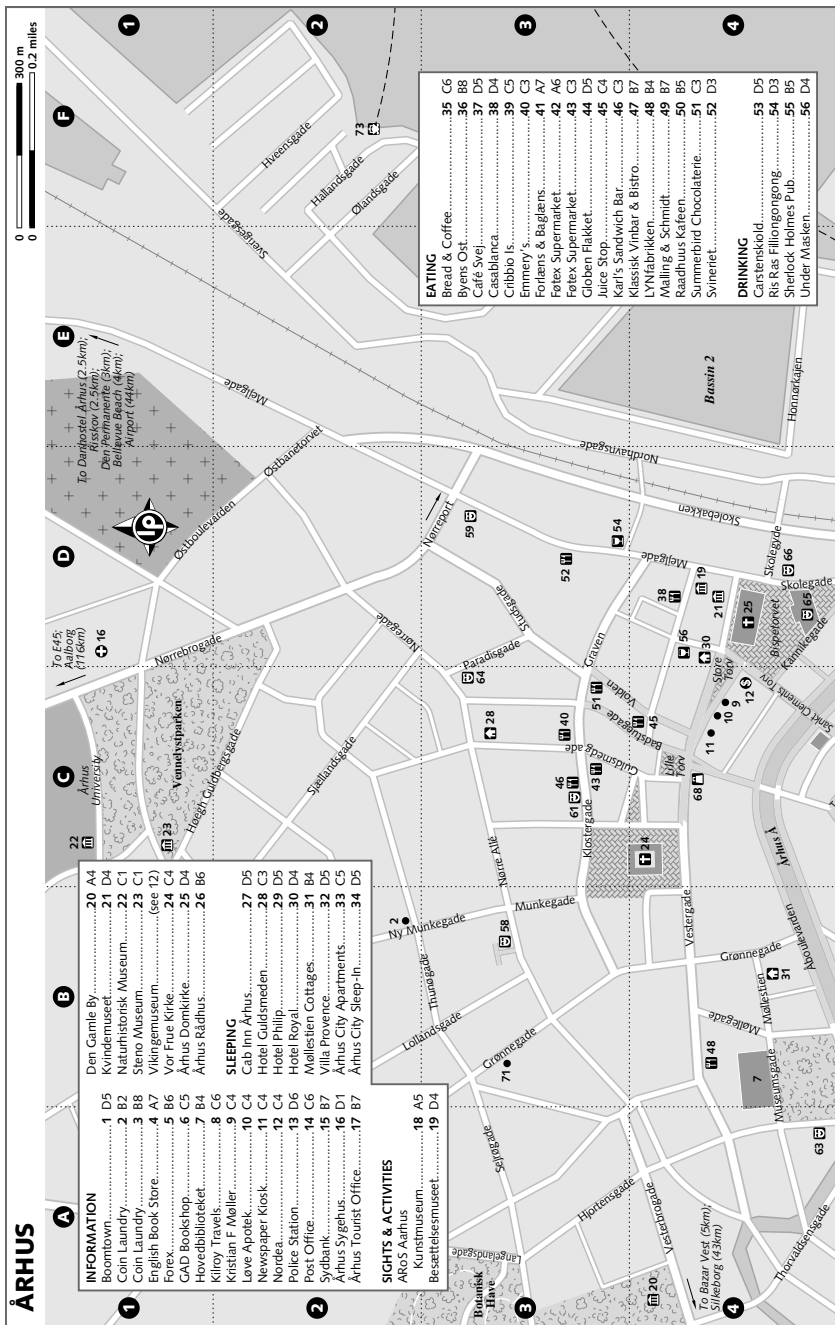
Due to its central seaside location, Århus has always been a busy trading town. Its name comes from Aros, meaning 'place at the river's mouth'. Excavations from the mid-1960s suggest the city was founded around 900.

Medieval times were Århus' most turbulent, as the town was wedged in the middle of feuding neighbouring states. King Sweyn II of Denmark and King Magnus of Norway engaged in a major battle off Århus in 1043, and just a few years later, in 1050, Århus was ravaged by the Norwegian warrior king Harald Hardrada. Prosperity was kept in check over the following centuries by raids from rival Vikings and attacks by fearsome Wend pirates.

Stability then ensued until the 1500s and it was during this time Århus flourished as a centre of trade, art and religion. Its natural asset, a large, protected harbour, drew attention from far and wide and in the process turned Århus into one of Jutland's most important transport and trading hubs.

The university has a tale of its own, as Århus established it against the wishes of the national





government in 1928. By the time it was ready in 1933 the government had changed its tune and was in full support of the learned institution. Nowadays it's a cornerstone of the vibrant life of the city; there are around 40,000 students living in Århus (about 14% of the total population), studying at the uni and various other higher-educational establishments and ensuring the city ticks all the boxes on most students' (and plenty of travellers') wish lists: live music, good bookshops, quality coffee and cheap beer!

## ORIENTATION

Århus is fairly compact and easy to get around. The train station (Århus Hovedbanegård) marks the south side of the city centre. The pedestrian shopping street (called Ryesgade, Søndergade and Sankt Clements Torv in various sections) extends about a kilometre from the station to Århus Domkirke (the cathedral) in the heart of the old city. The small streets to the northwest of the cathedral are known as the Latin Quarter and are filled with cafés and shops.

## INFORMATION

### Bookshops

**English Book Store** (☎ 86 19 54 55; Frederiks Allé 53) New and second-hand English-language books.

**GAD bookshop** (☎ 86 13 10 66; Søndergade 20)

**Kristian F Møller** (KFM; ☎ 86 13 06 99; Store Torv 5)

Well-priced English-language books, and a range of travel guides.

**Newspaper kiosk** (Store Torv 7) Sells international newspapers and magazines.

### Emergency

**Police/ambulance** (☎ 112)

**Police station** (☎ 87 31 14 48; Ridderstræde 1; ☎ 24hr)

### Internet Access

**Boomtown** (☎ 89 41 39 30; Åboulevarden 21; per 30/60min 20/30kr; ☎ 11am-1am Mon-Thu, 11am-8am Fri & Sat, 8am-midnight Sun) A dimly lit hidey-hole full of all-night gamers.

### Laundry

Look for signs saying *møntvask* (coin laundry). These are generally open from 7am to 9pm. You'll find **coin laundries** at the corner of Thunøgade & Ny Munkegade, and Skt Pauls Kirkeplads at the end of MP Bruuns Gade, south of the train station.

### Left Luggage

Coin-operated lockers are available at the train and bus stations; a small/large locker costs 10/20kr for a 24-hour period.

### Library

**Hovedbiblioteket** (☎ 89 40 92 00; www.aakb.dk; Møllegade 1) Read international newspapers or get online for free at the main public library, off Vester Allé.

### Medical Services

**Århus Sygehus** (Hospital; ☎ 87 31 50 50; Nørrebrogade 44) Has a 24-hour emergency ward; call before arriving.

**Løve Apotek** (☎ 86 12 00 22; Store Torv 5; ☎ 24hr) 24-hour pharmacy.

### Money

There are banks and ATMs all over town, with a good concentration along the pedestrianised shopping strip (Ryesgade/Søndergade) and around the cathedral.

**Forex** (Ryesgade 28; ☎ 9am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-3pm Sat) Foreign exchange close to the train station.

**Nordea** (Sankt Clements Torv 6) Near Århus Domkirke.

**Sydbank** (Banegårdspladsen 1) At the front of the train station.

### Post

**Post office** (Banegårdspladsen 1A; ☎ 10am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-1pm Sat) Next to the train station.

### Tourist Information

**Århus Tourist office** (☎ 87 31 50 10; www.visi.taarhus.com; Banegårdspladsen 20; ☎ 9.30am-6pm Mon-Fri, 9.30am-3pm Sat, 9.30am-1pm Sun Jul-early Sep, 9.30am-5pm Mon-Thu, 9.30am-4pm Fri, 10am-1pm Sat early Sep-Jun) Across from the train station. Helpful

### CITY DISCOUNTS

If you're planning to tick off the city sights, the Århus Pass is a worthwhile investment. The tourist office, bus station and most accommodation providers sell the pass (adult/child 1-day pass 119/53kr, 2-day pass 149/67kr), which allows unlimited transport on local buses as well as free or discounted admission to most city sights.

In a city full of students, an ISIC card or ID card from your home university is a great asset. If you have one, flaunt it at every opportunity. From pubs to restaurants to museums, students with cards are given favourable prices.

staff and an office well stocked with brochures on the city and surrounds, and on the rest of Jutland and Denmark. Sells the Århus Pass (opposite), and a range of tickets and passes for local buses.

### Travel Agencies

**Kilroy Travels** (☎ 70 15 40 15; www.kilroytravels.dk; Fredensgade 40) Opposite the bus station.

## SIGHTS

### ARoS aarhus Kunstmuseum

The towering, cubist, red-brick walls of Århus' new showpiece **art museum** (☎ 87 30 66 00; www.aos.dk; Aros Allé 2; adult/concession/child 90/75kr/free; ☎ 10am-5pm Tue-Sun, to 10pm Wed; ☎) look rather uninspiring from the outside, but inside it's nine floors of sweeping curves, soaring spaces and white walls. Intriguingly, the museum's main theme is Dante's *The Divine Comedy*; the entrance is on level 4, and from there you either descend into Hell (De 9 Rum, or The 9 Spaces, on the bottom floor, painted black and home to some moody installation pieces) or climb towards Heaven, which finishes at the rooftop terrace with views of the red rooftops of Århus – and something special still to come (see p260).

Opened in 2004, ARoS has a wonderful selection of Golden Age works, as well as examples of Danish modernism from 1900 to 1960, and an abundance of arresting and vivid contemporary art. There are pieces here by Warhol and Lichtenstein and, in colourfully lit pickling jars on the 6th floor, a work by

Danish artist Børn Nørgaard consisting of parts of a horse he sacrificed in 1970 in protest at the Vietnam War (long before British artist Damien Hirst started chopping up animals in the name of art). Perhaps the most compelling piece is Ron Mueck's *Boy* on level 1, an astoundingly lifelike, oversized (5m high) sculpture of a crouching boy.

The museum stages some fabulously varied special exhibitions – check what's on when you're in town (it could be anything from vintage racing cars to Frank Gehry's architectural vision). ARoS also houses a great gift shop and large, light-filled café on level 4 (free entry), and a restaurant on level 8.

### Den Gamle By

The Danes' limitless enthusiasm for dressing up and recreating history reaches its zenith at **Den Gamle By** (The Old Town; ☎ 86 12 31 88; Viborgvej 2; adult/student/child 90/45kr/free; ☎ 11am-3pm Jan, 10am-4pm Feb-Mar, 10am-5pm Apr-Jun & Sep–mid-Nov, 9am-6pm Jul & Aug, 9am-7pm Mon-Fri, 10am-7pm Sat & Sun mid-Nov–Dec; ☎). It's an engaging and picturesque open-air museum of 75 half-timbered houses brought here from all corners of Denmark and reconstructed as a provincial town, complete with a functioning bakery and assorted craftspeople practising their trade. There's a real feeling of authenticity – this is not just a site torted up for tourism, despite its being a proven heavyweight on the town's tourist circuit. The focus is on ye-olde city life (as opposed to rural life), and there are activities

## ÅRHUS IN...

### Two Days

Start by mixing the old with the new at Århus' two big-ticket attractions – **ARoS** (above) for cutting-edge art and architecture, and **Den Gamle By** (above) for a charming taste of yesterday. Alfresco dinner and drinks along Åboulevarden offers you the chance to sample the local nightlife and indulge in prime people-watching. Next day, visit the **Moesgård Museum** (p260) to pay your respects to the remarkable Grauballe Man, then return to town to visit the **cathedral** (p261) and poke around the Latin Quarter, where you'll have no trouble finding a cool spot to refuel or listen to some live tunes.

### Four Days

Follow the two-day itinerary, and on the third day – well, when in Rome... Grab a **free city bike** (p270) and venture further afield, to **Marselisborg** (p262) in the south, or north to **Risskov** (p263). Take your swimsuit if it's warm enough. Later, check out the boutiques and restaurants of the city's new up-and-coming neighbourhood, **Frederiksbjerg** (p267). On day four, consider jumping on a train or bus and checking out the waterways of **Silkeborg** (p274) or the beaches or funparks of **Djursland** (p274).

### SOMEWHERE OVER THE RAINBOW

Every city, and every museum, needs an icon – something large, perhaps, and memorable, worth travelling to see, and indelibly associated with the place. AROs already has an icon in the form of Ron Mueck's giant sculpture, simply entitled *Boy*. But stand by for another, due for completion some time in 2009 – and if the model is anything to go by, it will be a knockout. The Danish-Icelandic artist Olafur Eliasson, most famous in the UK for his exhibition *The Weather Project* at London's Tate Modern in 2003, has created the winning design in a competition to enhance the AROs rooftop space. Eliasson's ambitious creation includes a spectacular elevated, 360-degree walkway to sit on the rooftop, with the passage to be made of coloured glass panes in various shades of the rainbow. It's entitled *Your Rainbow Panorama*, and other elements of the project include a camera obscura and a spherical observatory called the AROs Prism. It's all about the interplay of colour, light and space, and is cleverly in keeping with the heavenly element of the museum's *Divine Comedy* theme. Words can't quite do justice to the grand vision of Eliasson's work – read more about it on the AROs website, [www.aros.dk](http://www.aros.dk) (click onto the English version of the site, then go to Information, Press, and finally Eliasson Behind 'Sky Space').

for visitors throughout the year, especially in the peak summer period and in the lead-up to Christmas – check the website for more information. Kids are very well catered for. Note that in the quiet period from January to March the admission fee is reduced to 50kr for adults. Folk with disabilities should call in advance to reserve use of a cobblestone-friendly wheelchair.

You can take a horse-drawn **wagon ride** (adult/child 35/25kr) around the site, and then visit each building and shop to see what life was all about; there's also a café and beer cellar. Outside of opening hours you can stroll the cobble streets for free. It's an interesting time to visit as the crowds are gone and the light can be ideal for photography, though you won't be able to enter the buildings themselves.

Den Gamle By is about 1.5km west of the city centre (a 20-minute walk from the train station); buses 3, 14, 25 and 55 can take you there. The site is surrounded by the **Botanisk Have** (Botanical Gardens), with its greenhouses and re-created Jutland environments. The garden can be reached through an exit from Den Gamle By or directly from Vesterbrogade.

### Moesgård

Visit Moesgård, 10km south of the city centre, for its glorious beech woods and the trails that lead through them to sandy beaches. Visit for the well-presented history exhibits from the Stone Age to the Viking era at the **Moesgård Museum of Prehistory** (☎ 89 42 11 00; [www.moesmus.dk](http://www.moesmus.dk); Moesgård Allé 20; adult/child 45kr/free; ☎ 10am–5pm daily Apr–Sep, 10am–4pm Tue–Sun Oct–Mar; ♿). But above all else, visit Moesgård for the

museum's most dramatic exhibit: the 2000-year-old **Grauballe Man**, (Grauballemanden) whose astonishingly well-preserved body was found in 1952 at the village of Grauballe, 35km west of Århus.

The superb new display on the Grauballe Man is part history lesson, part *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation* episode. Was he a sacrifice to Iron Age fertility gods, an executed prisoner perhaps, or simply a victim of murder? Either way, the broken leg and the gaping neck wound suggest his death, sometime around 290 BC (give or take 50 years), was a horribly violent one. His body and skin, tanned and preserved by the unique chemical and biological qualities of the peat bog in which he was found, are remarkably intact, right down to his hair and fingernails (and even the remains of his final meal – a herb-filled porridge – in his stomach).

Away from the death and violence, there's an enjoyable **walking trail**, dubbed the 'Prehistoric Trackway' (Oldtidsstien), leading from behind the museum across fields of wildflowers, past grazing sheep and through beech woods down to **Moesgård Strand**, one of Århus' best sandy beaches. The trail, marked by white stones, passes reconstructed historic sights including burial sites and an Iron Age house. Before heading off, pick up a brochure and map at the museum. You can walk one way and catch a bus from the beach back to the city centre, or follow the trail both ways as a 4km round-trip.

Bus 6 from Århus terminates at the museum, and runs half-hourly year-round. Bus 19 runs from May to September and termi-

nates at Moesgård Strand. If you have your own wheels, it's a lovely drive through forest to reach the museum – take Strandvejen south and follow the signs.

### Århus Domkirke

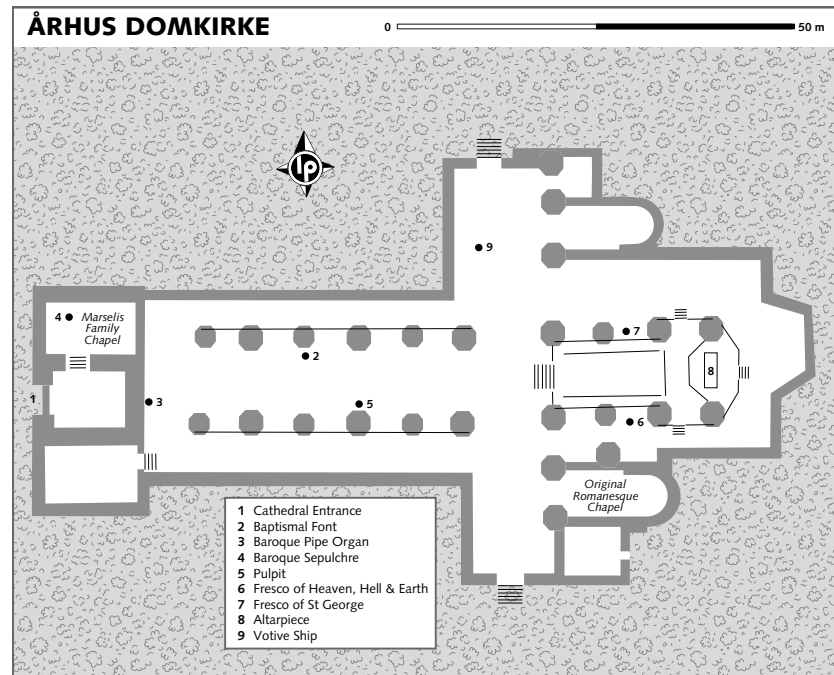
With a lofty nave spanning nearly 100m in length, **Århus Domkirke** (☎ 86 20 54 00; Bispetorv; ☎ 9.30am–4pm Mon–Sat May–Sep, 10am–3pm Mon–Sat Oct–Apr) is Denmark's longest church. Its construction began around 1200 and took 100 years to complete. In the 15th century the cathedral was transformed from its original Romanesque style to its current Gothic character. At that time the roof was raised over the nave, the landmark clock tower was erected, high Gothic windows were installed and the chancel extended.

Århus Domkirke was once richly decorated with frescoes that were painted to convey biblical parables to illiterate peasants. After the Reformation in 1536 church authorities, who felt the frescoes embodied Catholicism, had them all whitewashed. Many of these **frescoes**, which range from tormented scenes of hell to fairy-tale-like paintings, have now been un-

covered and painstakingly restored. Just north of the altar is a powerful **painting of St George**, the patron saint of knights, who is slaying a dragon while a grateful princess looks on; the Arabic numerals in the corner date it to 1497. The fresco depicting Heaven, Hell & Earth is also worth some contemplation.

A focal point of the cathedral is the ornate, five-panel gilt **altarpiece** made in Lübeck by the renowned woodcarver Bernt Notke in the 15th century. In its centre panel, to the left of the Madonna and child, is a gaunt St Clement, to whom Århus Domkirke was dedicated. Rather ironically, Clement became the patron saint of sailors by having the inauspicious fate of drowning at sea with an anchor around his neck. The anchor, which has come to symbolise St Clement, can be found in many of the cathedral's decorations.

Other items worthy of special attention are the bronze **baptismal font** dating from 1481, the finely carved Renaissance **pulpit** created in 1588, the magnificent **baroque pipe organ** made in 1730, the large **votive ship** from the 18th century, and the **baroque sepulchre** in the Marselis family chapel.



## Vor Frue Kirke

Set back from Vestergade, **Vor Frue Kirke** (Church of Our Lady; ☎ 86 12 12 43; Frue Kirkeplads; ☞ 10am-2pm Mon-Fri, 10am-noon Sat Sep-Apr, 10am-4pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat May-Aug) is like a Russian *matryoshka* doll, opening to reveal multiple layers beneath the surface. It was here that the original Århus cathedral was erected shortly after 1060 when Sweyn II, bent on weakening the power of the archbishop who led the Danish church, divided Denmark into eight separate dioceses, one of which was Århus. The cathedral was constructed from rough stone and travertine, and stood until about 1240, when it was replaced by the current Vor Frue Kirke.

Built of red brick, the church has a largely whitewashed interior although the chancel features a few exposed frescoes depicting the coats of arms of wealthy families from the 14th century. There's also a detailed triptych altar carved by Claus Berg in 1530. The main treasure, however, is in the church basement – the vaulted crypt of the original cathedral (the oldest surviving church interior in Denmark). Entered via the stairs beneath the chancel, the musty, atmospheric crypt was uncovered by chance in 1956 during a restoration by the national museum.

Vor Frue Kirke has yet another chapel, this one exhibiting early-16th-century frescoes. It can be entered through the garden courtyard: once inside the main church, take the first door on the left; in the courtyard, again take the first door on the left, then the door on the right.

## Kvindemuseet

Denmark is today a model for equality between the sexes, but it hasn't always been the case. In a remarkably fresh and engaging exhibition inside the old town hall, the **women's museum** (☎ 86 18 64 70; www.kvindemuseet.dk; Domkirkeplads 5; adult/child 40kr/free; ☞ 10am-4pm Tue-Fri, 11am-4pm Sat & Sun Sep-May, 10am-5pm Mon-Fri, 11am-5pm Sat & Sun Jun-Aug, to 8pm Wed year-round) charts women's lives in Denmark and their hard-won achievements. It's pretty inspiring stuff, but it's not just one for the chicks – families will also love the hands-on kids' exhibits in the 'History of Childhood' section.

## Besaettelsesmuseet

For those interested in the German Occupation of Denmark during WWII, this small **museum** (☎ 86 18 42 77; www.besaettelsesmuseet.dk;

Mathilde Fibigers Have 2; adult/child 20kr/free; ☞ 11am-4pm Tue, Thu, Sat & Sun Jun-Aug, 11am-4pm Sat & Sun Sep-May) is inside the building that the Germans once used to interrogate and house prisoners (the entrance is just behind Kvindemuseet). It has well-presented displays of military equipment, Nazi and Danish propaganda, and insights into everyday life during the war. Labels are in Danish – be sure to ask for the explanatory guide in English when you enter.

## Vikingemuseum

There's more than the expected vaults in the basement of Nordea Bank, a stone's throw from the cathedral. In the mid-1960s this site was excavated and impressive artefacts from the Viking era were unearthed. This **musty museum** (☎ 89 42 11 00; Sankt Clements Torv 6; admission free; ☞ 10am-4pm Mon-Fri, 10am-5.30pm Thu) is not nearly as slick as others in town, but is charming for its old-school ways. Exhibits include a skeleton, a reconstructed house, 1000-year-old carpentry tools and pottery, and photos of the excavation. It's accessible only during the bank's opening hours – enter the bank and take the staircase to the left.

## University Museums

There are two museums in Universitetsparken, the grounds of Århus University, north of the city centre. Buses to the university include routes 2, 3, 11 and 14.

**Naturhistorisk Museum** (☎ 86 12 97 77; www.naturhistoriskmuseum.dk; Wilhelm Meyers Allé 210; adult/child 45kr/free; ☞ 10am-5pm Jul & Aug, 10am-4pm Sep-Jun) delves into the evolution of the Danish landscape since the Ice Age, and has a comprehensive collection of stuffed birds and animals from all corners of the globe.

**Steno Museet** (☎ 89 42 39 75; www.stenomuseet.dk; CF Møllers Allé 1100; adult/child 45kr/free; ☞ 9am-4pm Tue-Fri, 11am-4pm Sat & Sun) showcases the history of science and medicine (more interesting than it sounds), and features a medicinal herb garden and small planetarium.

## Marselisborg

A green belt begins 2km south of the city centre and runs nearly 10km south – a great place for hiking and cycling. It's divided into three sections, with the northern end known as Marselisborg, the midsection Moesgård and the southern end Fløjstrup – names taken from the former estates that they were once part of.

Landmark features on the northern tip of the woodland are Tivoli Friheden (below), Jysk Væddeløbsbane (a horse-trotting track) and Atletion (a sports complex encompassing various stadiums).

**Marselisborg Palace & Park** (Kongevej 100) is a summer home of the royal family, and when they're not in residence the public is allowed to explore the English-style grounds and rose garden (free admission). When the blue-bloods are here on vacation, you can watch the changing of the guard at noon from a vantage point on the road. The palace can be reached by buses 1, 18 and 19.

A further 1.5km southeast of the palace is **Dyrehaven** (Deer Park) which, as the name suggests, has an abundance of deer (along with wild boar). The wooded park makes for a relaxing stroll on a sunny day.

## Tivoli Friheden

Neither as big nor as fabulous as Copenhagen's major drawcard, Århus' **Tivoli** (☎ 86 14 73 00; www.friheden.dk; Skovbrynet 100; adult/child 60/40kr; ☞ late Apr-Sep) is still a fun, wholesome family attraction, full of childhood favourites – Dodgem cars and a Ferris wheel – as well as newer, faster rides. It's a good way to break up the cultural bombardment if museums are wearing a little thin. You can buy a multi-ride pass (adult/child 180/160kr, including admission) and go hard, or pay for each ride individually.

The park is at the northern edge of Marselisborg woods and can be reached on buses 4, 18 or 24. It operates to a complex schedule of hours (daily until as late as 11pm in peak summer, weekends only until 7pm at other times) – phone ahead or check the website.

## ACTIVITIES

The easiest and most enjoyable way for visitors to experience the great outdoors surrounding Århus is on foot or by bike, and the best hiking and cycling can be found along the green belt south of the city (see p270 for details on bike rental). The tourist office can outline some good routes, but has limited English-language brochures and maps.

If the weather's good and you're keen to get sand in your shorts, popular family-friendly beaches lie on the town's outskirts and feature clean, calm (but often cool) waters. The best-loved spots to the north are the traditional sea baths known as Den Permanente, in Risskov not far from the hostel (p264). There are also

segregated areas here for swimming *sans* swimsuit. Bellevue, a little further north of Den Permanente (about 4km north of the city centre), is also popular; buses 6 and 16 will get you there. Otherwise head south to Moesgård Strand, about 7km from the centre on bus 19.

If you're here in the cooler months, rug up and get your skates on – from October to March the area out front of Musikhuset on Valdermarsgade is transformed into a free ice-skating rink.

The tourist office can also help with information on other options in the area, including sailing, windsurfing, fishing and golf.

## TOURS

On weekdays from mid-June to mid-August the **tourist office** (☎ 87 31 50 10; www.visitaarhus.com; Banegårdspladsen 20) offers guided walks, taking in various sights according to themes (eg the Latin Quarter, the city's history or art and architecture). Sadly there are no official tours outside these months. Starting times and rendezvous points vary, so it's best to make enquiries before you travel or when you arrive. At the time of research, two-hour tours cost adult/child 125/70kr, and tickets must be purchased in advance from the tourist office.

Also during the summer, the tourist office arranges a tower climb at the Århus rådhus (town hall), at Rådhuspladsen just north of the train station. The controversial building was designed by architect Arne Jacobsen, a pioneer of Danish modernism, and completed in 1942. The tower is open at 2pm Tuesday and Thursday from mid-June to mid-August; climbing it costs adult/child 35/15kr (buy tickets in advance from the tourist office).

## FESTIVALS & EVENTS

The city dons its shiniest party gear at the end of August, when the **Århus Festival** (www.aarhusfestuge.dk) transforms the town for 10 days – we're talking theatre, music, dance, visual arts, literature, sporting events and outdoor events for all ages (many of which are free).

And it's not the only date to circle on your calendar, especially for music-lovers:

**Spot Festival** (www.spotfestival.dk) An annual event (late May/early June) showcasing up-and-coming Danish and Scandinavian talent, with most forms of popular music evident in and around Musikhuset (p268).

**Århus Jazz Festival** (www.jazzfest.dk) A week-long celebration held mid-July, with big-name local & international acts doing their thing in various theatres, cafés and town squares.

## ÅRHUS FOR KIDS

Århus – and indeed all of Jutland – is an incredibly family-friendly place to travel (see p237 for more on exploring this area with kids in tow). Entry to most museums is free for kids, and you won't have to minimise your time in culture-vulture places lest your offspring start climbing the walls – almost every attraction has factored kids into its audience, with displays and activities designed especially to keep them entertained. And then there are places designed *solely* with families in mind – Tivoli Friheden, p263, for example, but also parks in Djursland (p274), Randers (p284) and, of course, Legoland (p281), although the plastic-fantastic world is 100km from Århus and might be a bit too far to consider as a day trip.

Other factors point to a relatively stress-free experience: many hotels have family rooms (Danhostel Århus, Cab Inn and Århus City Apartments are particularly good options – see below); almost all restaurants have a *børnemenu* (children's menu); the outdoors is gentle and the beaches calm; and you can hire kids' bikes or seats from Bikes 4 Rent (p270). Go forth and multiply!

## SLEEPING

Surprisingly, Denmark's second-biggest city doesn't have a huge range of accommodation. Our best advice? If you're after something special, avoid the bland chains and book early to snare a room at one of the boutique hotels.

The tourist office can book rooms in private homes from around 300/400kr single/double, plus a 50kr booking fee.

### Budget

**Blommehaven Camping** (☎ 86 27 02 07; www.blommehaven.dk, Ørneredevej 35, Højbjerg; per adult/child/site 68/43/40kr; ☺ late Mar-late Oct; (P) (Q)) Huge, busy camping ground 6km south of the city centre, fronting the beach in the scenic Marselisborg woods, en route to Moesgård. It's got loads of family-oriented facilities and activities, plus simple cabins (425kr) for those who prefer a roof over their head. If you're driving, follow Strandvejen south; otherwise, take buses 6 or 19.

**Århus City Sleep-In** (☎ 86 19 20 55; www.citysleep-in.dk; Havnegade 20; dm 125kr, d with/without bathroom 460/400kr; (Q)) The city's most central budget option has small, no-frills rooms down by the harbour. You'll probably be more drawn to the communal areas, such as the garden or 1st-floor TV room, reading nook and sunny yellow breakfast room. There's friendly, helpful staff and all the hostel amenities you could require (internet, kitchen, pool table, laundry), plus a contented bunch of international backpackers. The doubles are pricey, or – if you need to rent bed linen (48kr) and a towel (20kr), you might want to start looking at the cheaper midrange hotels.

**Danhostel Århus** (☎ 86 21 21 20; www.aarhus-danhostel.dk; Marienlundsvej 10, Risskov; dm 140kr, r with/with-

out bathroom 496/448kr; ☎ reception 8am-noon & 4-8pm; (P) (Q)) The main building at this hostel is as pretty as a picture: it's a large octagonal room that was a dancehall in a previous life and now serves as the breakfast room. Accommodation is bright and basic, and room rates apply whether there are one or four people in the room. The hostel is 3km north of the city centre, in lovely green woods close by the sea baths and a beach. With your own vehicle, follow Havnegade/Kystvejen north; or catch buses 1, 6, 9 or 16, and then it's a 300m walk east along Marienlundsvej.

### Midrange

**Cab Inn Århus** (☎ 86 75 70 00; www.cabinn.com; Kanikegade 14; s/d/tr/f from 475/595/765/885kr; (P) (Q) (S)) 'Sleep cheap in luxury' is this hotel chain's motto and hey, it's all relative. Cheap? By Scandi big-city standards, sure. Luxury? Well, it's a stretch, but the small, functional rooms (based on ships' cabins, hence the name) are bright and amenity-loaded for the price (all with bathroom, kettle, phone and TV). The location is top-notch, with Åboulevarden and the cathedral at your doorstep. This chain has found a niche in Denmark and is bursting with locals and budget-conscious Euro-tourists happy to have snared a good-value place to crash. It has laptops at 50 paces in the wi-fi lobby/TV room. Breakfast costs 50kr per person.

**Havnhotellet** (www.havnehotellet.dk; Marselisborg Havnevej 20; s/d 545/690kr; (P) (S)) These good-value rooms down at the marina are fresh off the Ikea production line – fresh and functional, and attractive too. The downside? Well, there's something quite impersonal about an unstaffed hotel. All booking is done online

## THE SOUND OF MUSIC

If music festivals are your thing, you *definitely* need to know about the annual **Skanderborg Festival** (www.smukfest.dk), held on the second weekend in August and billed as 'Denmark's most beautiful festival', due to its gorgeous location among beech forest in the Lake District. Skanderborg is about 28km southwest of Århus, and roughly the same distance from Silkeborg.

It's the country's second-biggest music festival (after Roskilde, p135) and has a reputation of being considerably more chilled and, well, tree-hugging than the Zealand behemoth. In 2007 around 180 artists and bands performed for more than 45,000 festival-goers. Rock, pop, metal, folk, hip-hop and electronic music all get a look-in over the four days, and the line-up includes Danish and international names – in 2007 the eclectic programme included Snoop Dogg, Sinead O'Connor, Razorlight, Peter Gabriel and Status Quo, and Boy George DJing. Local acts included Nephew and Danser med Dreng. A special feature is the Sunday-morning concert performed by the Århus Philharmonic Orchestra (a gentle way to wake up after some full-on partying).

In 2007 a ticket covering the full four days of the festival cost 1650kr; one-day tickets were available for 500kr to 700kr (a festival ticket entitles you to camp for free). Tickets do sell out, so get in early. Check the website, which has loads of information including line-up, ticketing, transport and all the other vital stuff.

(hence no phone number), and check-in is via a computer too. The hotel is about 1.5km south of the centre (off Strandvejen; catch buses 6 or 19) and walking distance to the treats of Marselisborg; at your doorstep are a handful of popular restaurants. Tip: choose a room on the 1st floor (1.sal), as ground-floor rooms lack privacy. Breakfast costs 55kr.

**Møllestien Cottages** (☎ 86 13 06 32; www.house-in-aarhus.com; Møllestien 49 & 51; d 600-800kr) Møllestien is easily Århus' prettiest street – all cobblestones, colourful cottages and flowering hollyhocks. A local ceramicist rents out two neighbouring self-contained cottages perfect for a romantic escape. These are small, homely places with courtyard, kitchen, lounge and bathroom (the cheaper of the two is more rustic); be warned that the staircases to the upstairs bedrooms are *steep*. Book early for a totally enchanting experience.

**Århus City Apartments** (☎ 86 27 51 30; www.hotelaca.dk; Fredensgade 18; d studio/apt 630/730kr; (P)) Perfect for families and long-stayers, this charcoal-coloured three-storey apartment block is home to 11 modern abodes, from small single studios to generous two-bedroom options (sleeping up to six). All have kitchens (kitchenettes in the studios), cable TV and free wi-fi. There's no reception, so you need to book ahead and arrange to be met. Short stays are penalised with high prices – you need to stay a minimum of three nights to get the good-value rates we've listed.

**our pick** **Hotel Guldsmeden** (☎ 86 13 45 50; www.hotelguldsmeden.dk; Guldsmedgade 40; s with/without bath-

room from 995/645kr, d with/without bathroom 1150/845kr, (P) (Q)) A top pick for its warm staff, French colonial-style rooms with Persian rugs on hardwood floors, four-poster beds with soft white linen, a pretty garden oasis and a generally relaxed, stylish ambience. There's brilliant attention to detail too: mainly organic breakfasts (included in the price) are served on handmade Mexican ceramics, and the hotel has its own organic toiletries range for guest use. *Guldsmed* means both goldsmith and dragonfly in Danish – look for sweet use of the dragonfly motif in the décor. Wireless internet available. Ask about the nearby apartment too, which sleeps up to six.

### Top End

**Villa Provence** (☎ 86 18 24 00; www.villaprovence.dk; Fredens Torv 12; s/d/ste from 995/1095/2000kr; (P)) Elegant rooms (individually decorated in Provençal country style) for a mature, well-heeled crowd. The suites are large and lovely; standard rooms are smaller but with the same attention to detail – all have flat-screen TVs, French linen and original French movie posters. Besides the gourmet breakfast, our favourite feature might just be the courtyard, replete with flowering pot plants and fairy-lit lime trees.

**Hotel Philip** (☎ 87 32 14 44; www.hotelphilip.dk; Åboulevarden 28; s/d 1295/1495kr) Owned by Marc Rieper, a former star of the Danish football team, this boutique hotel is in the centre of the action (with a top-notch restaurant downstairs). There are eight individually decorated

suites above the restaurant that make a good home-away-from-home (all large and light-filled, with lounge area and kitchenette); in the building next door are four ultra-modern apartments, with full kitchen and balconies overlooking Åboulevarden.

**Hotel Royal** (☎ 86 12 00 11; www.hotelroyal.dk; Store Torv 4; s/d from 1295/1595kr; (P) (♿)) If you've come to expect restrained Scandi style in your top-end Danish hotels, prepare to be surprised by the Royal, Århus' premiere place to bed down. From the over-the-top entrance portico to the chandelier-lit reception area and incredible murals everywhere you look, the place seems a little, well, gaudy in parts. But fun, too – we love the fish-tank reception desk and the rich colour schemes. The rooms are lavish and ornate (check out the blingy white-and-gold bathrooms) and the staff are reassuringly warm and friendly.

## EATING

When you see the collection of restaurants and cafés lining Åboulevarden, you may wonder if the city needs any other eating venues. Rest assured – there are loads more! Fertile hunting grounds include the Latin Quarter, Skolegade and its extension, Mejlgade, and the new hot spot, Jægergårdsgade.

## RESTAURANTS

**Forlæns & Baglæns** (☎ 86 76 00 70; Jægergårdsgade 23; tapas 45-75kr; (♿) lunch Tue-Sun, dinner Tue-Sat) It can be tough to snare a table at this little hot spot, which dishes up tapas and cocktails from 6pm (and a popular Sunday brunch for 80kr). There's only one dish at lunchtime (an antipasto platter of sorts, for 80kr). Of an evening, sit among the colourful light fittings that dangle from the ceiling and choose between tempting morsels such as Spanish meatballs or grilled tiger prawns.

**Raadhuus Kafeen** (☎ 86 12 37 74; Sønder Allé 3; smørrebrød 44-85kr, mains 89-175kr; (♿) lunch & dinner) Sleek riverside spots are all well and good, but what if you want to look at a menu and really know you're in Denmark? This classic wood-panelled dining room is the place – a taste of old-school Danish cuisine from the herring plate to *frikadeller* (meatballs) to 101 lunchtime smørrebrød options.

**Globen Flakket** (☎ 87 31 03 33; Åboulevarden 18; café mains 52-98kr; (♿) breakfast, lunch & dinner; (V)) You know a place is doing something right when, surrounded by tough competition, it pulls

a crowd every night. This upbeat riverside venue pitches to a broad demographic, and succeeds. In the upstairs café-bar families, groups and couples dine from a simple, crowd-pleasing menu (burgers, pasta, salads, you know the drill). Brunch is a hit, as is the 128kr dinner buffet on Friday and Saturday night. Downstairs the formal restaurant puts on the fancy-pants and caters to a more discerning crowd.

**our pick Klassisk Vinbar & Bistro** (☎ 86 13 12 21; Jægergårdsgade 65; mains 120-250kr; (♿) dinner) Heavy on rustic, shabby-chic charm, this 'classic wine bar and bistro' is all about carefully mismatched furniture and crockery, and shelves laden with wine. The locals are flocking for the much-prized *hyggelig* (cosy) atmosphere and value for money. The kitchen puts a Danish spin on French country cooking, with plenty of seafood and flambéed this-and-that alongside traditional Danish favourites on the short, changing menu. The three-course menu of the day is perfect at 245kr.

**Svineriet** (☎ 86 12 30 00; Mejlgade 35; 2/3 courses 260/325kr; (♿) dinner Tue-Sat) Relaxed, upmarket dining in a Latin Quarter courtyard is what this place offers, and diners lap it up. The seasonal menu is a meeting of Denmark and the Med, with inspiration (and some raw produce) clearly coming from Italy. The 'Gourmet Garagen' section of the restaurant offers flavour-filled rustic Italian cooking at easier-on-the-wallet prices.

**Malling & Schmidt** (☎ 86 17 70 88; Jægergårdsgade 81; 5/7 courses 565/695kr; (♿) dinner Tue-Sat) Torsten Schmidt was voted Denmark's best chef in 2006. His chic restaurant is understandably a darling among the media, industry and serious foodies due to its inspired experimental cooking using top-quality Scandinavian seasonal produce ('new Nordic cooking' is the catchphrase being bandied about). The menu is evidence that the molecular food craze has well and truly reached Århus, and the media rave that a meal here is not just a meal, but an experience. Needless to say, book ahead.

## Cafés

**Emmerys** (☎ 86 13 04 00; Guldsmedgade 24; sandwiches 55-70kr, brunch 120kr; (♿) breakfast & lunch) Brunch aficionados adore this modern bakery-café, and what's not to love? The bread is excellent and the sandwiches are huge; there are plenty of quality tea and coffee options; and you can last all day on the big brunch plate (or grab a

pastry on your way out, just in case). There's a second branch at MP Bruuns Gade 49.

**Casablanca** (☎ 86 13 82 22; Rosensgade 12; meals 55-145kr; (♿) brunch, lunch & dinner; (V)) Århus' oldest café (established 1891) offers oodles of Continental charm, from its mismatched bentwood chairs to its mirrors, ceiling fans and old posters inside, and its sun-seeking outdoor tables behind the cathedral. There's a decent menu of café faves, with all-day options from brunch to a nightcap (it's open until midnight or later).

**Café Svej** (☎ 86 12 30 13; Åboulevarden 22; meals 65-168kr; (♿) brunch, lunch & dinner; (V)) Kick off the day with a late alfresco breakfast (from 10am) at this relaxed café-brasserie with its 14m-long zinc bar. Among the early options are pancakes, Greek yoghurt or a veggie brunch platter. The all-day menu reads like a classic hits compilation (sandwiches, salads, pasta and soup), but it's all served with flair.

**our pick LYNfabrikken** (☎ 87 30 00 75; www.lynfabrikken.dk; Vestergade 49B; meals 40-85kr; (♿) 10am-6pm; (V)) This hip design studio oozes attitude (in a good way), from its boutique area by the café, which is stocked with cool clothes, bags, textiles and ceramics, to the sunny rooftop terrace. The 3rd-floor café has a great-value lunch plate with a little taste of everything you like (cheese, meats, soup, bread), or there's coffee and cake to go with your free wi-fi. Head inside the courtyard and climb the stairs.

## Cheap Eat\$

How to categorise these? Well, there are burgers made to cure midnight munchies, kick-startin' juices, and superb ice cream and chocolates. Yep, it's a mixed bag of snacks.

**Summerbird Chokolaterie** (☎ 86 19 00 50; www.summerbird.net; Volden 31; (♿) 11am-5.30pm Tue-Fri, 10.30am-3pm Sat) In your wanderings around the Latin Quarter, stop into this exquisite shop for a scoop of chocolate-covered almonds. The pretty packaging makes these chocs a classy souvenir for a deserving someone back home.

**Cribbio Is** (☎ 86 18 56 14; Frederiksgade 31; 2/3 scoops 20/25kr; (♿) 10am-9pm) *Perfetto* Italian-style ice cream and sorbets in difficult-to-choose flavours. Go for the tiramisu if you're after dessert-in-a-cone, the grown-up 'after nine' (mint and chocolate), or richly coloured berry flavours that taste of summer.

**Juice Stop** (☎ 86 13 69 65; Badstuegade 4; juice/bagel from 25/35kr; (♿) 9am-6pm Mon-Thu, 9am-7pm Fri, 9am-2pm Sat) A good juice/coffee/bagel pit stop in the Latin Quarter, with plenty of fruity concoctions to pep you up. It's mainly takeaway, but there are a few seats to rest cobblestone-weary feet.

**Karl's Sandwich Bar** (☎ 86 12 98 11; Klostergade 32; burgers from 30kr; (♿) 11am-9pm Sun-Wed, 11am-6am Thu-Sat) This place is exactly where you want it, when you want it – right by some of the city's most thumping nightlife, and serving food into the wee hours. You'll find pizza, sandwiches and shawarma but it's the homemade burgers that everyone raves about – do yourself a favour and get one with bacon *and* cheese – and yes, you would like fries with that.

**Bread & Coffee** (☎ 86 13 33 44; Banegårdspladsen 2; sandwiches around 40kr) The offerings here are just a little more complex than the bakery's name suggests. If you're waiting for a train, pop across and grab a coffee and some walnut bread or a *hindbær snitte* (a biscuit-slice filled with raspberry jam) for the journey.

## FAB FREDERIKSBJERG

If you're uninspired by the sameness of places along Åboulevarden, the perfect antidote is to be found in Frederiksbjerg, the city's coolest new neighbourhood, just south of the train station. Take a wander along MP Bruuns Gade (beyond Bruun's Galleri shopping centre, south to Skt Pauls Kirkeplads) and Jægergårdsgade and admire the new bars and restaurants, quirky boutiques, retro furniture stores and specialist food shops. The area has undergone a renaissance in recent years and in-the-know locals are moving in; this means you'll find a tattoo parlour directly opposite one of the town's schmilkest restaurants (Malling & Schmidt, since you asked), plus old-school pubs next to fashionably revamped bars, and op shops next to hip boutiques. It's the kind of Danish neighbourhood you've (ok, we've) always wanted to live in. There are plenty of places waiting to be discovered, and new places springing up, or you can check out some of our favourites: Malling & Schmidt (p266), Forlæns & Baglæns (p266) and Klassisk Vinbar & Bistro (see opposite), and Byens Ost delicatessen (p268).

## Self-catering

**Bazar Vest** (☎ 86 25 42 11; www.bazarvest.dk; Edwin Rahrs Vej 32; ☎ 10am-6pm Tue-Sun) More than just a place to pick up groceries, Bazar Vest offers an insight into the multicultural side of Århus (which may not be evident somewhere like Åboulevarden). Local immigrants set up stands of every kind at this huge, closed-top bazaar, about 5km west of town. Plenty of fresh fruit and veg, butchers, Turkish bakeries, ethnic eateries and lots of trinket shops make for a colourful excursion – take buses 5 or 15.

The train station houses a small **supermarket** (☎ 7am-midnight Mon-Fri, 8am-midnight Sat & Sun) with long opening hours, while MP Bruuns Gade is home to fine food stores, including **Byens Ost** (☎ 86 12 24 79; MP Bruuns Gade 54), which sells fabulously stinky cheese among its deli-delights.

Another option is **Føtex supermarket** Latin Quarter (cnr Klostergade & Guldsmedgade; ☎ 9am-8pm Mon-Fri, 8am-5pm Sun); Frederiks Allé (Frederiks Allé 22; ☎ 9am-8pm Mon-Fri, 8am-5pm Sun).

## DRINKING

Århus' large student contingent guarantees the bars fill up from Thursday onwards but, really, any night is good for bar-hopping. There are a few streets lined with wall-to-wall drinking dens: Åboulevarden is full of chic restaurant-bars and a more savvy, fashionable crowd – drinks here don't come cheap. A few chic places have spilled into nearby Skolegade, alongside intimate boozers and dive bars; while Frederiksgade gives you more boisterous English/Irish pubs than you can poke a pint at, all attempting to woo students with discounted beer (20kr for a pint of Carlsberg – yes, please!) and schedules of live music and jam sessions, televised sports, quiz competitions (generally in English) and the dreaded karaoke. A number of places mentioned under Eating, p266, are also decent drinking spots. Put on your boots and head out to explore...

**Under Masken** (☎ 86 18 22 66; Bispegade 3; ☎ noon-late) The ethnic masks lining the walls and ceiling may leer and scowl but the real natives in this convivial little basement pub are friendly. The funky décor even extends to the fish tanks, decorated with sculptures, and the mood is relaxed and unpretentious. We like.

**Ris Ras Filliongongong** (☎ 86 18 50 06; Mejlgade 24; ☎ noon-2am) The old lounges, vintage furniture and quirky tit-bits make Ris Ras (named after a children's nursery rhyme) feel like the

lounge room of a cool local friend one with a fridge full of Belgian and Danish microbrewed beers, no less. There's no food on offer, but you're welcome to bring your own. This place is small, intimate and friendly – get here early to nab a seat.

**Carstenskiold** (☎ 86 55 22 23; Åboulevarden 32; ☎ from 10am) The huge white lights, red sofas and long red drapes against a black background create an appropriately dramatic setting for the city's most fashionable crowd to 'see and be seen' (some locals accuse it of being up its own arse – it's the only place in town where we copped some attitude from the staff!). DJs play lounge music of a Saturday night.

**Sherlock Holmes Pub** (☎ 86 12 40 50; www.sherlock-holmes.dk; Frederiksgade 76D; ☎ from noon or 1pm) This is a real English rainy-day pub (perfect for Danish weather then), dim and cosy and with an array of live music, televised football and a Sunday-night jam session. You can pop next door to the Golden Lion for a good dose of English pub grub, too.

## ENTERTAINMENT

### Live Music

**Musikhuset Århus** (☎ 89 40 40 40; www.musikhu setaarhus.dk in Danish; Thomas Jensens Allé; ☎) Drop by the Music House and pick up a guide to what's on – you're bound to find something that appeals. This newly expanded, glass-fronted venue hosts a range of events, from art-house films in its cinema to piano concerts and jazz performances (many of them free) in its large, light-filled foyer. The formal offerings in the concert halls cut a broad swathe through the arts, from Damien Rice or Macy Gray to *Rigoletto*, performances from Den Kongelige Ballet (the Royal Danish Ballet) to percussion supremos Stomp, or an evening of flamenco dance.

**Musikcaféen & Gyngen** (☎ 86 76 03 44; www.musik cafeen.dk in Danish; Mejlgade 53) Musikcaféen and the neighbouring restaurant-bar, Gyngen, are part of Kulturgyngen, a youth-oriented cultural activity centre open to all. Student-heavy Gyngen has great-value organic meals, while the intimate Musikcaféen offers a peek into Århus' alternative scene with a wide range of music (including rock, techno, jazz and world music) performed by local up-and-comers.

Århus is considered Denmark's music capital, so aside from the diverse offerings of Musikhuset and the live-music events of

club venues such as Train (below) and **VoxHall** (☎ 87 30 97 97; www.voxhall.dk in Danish; Vester Allé 15), it's not hard to track down quality music being played in more intimate venues. Long-standing **Jazzbar Bent J** (☎ 86 12 04 92; www.jazzbarbentj.dk; Norre Allé 66; ☎ Mon & Thu-Sat) is dark and moody, as all good jazz haunts should be; and **Fatter Eskil** (☎ 86 19 44 11; www.fattereskil.dk in Danish; Skolegade 25; ☎ from 8pm Tue-Sat) has live music every night – a mixed bag of pop, rock, soul, blues and jazz. Websites may be in Danish but the events calendars should be easy enough to follow.

## NightClubs

**Train** (☎ 86 13 47 22; www.train.dk; Toldbodgade 6; admission 50kr; ☎ nightclub Fri & Sat from about 11.30pm) You know it must be good when it's voted club of the year (2007) by the Danish DJ Awards. Train is first and foremost a concert venue, with shows a couple of nights a week. Some well-established international names have played here over the years, from the Happy Mondays to Wolfmother via Bryan Ferry and Iggy Pop. Train opens as a nightclub, too, on Friday and Saturday nights, with room for up to 1500 party people and a serious DJ line-up. You need to be 21 to enter on Friday, 23 on Saturday – so what we're saying is that this is a place for grown-ups, not lairy teenagers out for a big night (that's not to say that things don't get messy!). But that's not all... The complex also incorporates Perron (Platform), a gourmet restaurant where you can begin your evening's 'journey', and Kupé (Compartment), a funky lounge club where it's all about the pre-party champagne and cocktails. Go. Enjoy.

**Social Club** (☎ 86 19 42 50; Klostergade 34; admission 20-40kr, free with student card before 2am; ☎ from 11pm Thu-Sat) Attracts students in droves, perhaps due to the ever-popular free beer (just for students) before midnight. Afterwards, the place turns into a packed and sweaty dance affair with plenty of trance and hard tunes. Many clubbers float back and forth between the Social Club and its superpopular neighbour Fabriken also at Klostergade 34 (open from 9pm to 5am Friday & Saturday), which offers pumping tunes (and often live bands).

## Theatre

**Århus Teater** (☎ 89 33 23 00; www.aarhusteater.dk in Danish; Bispetorv; Sep-mid-Jun; ☎) This is a suitably theatrical building dating from 1900, embellished with gargoyles and other extravagant

décor, including a scene from a Ludvig Holberg play. It's Jutland's largest theatre with five stages, a permanent theatre troupe and an affiliated drama school. Performances are largely in Danish, but musical and dance productions are also occasionally staged. The box office is across the road from the theatre, on Skolegade.

Keep your eyes open for performances by the **Aarhus International Theatre Company** (AAITC; ☎ 86 19 31 22; www.aaitc.dk), which regularly stages productions in English.

## Cinema

When the weather's not conducive to sight-seeing, you might want a place to escape. Cinema tickets cost around 60kr to 75kr – it's invariably cheaper to see a daytime session, and students should ask about discounts.

**Cinemaxx** (☎ 70 12 01 01; MP Bruuns Gade 25) Inside Bruun's Galleri shopping centre (you can enter via the train station); state-of-the-art cinemas and the latest blockbusters alongside smaller local films.

**Øst for Paradis** (☎ 86 19 31 22; Paradisgade 7-9) Art-house cinema in northern reaches of the Latin Quarter.

## CASINO

**Royal Casino** (☎ 86 19 21 22; Store Torv 4; admission before/after 7pm 20/60kr; ☎ 2pm-3am or 4am) If you're feeling the lure of the lucre, dress up and head to the city's only casino. It's in the Hotel Royal building (the cathedral is nearby should you need to repent later). It's a rather handsome environment in which to chase lady luck, but we wonder what they'd make of an entrance fee in Vegas?

## SHOPPING

Århus has the best shopping outside of Copenhagen, but Sunday will be an enforced day of rest for your credit cards – most shops don't open on Sunday, except in December.

Pick up a copy of the *Shopping in Århus* guide from the tourist office to point you in the right direction. The busy pedestrian street, Søndergade (known as Ryesgade at its starting point opposite the train station), and the Latin Quarter are the two main shopping areas: the former offers largely mainstream shopping and chain stores (Danish and international); the latter offers more original finds in cool boutiques. Another browse-worthy neighbourhood is Frederiksbjerg, (p267), south of the train station on MP Bruuns Gade – foodies will love the excellent delicatessens



and specialist food stores here, plus there are some stores selling retro furniture and quirky curios on nearby Jægergårdsgade. Art-lovers should check out the galleries lining Vester-gade (be sure to stop in at LYNfabrikken, p267). Another place to pick up interesting souvenirs is the shop inside AROs art museum (p259).

There are two main department stores, **Magasin du Nord** (☎ 86 12 33 00; Immervad 2) and **Salling** (☎ 86 12 18 00; Søndergade 27), which should cover the casual shopper's basic needs, from Danish silverware to tax-free gift items. **Bruun's Galleri** (MP Bruuns Gade 25) is a busy shopping mall connected to the train station – it's home to a large supermarket, a cinema and plenty of high-street chains.

## GETTING THERE & AWAY

### Air

**Århus airport** (AAR; ☎ 87 75 70 00; www.aar.dk), also known as Tirstrup airport, is 45km northeast of the city. Scandinavian Airlines (SAS) has numerous daily flights to/from Copenhagen; there are also regular direct connections to Stockholm, Gothenburg and Oslo. Budget airline Ryanair has regular connections to/from London (Stansted) and Barcelona (Girona).

### Boat

**Mols-Linien** (☎ 70 10 14 18; www.mols-linien.dk) operates frequent car ferries between Århus and North Zealand. The fast service to Odden takes 65 minutes and one-way fares cost adult/child/car 250/125/555kr; a more leisurely service to Kalundborg (2¾ hours) costs adult/child/car 160/80/350kr. The rates for car passage include up to five passengers.

### Bus

All long-distance buses stop at Århus bus station (*rutebilstation*) on Fredensgade, 500m northeast of the train station. From Århus you can reach most Jutland towns of note on the X-bus network (www.xbus.dk in Danish). Express bus line 888, operated by **Abildskou** (☎ 70 21 08 88; www.linie888.dk), runs up to six times daily between Århus and Copenhagen's Valby station (250kr, three hours). Students and seniors travel for a bargain-priced 125kr from Monday to Thursday.

### Car & Motorcycle

The main highways to Århus are the E45 from the north and south, and Rte 15 from the west.

The E45 doesn't make it into the city itself – takes exits 46 to 50.

### Train

Inside the train station (*hovedbanegård*) you'll find the **ticket office** (☎ 5.30am-7.30pm Mon-Wed, 5.30am-9pm Thu & Fri, 6.30am-7pm Sat, 7.30am-9pm Sun) with its orderly ticket-queuing system: red for internal journeys, green for international. For local journeys, unless you've mastered the art of the quicker ticket machines (instructions available in English), be prepared for lengthy waits. Friday trains are always busy, and it's strongly advised to reserve a seat for long journeys.

Trains to Copenhagen (one way 302kr, 3½ hours), via Odense (190kr, 1¾ hours), leave Århus roughly half-hourly from early morning to 11pm, with an 'overnight' train leaving Århus just before 2am, arriving into the capital around 5.30am.

There's an hourly train service north to Frederikshavn (199kr, 2¾ hours) and south to Fredericia (116kr, one hour). There are also regular trains to Grenaa (71kr, 1¼ hours), and hourly trains to Silkeborg (61kr, 50 minutes).

## GETTING AROUND To/from the airport

A bus service connects Århus with the airport at Tirstrup (85kr, 50 minutes). Buses depart from the front of the train station (close to the post office) and the schedule is geared to meet all incoming and outgoing flights – enquire at the tourist office or your hotel for times. A taxi between the airport and the city centre will set you back a hefty 600kr.

Århus is also connected by shuttle bus with the larger airport at Billund (p284), about 80km southwest and a 1½-hour bus ride away (180kr).

### Bicycle

Look out for free Århusbycykel (www.aarhusbycykel.dk) city bikes, available from various spots around the city from May to October (these can be tricky to find – download a map from the website before you travel, or ask at the tourist office). There are a few bikes close to the Bread & Coffee bakery opposite the train station. You need to put a 20kr coin into the slot to obtain the bike (the coin is refunded when you return it).

If you're visiting from November to April, or you want a better-quality bike for a lengthy

period, **Bikes 4 Rent** (☎ 20 26 10 20; www.bikes4rent.dk; Grønnegade 77C; 1 day/2 days/1 week 75/140/245kr) can help out with a good range of bikes and accessories, and can also arrange guided cycling tours in the Århus surrounds. You need to walk through the courtyard to find the office.

### Bus

Århus has an extensive, efficient local bus network. Most in-town buses stop in front of the train station or around the corner from it on Park Allé. Unlike the rest of Denmark, you get on the back of the bus and buy your ticket from the machine (18kr, allowing up to two hours' travel) – then exit at the front of the bus. You can also buy a good-value *klippekort* ticket, valid for 10 rides, for 110kr. Information on tickets, routes and schedules is available at the tourist office, from the bus station on Fredensgade, or by dialling ☎ 86 12 86 22.

### Car & Motorcycle

A car is convenient for getting to sights such as Moesgård on the city outskirts, although the city centre is best explored on foot.

There's paid undercover parking in municipal car parks, including one near Musikhuset Århus and at Bruun's Galleri shopping centre. Such car parks usually charge by the hour. There are also numerous *billetautomat* (parking meters) along city streets. You'll usually need to pay for street parking from 9am to 7pm Monday to Friday and 9am to 4pm Saturday (outside those hours parking is generally free of charge). Parking costs 12/15kr for the first/second hour, and 20kr per hour after that. Press a button on the *billetautomat* for English instructions.

#### ON YER BIKE

Ok, so you've actually found yourself a *bycykel* (no mean feat!) and are looking to explore. Good two-wheeled trips (not too taxing, mind):

- South to Marselisborg, taking in the palace and park. Stop off to refuel at the marina en route.
- North to the university museums, or further north to Risskov to check out the pretty woodlands and beach.

All the major players (Europcar, Budget, Hertz and Avis) have car-hire desks at Århus airport. In town, cars can be rented from **Europcar** (☎ 89 33 11 11; Sønder Allé 35) and **Avis** (☎ 86 19 23 99; Spanien 63).

### Taxi

Taxis are readily available at the train station and at a rank by the cathedral; you can also flag one on the street or order one by phone (☎ 89 48 48 48). All taxis have a meter – expect to pay around 65kr for destinations within the inner city.

## DJURSLAND

Djursland, the large peninsula northeast of Århus, is prime summer-holiday territory for hordes of beach-going Danish, Swedish and German families. The area's standout towns are Ebeltoft and Grenaa. Sprawling Grenaa (connected by ferry to Varberg in Sweden) is the larger of the two and the surrounding beaches are better, but Ebeltoft has more charm. There are some top-notch sandy beaches all over the peninsula (particularly in the north, at Fjellerup, Bønnerup and Gjerriid, and just south of Grenaa), while family-focused, land-based activities range from historic manor houses to animal parks, shark pools and a popular funpark.

Djursland's public transport connections with Århus are first-rate, making it a good escape if you've had your fill of the bright lights of the 'big city'. If you have your own set of wheels, Rte 15 heads out of Århus towards Ebeltoft (via Rte 21) and on to Grenaa – but with a little time up your sleeve we recommend you take the rural back roads.

## EBELTOFT

pop 5850

Ebeltoft has all the ingredients you need for a great summer getaway. Cobblestone streets lined with pretty half-timbered houses, white-sand beaches and a classic warship attract large numbers of ice-cream-eating holiday-makers every year.

The tourist office, the *Fregatten Jylland* and harbour are along Strandvejen. From the harbour walk a block east on Jernbanegade to reach Adelgade, the main shopping street. Torvet, the town square, is at the southern end of Adelgade.

## Information

**Nordea** (Jernbanegade 7) Bank with ATM.

**Post office** (SA Jensens Vej 1) On the waterfront, right by the tourist office.

**Tourist office** (☎ 86 34 14 00; www.visitdjursland.com; SA Jensens Vej, off Strandvejen; ☎ 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, 10am-4pm Sat mid-Jun-mid-Aug, 9am-4.30pm Mon-Fri, 10am-1pm Sat mid-Aug-mid-Jun) Next to *Fregatten Jylland*.

## Sights & Activities

The **Fregatten Jylland** (☎ 86 34 10 99; www.fregatten-jylland.dk; SA Jensens Vej 4; adult/child/family 80/40/200kr; ☎ 10am-4pm Jan-Mar & Nov-Dec, 10am-5pm Apr-Jun & Sep-Oct, 10am-7pm Jul-Aug) has quite a presence. From bow to stern the frigate is 71m, making it the longest wooden ship in the world. It played an instrumental role in Denmark's navy in the 19th century; today it's been restored for visitors – step inside and experience the life of a crew member.

Contemporary glass art is beautifully showcased at the typically sleek **Glasmuseet Ebeltoft** (☎ 86 34 17 99; www.glasmuseet.dk; Strandvejen 8; adult/child 60/10kr; ☎ 10am-5pm year-round, to 7pm Jul). If you're brave enough to try getting something home in one piece, you'll love the shop here, which sells stunning vases, bowls and candleholders (many of them produced by glass-blowers working their magic on site).

The diminutive old town hall, built in 1789, has a half-timbered, chocolate-box appearance and is now home to the **Ebeltoft Museum** (☎ 86 34 55 99; www.ebeltoftmuseum.dk; Torvet; adult/child 25kr/free; ☎ 11am-3pm Sat & Sun Oct-Apr, from 11am daily May-Sep), which contains local history exhibits.

Ebeltoft sits on a calm, protected bay fringed with **white-sand beaches**; you'll find a nice stretch right along Strandvejen, the coastal road that leads north from the town centre. Down at the harbour, **Bådshoppen** (☎ 86 34 30 33; Vestervej 17) rents out motor boats for fishing trips and coastal exploration (per day 450kr), or bikes for land-lubbers (per day/week 60/375kr). From May to September, closing time varies from 3pm to 5pm

## Sleeping & Eating

**Ebeltoft Strand Camping** (☎ 86 34 12 14; www.ebeltoftstrandcamping.dk; Nordre Strandvej 23; per adult/child/site 78/40/30kr; ☎) The first camping ground you'll see, on your right as you enter town, has plenty of good sites backing onto a beach.

It's well geared up for family fun, with playgrounds and mini-golf to entertain.

**Danhostel Ebeltoft** (☎ 86 34 20 53; www.danhostel.dk/ebeltoft; Søndergade 43; dm/s/d without bathroom 140/250/310kr; ☎ Feb-Nov) An appealing option in a quiet spot on Søndergade (the extension of Adelgade), and just a block back from the waterfront. Rooms are simple, but there's a lounge with fireplace for cool nights, and outdoor tables for good weather.

**Ebeltoft Parkhotel** (☎ 86 34 32 22; www.ebeltoftparkhotel.dk; Vibæk Strandvej 4; s/d 625/825kr; ☎) Also in the northern reaches of the town, and across the busy main road from the beach. It's decent value too, with comfy rooms and a heated indoor pool and sauna.

**Glascaféen** (☎ 86 34 10 24; Strandvejen 8; mains 50-120kr; ☎ lunch) You don't need to pay the entry price at the Glasmuseet Ebeltoft just to enter the glass museum's stunning café. In good weather there's no better place to be than on the terrace nursing a coffee, enjoying the views over the water. Weekend brunches are popular (98kr), and in July and August the café stays open until 10pm.

**Molskroen** (☎ 86 36 22 00; www.molskroen.dk in Danish; Hovedgaden 16, Femmøller Strand; lunch mains 175-295kr, dinner mains 395kr; ☎ lunch & dinner) For something special, hang the expense and make your way 6km northwest of town to this acclaimed *kro* (inn). Sample the chef's award-winning French-inspired creations as part of a six-course degustation menu for around 800kr, or a three-course lunch for 375kr. If you can't travel far after all that exquisite food, there are equally impressive rooms here, with sleek, design-heavy doubles starting at 1480kr.

You'll find several other places to eat along Adelgade, between Jernbanegade and Torvet.

## Getting There & Away

Ebeltoft is on Rte 21, 54km east of Århus and 35km southwest of Grenaa.

Bus 123 runs between Århus and Ebeltoft (66kr, 1½ hours). Bus 351 has regular services between Ebeltoft and Grenaa (49kr, one hour).

**Mols-Linien** (☎ 70 10 14 18; www.mols-linien.dk) operates a hydrofoil car ferry between Ebeltoft and Odden in North Zealand at least six times daily. The service takes 45 minutes and one-way fares cost adult/child/car 250/125/555kr; the rate for car passage includes up to five passengers.

## GRENAA

pop 14,100

A purpose-built harbour complete with (cap-tive) sharks, an historic old town and 7km of fine, sandy beaches are the defining attractions of this town. The old town, radiating out from Torvet, is the economic and shopping hub of the district. It's about 3km west of the harbour, where the waterfront is peopled by shark-fanciers and Sweden-bound ferry-goers.

## Information

**Djurslands Bank** (Torvet 5) Close to the tourist office.

**Post office** (Stationsplads 2) West of the train station.

**Tourist office** (☎ 87 58 12 00; www.visitdjursland.com; Torvet 1; ☎ 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, 9.30am-1.30pm Sat mid-Jun-mid-Aug, 9am-4.30pm Mon-Fri, 10am-1pm Sat mid-Aug-mid-Jun) Opposite the cathedral in the main square.

## Sights & Activities

Grenaa's 7km of Blue Flag-winning beach runs south out of town and is where it's at on hot days. To get there just follow the coast south from the harbour. If you want to be surrounded by holidaymakers, the northern end of the beach is always a hive of activity, but as you run south it becomes a little more private.

If you fancy being just inches from a shark and in total control, then you'll love the glass tunnel at **Kattegatcentret** (☎ 86 32 72 00; Færgevej 4; www.kattegatcentret.dk; adult/child 120/60kr; ☎ 9.30am-6pm Jul-mid-Aug, 10am-4pm or 5pm mid-Aug-Jun; ☎), where the focus is on surrounding sea life. Call ahead or check the website to ensure you're around for a shark-feeding session – a good way to see just why sharks are at the top of the food chain. There is also a seal pool (and feeding sessions), and a kid-friendly touch pool for those with a fetish for touching stingrays and other sea life. If you want to go diving it can be organised through the centre, for everyone from beginners to experts.

Character simply oozes from the **Djurslands Museum & Dansk Fiskerimuseum** (☎ 86 32 48 00; Søndergade 1; adult/child 30kr/free; ☎ 10am-4pm Mon-Fri, 1-4pm Sat & Sun mid-Jun-Aug, 1-4pm Tue-Fri & Sun Sep-mid-Jun). It's in an eye-catching green-and-gold merchant's house, just south of Torvet. The museum houses artefacts that have been discovered in the region and includes plenty of model boats to keep the budding builder entertained. While you're in the neighbourhood,

check out the Gothic-style **Grenaa Kirke** (Torvet; free admission; ☎ 2-5pm) – parts of the church date back to the 14th century.

## Sleeping & Eating

The tourist office maintains a list of private homes in the area that rent rooms from around 200kr per person. It also has information on beachside holiday cottages (usually rented by the week).

**Grenaa Strand Camping** (☎ 86 32 17 18; www.grenaastrandcamping.dk; Fuglsangvej 58; per adult/child/site 63/32/30kr; ☎ Apr-Sep; ☎) A super option if your visit to Grenaa is all about the beach, this site is in poll beachside position a few kilometres south of town. Loads of peak-season activities for kids plus a swimming pool (with waterslide) will keep everyone happy. Cabins and on-site caravans are well priced; there's also a minimarket and summertime café.

**Danhostel Grenaa** (☎ 86 32 66 22; www.danhostel.dk/grenaa; Ydesvej 4; dm/s/d 150/350/425kr) A little removed from the action, about 1.5km south of the town centre, but offering modern, high-quality rooms (all with bathroom) in a green area by a sports stadium.

**Hotel Grenaa Strand** (☎ 86 32 68 14; www.grenaastrand.dk; Havneplads 1; s/d/apt from 450/675/950kr) Easily the most charming accommodation option in town, this sunny little hotel dates from 1912. It's opposite the harbour and offers simple, comfy rooms, and an apartment that sleeps four.

Over a footbridge by Kattegatcentret is the marina, a pleasant little place to explore and home to a few good eating options. Of an evening you'll find locals and holidaymakers loading their plates from the impressive buffet at **Restaurant Skakkes Holm** (☎ 86 30 09 89; Lystbådehavnen; buffet adult/child 168/88kr; ☎ dinner). Given the surroundings, it's only fitting that the emphasis here is on fish.

## Getting There & Around

Grenaa is 63km northeast of Århus on Rte 15 and 57km east of Randers along Rte 16.

Bus 121 or 122 and train services run throughout the day between Århus and Grenaa. (71kr, 1¼-1½ hours); the train is marginally quicker than the bus, but the prices are the same. In Grenaa, buses and trains leave from the station at Stationsplads 4, a short walk from Torvet. Bicycles can be hired from **Viggo Jensen** (☎ 86 32 06 83; Strandgade 14) near the harbour.

For information on ferries between Grenaa and Varberg, Sweden, see p331.

## AROUND DJURSBLAND

### Gammel Estrup

On the outskirts of Auning, 33km west of Grenaa, is the magnificent manor house **Gammel Estrup** (☎ 86 48 30 01; www.gammelestrup.dk; Randersvej 2, Auning; manor & museums adult/child 75kr/free; ☞ 10am-5pm or 6pm daily Apr-Oct, 10am-3pm Tue-Sun Nov-Mar), where two museums, exquisite gardens and an aura of Danish gentility await.

The moat-encircled manor house, home to **Jyllands Herregårdsmuseum** (Jutland's Manor House Museum), has been preserved and presented in much the same way as it was in the 17th century, with spacious rooms, antique furniture, elaborate tapestries, historic portraits, glorious views and creaking floorboards that tell a thousand stories. Less interesting (well, unless you're a farmer), is the **Dansk Landbrugs-museum** (Danish Agricultural Museum), which has a mammoth collection of old farm equipment and tells the story of Danish farming.

To get to Gammel Estrup, take bus 119 from Århus or buses 212 or 214 from Randers. If you're driving, take Rte 16 between Grenaa and Randers.

### Djurs Sommerland

If you're travelling with hyperactive kids, let them drag you to one of Djursland's biggest drawcards, **Djurs Sommerland** (☎ 86 39 84 00; www.djursommerland.dk; Randersvej 17, Nimtofte; admission 180kr; ☞ from 10am mid-May-mid-Sep). It's a much-hyped amusement park with arguably the best outdoor rides in Jutland (more than 60) and a waterpark, with pools and waterslides for all ages. Your wallet may feel the sting, however, when you realise that everyone over the age of three pays the same entrance fee; once this is paid, though, you're free to play to your heart's content. Closing hours vary (from 5pm to 9pm in July and August).

The park lies 20km west of Grenaa in Nimtofte. Plenty of bus options will get you here – from Århus take bus 121 or 122, from Randers or Grenaa take bus 214, from Ebeltoft take bus 212 and change to bus 400 at Kolind.

### Skandinavisk Dyrepark

It's true, animals in captivity can be a tad confronting for sentimental adults. Still, if you were to be a caged bear, **Skandinavisk Dyrepark** (☎ 86 39 13 33; www.skandinaviskdyrepark.dk; Nodagervej 67B, Nød-

agervej; adult/child 130/70kr; ☞ 10am-5pm or 6pm May-Oct; ☞) is where you would want to be, with endless space and plenty of playmates to fill in the days. The biggest attraction here is the very impressive polar bear facility, which opened in 2006 and allows you a unique chance to check out these icy babies up close. Other star performers include brown bears, moose and wolves. Fallow deer, reindeer and goats can be fed by hand.

The park is 2km north of Tirstrup on the road to Kolind. Follow Rte 15 to Tirstrup and then it is just to the north (and well sign-posted). Bus 120 runs between Århus and Grenaa and stops at the wildlife park.

## THE LAKE DISTRICT

One of Jutland's most prized areas is the Lake District (Søhøjlandet), as it dazzles with hills, forests and lakes not found anywhere else in Denmark. This region is home to Denmark's longest river (the Gudenå; 160km), Jutland's biggest lake (Mossø) and Denmark's highest point, Ejer Baunehøj (a smidge under 171m, bless its cotton socks). In many countries, visiting the land's highest/longest/biggest anything would probably be a passport to gobsmacking scenery and have you reaching for your camera and grasping for superlatives. Not in Denmark! Instead of craning your neck at sky-reaching peaks, here you can marvel over the gentle nature, neat and tame, and the superbly pretty scenery.

### SILKEBORG

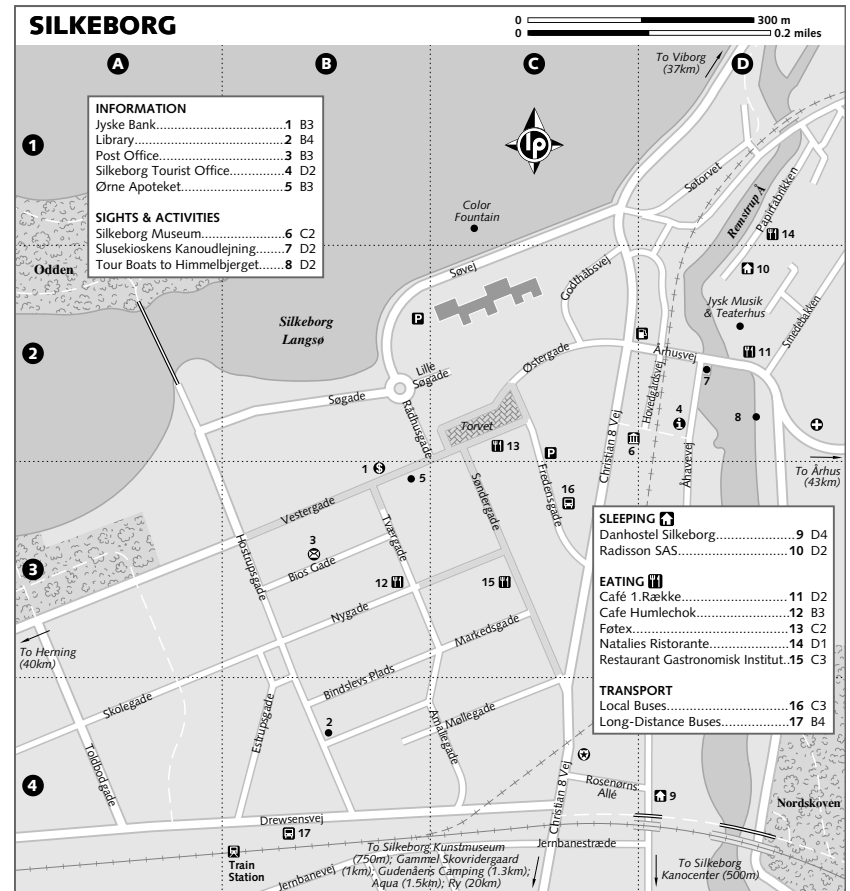
pop 41,300

In a country of supreme flatness, the modern town of Silkeborg is something of a black sheep, surrounded as it is by hills, sitting on an expansive lake and spaciouly laid out. Modern-art lovers and history boffins will find cause to stop here a while, but nature-lovers who have the most to celebrate. It's Silkeborg's surrounding landscapes that draw plenty of tourists – not adventure-seekers after an adrenaline rush but rather families and other outdoorsy folk drawn to the lush forests and waterways that are perfect for gentle cycling, walking and, especially, canoeing.

### Information

**Jyske Bank** (Vestergade 16)

**Library** (☎ 86 82 02 33; Hostrupsgade 41) Has a central location and computers with internet access.



**Post office** (Bios Gade) Small, central branch, one block behind Vestergade.

**Tourist office** (☎ 86 82 19 11; www.silkeborg.com; Åhavevej 2A; ☞ 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat & Sun Jul-Aug, 9am-4pm Mon-Fri, 10am-1pm Sat Apr-Jun & Sep-Oct, 10am-3pm Mon-Fri Nov-Mar) Faces the river, next to the museum.

**Ørne Apoteket** (☎ 86 82 15 00; Vestergade 9) Pharmacy.

### Sights

**Silkeborg Museum** (☎ 86 82 14 99; www.silkeborgmuseum.dk; Hovedgårdsvej 7; adult/child 45kr/free; ☞ 10am-5pm daily May-Oct, noon-4pm Sat & Sun Nov-Apr; ☞) is housed in the oldest building in Silkeborg (dating back to 1767). Speaking of old, inside the museum you can check out the amaz-

ingly well-preserved body of the **Tollund Man**, the central (albeit leathery) star in an otherwise predictable collection. Like the Grauballe Man at the Moesgård Museum outside Århus (p260), the life (and death) of the Tollund Man remains a mystery. His intact remains were found around the outskirts of Silkeborg in 1950, and have been carbon dated to around 220 BC. The autopsy suggests he had been hanged, yet he was placed as though lying asleep with only a leather hat over his face and a thin leather noose around his neck. Was he an executed prisoner, or a sacrifice to the gods? That's the big unanswered question, but the accompanying displays aren't as engrossing as those at Moesgård.

If you like modern art or, more specifically, modern art by world-renowned Dane (and Silkeborg native) Asger Jorn, you'll love **Silkeborg Kunstmuseum** (☎ 86 82 53 88; www.silkeborgkunstmuseum.dk; Gudenåvej 7; adult/child 50kr/free; 🕒 10am-5pm Tue-Sun Apr-Oct, noon-4pm Tue-Fri, 10am-5pm Sat & Sun Nov-Mar; 📍). Jorn's abstract works provide the backbone to the museum's paintings and sculptures, though the collection also features works by other modern artists, including Max Ernst, Le Corbusier and Danish artists from the influential CoBrA group. The museum is 1km south of the town centre.

Situated 2km south of the town centre is **Aqua** (☎ 89 21 21 89; www.aqua-ferskvandsakvarium.dk; Vejlsøvej 55; adult/child 90/50kr; 🕒 from 10am daily; 📍), an entertaining aquarium and exhibition centre built into several outdoor lakes. It explores the ecosystems of the surrounding area, with lots of touch tanks and fishy creatures, otters and fishing birds among the imaginative displays. It's a little pricey, but it's good on a rainy day. Closing times vary from 4pm to 6pm.

## Activities

### CANOING

In the warmer months (May to September) the tourist office organises popular self-guided canoe tours that take you through some magnificent countryside. Tour options range from two to five days and are outlined on the tourist office website.

As the name suggests, the five-day **Family Tour** (per 2 people 2795kr, extra adult/child 250/150kr) is ideal for kids. It takes you along a route from Tørring north to Silkeborg, staying in camping grounds where your tent is pre-erected for you. Tents and cooking gear are all sorted – you just need to bring a sleeping bag and mattress, and food. The Family Tour is only available from mid-June.

**Pioneer Tours** is a more challenging option, for those who like getting back to nature and sleeping at primitive tent sites along the way. If you're a softie who prefers a real bed at the end of the day, **Luxury Tours** has accommodation arranged at atmospheric old inns.

Alternatively, you can plan your own tour and consult the various canoe hirers for the finer details – they are a wealth of information, and will rent canoes by the hour (75kr) or day (250kr to 300kr) and help with transport of gear to the chosen departure point, if necessary. If you don't have your own

camping gear, you should also enquire about tent rental (usually possible if you arrange a few days in advance). If all you have is a day, recommended options are the 24km round-trip across the lakes east to Himmelbjerget (a harder, more exposed route), or a more gentle option travelling with the currents north from Silkeborg to Kongensbro (and taking the bus back to town). Make enquiries with the following:

**Silkeborg Kanocenter** (☎ 86 80 30 03; www.silkeborgkanocenter.dk; Åhave Alle 7)

**Slusekioskens Kanoudlejning** (☎ 86 80 08 93; www.kano4you.dk in Danish; Havnen)

### HIKING & CYCLING

The track of the old railway from Silkeborg to Horsens is now an excellent walking and cycling trail of about 50km. It passes through the beech forest of **Nordskoven**, itself crisscrossed by hiking and biking trails. To reach Nordskoven, simply head south down Åhavevej from the tourist office, then go left over the old railway bridge by the hostel. The tourist office has useful leaflets (mainly in Danish) on Nordskoven and the Silkeborg–Horsens trail. Bikes can be hired from local camping grounds (see opposite).

### BOAT TRIPS

The **Hjejlen** (☎ 86 82 07 66; www.hjejlen.com; Havnen), the world's oldest operating paddle steamer, has been faithfully plying the waters of the Lake District since it was first launched in 1861. These days the boat shuttles tourists from Silkeborg to the foot of Himmelbjerget during the summer season (10am and 2pm daily, July to mid-August). The operators have other boats regularly plying the same route during this period, and from May to September. The route (adult one way/return 75/105kr, 1¼ hours) takes in a wealth of river and lake scenery and is one of the most popular outings in the Lake District.

### Festivals & Events

There's something about Scandis and jazz. They love it, and Silkeborg has embraced it with a great excuse for a party – the four-day **Riverboat Jazz Festival** (☎ 86 80 16 17; www.riverboat.dk), held in late June. It's not quite New Orleans but you can buy a ticket and take a cruise down the river, or stroll the streets and take advantage of the free jazz. Some 40,000 people venture here each year – needless to

say, book your accommodation in the area well in advance.

### Sleeping

For a 10kr booking fee, the tourist office will book a room for travellers in private homes, where a double ranges from 300kr to 500kr.

**Gudenåens Camping** (☎ 86 82 22 01; www.gudenaaenscamping.dk; Vejlsøvej 7; per adult/child/site 70/40/37kr; 📍) Follow the signs for Aqua to find this tree-filled riverside park, about 2km south of the town centre (just south of the town park, Indelukket). Cabins and caravans are available for hire, and staff can also set you up with bikes and canoes for around 75kr per day. Local bus 10 runs down this way.

**Danhostel Silkeborg** (☎ 86 82 36 42; www.danhostel.dk/silkeborg; Åhavevej 55; dm 130-150kr, r 400-520kr; 🕒 Mar-Nov; 📍) The superb riverside location, modern facilities and lack of budget alternatives make this hostel very popular, so book ahead. Once here, enjoy the outdoor tables and homely communal areas alongside cyclists, families and Euro-backpackers. Prices vary with season, and there are rooms with and without bathroom. Doubles are difficult to score; rooms 11 to 22 all have river views.

**Radisson SAS** (☎ 88 82 22 22; www.silkeborg.radisson.com; Papirfabrikken 12; r 995-1495kr; 📍) Five years young and still shiny, this polished performer lives in the redeveloped paper factory that was once the backbone of the local economy. It's right on the river, among a clutch of new eating spots, and the designer rooms are smaller than expected but very comfy. Weekend rates are cheaper than midweek.

**Gammel Skovridergaard** (☎ 87 22 55 00; www.glskov.dk; Marienlundsvej 36; s/d 1065/1345kr, summer 545/795kr; 📍 📍) Also en route to Aqua, this is an excellent option. It usually serves as a conference centre, but in July and August, when business is slow, it offers bargain prices to holidaymakers (it's also worth enquiring about year-round weekend rates). The grounds are superb, and rooms and facilities are excellent.

### Eating & Drinking

There are really only two places you need to know about when scouting for eating (and drinking) options in Silkeborg: the reinvigorated Papirfabrikken (the old paper factory) and Nygade. End-of-week nightlife venues cluster around the corner of Nygade and Hostrupsgade.

**Restaurant Gastronomisk Institut** (☎ 86 82 40 97; Søndergade 20; sandwiches 40-55kr, mains 190kr; 🕒 lunch Mon-Sat, dinner Tue-Sat) The grand name (Gastronomy Institute) creates high expectations, but this place lives up to them – and the prices are excellent for the quality on offer, especially the two-course lunch (105kr) and four-course dinner (305kr). The changing menu features creative dishes made from fine local produce; evening bookings are recommended.

**Café 1.Række** (☎ 89 20 30 55; Papirfabrikken 80; meals 55-100kr; 🕒 lunch) The name means first row, and (appropriately enough) this large modern space is part of the Jysk Musik & Teaterhus. There's a great waterside terrace, while inside smartly dressed tables and plenty of plant life accompany a crowd-pleasing menu of sandwiches, seafood and pasta.

**Natalies Ristorante** (☎ 86 86 10 14; Papirfabrikken 10; lunch 59kr, 2/3 course dinner 119/139kr; 🕒 lunch & dinner; 📍) In among the family restaurants, cinema and café-bars of Papirfabrikken is Natalies, wooing a mixed crowd with a large, good-value menu of Italian and Mexican staples (pizza, pasta, burritos and tacos). It's a fairly generic place, with the better views outside.

**Café Humlecho** (☎ 86 81 91 03; Nygade 16; meals 69-158kr; 🕒 11am-midnight Mon-Thu, 10am-3am Fri & Sat; 📍) With a well-stocked bar, a classic menu of café fare, wallet-friendly prices (most meals under 100kr) and occasional live music, it's no surprise this café-bar draws a hip local crowd. Fab brunch options (served until 1.30pm) will kick-start your day.

For self-caterers, there's a central supermarket, **Fotex** (Torvet 4; 🕒 9am-8pm Mon-Fri, 8am-5pm Sat).

### Getting There & Away

Silkeborg is 37km south of Viborg on Rte 52 and 43km west of Århus on Rte 15. Hourly trains connect Silkeborg with Århus (61kr, 50 minutes) via Ry (31kr, 16 minutes). Bus 311 also connects Silkeborg and Ry for the same price (but offers a slightly slower journey); it continues on to Himmelbjerget.

### RY

#### pop 5230

Mellow, more-rural Ry lies in the heart of the Lake District. It has a pretty duck-filled harbour area, where you'll find tourist boats to Himmelbjerget, canoe hire, a kiosk and marina. There's also an assortment of activities around town to keep you busy, and quaint villages perfect for discovering on two wheels.

**ACTION HOLIDAY HOT SPOTS**

In the market for a destination that allows for more than just strolling and window-shopping? Here are our picks for Jutland's best places to enjoy an adventure holiday.

- Lake District (p274) – for superb canoeing down the Gudenå
- Hvide Sande (p290) – feel the wind in your hair, and in your windsurfing or kite-surfing sails
- Klitmøller (p313) – more water-based activities to take advantage of the raging winds
- Rebild Bakker (p288) – walking and mountain-biking (yes, you read that right – mountains!) in Denmark's largest forest
- Rømø (p245) – create new land-speed records on kite-buggies and blokarts

The helpful **tourist office** (☎ 86 69 66 00; www.visitskanderborg.com; Klostervej 3; ☹ 7am-5pm Mon-Fri, 9am-2pm Sat Jul-Aug, 7am-4pm Mon-Fri, 10am-noon Sat Sep-Jun) is at the train station.

**Activities**  
**CLIMBING**

Denmark's tallest tree used to stand in a forest outside Ry. Then a storm blew it down and enterprising locals converted it into an impressive climbing pole measuring 44m in height. Enquire at the Ry tourist office about scaling the pole to enjoy a bird's-eye view of the area. At the time of research it was open to the public from 5pm to 7pm Thursdays from June to August; climbing the pole (gear provided) costs 125kr.

**HIKING**

One of the nicest hikes from Ry is the two-hour, 7km walk west to Himmelbjerget. The starting point is the dirt road that begins off Rodelundvej, about 400m south of the Ry bridge. The signposted path leads to the Himmelbjerget boat dock before climbing the hill to the tower. A nice idea is to hike out and catch a boat back to Ry or on to Silkeborg.

**CYCLING TOUR**

**Ry Cykel** (☎ 86 89 14 91; Parallelvej 9B) is 1.5km east of the train station, towards Skanderborg. Bikes can be rented for 75kr per day.

Cycling is a great way to explore the low-key charms of the local area. Set out from Ry westbound on Rte 445 to **Gammel Rye** (5km away). Take a breather at an old *kro* or at the 1872 Dutch-style windmill (now a museum of wooden shoe making).

From Gammel Rye it's another 4km to reach **Øm Kloster Museum** (☎ 86 89 81 94; Munkevej 8, Emborg; adult/child 40kr/free; ☹ 10am-4pm or 5pm Tue-Sun). Øm is the ruins of a medieval monastery, where glass-topped tombs reveal the 750-year-old bones of Bishop Elafsen of Århus and many of his abbots.

Continue east from Øm and after 3km you'll reach pretty-as-a-picture **Boes**, a tiny hamlet with picturesque thatch-roofed houses and vivid flower gardens. In peak summer and on weekends the gorgeous **Boes Kaffestue** (☎ 86 57 71 22; Emborgvej 58) is open for meals and drinks from lunchtime.

From Boes it's about 4km back to Ry, making your round-trip 16km. But if you have the stamina to add another 12km, it's worth exploring further, to the eastern shores of **Mossø** (Jutland's largest lake) and the lovely lakeside summerhouses beyond Alken (follow the signs for Fuldbro Mølle). Head back to Alken when it's time to return to Ry and cycle via Svejstrup, rather than take the busier main road.

**CANOING**

If you want to explore the surrounding lakes and rivers, **Ry Kanofart** (☎ 86 89 11 67; www.kanoferie.dk in Danish; Kyhnsvej 20) has canoes for hire, costing 75/300kr per hour/day. Similarly to the operators in Silkeborg (p276), the staff here can help you plan lengthy river trips on the Gudenå.

**Sleeping & Eating**

**Birkhede Camping** (☎ 86 89 13 55; www.birkhede.dk; Lyngvej 14; per adult/child/site 71/44/45kr, motel d 500kr; ☹ Apr-mid-Sep; 📶) You really need your own transport to get to this park (3.5km by road from Ry township) – but once here you may not want to leave. There's a swimming pool and waterslide, playground and lake, plus canoe and bike rental, all in a green and woody setting.

**Ry Park Hotel** (☎ 86 89 19 11; ryparkhotel@mail.dk; Kyhnsvej 2; s/d from 590/790kr; 📶 📺 🍷) The rooms are pretty formulaic and bland at this, Ry's only hotel, but it's a large, pleasant-enough place, popular for conferences and weddings.

Angle for a room with lake views. The hotel has been awarded a Green Key (p21).

**Le Saison** (☎ 86 89 19 11; Kyhnsvej 2; lunch 35-82kr, dinner mains 148-182kr; ☹ lunch & dinner) Easily Ry's most appealing dining option, this shiny new outfit is attached to Ry Park Hotel. At lunchtime opt for the huge sandwiches (try the Mexican 'hot stuff'); the dinner menu takes itself more seriously.

There are a few takeaway options and Italian restaurants on Skanderborgvej, or pack up a picnic lunch for your hike or ride. **Babettes Brød** (Klostervej 12; ☹ from 6am), a bakery opposite the train station, is a good place to start.

**Getting There & Away**

Ry is on Rte 445, 20km southeast of Silkeborg and 35km west of Århus. Hourly trains connect Ry with Silkeborg (31kr, 16 minutes) and Århus (49kr, 30 minutes). Bus 311 runs to both Silkeborg and Himmelbjerget on weekdays (see right).

**HIMMELBJERGET**

There's something quite endearing about a country that will name one of its highest points Himmelbjerget (meaning 'sky mountain'), especially when that peak only hits 147m. It's a mere hillock to non-Danes, but it does afford charming vistas of the surrounding forests and lakes. But, while the scenery is indeed sweet, the money-grabbing and tacky souvenir stalls do detract a little from the commune with nature.

First up, it costs 10kr to park your vehicle. Once you've completed the five-minute pilgrimage from the car park to the mountain top, you could climb the 25m tower (another 7.50kr) for a fine 360-degree view of the lakes and countryside, but the view from outside the tower seems just as good (the tower is open from Easter to October). There are marked hiking trails in the woodland area, including one that leads 1km down to the lake (where boats from Ry and Silkeborg dock, see right).

There's a handful of nondescript kiosks and cafés surrounding the car park. There's also **Hotel Himmelbjerget** (☎ 86 89 80 45; www.hotel-himmelbjerget.dk in Danish; s/d/f without bathroom 475/550/675kr; ☹ Easter-Oct), a rustic lodge with something of a Swiss-chalet feel (hey, we are in the Danish mountains). Rooms are basic but comfy and boast lovely panoramas of the surrounding woods. It's not a bad option

either to enjoy the area once the daytime crowds have left.

**Getting There & Away**

Bus 311 runs from Silkeborg via Ry train station to Himmelbjerget seven times per day (weekdays only); the bus stops 750m before the main car park. Himmelbjerget is a 10-minute drive west of Ry on Rte 445. It can also be reached by a pleasant 7km hike from Ry, or by a scenic boat ride from either Ry or Silkeborg. For details on boats from Silkeborg, see p276. **Ry Turistbåde** (☎ 86 82 88 21; return adult/child 80/50kr) operates boats to Himmelbjerget daily from June to August (and at weekends in May and early to mid-September), leaving Ry at 10am, noon and 2pm, and sailing from Himmelbjerget one hour later.

**THE INTERIOR**

The landscape of Jutland's interior ranges from hilly woodland up the middle to rolling fields in the east. Industry is prominent throughout the area, and indeed there are plenty of medium-sized towns that are pleasant enough places to while away a day, if you find yourself in the neighbourhood, but are not particularly worth going out of your way for (no offence to the towns themselves, mind, but we're talking about the likes of Fredericia, Vejle, Herning and Holstebro).

Our advice is pretty straightforward – with limited holiday time, head to the towns and regions with the most visitor appeal, be it in the form of Viking relics, historic churches or theme parks.

**JELLING**

pop 5700

A sleepy town with a big history, Jelling is revered as the birthplace of Christianity in Denmark, the monarchy and all that is truly Danish. The town served as the royal seat of King Gorm during the Vikings' most dominant era; Gorm the Old was the first in a millennium-long chain of Danish monarchs that continues unbroken to this day. The site of Gorm's ancient castle remains a mystery, but other vestiges of his reign can still be found at Jelling Kirke. People come to pay homage at the church, inspect the two nearby rune stones and climb the burial mounds. The area became a Unesco World Heritage site in 1994.

Jelling Kirke is in the centre of town, just a two-minute walk due north from the train station along Stationsvej. The **tourist office** (☎ 75 87 23 50; www.visitjelling.dk; Gormsgade 23) is part of the Kongernes Jelling museum, directly opposite the church, and has the same convoluted opening hours (see right).

### Sights

**Jelling Kirke** (☎ 75 87 11 17; www.jellingkirke.dk in Danish; cnr Gormsgade & Vejlevej; 🏛️ church 8am–5pm Mon–Fri, 8am–4pm Sat, grounds open year-round), erected in about 1100, is one of Denmark's most significant historical sites. Inside this small whitewashed church you'll find some vividly restored 12th-century **frescoes** that are among the oldest in Denmark. The main attractions, however, are the two well-preserved **runes stones** just outside the church door.

The smaller stone was erected in the early 10th century by Gorm the Old in honour of his wife. The larger one, raised by Gorm's son, Harald Bluetooth, is adorned with the oldest representation of Christ found in Scandinavia. It reads:

Harald king bade this be ordained for Gorm his father and Thyra his mother, the Harald who won for himself all Denmark and Norway and made the Danes Christians.

Harald Bluetooth did, in fact, succeed in routing the Swedes from Denmark and began the peaceful conversion of the Danish people from the pagan religion celebrated by his father to Christianity. The larger stone, commonly dubbed 'Denmark's baptismal certificate', not only represents the advent of Christianity but also bids a royal farewell to the ancient gods of prehistoric Denmark. One side of the stone, which depicts a snake coiled around a mythological creature, is thought to symbolise this change of faith.

Two huge **burial mounds** flank Jelling Kirke. The barrow to the north was long believed to contain the bones of Gorm and his queen, Thyra, but when it was excavated in 1820 no human remains were found. In 1861 Frederik VII oversaw the excavation of the southern mound but, again, only a few objects were found with no mortal remains among them.

In the 1970s a team of archaeologists dug beneath Jelling Kirke itself and hit pay dirt. They found the remains of three earlier

wooden churches; the oldest is thought to have been erected by Harald Bluetooth. A burial chamber was also unearthed at this time and human bones and gold jewellery were discovered. The jewellery was consistent with pieces that had been found earlier in the northern burial mound.

Archaeologists now believe that the skeletal remains found beneath the church are those of Gorm, who had originally been buried in the northern mound but was later re-interred by his son. Presumably Harald Bluetooth, out of respect, moved his parents' remains from pagan soil to a Christian place of honour within the church. The bones of Queen Thyra have yet to be found.

**Kongernes Jelling** (Royal Jelling; ☎ 75 87 23 50; www.kongernesjelling.dk; Gormsgade 23; admission free; 🕒 1–4pm Tue–Fri Dec–Jan, 1–4pm Tue–Sun Feb–Apr & Oct–Nov, 10am–4pm Tue–Sun May–mid-Jun & Sep, 10am–5pm daily mid-Jun–Aug; 🏛️), opposite the church, is an enthralling modern museum providing further insight into the town's magnificent monuments and its importance in Danish royal history. An enlarged coloured version of the larger rune stone helps visitors understand the meaning behind it, while a family tree shows the direct line of descent from Gorm the Old to present-day Queen Margrethe II.

It's a decent leap from Christianity to lions (or is it?), but if you're in the area and in need of a fun family distraction, **Givskud Zoo & Lion Park** (☎ 75 73 02 22; www.givskudzoo.dk; Løveparkvej 3, Givskud; adult/child 130/70kr; 🕒 from 10am late Apr–late Oct; 🏛️), 8km northwest of Jelling, can certainly provide. It's an entertaining safari park with

### BLUETOOTH

Here's some dinner-party conversation for you... Today the term 'Bluetooth' is used to describe the wireless transportation of electronic data between computers, mobile phones etc. It is in fact named after 10th-century Harald Bluetooth, who was known for his unification of previously warring tribes from Denmark and Norway (including the then-Danish territory of Skåne in Sweden, which is where Bluetooth technology was developed by Swedish company Ericsson). Bluetooth was likewise intended to unify different technologies. The Bluetooth logo merges Nordic rune symbols. So now you know...

plenty of African animals, and you explore from the comfort of your own car, or in the park-run safari buses (25kr). Walking trails will take you past elephant and gorilla enclosures; for littlies there's also a petting zoo. Closing times vary (from 5pm to 8pm). Bus 211 runs regularly to the zoo from Vejle, via Jelling.

### Sleeping & Eating

You're not exactly spoiled for choice in either the sleeping or eating department in Jelling. Options are better in the larger town of Vejle, 10km southeast – or, better yet, in Billund (about 20km west).

**Jelling Camping** (☎ 75 87 16 53; www.jellingcamping.dk; Mølvangvej 55; per adult/child/site 62/35/25kr; 🕒 Apr–Sep; 🏠) In the holiday period you'll be surrounded by happy families taking advantage of this park's proximity to Givskud Zoo and Legoland; the park caters to them beautifully with a summertime pool, café, playgrounds and bike rental. You can hire well-priced on-site tents, caravans and cabins, too. It's 1km west of Jelling Kirke.

**Jelling Kro** (☎ 75 87 10 06; www.jellingkro.dk in Danish; Gormsgade 16; s/d/tr without bathroom 445/595/670kr) In a 1780 yellow building bristling with character is Jelling's only hotel. The rooms are simple, inviting and comfy, while downstairs the restaurant serves up traditional meals including smørrebrød or herring for lunch (meals 32kr to 94kr) and fish of the day or steak for dinner (mains 88kr to 182kr).

Otherwise, **Candy Corner** (Gormsgade 13) opposite the church offers sandwiches and takeaway food, or just beyond is the well-stocked supermarket **Super Brugsen** (Mølvangvej 2), ideal for picnic supplies.

### Getting There & Away

Jelling is 10km northwest of Vejle on Rte 442. From Vejle trains run at least hourly on weekdays, slightly less frequently at weekends (30kr, 15 minutes). Bus 211 covers the same ground for the same price.

### BILLUND & LEGOLAND

Legoland is so geared to families you might feel a little, well, underdressed if you visit without your own set of excited ankle biters; but don't let that stop you from embracing your inner child and allocating the park some generous time in your itinerary. Mind-blowing Lego models and the happy-family magic

associated with great theme parks has transformed Legoland into Denmark's most visited tourist attraction outside of Copenhagen. It's a great day outing (you'll need at least a day), and sits smack-bang in the middle of Jutland, 1km north of the town of Billund.

### Information

There's no official tourist office, but there's good info online at www.visitbillund.dk. At the front gate of Legoland is **Legoland Travel** (☎ 96 23 47 95; www.legoland-travel.dk; 🕒 9am–6pm Mon–Fri, 10am–4pm Sat & Sun Jul–mid-Aug, 9am–5pm Mon–Fri mid-Aug–Jun), an agency that can organise accommodation. Inside Legoland you'll find a bank, ATMs, lockers, baby room, pushchair rental and almost anything else you might need.

It's not a bad idea to buy your tickets online prior to your visit and avoid the queues. For visitors to Legoland with their own wheels, don't be suckered into paying the high price (45kr per day) at the car parks directly opposite the park's entrance. If you're prepared to walk a little there is plenty more (free) parking.

Also worth knowing – and not well publicised – is that the park opens its gates about a half-hour before the rides close, and no ticket is necessary to enter. Rides normally close one or two hours before the park itself (check the website), so with a bit of luck you could end up with 2½ hours to browse and check out Miniland for free.

### Sights & Activities

If you're 'of a certain age', the paramount attraction of **Legoland** (☎ 75 33 13 33; www.legoland.dk; adult/child 229/199kr, under 3 free; 🕒 from 10am Apr–Oct, closed Nov–Mar; 🏛️) is **Miniland** – the 20 million plastic Lego blocks snapped together to create miniature cities and replicate global icons. You can't help but marvel at the brilliant Lilliputian models of the Kennedy Space Centre, Amsterdam, Bergen or a Scottish castle, and you'll no doubt vow to head home and drag your Lego out of storage to see what masterpiece you can create (surely it's not that hard?). In Miniland you can also do some advance sightseeing of Danish landmarks including Copenhagen's Nyhavn, Ribe, Skagen or the royal palace of Amalienborg. Or take a trip in miniboats past landmarks such as the Statue of Liberty, the Acropolis, and an Egyptian temple. The reconstructions are on a scale of 1:20 to 1:40 and

the attention to detail is incredible. The park's largest piece, a model of Mt Rushmore with the four American presidents, is built with a staggering 1.5 million Lego bricks.

Be sure to pick up a park map to assist with further exploration. The park is divided into themed areas, including **Legoredo Town**, a Wild West area; **Knights' Kingdom**, where a grand old castle awaits; **Pirate Land**, which hosts ships and sword-play; and **Duplo Land**, with plenty of safe, simple rides and activities for the little 'uns.

Legoland's smorgasbord of rides and activities is mostly geared to pre-teens and wholesome family fun. For wilder rides suited to older kids, Legoland compares unfavourably to somewhere such as Copenhagen's Tivoli. Still, adrenaline-junkies should seek out **X-treme Racers**, a roller coaster that cranks up to a speed of 60km/h, then head to the nearby **Power Builder** to defy gravity on a Terminator-like robotic arm. For some downtime stop by the **Imagination Zone**, with its 4-D cinema and new feature **Atlantis**, an aquarium built around Lego models of divers and submersibles. For the chilled park-goer there are rides aplenty to keep the blood pressure down, from merry-

go-rounds to a tranquil train ride. Once the entrance fee is paid, all rides are free – the only exception is the **Statoil Driving School** (30kr), which lets kids aged seven to 13 obtain their driving licences and puts them out onto the 'open road' (that is, the open Lego road).

## Sleeping

Billund hotels are generally quite pricey, but they're all busy catering to a market focused generally on family fun (colourful décor, playrooms, pools, peak-summer activities etc). Advance bookings are highly recommended.

**Billund FDM Camping** (☎ 75 33 15 21; www.billundcamping.dk; Ellehammer Allé 2; per adult/child/site 76/42/50kr; 🏠) It's all happy families at this busy year-round park, just 500m from Legoland itself and loaded to the gills with kid-friendly facilities – playgrounds, a petting zoo, mini-golf and even summertime pony-rides. The ground is well maintained, including the small but well-equipped chalets (sleeping five, from 450kr to 795kr); there's a restaurant on site.

**Zzzleep Hotel** (☎ 75 33 19 00; www.zleep.dk; Passenger Terminalen; r 399-899kr) If you can do without the

frills, bright and brand-new Zzzleep (part of an expanding chain) is right by the airport terminal and offers simple, comfy rooms, all spotless and with bathroom and cable TV. Some rooms sleep four, while downstairs is a decent lounge and kids' playroom. Advance online bookings bring the best rates; breakfast costs an additional 50kr per person. There's also bike rental here – handy for covering the 2km to Legoland.

**our pick Legoland Village** (☎ 75 33 27 77; www.legoland-village.dk; Ellehammer Allé; s/d/f low season 550/650/895kr, high season 785/885/1045kr; 🏠 🚗) Once a regular Danhostel, now tarted up and billed as a 'five-star family hostel' – and it is. It's beside the camping ground and offers bright, large rooms sleeping up to five, all with bathroom, wi-fi, TV, and Lego for the kids to play with. You'll need to bring your own linen, or pay extra to hire it. Breakfast is included in the price, and there are guest kitchen facilities. Look for smile-inducing Lego-themed details everywhere, from the key chains to the hooks behind the doors. Decent value.

**Hotel Propellen** (☎ 75 33 81 33; www.propellen.dk; Nordmarksvej 3; s/d 1050/1198kr; 🏠 🚗) Compared to other places in town, Propellen has a grown-up feel, but still caters to families with its indoor pool, playground and playground. Adults will enjoy the sauna, Jacuzzis and restaurant. The comfy, high-quality rooms come in mellow yellow-and-blue tones, with decent facilities including kettle and minibar.

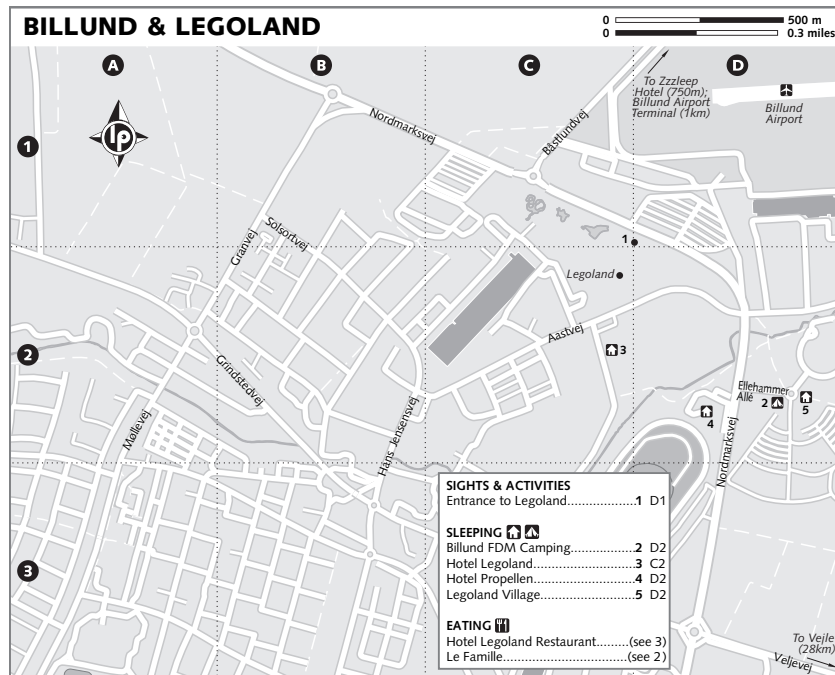
**Hotel Legoland** (☎ 75 33 12 44; www.hotellegoland.dk; Aastvej 10; s/d/f from 1445/1905/2635kr; 🏠 🚗) Lego figures greet you at the door and a copy of a Lego *Mona Lisa* hangs in the reception area. There's amazing kid-friendly detail here, and plenty of space for grown-ups as well as playrooms. Double rooms are fairly standard, though of high quality. Where this place shines is in the family rooms, and the utterly fabulous knight, princess and pirate themed rooms. Rates include two days' park admission; prices drop for a second night at the hotel.

## Eating

There are offerings within the park, and eateries attached to the hotels, or you can head into the township of Billund itself, which has a big supermarket, plenty of pizzerias and a few other options.

Within the park, there are loads of picnic spots, plus restaurants and outlets selling the usual takeaway fare. The names given to these simple eateries – Sandwich Pit, Donut Bakery, Chicken Delight, Pizza Slices – should cause you no confusion over what they serve. And hey, we even saw a stall selling fresh fruit (admittedly there were few customers!).

For sit-down fare you can head to the Family Buffet (adult/child 128/78kr) or Pizza & Pasta house, or try the spare ribs at the Saloon. From the park you can also access the **Legoland Hotel Restaurant** (☎ 75 33 12 44;



## PLASTIC FANTASTIC

Ever thought that you're only one good idea away from a million big ones? Well, Ole Kirk Christiansen probably didn't, but that's all it took. A carpenter by trade, when business was slow during a Depression-era slump in 1934 he turned his tools to making wooden toys in Billund. Christiansen came up with the business name Lego, a contraction of *leg godt*, meaning 'play well' in Danish (in a beautiful piece of symmetry, it is later realised that *lego* can mean 'I put together' in Latin). What followed was a heart-warming story showing that 'from little things big things grow'. By the late 1940s Lego became the first Danish company to acquire a plastics-injection moulding machine for toy production and began making interlocking plastic blocks called 'binding bricks' – the forerunner of today's Lego blocks.

Every rags to riches story has its tragedy, however, and this one is no exception. In 1960 the wooden-toy warehouse went up in flames. Lego decided to focus production on its plastic toys instead, an idea that proved to be the cornerstone of the company's success. Lego blocks soon became the most popular children's toy in Europe – in 2000 *Fortune Magazine* named the Lego brick 'toy of the century'.

If you believe the official literature, on average every person on the planet has 62 Lego bricks – and seven Lego boxes are sold every second. Even in the age of technology, Lego goes hand in hand with growing up: one foot in front of the other, one block on top of the other. The company (but not the theme park) is still owned by Ole Kirk's descendants.

Aastvej 10; mains 140-225kr), a large, light-filled place with a comprehensive kids menu. The buffet lunch (adult/child 128/68kr) and dinner (230/84kr) represents pretty decent value, and kids (adults, too) will love the potatoes shaped like Lego bricks! An à la carte menu is also offered.

**La Famille Café & Bistro** (☎ 75 33 27 77; Ellehammer Allé 2; buffet adult/child 142/68kr) at the camping ground is a more-economical cafeteria-style place with a good-value evening buffet.

## Getting There & Away

### AIR

**Billund airport** (BLL; ☎ 76 50 50 50; www.billundairport.dk) sits almost right outside Legoland's gate, serving not only Legoland but most of Jutland. Because of its central location, it has grown into Denmark's second-busiest airport.

There's a comprehensive schedule of direct flights from Billund to various Scandinavian and northern European cities (Copenhagen, Stockholm, Helsinki, Oslo, Bergen, Stavanger, Frankfurt, Amsterdam and Berlin). Scandi low-cost airline **Sterling** (www.sterling.dk) has a base at Billund and offers flights to Danish holiday destinations such as Majorca and Malaga, as well as to London (Gatwick), Rome and Paris. **Ryanair** (www.ryanair.com) connects Billund with Alicante, Barcelona, Dublin, London (Stansted), Madrid, Milan, Pisa and Valencia.

### BUS

There's no train service to Billund. If you're travelling by train, the most common route is to get off at Vejle and catch a bus from there. Buses 244 and 907X (58kr, 30 minutes to airport, 40 minutes to Legoland) runs hourly from Vejle to Billund.

Billund is Jutland's biggest airport, so it makes sense that there is a regular bus connecting it to Jutland's biggest city. Buses run up to 10 times daily between Billund and Århus (one way adult/child 180/90kr, 1½ hours). Other buses run to the airport from major Jutland towns including Esbjerg, Ribe and Kolding.

### CAR

Billund is on Rte 28, 59km northeast of Esbjerg and 28km west of Vejle.

For new arrivals into Billund airport, the big international car-rental agencies have offices here:

**Avis** (☎ 70 24 77 70)

**Budget** (☎ 75 35 39 00)

**Europcar** (☎ 89 33 11 33)

**Hertz** (☎ 75 33 82 50)

**Sixt** (☎ 75 33 14 02)

## RANDERS

pop 55,900

Randers' appeal lies partly in its impressive old town and partly in its most flaunted attraction – a triple-domed zoo that mesmerises families and wildlife-enthusiasts alike. Industrial pursuits are still the heartbeat of the city (Denmark's sixth largest) but there's also history and culture if you know where to look. Randers doesn't feature strongly on the travellers' radar, but if you have the time and an interest in diverse subject matter (from Elvis to tropical animals), it's worth a visit.

## Orientation

The train station is west of the city centre. It's a 10-minute walk from there to the tourist office (go east on Jernbanegade and Tørvebyruggen) or a 10-minute walk via Vestergade and Kirkegade to Rådhusstorvet, the central square.

## Information

**Net Café Pactown** (☎ 86 40 77 22; Trangstræde 7; per 1hr 25kr; ☎ noon-10pm Sun-Thu, noon-midnight Fri & Sat) Speedy internet access.

**Nordea** (Kirkegade 3) Bank with ATM.

**Post office** (Nørregade 1)

**Tourist office** (☎ 86 42 44 77; www.visitranders.com; Tørvebyruggen 12; ☎ 9am-5.30pm Mon-Fri, 10am-1pm Sat mid-Jun–mid-Aug, 9.30am-4pm Mon-Fri, 10am-1pm mid-Aug–mid-Jun; closed Sat Nov-Jan) Close to Randers Regnskov and has plenty of good local information.

## Sights & Activities

The city's most visited attraction is **Randers Regnskov** (☎ 87 10 99 99; www.randers-regnskov.dk; Tørvebyruggen 11; adult/child 130/70kr; ☎ 10am-5pm or 6pm Jul-Aug, 10am-4pm Mon-Fri, 10am-5pm Sat & Sun Sep-Jun; ☎), a dome-enclosed tropical zoo. Trails within the sultry domes pass through enclosures housing crocodiles, monkeys, pythons, iguanas, orchids, hibiscus and other rainforest flora and fauna. The South American dome is a standout, as waterfalls and an abundance of wildlife engulf you. It is astounding how well done this ecosphere is, considering it's on the wrong side of the equator.

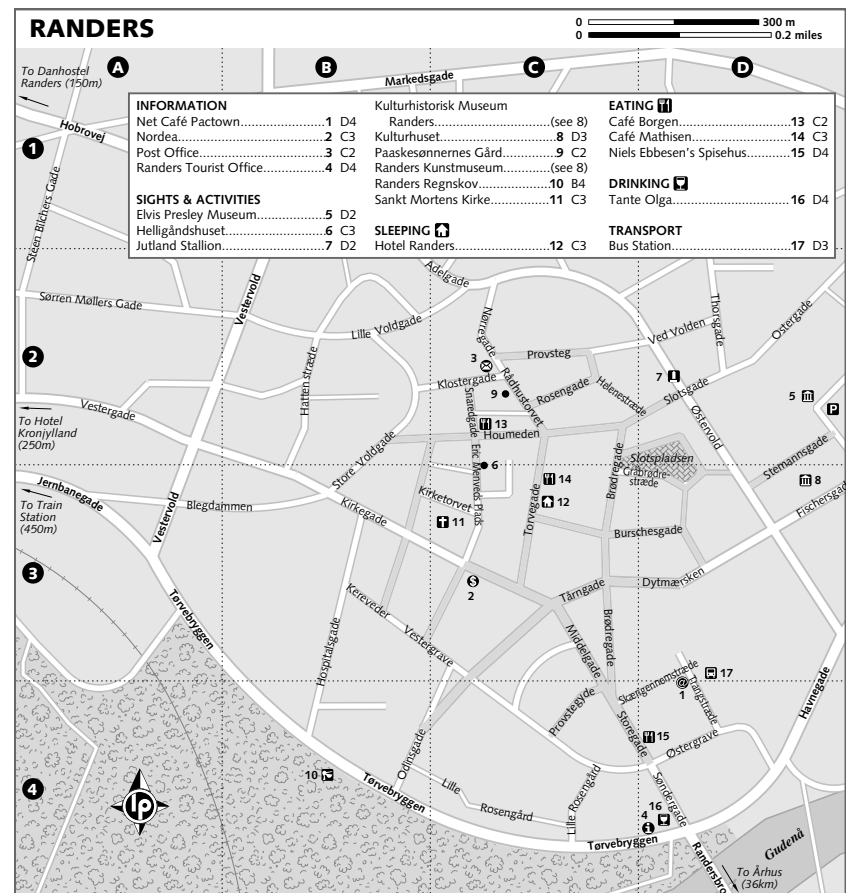
By far the most interesting part of Randers is its central area, a real hotchpotch of

architecture with some antique gems alongside more-modern eyesores. Hunt down the pearls, and the stories behind them, with the *Star Route* brochure, free from the tourist office. It outlines a self-guided tour around town, highlighting the likes of the late-15th-century **Paaskeønnernes Gård** (Rådhusstorvet 7); **Helligåndshuset** (Eric Menveds Plads), once part of a medieval monastery; and the imposing red medieval **Sankt Mortens Kirke** (Kirketorvet).

Over on Stemannsgade – note the imposing bronze **Jutland Stallion** statue en route – is the modern **Kulturhuset** (Stemannsgade 2), housing the town's library, alongside **Randers Kunstmuseum** (☎ 86 42 29 22; admission free; ☎ 11am-5pm Tue-Sun; ☎) and **Kulturhistorisk Museum Randers** (☎ 86 42 86 55; admission free; ☎ 11am-5pm Tue-Sun; ☎). The art mu-

seum has a good collection of Danish works from 1800 to the present – the *Cosmic Room* glass installation by Faroese artist Tróndur Paturson is well worth checking out.

But if that's all too highbrow, around the corner from Kulturhuset is the **Elvis Presley Museum** (☎ 86 42 96 96; www.elvisunlimited.com; Stemannsgade 9C; adult/child 30kr/free; ☎ 10am-5.30pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat), thankyouverymuch. True, you don't expect to find a shrine to the King in regional Denmark, but we'd go out of our way to visit a good Elvis museum, and this one's a cracker! It's a great collection of mementos assembled by a mad-keen local. Check out the rare photo of a star-struck crown princess (now queen) Margrethe II meeting Elvis in Hollywood in 1960.





## Sleeping

There's not a great deal of accommodation in town; many families visit Randers Regnskov from nearby holiday hot spots such as Djursland. The tourist office can arrange accommodation in private homes for about 300kr for a double.

**Danhostel Randers** (☎ 86 42 50 44; www.danhostelranders.dk; Gethersvej 1; dm 160kr, s 290-520kr, d 350-520kr; ☑ ☎) A cheerful, modern spot on the edge of a park, 10 minutes' walk west of the town centre. There are rooms with and without bathroom, while good family facilities include pool table and table tennis. There's all the things you'd need from a hostel, including kitchen, laundry, and even wireless internet.

**Hotel Kronjylland** (☎ 86 41 43 33; www.hotelkronjylland.dk; Vestergade 53; r 665-1195kr; ☑ ☎) Now part of the Choice Hotels chain, this smart hotel opposite the train station (a 10-minute walk west of town) caters to both business folk and holidaymakers. The crisp décor and efficient service are impressive; rates vary according to room standard and demand, with good-value rates on Friday and Saturday.

**our pick Hotel Randers** (☎ 86 42 34 22; www.hotel-randers.dk; Torvegade 11; s/d Mon-Fri 825/1105kr, summer & weekends 645/785kr) This is an old-world, Art Deco treasure. It was built in 1856, refurbished in the 1920s and has retained its unique style thanks to the owner, one 80-something Fru Mathisen who lives at the hotel Howard Hughes-style (and may occasionally be seen greeting and farewelling guests). The décor is rich and individualised – if you can afford to upgrade to an 'antique room' you can live the highlife for a night.

## Eating & Drinking

**Café Borgen** (☎ 86 43 47 00; Houmeden 10; snacks & meals 40-75kr; ☎ brunch, lunch & dinner) Offers a little slice of Euro-life, with Parisian-style outdoor seating and a low-lit interior. Home to rich coffee and lazy lunches on a sunny day, it then morphs into an inviting spot for late-night drinks.

**Café Mathisen** (☎ 87 11 30 68; Torvegade 11; lunch 65-148kr, dinner mains 95-178kr; ☎ lunch & dinner Mon-Sat) Part of the delightful Hotel Randers and newly opened, the Mathisen has stylish black-and-white décor and fabulous light fittings that bring to mind the Art Deco era. Lunch offerings are light and simple, and we like a place that isn't too fancy to put a burger next to braised quail on the dinner menu.

**Niels Ebbesen Spisehus** (☎ 86 43 32 26; Storegade 13; lunch 69-89kr, dinner mains 119-209kr; ☎ lunch & dinner) You can't miss this photogenic restaurant in the heart of town – red, three-storey and half-timbered, built in 1643. As befits its location in such a history-filled building, the restaurant's menu is Danish food at its most traditional – lunch on pronounceable smørrebrød, or go for *peberhøf* (pepper steak) or *svinemørbrød* (pork tenderloins).

**Tante Olga** (☎ 86 41 19 70; Søndergade 6; ☎ Thu-Sat night) This club-bar is an institution in town – live music, stand-up comedy, beer- and/or whisky-tasting, jazz nights and plenty of local colour. Head along to see what's happening.

## Getting There & Around

Randers is 76km south of Aalborg and 36km north of Århus on the E45, and 57km west of Grenaa and 41km east of Viborg on Rte 16. All trains between Århus (55kr, 35 minutes) and Aalborg (88kr, 50 minutes) stop here, at the station on Jernbanegade, just west of the city centre.

## HOBRO

pop 11,000

Hobro's biggest asset is Fyrkat, a recently discovered 10th-century Viking ring fortress. The town itself is pleasant enough – lying at the mouth of the Mariager Fjord – but there's little historical and visual enchantment due to a history of fires. Nowadays Hobro primarily acts as a service town to the surrounding farms.

The train station lies on the western edge of the town. To reach the centre walk 1km east along Jernbanegade, using the church tower as your central reference. The **tourist office** (☎ 96 57 66 13; www.visithobro.dk; Store Torv, Adelgade 30; ☎ 10am-5pm Mon-Fri, 10am-1pm Sat late Jun–mid-Aug, 10am-4pm Mon-Fri, 10am-1pm Sat mid-Aug–late Jun) is in the public library, and has information on Fyrkat and the town. The pedestrian street, Adelgade, is home to banks, supermarkets and assorted services.

## Sights

### FYRKAT

Although it's smaller than the better-known Trelleborg in Southern Zealand (p147), the 1000-year-old **Fyrkat fortress** (☎ 98 51 19 27; Fyrkatvej; adult/child incl entry to Vikingecenter Fyrkat 60kr/free; ☎ 10am-5pm Jun-Aug, 10am-4pm Apr-May & Sep-Oct) south of Hobro so closely resembles Trelleborg

that both are presumed to have been built by the Viking king mastermind Harald Bluetooth around 980.

When archaeologists discovered the fortress in 1950 they realised its importance and excavated the area over the following decade. Fyrkat was found to be a military stronghold used to monitor 'traffic' movement throughout Jutland. Evidence indicates that 800 Vikings and their families lived within the fort. The site is thought to have been abandoned when it was destroyed by fire just after its completion; many objects uncovered were singed, confirming that fire was the probable culprit.

Today, as you walk out onto the grass-covered circular ramparts, you can almost envisage the Viking warriors roaming the fortress. Absorb the fort's impressive symmetrical design and marvel at the four cuts in its earthen walls, formerly imposing gates that faced the four points of the compass. Within the rampart walls the fortress was divided into four quadrants, each with a central courtyard surrounded by four symmetrical buildings, which housed the inhabitants of Fyrkat. Stone foundation blocks show the outline of these elongated buildings. Sheep grazing in the fields add a timeless backdrop to it all.

Although no structures remain standing in the ramparts, just outside is a replica Viking house built of oak timbers utilising a stave-style construction technique.

At the entrance to Fyrkat there are some period farm buildings, including a 200-year-old working water mill and a half-timbered house – an unlikely setting for an authentic Italian restaurant.

Fyrkat is 3km southwest of Hobro's town centre via Fyrkatvej; a taxi ride from the train station costs about 100kr. If the weather is good, stop at the Vikingecenter Fyrkat and walk the last kilometre to the fortress site. There is no bus service.

### VIKINGECENTER FYRKAT

Complementing Fyrkat fortress is a Viking-style farmstead 1km north along Fyrkatvej. Archaeologists believe such farms existed around the fortress walls, supplying encamped Vikings with fresh produce.

The complex took more than a decade to erect, using only materials and hand tools authentic to the period. The 33m long house is particularly impressive. It has a frame made of

oak hewn by hand using an adze, a roof constructed of reeds fastened by willow shoots, a ridge of local peat and walls made from a mixture of cow dung, blue clay and straw.

Costumed interpreters provide demonstrations of silverwork, archery and other Viking activities. Many of these folk are volunteers who come to Fyrkat every year for a week or so to live as the Vikings did: sleeping in the long house, eating grains and smoked fish that they prepare for themselves, and mastering Viking-era crafts. They'll be happy to answer any questions you might have and most of them also speak English. The Viking-style farm is normally bustling with school trips and enthusiastic volunteers.

The farmstead has the same opening hours as the Fyrkat fortress site. Admission is included in the cost of entry to the fortress.

### HOBRO MUSEUM

Round out your trip by checking out some excavated items of interest from Fyrkat and a detailed history of Hobro at the **Hobro Museum** (☎ 98 51 05 55; www.sydhimmerlandsmuseum.dk; Vestergade 23; adult/child 30kr/free; ☎ 11am-4pm May-Sep), in an 1821 merchant's house.

## Festivals & Events

Fyrkat annually hosts a play put on by a local amateur theatre troupe, **Fyrkatspillet** (www.fyrkatspillet.dk in Danish), over a two-week period in late May/early June. Although performed in Danish, the general theme is easy to follow – expect to see beautiful damsels, sword-wielding Viking warriors, conflicts and resolutions, and lots of light-hearted laughter. A new play is performed each year but a constant theme involving Viking kings is assured. If you're in the area during this period, enquire after tickets with the Hobro tourist office or check the troupe's website.

## Sleeping & Eating

The tourist office has a list of rooms in private hotels that cost around 300kr per double.

**Danhostel Hobro** (☎ 98 52 18 47; www.danhostelhobro.dk; Amerikavej 24; dm/s/d 150/350/385kr; ☑) A large modern hostel often bustling with school groups (but don't let that put you off). All rooms have bathrooms and the hostel is clean and spacious. It's about 1.5km east of town (reached by local bus 1), and the bikes available for rent will come in handy for getting to Fyrkat if you don't have your own wheels.

**Hotel Amerika** (☎ 98 45 42 00; www.hotelamerika.dk; Amerikavej 48; s/d 756/1018kr; 🍴 📺) This hotel feels like a country retreat, thanks to its forest location and spacious grounds (and the fjord is just a few hundred metres away). The rooms are quite luxurious, classically furnished and equipped with all the necessities. The restaurant is equally refined (the outdoor terrace is lovely) and focuses on fresh ingredients. It's 2.5km east of town.

**Fyrkat Mølle – Il Molino** (☎ 98 52 10 65; Fyrkatvej; pizza & pasta 50-80kr; 🍴 lunch & dinner; 📺) Miles from town and near a 1000-year-old Viking relic is *not* where you'd expect to find an authentic Italian restaurant, but this is indeed what you'll find by the Fyrkat fortress. An Italian-German husband and wife team offer a huge menu of well-priced favourites, from *calamari fritti* to tiramisu.

**Ost og Paté** (☎ 98 52 49 01; Østergade 10) One of our favourite impromptu meals in all of Jutland was a takeaway tub of creamy potato salad and two home-baked *frikadeller* from this old-style deli, for the princely sum of 26kr. Bargain!

### Getting There & Away

Route 180 runs straight through Hobro, connecting it with Randers 27km to the southeast, and to Aalborg 49km to the north. The speedier E45 runs along the outskirts of Hobro, connecting with the same cities.

Hobro is on the main Frederikshavn – Århus railway line. Trains run about twice hourly to Randers (34kr, 15 minutes) and Aalborg (72kr, 40 minutes).

### REBILD BAKKER & ROLD SKOV

The heart-warming story of **Rebild Bakker**, Denmark's only national park (for now, as there are plans for new national parks) dates back to 1912, when a group of Danish-Americans presented 200 hectares of (previously privately owned) forest to the Danish government on the proviso that it would remain in a natural state, be open to all visitors and be accessible to Danish-Americans for the celebration of US holidays.

This act of goodwill inspired the Danish forest service to acquire adjacent woodland and collectively the 77-sq-km area is now known as **Rold Skov** (the Rold Forest, Denmark's largest). The area has good walks (and mountain-biking trails) that take you through rolling heather-covered hills, while

its woods contain European aspen, beech and oak trees.

The superhelpful **tourist office** (☎ 99 88 90 00; KulturStationen, Sverrigårdsvej 4; www.visitrebild.dk; 🕒 9am-4pm Mon-Fri, 9am-noon Sat) is opposite the train station at Skørping, 3km east of Rebild Bakker. It has loads of info and maps of the area and makes a good first port of call.

### Sights & Activities

The **Lincoln Log Cabin** (☎ 98 39 14 40; adult/child 20kr/free; 🕒 noon-4.30pm), just west of the car park at the start of the trails, contains bits of Americana as seen through Danish eyes, plus displays on Danish emigration to the USA. Modelled on the log cabin that US president Abraham Lincoln grew up in, the cabin is itself a replica, the original having been destroyed by fire in 1993.

At the far end of the car park is **Spillemandsmuseet** (Fiddlers' Museum; ☎ 98 39 16 04; adult/child 25kr/free; 🕒 daily May-Sep, Sun Oct-Apr), a simple regional museum featuring a varied collection of exhibits including guns and traps, 19th-century kitchen textiles and fiddles and folk music.

There are numerous **walking trails** crisscrossing the park. One pleasant 4km route begins in a sheep meadow west of the car park. It goes past Tophuset, a small century-old thatched house that was built by the first caretakers; the Lincoln log cabin; a large glacial boulder called Cimbrerstenen, sculpted in the form of a Cimbrian bull's head by Anders Bundgaard; the hollow where the 4th of July celebrations are held; and Sønderland, the park's highest hill (102m). It's a particularly lovely area in summer and autumn, when the heather adds a purple tinge to the hillsides.

And no, your eyes don't deceive you – these mountains (of sorts) are a magnet for mountain-bikers, and there are 23km of bike tracks throughout the park. Bikes can be hired from **Rold Skov Cykler** (☎ 98 39 11 72; Jyllandsgade 23) in Skørping; city/mountain bikes cost 100/150kr per day.

### Festivals & Events

**Rebild Festival** (www.rebildfesten.dk) is an annual 4th of July celebration (held since 1912) that is the biggest outside the USA. Singing, dancing, country music and US guest-speakers are in abundance, and the festival is the Danes' way of thanking a land that has welcomed more than 300,000 Danish immigrants. Interestingly, the festival's popularity has waned over

the decades, particularly among the younger generation, and attendances have dropped from one-time highs of 10,000 to around 4000. International guests tend to stay in Aalborg.

### Sleeping & Eating

Rebild Bakker is a pretty sleepy place. Unless there's a festival in full swing, this is more a place for a day trip, and a good place to bring a picnic.

Still, if you're keen to stay overnight, there are decent options. **Safari Camping** (☎ 98 39 11 10; http://safari.dk-camp.dk; Rebildvej 17A; camp sites per adult/child 70/35kr) is a simple camping ground near the park's entrance. The nearby **Danhostel Rebild** (☎ 98 39 13 40; www.danhostel.dk/rebild; Rebildvej 23; dm/s/d 200/375/400; 🕒 Feb-Nov; 🍴 📺), photogenic underneath its thatched roof, is of a typically high standard. All rooms have their own bathroom, and staff here can help arrange bike hire.

There are two hotels in the park vicinity, too. **Comwell Rebild Bakker** (☎ 98 39 12 22; www.comwell.com; Rebildvej 36; s/d 995/1195kr; 📺 📺) is a large, modern, conference-friendly place near the park's entrance; but if you have your own transport it's worth driving 2km past the park to **Rold Storkro** (☎ 98 37 51 00; www.roldstorkro.dk; Vaelderskoven 13; s/d without bathroom 325/495kr, s/d 795/995kr; 🍴 📺 📺), off Rte 180 to Hobro. It has more character and a prettier setting than Comwell, and is a hugely popular spot for parties and wedding receptions. Rooms are simple and unmodernised, but facilities are good (including an indoor swimming pool). The icing on the cake is the **restaurant** (lunch 45-95kr, dinner mains 190-220kr), which offers a forested outlook and a good, traditional menu – fresh and smoked venison is a speciality. The hotel has been awarded a Green Key (p21).

### Getting There & Away

Route 180 runs through the Rold Skov forest, connecting Rebild Bakker with Hobro, 23km to the south.

Trains running between Aalborg (48kr, 25 minutes) and Århus (125kr, 1¼ hours) stop in Skørping, from where it's 3km west to Rebild Bakker. Bus 104 runs between Skørping and Rebild Bakker (16kr) hourly on weekdays, less often at weekends. By train you can also easily reach nearby towns such as Hobro (32kr, 20 minutes) and Randers (61kr, 40 minutes).

### VIBORG

pop 34,100

Rich in religious history and bordering two idyllic lakes, Viborg is a superbly romantic getaway. During its holiest period (just prior to the Reformation), 25 churches lined the streets. Nowadays, however, only two can be found in the town centre. The Viborg cathedral is part of a charming old centre perfect for wandering.

### Information

**Danske Bank** (Sct Mathias Gade 52)

**Post office** (Sct Mathias Gade 19)

**Tourist office** (☎ 87 87 88 88; www.visitviborg.dk; Nytorv 9; 🕒 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, 9am-2pm Sat) Clued up on the area, with good brochures and maps. Also offers internet access and bike hire.

### Sights & Activities

The striking, twin-towered **Viborg Domkirke** (☎ 87 25 52 50; Sankt Mogens Gade 4; 🕒 10am-5pm Jun-Aug, 11am-4pm Apr-May & Sep, 11am-3pm Jan-Mar & Oct-Dec) is equally impressive inside and out, with exquisite frescoes by Joakim Skovgaard evocatively portraying the story of the Protestant bible. In 1876 the cathedral was almost entirely rebuilt, becoming the largest granite church in Scandinavia, an enduring claim to fame. The crypt is all that survives from its birth date, 1100.

Of the paintings inside, two are especially notable: God creating women (on the left as you enter), and the 12 Apostles and four evangelists with St Paul replacing Judas (the centrepiece on the roof). They're well worth absorbing as the detail is astounding. There is a 10kr booklet for sale at the church that details the biblical story behind each of the 51 paintings and is a worthwhile investment. The impressive exterior features the massive walls and semicircular arches common to Norman-style buildings. For 5kr you can climb the south tower during the church's opening hours to enjoy scenic town views.

**Skovgaard Museet** (☎ 86 62 39 75; Domkirkestræde 4; adult/child 30kr/free; 🕒 10am-5pm Tue-Sun Jun-Aug, 11am-4pm Tue-Sun Sep-May) is just outside the cathedral and highlights further work of cathedral-artist Joakim Skovgaard, among other artists and changing exhibitions.

The old part of town lies just to the north and west of the cathedral. **Sankt Mogens Gade** has a charming pocket of homes from the mid-16th century, including Den Hauchske Gård at

number 7, Villadsens Gård at number 9A, and Den Gamle Præstegård at number 11.

Jump on board a one-hour cruise on the **Margrethe I** (☎ 87 87 88 88; adult/child 40/25kr; ⚓ 2pm May-Aug) in summer and soak up the sun – and Viborg – from out on the lake. There are additional tours from late June; the boat departs from outside Golf Salonen on Randersvej. From mid-May to late September, you can also rent canoes and rowboats here for lake exploration (45/70kr for 30/60 minutes).

### Sleeping & Eating

**Danhostel Viborg** (☎ 86 67 17 81; www.danhostel.dk/viborg; Vinkelvej 36; dm 130kr, d 350-420kr; ⚓ mid-Jan–Nov; 📺) This well-run place feels like a country escape, 3km from town in green surroundings and backed by botanic gardens down to the lake shore. Take a walk or enjoy the table tennis and giant chess set in the garden. Rooms are top-notch, too (most with bathroom). Local bus 55 runs out here.

**Oasen Viborg** (☎ 86 62 14 25; www.oasenviborg.dk in Danish; Nørregade 13; B&B per person 350kr) We wish every Danish town had accommodation like Oasen, a complex of central rooms and apartments, beautifully bridging the gap between bring-your-own-linen-breakfast-costs-extra hostels and pricey business hotels. Some rooms have shared bathroom, but all have cable TV and free wi-fi, plus kitchen access. And breakfast is included, in a sweet little ‘café’ in the garden.

**our pick** **Niels Bugge’s Hotel** (☎ 86 63 80 11; www.nielsbuggeskro.dk in Danish; Egeskovvej 26, Hald Ege; s/d without bathroom 570/750kr, d/ste with bathroom 1050/1350kr) We adore this place, an old inn set amid forest on the outskirts of town (take Rte 13 south, then Rte 12 west and take the first road on your right). It’s superbly decorated in swanky farmhouse chic, all florals, patchworks and antiques without an air of naff; and the library, outdoor areas and sky blue on-site restaurant, Skov (meaning ‘forest’), had us begging to either move in or recruit their decorator. Bus 53 runs to the area.

**Café Morville** (☎ 86 60 22 11; Hjultorvet; meals 52-148kr; ⚓ lunch & dinner; 📺) One of those chic all-day cafés that seem compulsory in Danish towns. You can park yourself on the leather banquettes for a mid-morning coffee or late-night drink and everything in between, from brunch plates to burgers.

**Brygger Bauers Grotter** (☎ 86 61 44 88; Sct Mathias Gade 61; lunch 53-88kr, dinner mains 138-208kr; ⚓ lunch

& dinner) Follow the candlelit passageway for a fine-dining experience inside ‘cave rooms’ that date back more than 100 years. Service is polished and the menu is nicely upmarket, with traditional touches – we’re talking venison with redcurrant sauce and mushroom roulade, or maybe fried plaice. There’s an excellent beer and wine selection, including local boutique brews. Lunch is considerably more casual. You can also enter from Domkirkestræde, behind the cathedral.

### Getting There & Away

Viborg is 66km northwest of Århus on Rte 26 and 41km west of Randers on Rte 16. Trains to/from Århus (108kr, 70 minutes) run hourly on weekdays, less frequently at weekends. The train station is about 1km southwest of the tourist office.

## CENTRAL WEST COAST

The sweeping, windswept coastline of the central west is dotted with an array of summer towns catering primarily to German summer tourists. The coast’s most flaunted area is Holmsland Klit, the thin neck of sand and dunes stretching nearly 35km from north to south and separating the North Sea from Ringkøbing Fjord. Windsurfers flock to Hvide Sande as its reputation for the best wind conditions in Denmark spreads.

### HVIDE SANDE

pop 3200

Hvide Sande (the name means ‘white sands’) owes its existence to the wind. Wind caused the sand migration that forced the construction of a lock here in 1931 to assure a North Sea passage for the port of Ringkøbing. And wind continues to be the big drawcard for the large number of tourists who come here for windsurfing.

Aside from the wind, it’s all about the fish. Hvide Sande has a busy deep-sea fishing harbour, with trawlers, fish-processing factories and an early-morning fish auction. There’s also a small fishing museum/aquarium adjacent to the **tourist office** (☎ 97 31 18 66; www.visitvest.dk; Nørregade 2; ⚓ 9am-4pm Mon-Tue & Thu-Fri, 9am-4pm Sat, 10am-noon Sun, closed Wed year-round), on the northern side of the channel. Ask at the tourist office about fishing trips with local fishermen.

### Activities

#### WINDSURFING

A consistent, howling westerly coupled with both an invitingly safe lake in Ringkøbing Fjord and the wild North Sea around Hvide Sande make this area ideal for windsurfers of all skill levels.

**Westwind** (☎ 97 31 25 99; www.westwind.dk in Danish; ⚓ May-Sep) has two bases on the outskirts of Hvide Sande (one in the north, the other just south). The company offers instruction (in English, German and Danish, despite the website being in German and Danish only) in windsurfing and kitesurfing, plus gear rental. A three-hour introductory windsurfing course costs 400kr; a 12-hour course (in four three-hour blocks) costs 895kr – and they guarantee you can windsurf after those 12 hours. A two-hour introduction to kitesurfing costs 250kr.

#### KAYAKING

From June to October, **MyKayak** (☎ 30 22 86 00; www.mykayak.com in Danish; tours from 200kr) arranges paddles around the harbour together with a barbecue dinner, or later sunset tours (taking advantage of the long summer nights). You can also do various kayaking courses under their tutelage.

#### HORSE RIDING

Hvide Sande is perfect for glorious rides at sunrise and as the sun sets over the water (well, providing it’s not *too* windy!). Contact **Vinterlejegaard Ridecenter** (☎ 97 31 51 63; www.vinterlejegaard.de in Danish; Vesterledvej 9; 1hr beach ride 145kr) for details; it’s about 8km north of Hvide Sande.

### Sleeping & Eating

The tourist office rents out a number of sexy state-of-the-art houseboats, as well as summer cottages and rooms in private homes (the houseboats and cottages are generally rented by the week in summer).

**Beltana Camping** (☎ 97 31 12 18; www.beltana-camping.dk in Danish; Karen Brandsvej 70; ⚓ Apr-Oct; per adult/child/site 65/35/35kr) If you’re here for the windsurfing, this is the camping ground for you. It’s on the southern side of town, across the road from the Westwind operation, and offers good facilities including cabins and bike hire.

**Danhostel Hvide Sande** (☎ 97 31 21 05; www.hvidesande.dk/danhostel; Numitvej 5; dm 110kr, d 250-385kr)

Tucked away from the madness in a side street on the northern side of the channel, this typically high-quality hostel offers clean, no-frills rooms (many with bathroom) and access to the nearby sports centre with which it’s affiliated.

**Hvide Sande Sømændshjem & Hotel** (☎ 97 31 10 33; www.hssh.dk; Bredgade 5; s/d from 545/745kr; 📺) The only hotel in town has friendly owners and lovely fresh rooms in an old seamen’s home down at the bustling harbour. Prices are very reasonable, especially outside the peak season (when doubles drop to around 590kr).

**Restaurant Under Broen** (☎ 97 31 30 40; 1 fl, Toldbodgade 20; lunch 65-149kr, dinner mains 129-229kr; ⚓ lunch & dinner) Given the prime harbourside location of this elegant dining room, and the fishing boats moored just metres away, it doesn’t take a brainiac to know the menu will feature superfresh fish options.

Down at the harbour there’s a supermarket and no shortage of cafés, ice-creameries and bakeries competing for holidaymakers’ appetites. Build your own picnic by calling into **Edgar Madsen** (☎ 97 31 14 33; Metheasvej 11; ⚓ 8am-5.30pm Mon-Fri, 8am-noon Sat), proud and long-standing purveyor of all things fishy.

### Getting There & Away

Hvide Sande is on Rte 181. Bus 58 runs between Hvide Sande and Ringkøbing train station (31kr, 20 minutes) roughly hourly on weekdays, less frequently at weekends.

There’s also a boat that runs between Ringkøbing and Hvide Sande two to three times daily on weekdays from May to September (one-way fare 75kr, one hour).

### RINGKØBING

pop 9500

Pretty fjordside Ringkøbing is a pleasant, if unremarkable, place acting as a service centre for the surrounding beachside communities. It nurtures the strongest hold on the past of any town on the central west coast, and makes a decent base if you’re interested in more than just beach-going. It was once a prominent North Sea port, until shifting sands caused the mouth of the fjord to slowly migrate south and threatened to cut off the town’s lifeline to the sea. In 1931 the town acquired a constant North Sea passage when a lock was built at Hvide Sande. Today the port is not a big player in exports, and the town is surrounded by industry, namely windmills.

The central **tourist office** (☎ 70 22 70 01; www.visitvest.dk; Torvet; ☎ 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat mid-Jun-Aug, 9.30am-4pm Mon-Fri, 10am-1pm Sat Sep-mid-Jun) can help arrange local accommodation, from rooms to beach houses. You should also pick up the English-language brochure detailing the town's **historic buildings**. Hotel Ringkøbing, right by the tourist office, has a timber-framed wing dating from 1601; the church northwest of the hotel dates from medieval times and has a sundial from 1728 on its western buttress. The **marina** is another good spot for aimless wandering, where old fishermen's huts contrast with modern development.

The most interesting exhibitions at **Ringkøbing Museum** (☎ 97 32 16 15; Herningvej 4; adult/child 30kr/free; ☎ 11am-5pm Jul & Aug, shorter hrs rest of year), east of Torvet, features displays on the ill-fated Greenland expedition (1906-08) led by local explorer Ludvig Mylius-Erichsen.

### Sleeping & Eating

Campers should head 9km west to the camping grounds around Søndervig on Rte 181.

**Danhostel Ringkøbing** (☎ 97 32 24 55; www.rofi.dk; Kirkevej 28; dm 150, d 325-440kr; ☎ ☎) This is up there with the best of them – it has a great socialising/relaxing area, modern layout, activities in abundance (it's in a sports centre), and large, light-filled rooms (all with bathroom). Families will love the on-site bowling alley, playground and mini-golf. The drawback: the hostel is neither terribly easy to find, nor accessible by local bus. It's 1.5km north of the train station, via Holstebrovej.

**Hotel Ringkøbing** (☎ 97 32 00 11; www.hotel-ringkobing.dk; Torvet 18; s/d from 695/895kr) Dating to 1601 and located in a prime position on the main square, this hotel has loads of yesteryear charm, so the rooms come as a bit of a surprise, all light, fresh and modern. Rooms are above the restaurant and in a couple of neighbouring buildings on the square.

**Café & Restaurant Kræs** (☎ 97 32 42 88; Ved Fjorden 28; lunch 59-125kr, dinner mains 125-225kr; ☎ lunch & dinner Mon-Sat) As well as a boutique that sells wine, coffee and chocolates, this handsome modern restaurant at the marina has a small but well-crafted menu featuring plenty of local specialities. Try the lunchtime *fiskefrikadeller* (fishballs) or savoury pancakes.

**Torvestuen** (☎ 97 32 00 11; Torvet 18; lunch 68-99kr, dinner mains 97-188kr; ☎ lunch & dinner) Torvestuen, one of the restaurants at Hotel Ringkøbing, has great people-watching from its alfresco tables, plus a comprehensive menu of old-school Danish favourites, from Greenland shrimps to fried plaice by way of *frikadeller* and herring. There's little joy for vegetarians in the meaty evening options.

### Getting There & Around

Ringkøbing is on Rte 15, 46km west of Herning and 9km east of the North Sea. By rail it's between Esbjerg (88kr, 1½ hours) and Struer (58kr, one hour).

A ferry links Ringkøbing and Hvide Sande (see p291). Bus 58 runs to Hvide Sande from Ringkøbing train station (31kr, 20 minutes) about hourly on weekdays, less frequently at weekends.