

History

A mere speck on the globe, tiny Denmark might seem an afterthought of a nation at Europe's continental margins but it has been a major player in the shaping of the region, with influences on and contributions to the progress of European culture far in excess of its size.

OF STONE, BRONZE & IRON

Humans first trod the earth and dug the region's flint tens of thousands of years ago during the interglacial period, settling permanently in about 12,000 BC, when the glacial ice retreated enough to support the lichen and mosses of the low-lying tundra, which in turn attracted herds of reindeer.

Stone Age culture relied primarily on hunting, but as the climate gradually warmed and the tundra gave way to forest, the reindeer migrated further north. Eventually hunters resettled near the sea and subsisted on fish, sea birds and seals.

Villages developed around the fields and the villagers began to bury their dead in dolmen, a type of grave monument comprising upright stones and topped by a large capstone; you can still find a number of these ancient dolmen in Denmark's meadows.

Around 1800 BC the first artisans began fashioning weapons, tools, jewellery and finely crafted works of art in the new metal bronze, traded from as far away as Crete and Mycenae.

The arrival of locally-available iron, was the tough raw material for a ground breaking advance: superior ploughs, permitting larger-scale agricultural communities. Present-day Denmark's linguistic and cultural roots date to the late Iron Age and the arrival of the Danes, a tribe thought to have migrated south from Sweden about AD 500.

At the dawn of the 9th century, the territory of present-day Denmark was on the perimeter of Europe, but Charlemagne (r 768–814) extended the power of the Franks northward to present-day northern Germany. Hoping to ward off a Frankish invasion, Godfred, king of Jutland, reinforced an impressive earthen rampart called the Danevirke. However, the raiding Franks breached the rampart, bringing Christianity to Denmark at sword point.

THE VIKINGS

Although unrecorded raids had probably been occurring for decades, the start of the Viking Age is generally dated from AD 793, when Nordic Vikings ransacked Lindisfarne Monastery, off the coast of Northumbria in northeastern England. Survivors of the attack described the Vikings' sleek

Denmark is the oldest monarchy in Europe.

TIMELINE

c 12,000 BC

The first permanent settlements are established on Jutland and the nearby Baltic islands

c 4000 BC

People begin to grow more food crops, and agriculture and the keeping of animals became common. Woods are cleared by slash-and-burn and grain is sown in the resulting ash

c 1800 BC

Bronze was introduced to Denmark, giving rise to skilled artisans who fashioned weapons, tools, jewellery and works of art. Trade routes to the south brought a supply of bronze – and influences from as far away as Crete and Mycenae

DENMARK'S BOG BODIES

The people of Iron Age Denmark left little evidence and precious little by way of written records of themselves. We would know a lot less about these early village societies, apart from a few decidedly partial accounts from Roman chroniclers, had it not been for some extraordinary discoveries in the last couple of centuries.

Drainage and peat cutting in Denmark's bogs has yielded hundreds of often amazingly well-preserved bodies of men, women and children mostly from the Iron Age (the early centuries BC and AD). Their discovery brings us electrifyingly close to these ancient societies.

Many of the bodies are also compelling historical who- and why-dunnits owing to the manner of their deaths. These people had not merely been buried after death (cremation was the common funerary ritual at the time) and some seem to have been ritually killed, perhaps as part of religious ceremonies or acts of propitiation linked to the supernatural power the Iron Age people are thought to have attributed to the bogs.

If it was ritual killing, were these people victims or willing participants? Was it perhaps an honour to be sacrificed? The Windeby Girl, for example, found in 1950 in Germany, aged about 14, had been blindfolded and had her hair carefully cropped, suggesting some kind of ritual. Others may have simply been waylaid, murdered and dumped. Roman chronicler Tacitus wrote that this was the kind of end met by 'cowards, deserters and homosexuals'.

The Grauballe Man certainly died a nasty death that suggests a brutal execution, a subject brilliantly illustrated in the superb display in Århus (p260), a history and forensics lesson but also an abiding conundrum. 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 suggests his death, sometime in the last century BC, was a horribly violent one. His body and skin, tanned and preserved by the unique chemical and biological qualities of the peat bogs, are remarkably intact, right down to hair and fingernails.

The most famous body of all is that of the Tollund Man in Silkeborg (see p274). Sadly, the lack of good enough preservation techniques at the time of Tollund Man's discovery meant that his body was spoiled (what you see has been largely fabricated) but it is his face, extraordinarily preserved right down to the stubble on his chin, that is the most arresting. He died, aged in his 30s, naked but for the beautifully plaited leather noose used to strangle him and the leather cap he has worn for 2000 years. It frames an utterly serene face.

square-rigged vessels as 'dragons flying in the air' and the raiders as 'terrifying heathens'.

Early Viking raiders often targeted churches and monasteries, not for their religious significance but for their rich repositories of gold and jewels. Because the churches also served as centres of learning, many irreplaceable documents, books and other cultural artefacts went up in flames during the raids.

The Vikings were, by and large, adventurous opportunists who took advantage of the turmoil and unstable political conditions that prevailed elsewhere in Europe. In time their campaigns evolved from the mere forays of pirates into organised expeditions that established far-flung colonies overseas.

So fearsome were the Vikings that the English introduced a special prayer into church services: 'From the fury of the Northmen, good Lord, deliver us'.

Different Viking groups came from the territories that now make up Denmark, Norway and Sweden, and each group had its own dominant sphere. The Swedes colonised the Baltic countries, which became the bases for expeditions deep into present-day Russia. The Norwegian domain included Scotland, Ireland and the Shetland, Orkney and Hebrides island groups. It was a Norwegian explorer, Erik the Red, who colonised Iceland and Greenland; his son, Leif Eriksson, went on to explore the coast of North America.

Danish Vikings primarily visited the coast of Western Europe and north-eastern England, with the first documented raid by Danish Vikings occurring in 835. England was particularly vulnerable because it comprised a number of warring kingdoms.

By 850, Danish Vikings had established a settlement in Kent, and soon sizable groups of Danish colonists came to control northwestern England (a region that became known as the Danelaw). But the Anglo-Saxon king Alfred the Great (r 871–99) successfully repelled the Danes and forced them to accept a boundary that recognised his reign over the kingdom of Wessex.

A UNIFIED DENMARK (SORT OF)

By the early 9th century Jutland (and parts of southern Norway) were more or less united under a single king. In the late 9th century a move towards unification of the territories that make up modern day Denmark occurred when warriors led by the Norwegian chieftain Hardegon conquered the Jutland peninsula; Hardegon then began to extend his power base across the rest of Denmark's territory.

The current Danish monarchy traces its roots back to Gorm the Old, Hardegon's son, who established his reign in the early 10th century, ruling from Jelling in central Jutland. His son, Harald Bluetooth, who ruled for 35 years, completed the conquest of Denmark, converting the Danes to Christianity, partly to appease his powerful Frankish neighbours to the south who, a century earlier, had sent the missionary Ansgar to build churches in the Danish towns of Ribe and Hedeby.

Harald Bluetooth's son Sweyn Forkbeard (r 987–1014) and grandsons Harald II (r 1014–18) and Canute the Great (r 1019–35), conquered England establishing a short-lived Anglo-Danish kingdom over much of the British Isles. Canute the Great was the first true Danish king to sit on the throne of England, reigning in much the same manner as an English king except that he employed Scandinavian soldiers to maintain his command.

When Canute's son Hardecanute died the balance of power shifted to the English heirs of Alfred the Great, although many of the Danes who had settled in England elected to stay on to live under English rule.

Unsuccessful attempts by the Danes to reclaim England followed and the defeat of the Norwegian Vikings by Harold II of England at the Battle of Stamford Bridge in 1066 marked the end of the Viking era.

c AD 500

Arrival of the Danes in the late Iron Age. This tribe thought to have migrated south from Sweden, forms present-day Denmark's linguistic and cultural roots

835

The first documented raid on northeastern England by Danish Vikings. England is particularly vulnerable because it comprised a number of warring kingdoms

950–985

King Harald I (Bluetooth), son of Gorm the Old, unifies Denmark. He spearheads the conversion of Danes to Christianity from his court at Jelling

985–1014

Under the reigns of Harald Bluetooth's son Sweyn Forkbeard (r 987–1014) and grandsons Harald II (r 1014–18) and Canute the Great (r 1019–35), England is conquered and a short-lived Anglo-Danish kingdom formed

1066

The defeat of Norwegian Vikings by Harold II of England at the Battle of Stamford Bridge, marking the end of the Viking Era

1137–1157

Civil strife, assassinations, plots and general skulduggery continues until Valdemar, son of Knud Lavard, takes the throne in 1157, introducing progressive policies in the Jyske Lov (Jutland Code)

THE VIKING AGE

The image of the towering marauder wearing a horned helmet, jumping from a longship and cheerfully raping and pillaging his way through early Christendom is what many people summon up when they hear the word Viking.

Some of these Northmen (as they were known in Britain, one of their favourite pillaging spots) undoubtedly did go in for pillage and slaughter as well as slave trading, robbery and the murder of clergy.

The real history of the Scandinavian seafarers from Norway, Denmark and Sweden that came to be known as Vikings is, however, more complicated than the simple image presented by many of the horrified accounts of the era, and a great deal of myth making since.

The Viking era in fact spanned a couple of centuries and took on a different character through the decades. For the record, Vikings didn't have horned, or winged, helmets, nor did they celebrate slaughter by drinking mead from cups made of skulls, another popular myth (although they did rejoice in some storybook names, including Erik Bloodaxe, Svend Forkbeard and Sigtrygg Silkbeard).

Part of the reason the Vikings have such a negative rap is down to the fact that roughing up monks hardly endeared the Vikings to posterity, since they were essentially the writers of the history of the age. The fact that the Vikings put the wind up kings and chieftains all along the coast and river systems of Europe and the Mediterranean with decades of lightning raids did much to enhance their notoriety.

Battle and bloodlust is far from being the whole story however. The Vikings were not just plunderers but successful traders, extraordinary mariners and insatiable explorers ranging to Byzantium, Russia, North Africa, even as far as the Caspian and Baghdad. They also established settlements in Iceland, Greenland and Newfoundland.

Nor were they simply bloodthirsty raiders. They settled in several places including Northern France and the British Isles, proving able farmers. They were also shrewd political players establishing their own kingdoms and intermarrying with local nobles or squeezing protection money from local kings (the creation of the hated Danelaw in England being a good example).

Even the historically pivotal 1066 Battle of Hastings can be thought of not as a battle between England and France, but essentially a fight between two leaders descended from this Nordic stock (William and Harold).

Settlement and assimilation was one reason for a decline in raiding and fighting. The **Jelling Stone** (p279) of Harald I Bluetooth that still stands in the churchyard in Jelling is the document of an even more important factor: the embrace in the 10th century of Christianity in Scandinavia and thus closer cultural ties and a degree (very relatively speaking) of 'civilisation'.

As well as Jelling, other fascinating Viking heritage worth seeking out in Denmark includes the **Nationalmusset** in Copenhagen (p76), the Viking ring fortress at **Trelleborg** (p147) and (if you'd like to see 'real' live Vikings hit each other with rubber swords, and let's face it who doesn't?), the **Ribe Vikingcenter** (p241).

Perhaps the best way to get a feel for the technical supremacy, bravery and hardihood of the Vikings is to experience their longships first hand at the Roskilde **Viking Ship Museum** (p132).

THE BLOODY MIDDLE AGES

Internal strife, plots, counter plots and assassinations involving rival nobles, wealthy landowners and corrupt church leaders blighted the early medieval era – just look at the blood-soaked timeline from 1086–1157.

King Valdemar I eventually united a war-weary country and enacted Denmark's first written laws, known as the *Jyske Lov* (Jutland Code). His successors enacted other laws that were quite progressive for their time: no imprisonment without just cause, an annual assembly of the *hof* (national council), and the first supreme court.

Margrethe who had assumed de facto control of the Crown after her young son Oluf died in 1387, became the official head of state and Denmark's first ruling queen. The next year Swedish nobles sought Margrethe's assistance in a rebellion against their unpopular German-born king. The Swedes hailed Margrethe as their regent, and in turn she sent Danish troops to Sweden, securing victory over the king's forces.

A decade later Margrethe established a formal alliance between Denmark, Norway and Sweden known as the Kalmar Union, to counter the powerful German-based Hanseatic League that had come to dominate regional trade.

In 1410 King Erik of Pomerania, Margrethe's grandson, staged an unsuccessful attack on the Hanseatic League, which sapped the Kalmar Union's vitality. This, together with Erik's penchant for appointing Danes to public office in Sweden and Norway, soured relations with aristocrats in those countries. In 1438 the Swedish council withdrew from the union, whereupon the Danish nobility deposed Erik.

Erik's successor, King Christopher III, made amends by pledging to keep the administrations of the three countries separate. However, the union continued to be a rocky one, and in 1523 the Swedes elected their own king, Gustav Vasa. The Kalmar Union was permanently dissolved, but Norway would remain under Danish rule for another three centuries.

THE LUTHERAN REFORMATION & CIVIL WAR

The monarchy and Catholic Church played out a pivotal power struggle during the Danish Reformation. Caught in the middle of this religious and political foment was King Frederik I who over some 10 years went from promising to fight heresy against Catholicism to inviting Lutheran preachers to Denmark. When Frederik died, the lack of a clear successor left the country in civil war.

The following year (1534) Hanseatic mercenaries from Lübeck (now Germany) invaded southern Jutland and Zealand. By and large the Lübeckers were welcomed as liberators by peasants and members of the middle class, who were in revolt against the nobility.

Alarmed by the revolt, a coalition of aristocrats and Catholic bishops crowned the Lutheran Christian III as king. Still, the rebellion raged on.

A History of Denmark by Palle Lauring is a well-written excursion through the lives and times of the Danish people.

The Order of the Elephant was instituted by King Christian I in the 1470s to celebrate the battle elephants of the Christian crusades.

1219

The Dannebrog (the Danish flag, today the oldest national flag in the world) is raised for the first time, its creation supposedly divinely provided and firing the Danes to victory in Estonia under Valdemar II

1363

Norway's King Haakon marries Margrethe, daughter of the Danish king Valdemar IV, who is to become an influential and powerful queen

1375

Five-year-old Oluf becomes king of Denmark following the death of Valdemar IV, and five years later also becomes Norwegian king on the death of King Haakon. His mother assumes de facto control

1396–1439

Reign of King Erik of Pomerania, Margrethe's grandson, stages an unsuccessful attack on the Hanseatic League, which exhausts the resources of the Kalmar Union. The Danish nobility depose Erik in 1439

1534

Following King Frederick I's death, Hanseatic mercenaries from Lübeck (now Germany) invade southern Jutland and Zealand. In revolt against the nobility, Danish peasants and members of the middle class welcome the invaders

1588–1648

The early prosperous and peaceful years of Christian IV's long reign end in 1625 when Christian attempts to neutralise Swedish expansion by beginning the Thirty Years' War. Denmark suffers crippling losses

In Jutland, manor houses were set ablaze and the peasants made advances against the armies of the aristocracy.

Christian's general, Rantzau, took control cutting Lübeck off from the sea and marching northward through Jutland, brutally smashing peasant bands. Rantzau's troops besieged Copenhagen, where merchants supported the uprising and welcomed the prospect of becoming a Hanseatic stronghold. Cut off from the outside world, Copenhagen's citizens suffered starvation and epidemics before surrendering after a year in 1536, marking the end of the civil war.

Christian III quickly consolidated his power, offering leniency to the merchants and Copenhagen burghers who had revolted in exchange for their allegiance. Catholic bishops, on the other hand, were arrested and monasteries, churches and other ecclesiastical estates became the property of the Crown.

Thus the Danish Lutheran Church became the only state-sanctioned denomination and was placed under the direct control of the king. Buoyed by a treasury enriched by confiscated Church properties, the monarchy emerged from the civil war stronger than ever.

WAR & ABSOLUTE MONARCHY

After a period of peace Christian IV embarked on what became the ruinous Thirty Years' War, its aim to neutralise Swedish expansion, its outcome for Denmark morale and coffer-sapping losses.

Seeing a chance for revenge against Sweden, following its troubled occupation of Poland, Christian IV's successor, Frederik III, once again declared war in 1657. For the Danish government, ill-prepared for battle, it was a tremendous miscalculation.

Sweden's King Gustave led his troops back from Poland through Germany and into Jutland, plundering his way north. During 1657–58 – the most severe winter in Danish history – King Gustave marched his soldiers across the frozen seas of the Lille Bælt between Fredericia and the island of Funen. King Gustave's uncanny success unnerved the Danes and he proceeded without serious resistance across the Store Bælt to Lolland and then on to Falster.

The Swedish king had barely made it across the frozen waters of the Storstrømmen to Zealand when the thawing ice broke away behind him, precariously separating him and his advance detachment from the rest of his forces. However, the Danes failed to recognise their sudden advantage; instead of capturing the Swedish king, they sued for peace and agreed to yet another disastrous treaty.

In February 1658 Denmark signed the humiliating Treaty of Roskilde, ceding a third of its territory, including the island of Bornholm and all territories on the Swedish mainland. Only Bornholm, which eventually staged a bloody revolt against the Swedes, would again fly the Danish flag.

Learn everything you ever wanted to know about a millennium of Danish monarchy at www.danskekonger.dk.

A romantic historical novel *Music and Silence* by Rose Tremain is set in the time of Christian IV and has some wonderfully evocative descriptions of courtly life in Copenhagen.

Absolute monarchy returned in 1660, when King Frederik III cunningly convened a gathering of nobles, placed them under siege, and forced them to nullify their powers of council. Then Frederik conferred upon himself the right of absolute rule enshrining the new system in an absolutist constitution called the *Kongeloven* (Royal Act), which essentially declared the king the highest head on earth, above all human laws and inferior to God alone. So concentrated were royal powers that Frederik's successor had to place the crown upon his own head during the church service – nobody else was deemed worthy.

In the following decades the now all powerful monarchy rebuilt the military and continued to pick fruitless fights with Sweden. Peace of a sort eventually descended and for much of the 18th century, the Danes and Swedes managed to coexist without serious hostilities.

REVOLUTION & DEMOCRACY

By the turn of the 19th century, Denmark's trading prowess was worrying Britain, by now the world's pre-eminent sea power. When Denmark signed a pact of armed neutrality with Sweden, Prussia and Russia, Britain sent a naval expedition to attack Copenhagen in 1801, inflicting heavy damage on the Danish fleet and forcing Denmark to withdraw from the pact.

Denmark managed to avoid further conflicts and actually profited from the war trade until 1807, when a new treaty between France and Russia once again drew the Danes closer to the conflict. However, the British, wary of Napoleon's growing influence in the Baltic, feared that Denmark might support France.

Despite Denmark's neutrality, the British fleet unleashed a devastating surprise bombardment on Copenhagen, setting much of the city ablaze, destroying its naval yards and confiscating the entire Danish fleet: nearly 170 vessels.

Although the unprovoked attack was unpopular enough back home to have been roundly criticised by the British parliament, Britain nonetheless kept the Danish fleet. The British then offered the Danes an alliance – who unsurprisingly refused the offer and instead joined the continental alliance against Britain, which retaliated by blockading both Danish and Norwegian waters, causing poverty in Denmark and famine in Norway. When Napoleon fell in 1814, the Swedes, then allied with Britain, successfully demanded that Denmark cede Norway to them.

Despite the disastrous early years of the 19th century, by the 1830s Denmark was flourishing again, economically and culturally. Philosopher Søren Kierkegaard, theologian Nikolaj Frederik Severin Grundtvig and writer Hans Christian Andersen emerged as prominent figures. Sculptor Bertel Thorvaldsen bestowed his grand neoclassical statues on Copenhagen, and Christoffer Wilhelm Eckersberg introduced the Danish school of art.

Political innovation, meanwhile, was just around the corner. When revolution swept Europe in the spring of 1848, Denmark's new political parties,

A polar bear was included in the Danish coat of arms in the 1660s to symbolise the country's claim of sovereignty over Greenland.

The village of Trankebar (Tranquebar) in India was the sixth-largest Danish settlement in the world, including Denmark, in the 1700s.

The 1759 Gråsten Castle is now home for Crown Prince Frederik and Crown Princess Mary, a wedding gift from Queen Margrethe and Prince Henrik.

1658

Denmark signs the Treaty of Roskilde, the most lamented humiliation in its history, losing a third of its territory, including the island of Bornholm and all territories on the Swedish mainland

1665

King Frederik III establishes absolute monarchy. He introduces an absolutist constitution called the *Kongeloven* (Royal Act), which becomes the law of the land for most of the following two centuries

1675–1720

The monarchy manages to rebuild the military and fights three more wars with Sweden (1675–79, 1699–1700 and 1709–20), without regaining its lost territories. A period of relative peace follows

1784

The young crown prince Frederik VI assumes control. More benevolent than his predecessors, he brings progressive landowners into government and introduces a sweeping series of reforms improving rights for the masses

late 18th century

Feudal obligations of the peasantry abolished. Large tracts of land are broken up and redistributed to the landless. Education is made compulsory for all children under the age of 14

1800–1801

Denmark signs a pact of armed neutrality with Sweden, Prussia and Russia. In response Britain's navy attacks Copenhagen, battering the Danish fleet and forcing Denmark to leave the pact

which had arisen from the debating chambers of the new provincial assemblies, were poised to replace the waning power of the monarchy. The new Danish king, Frederik VII, under pressure from the new liberal party, convened a national assembly to abolish the absolute monarchy and draw up a democratic constitution, establishing a parliament with two chambers, Folketing and Landsting, whose members were elected by popular vote.

Although the king retained a limited voice, parliament took control of legislative powers. The constitution also established an independent judiciary and guaranteed the rights of free speech, religion and assembly. Denmark had changed overnight from a virtual dictatorship to one of the most democratic countries in Europe.

THE MODERN ERA

When Denmark's new constitution threatened to incorporate the border duchy of Schleswig, linguistically and culturally German, as an integral part of Denmark, the German population in the duchy allied with neighbouring Holstein, sparking years of unrest.

In 1864 the Prussian prime minister, Otto von Bismarck, declared war on a militarily weak Denmark and captured Schleswig. This further erosion of Denmark's sovereignty raised doubts about Denmark's survival as a nation.

In the wake of that defeat, a conservative government took power in Denmark – and retained power until the end of the century. The conservatives oversaw a number of economic advances: extending the railway throughout the country and rapid industrialisation that established large-scale shipbuilding, brewing and sugar refining industries.

Denmark declared neutrality at the outbreak of WWII, but Germany, threatened by the growing Allied presence in Norway, coveted coastal bases in northern Jutland. In the early hours of 9 April 1940, Germany staged a lightning fast seizure of key Danish strategic defences and issued an ultimatum: that Copenhagen would be bombed if the Danes resisted.

With only a nominal military at their disposal and German warplanes flying overhead, King Christian X and parliamentary heads hastily met at Amalienborg and, under protest, decided to yield to the Germans, with promises from the Nazis that Denmark would be allowed to retain some degree of internal autonomy. Before nightfall Denmark was an occupied country.

The Danes managed to tread a thin line, running domestic affairs under close Nazi supervision, until August 1943 when the Germans took outright control. A Danish resistance movement quickly mushroomed. In October 1943, as the Nazis were preparing to round up Jewish Danes, the Resistance, smuggled some 7200 Jews – about 90% of those left in Denmark – into neutral Sweden.

Although the island of Bornholm was heavily bombarded by Soviet forces, the rest of Denmark emerged from WWII relatively unscathed.

The Social Democrats led a comprehensive social-welfare state in postwar Denmark and the cradle-to-grave securities that guarantee medical care, education and public assistance were expanded. As the economy grew and the labour market increased, women entered the workforce in unprecedented numbers, and household incomes reached new heights.

In the 1960s, a rebellion by young people, disillusioned with growing materialism, the nuclear arms race and an authoritarian educational system, took hold in the larger cities. Student protests broke out on university campuses, and squatters occupied vacant buildings.

The movement came to a head in Copenhagen in 1971, when protesters tore down the fence of an abandoned military base at the east side of Christianshavn and turned the site into a commune, the 'free state of Christiania' (p84). Thousands of people flocked here, and the government let Christiania stand as a 'social experiment' that survives, for now at least.

Denmark's external relationships were also not without their troubles either. It joined the European Community, the predecessor of the EU, in 1973, but has been rather more hesitant about the subsequent expansion of the EU's powers. Denmark rejected the 1992 Maastricht Treaty (which set the terms for much greater economic and political cooperation) and, in 2000, also rejected adoption of the euro – the latter decision saw a remarkable 87% voter turnout.

Meanwhile, Denmark maintained its leadership stance for socially liberal policies, including same-sex marriage (instituted in 1989) and aggressive implementation of alternative power sources (p58).

These days, though, Denmark's long postwar liberal consensus is much less of a sure thing. The government is a coalition of the centre right Venstre party and the Conservative People's Party, sometimes also calling on the support of the generally nationalist right-wing Dansk Folkeparti.

This new power structure led Denmark to impose some of the toughest immigration laws in Europe in 2002, including restrictions on marriage between Danes and foreigners. It also led to a harder line in foreign policy and attempts to 'normalise' the status of Christiania, Copenhagen's hippie enclave, in part by clearing out its drug dealers.

DENMARK TODAY

Denmark may be officially considered the happiest nation on earth, according to a 2006 survey, but it is not without its problems. The last few years have been turbulent ones – by Danish standards anyway – in the social and political realms.

As in other European nations, there's been a gradual shift to the right in this famously liberal nation. It's been reflected in a growing concern over immigration – particularly from Muslim countries – and an erosion of traditional values.

The cultural and religious challenge posed by immigration was put into frightening relief in 2006. Denmark found itself in the unfamiliar role of

A monkey killed in a 1755 Lisbon earthquake is buried in Liselund Slot, Møn; its agitation before the disaster apparently saved its owners' lives.

In recognition of its actions in saving its Jewish population, Denmark is remembered as one of the Righteous Among the Nations at the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem.

1846–49

1901

1943

1953

1971

1973

As political ferment sweeps Europe, two growing Danish factions – farmers and liberals – join forces to form a united liberal party in 1846. The Danish constitution is enacted in 1849 and absolute monarchy abolished

The Venstrereformparti (Left Reform Party) sweeps to power and embarks on an ambitious social reform programme, including amending the constitution to give women the right to vote

In a hastily planned operation, the Danish resistance successfully smuggles some 7200 Jews into Sweden on hearing of Nazi plans to round up and transport them to its European concentration camps

Danish constitution is amended to allow a female monarch, paving the way for Margrethe II to become monarch, Denmark's first female monarch since the 14th century

Political activists and squatters tear down the fence of an abandoned military base at the east side of Christianshavn and turn the site into a commune, the 'free state of Christiania'

Denmark joins the European Community (now the European Union)

villain in the eyes of many Muslims, and became the focus of violent demonstrations all around the world following the publication of cartoons depicting the prophet Mohammed in the *Jyllands-Posten* newspaper. Although not offensive in nature, any pictorial representation of Mohammed is a deep taboo for many Muslims. To liberal news editors in Denmark and Europe the right to publish such images was a fundamental issue of freedom of speech.

Perhaps there's no clearer illustration of this change than the rise of the Danish People's Party (DPP). Although it was founded only in 1995, it's already the third-largest party in the Danish parliament with 12% of the seats, which make it an important swing vote. The DPP's platform supports, among other things, the monarchy, the national church, strong defence, law and order, and the preservation of Danish cultural heritage. Also significantly, the party's website states 'Denmark is not an immigrant country and has never been so. We will not accept a transformation to a multiethnic society'.

In practical terms, the DPP's participation has made the difference in Denmark's joining the US, UK and other allies in the 2003 Iraq War and Denmark's ongoing commitment to maintain its role in Afghanistan.

2000

Reaching the limits of their tolerance for the extent of the European project, Denmark votes against adopting the new European currency, the euro

2004

Crown Prince Frederik weds Australian-born Mary Elizabeth Donaldson in a fairy-tale ceremony watched by millions of people around the world

2005–06

Denmark becomes an unlikely villain in the eyes of many Muslims, and the focus of violent demonstrations following the publication of cartoons depicting the prophet Mohammed in the *Jyllands-Posten* newspaper

The Culture

THE STATE OF DENMARK

Far from being rotten, things are looking rather rosy in the State of Denmark these days. In fact, the Danes are frequently said to be among the most contented people in the world.

This might seem a curious state of affairs to visitors on first glance. The Danes pay some of the highest taxes in Europe, have the highest cancer mortality rates, some of the worst weather and, if CNN is to be believed, the streets of Copenhagen are aflame with civil unrest most days.

When asked to rate their happiness on a scale of one to 10, in a recent survey the Danes topped a list of European nations with a rating of 8.3, citing a healthy economy, low unemployment, high wages, plenty of holidays, superb social provision in terms of housing, hospitals and schools, efficient public transport and low crime. It was just the latest of many such surveys dating back over two decades that have shown the Danes to be uncommonly satisfied with the lot life has given them.

Though many claimed that the Danes merely have low expectations, don't like to complain or are, simply, more realistic about what life may bring than, say, Italians, there is no doubting that Denmark is a wealthy country, that its inhabitants work less than most of the rest of Europe (the average working week is 37 hours), yet earn more and that the trains tend to run on time.

Parents get 18 weeks full-pay maternity and paternity leave and childcare provision is among the best and cheapest in Europe. It is true many pay over half of their earnings to the state in tax (almost one million pay the top rate of 62%, which doesn't include the 25% VAT that everyone pays when they buy something), but if you ask most Danes they would say that they get good value for money in terms of the quality of health care and social benefits. They are rightly proud of having the smallest gap between rich and poor of any country in the world, of being the most 'equal'. It is hard to become truly super rich in Denmark, but equally, the social safety net is so well developed, that true poverty is equally rare.

Of course, that equality can, in itself, be seen as negative. Many Danes find it stifling to live in such a homogenous society where the fear of standing out breeds a suffocating conformity. Many young, ambitious Danes leave their homeland to seek their fortune in countries more appreciative of ambition and drive. Others, like the residents of Christiania, opt out of society altogether. The riots in Nørrebro in Copenhagen in March 2007 that brought the city so much unwelcome publicity on news channels around the world were sparked by the eviction of squatters from a long-established youth club/squat, another symptom, perhaps, of what happens to a society that places so much value on conformity.

THE NATIONAL PSYCHE

Danes are extremely proud, albeit still a little insecure, about their country and its place in the world. In any conversation about international issues, a Dane will usually make reference to their country's small size and how few Danes there are, within the first minute or so. This may explain their peculiar obsession with their flag, the Dannebrog, which they fly with great vigour whenever they get an excuse. To outsiders this can appear rather jingoistic, but the Danes don't see it that way and think nothing of decorating a child's birthday cake with their national flag or greeting family at the airport with a flag-waving demonstration.

Denmark was the first European nation to end its participation in the slave trade on moral grounds.

There is a wealth of interesting information on the comprehensive state-sponsored website www.denmark.dk.

DOS & DON'TS

- If you have a meeting, appointment or even just dinner scheduled, it's best to arrive on time and not before or after. If you show up late or not at all, you'd better have a good reason.
- Danes generally queue by a number system. When you go to the post office, a bakery, the tourist office – just about any place there can be a queue – there's invariably a machine dispensing numbered tickets. Grab one as you enter and wait until your number is called.
- Danes love to joke, and although irony and gentle teasing are common ways of showing respect, some visitors may find it jarring at first. Similarly, Danes are often quite frank, but that's not meant to be insulting. There's a high degree of respect for the queen, and any flippant remark about the royal family is apt to offend.
- Casual dress is usually perfectly fine. You rarely have to dress up to do anything in Denmark, other than for the fanciest of fine dining.

But perhaps nothing encapsulates the essence of Danishness better than the concept of *hygge* which, roughly translated, means cosy and snug. In fact *hygge* means much more than that. *Hygge* refers to a sense of friendly, warm companionship of a kind usually fostered when Danes gather together in groups of two or more (although you can actually *hygge* yourself if there is no-one else around). You don't have to be lifelong friends to generate a *hyggelige* evening, indeed you might only just have met, but if the conversation flows – avoiding potentially divisive topics like politics, religion and how much you love Sweden – the bonhomie blossoms, toasts are raised before an open fire or, at the very least some candles, you are probably coming close. *Hygge* implies shutting out the turmoil and troubles of the outside world and striving instead for a warm, intimate mood. *Hygge* affects how Danes approach many aspects of their personal lives, from the design of their homes to their fondness for small cafés and pubs. There's no greater compliment that a Dane can give their host than to thank them for a cosy evening.

POPULATION

Denmark's population is about 5.4 million, making it the most densely populated nation in northern Europe. Some 70% of people live in urban areas with Copenhagen (1,700,000), Århus (300,000), Odense (185,000) and Aalborg (169,000) the four largest cities. Life expectancy is about 75 years for men, and almost 80 for women.

Denmark is almost entirely inhabited by ethnic Danes, people of the Teutonic ancestry common to all of Scandinavia. Foreign nationals account for approximately 5% of the population, an increase from just 2% in 1984 but still one of the lowest in Europe. Approximately 12% of all foreign nationals come from Nordic countries, 43% from other parts of Europe, 25% from Asia, 12% from Africa and 5% from the Americas.

A relaxation of immigration policies during the economic expansion of the 1960s attracted 'guest workers', many of whom established a permanent niche. There are now sizable Turkish and Pakistani populations. New humanitarian policies – in response to famine and war crises in the '80s and '90s – resulted in small Somali and Ethiopian immigrant communities.

LIFESTYLE

Danish family life has changed dramatically in the past few decades. These days, about 20% of all couples who live together aren't married and the average age for those who do tie the knot has risen to 35 years. The average

number of children per family has dropped to 1.8. The divorce rate is, however, almost half that of its neighbour, Sweden, at 35% of all marriages.

Denmark was an early adopter of gay rights with the Danish National Association for Gays & Lesbians established back in 1948. In 1989, Denmark became the first European country to legalise same-sex marriages and to offer gay partners most of the same rights as heterosexual couples. In 1999 a further step in recognising a broader definition of the family was taken when the decade-old Registered Partnership Act was amended to allow married gays to legally adopt the children of their partners.

Women are often well established in their careers by the time they have their first child, and generous leave schemes make it easy to take a temporary pause from the workplace. The traditional role of homemaker, in which a woman stays home to care for children, has all but disappeared in Denmark. Fewer than 5% of Danish women remain at home full-time after the end of their maternity leave. Maternity leave is four weeks prebirth and 14 weeks after.

Today more than 80% of all Danish women are in the workplace. The Danish law prevents sex discrimination, yet women hold fewer than 10% of the top management positions in the private sector.

From infancy, Danish children spend a significant amount of time away from home – day-care centres and nursery schools are a normal part of daily life for the vast majority of preschoolers.

Perhaps because of spending so much time away the family from an early age, Danes are notably tolerant and have a high degree of social responsibility. Visitors will find Danes relaxed, casual and not given to extremes. Danes think of themselves as a classless society and there are seldom any hints of chauvinism, sexism or any other -ism. They tend to be more involved in club activities and organisations than most other societies.

Though you wouldn't think it to look at them, the Danes are a pretty unhealthy bunch. In terms of their diet, which shows a definite predilection for fatty foods, sweets, chocolate and alcohol, they make the Scots look like Jane Fonda. And then of course there are the cigarettes: cigarette sales have actually increased in recent years and over 24% of Danes smoke. The country has the highest mortality rate from cancer of any western European country: it is the most common cause of death. A new smoking law came into effect in August 2007 banning smoking in nearly all public and private workplaces and schools, as well as restaurants larger than 40 sq metres (smoking will still be permitted in pubs smaller than 40 sq metres that don't serve food).

ECONOMY

The Danish economy remains in good health with, effectively, no national debt, a GDP growth rate of 3.2% and unemployment steady at 5.9% (Denmark opted out of the euro in 1999). The Germans used to think of Denmark as their larder, so productive was its agricultural sector, but in the last 50 years the country's manufacturing and service sectors have grown so that, today, less than 4% of the workforce is employed in farming.

The economy of Denmark is today largely service-based and self-sufficient in terms of energy. Its technology and pharmaceutical sectors are especially strong. Denmark produces its own oil – a fact which has, to an extent, masked more worrying long-term economic trends, such as a rapidly ageing workforce and massive increases in health and benefit spending – and uses wind power and bioenergy sources. Denmark is the world leader in wind energy with up to 20% of its electrical production coming from the wind generators that pepper its landscape and seas. Denmark also gives more of its GDP (0.8%) to overseas aid than any nation in the world.

A Copenhagen man pieces together his wife's disappearance and his own inner life in Jens Christian Grøndahl's book *Silence in October*.

Danish painter Einar Wegener became the first man to undergo a sex-change operation in 1931.

MEDIA

Denmark has a relatively thriving national newspaper market. The heavy-weight broadsheets are – in order of circulation, highest first – *Jyllands Posten*, *Berlingske Tidende*, *Politikken* and *Informationen*. It was *Jyllands Posten* who kicked off the international ‘Mohammed Cartoon Crisis’. In terms of the trashier end of the market, tabloids such as *Ekstra Bladet* and *BT* rake the muck with shameless abandon, while the market for weekly celebrity/royalty photo magazines is booming.

Danish television (and radio) is dominated by Danmarks Radio. Their DR1 and DR2 channels produce news, documentaries and occasionally lavish drama series of a high quality. There are also a large number of commercial channels including TV2, TV3 and the more youth-orientated TV2 Zulu.

POLITICS

Denmark is a constitutional monarchy with Queen Margrethe II enjoying a similar, largely ceremonial position to Queen Elizabeth of England. The Danish government has traditionally been run on a multiparty, consensus basis, characterised by moderation and liberal, tolerant attitudes. That all changed when the current prime minister, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, leader of the Venstre Parti, came to power in 2001, his power in parliamentary votes being reliant on the right wing Dansk Folke Parti (Danish People’s Party – DPP). The DPP’s scaremongering tactics regarding immigration and the supposed degradation of traditional Danish character due to immigration from, essentially, Muslim countries gave them a sizable proportion of the vote in the last two elections and a good deal of power in the Folketing, or parliament. As a result, in 2002, Denmark implemented some of Europe’s most restrictive – and controversial – immigration laws, particularly governing marriage between Danes and foreigners.

Needless to say, the Folke Parti made much capital from the greatest political crisis to strike the country in recent years, the Mohammed cartoons affair (2006), in which a right-wing Jutland newspaper published inflammatory (and worse, not very funny) cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed. A few months later, a Copenhagen-based imam lit the touch paper by showing them to some friends in Saudi Arabia, and Danish flag-making companies enjoyed a windfall as the *Dannebrog* was burned in the streets in cities throughout the Middle East. That has all calmed down now, of course, but this little fairy-tale nation was in deep shock for some months after. Denmark lost €134m in trade to the Middle East, although exports to the USA rose by 17% in the first quarter of 2006.

In fact, both the DPP and government have recently quietly backtracked over immigration, finally admitting what everyone else has been saying for years, that the Danish economy with its ageing workforce desperately needs immigrants if its economy is to maintain its current health.

At the time of writing an election is approaching, the outcome of which is less predictable due to the emergence of a new political party, the centrist New Alliance.

RELIGION

Some 92% of Danes officially belong to Folkekirken (Danish People’s Church), an Evangelical Lutheran denomination that is the state-supported national church; however, fewer than 5% of Denmark’s citizens are regular churchgoers. The second largest religion is Islam (3%), followed by Roman Catholicism.

Danes enjoy freedom of religion and in most of the larger cities there are places of worship for Muslims (though not in official mosques at the time of writing), Catholics, Anglicans and Jews in addition to the Folkekirken.

‘...the Folke Parti made much capital from the greatest political crisis to strike the country in recent years, the Mohammed cartoons affair (2006)...’

ARTS Fine Arts

Prior to the 19th century, Danish art tended to revolve around formal portraits of the bourgeoisie, the aristocracy and the royal family. One of the most highly regarded portrait painters was Jens Juel (1745–1802).

Denmark’s ‘Golden Age’ of the arts, from 1800 to 1850, produced luminaries such as Christoffer Wilhelm Eckersberg (1783–1853), who depicted more universal scenes of everyday Danish life, and Eckersberg’s student Christen Købke (1810–48), who was little known in his time but is now regarded as one of the most important painters of the era. The leading Danish sculptor in this period was Bertel Thorvaldsen (1770–1844) who re-created classical sculptures during a long sojourn in Rome. Thorvaldsen later returned to Copenhagen in order to establish his own museum (see p81).

The Skagen school was active in the late 18th and early 19th centuries and specialised in romantic seaside subjects with an emphasis on the effects of natural light. Leading Skagen painters included PS Krøyer, Michael Ancher and Anna Ancher.

The CoBrA movement was formed in 1948 by artists from three European capitals (Copenhagen-Brussels-Amsterdam) with the aim of exploiting the free artistic expression of the unconscious, and it left a significant impact on 20th-century Danish art. One of its founders, Danish artist Asger Jorn (1914–73), achieved an international following for his abstract paintings, many of which evoke vivid imagery from Nordic mythology.

Architecture & Design

Danish architects and designers have had a huge influence on the way the world creates building and interiors. They place such great emphasis on ‘form following function’ that they typically design a room only after considering the styles of furniture that are most likely to be used there. So it’s not surprising that several Danish architects have crossed over to the field of furniture design, where their work has had an even broader impact. For more background on Danish design see p157.

Literature

The first half of the 19th century has been characterised as the ‘Golden Age’ of Danish literature. The foremost writers in that prolific period included Adam Oehlenschläger (1779–1850), a romantic lyric poet who also wrote short stories and plays; Steen Steensen Blicher (1782–1848), a writer of tragic short stories; Hans Christian Andersen (see boxed text, p44), whose fairy tales have been translated into more languages than any other book except the Bible; and the noted philosopher Søren Kierkegaard (1813–55), considered the father of existentialism.

A trend towards realism emerged in about 1870, focusing on contemporary issues of the day. A writer of this genre, novelist Henrik Pontoppidan (1857–1943), won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1917 shortly after publishing the epic *The Realm of the Dead*, which attacked materialism. Another Danish author who won the Nobel Prize for Literature (in 1944) was Johannes Vilhelm Jensen (1873–1950), who penned the six-volume novel *The Long Journey*, and *The Fall of the King*, a story about Danes during Renaissance times. Better known outside Denmark is Martin Andersen Nexø (1869–1954), whose novels about the proletariat – the four-volume *Pelle the Conqueror* and *Ditte*, *Child of Man* – helped draw attention to the conditions of the poor and spurred widespread reform in Denmark.

The most famous Danish writer of the 20th century, Karen Blixen (1885–1962, p116), started her career with *Seven Gothic Tales* published in New York under

Queen Margrethe is an accomplished artist. She has illustrated a number of books, including Tolkien’s *Lord of the Rings*, and designed stamps for the Danish postal service.

the pen name Isak Dinesen. She is best known for *Out of Africa*, the memoirs of her farm life in Kenya, which she wrote in 1937. It was made into an Oscar-winning movie (1985) starring Meryl Streep and Robert Redford. Blixen's other works include *Winter's Tales* (1942), *The Angelic Avengers* (1944), *Last Tales* (1957), *Anecdotes of Destiny* (1958) and *Shadows on the Grass* (1960).

Denmark's foremost contemporary novelist is Peter Høeg, whose works focus on nonconformist characters on the margins of society. In 1992 he published the bestseller *Miss Smilla's Feeling for Snow* (published as *Smilla's Sense of Snow* in the USA and made into a movie in 1997), a suspense mystery about a Greenlandic woman living in Copenhagen. Other Høeg novels published in English include *The History of Danish Dreams*, a narrative that sweeps through many generations of a Danish family; *Borderliners*, which deals with social issues surrounding private schooling in Denmark; and *The Woman and the Ape*, the main character of which saves a rare primate from the clutches of scientists. An earlier collection of his short stories has also been translated under the title *Tales of the Night*.

Theatre, Dance & Orchestral Music

Det Kongelige Teater (Royal Theatre) in Copenhagen first opened in 1748 as a court theatre, staging the plays of Denmark's most famous playwright, Ludvig Holberg (1684–1754). Today its repertoire encompasses international works, including Shakespearean plays, as well as classical and contemporary Danish plays.

In the mid-19th century, Den Kongelige Ballet (Royal Danish Ballet) took its present form under the leadership of the French choreographer and ballet master August Bournonville (1805–79). Today it's one of the leading dance companies in northern Europe, with nearly 100 dancers. It still performs a number of Bournonville's romantic ballets, such as *La Sylphide* and *Napoli*, along with more contemporary works.

ONCE UPON A TIME...

Denmark's most celebrated author, Hans Christian Andersen (1805–75) entered the world humbly, the son of a cobbler and a washerwoman in Odense. But, like so many of his characters, he wanted more. He was only 11 when his father died, and three years later he ran away to Copenhagen 'to become famous'. You might say he showed promise even at this young age: studying at the Royal Danish Theatre, attending university, travelling abroad and self-publishing a chronicle of his journeys.

Yet like the late-bloomers of whom he so famously wrote, he did not hit his stride until much later, when he was in his 30s – and what a stride it was. His first volume of fairy tales, *Tales, Told for Children* (1835), contained such classics as *The Tinderbox* and *The Princess and the Pea*, and in subsequent years this series was published at Christmas time, with new stories each year. Try to imagine the world today without *The Little Mermaid*, *The Ugly Duckling*, *Thumbelina* or *The Emperor's New Clothes*.

Andersen infused his animals, plants and inanimate objects with a magical humanity that somehow still remained true to their origins. His antagonists are not witches or trolls, but human foibles such as indifference and vanity, and it's often his child characters who see the world most clearly. The result is a gentleness that crosses borders and generations. His work is said to have influenced Charles Dickens, Oscar Wilde and innumerable modern-day authors.

Yet, despite his success, he led a troubled, largely unhappy life: unlucky at love, sexually ambivalent, high-strung and hypochondriacal.

Andersen's collected works (156 in all) include poems, novels, travel books, dramatic pieces and two autobiographies. He died of liver cancer at a villa outside Copenhagen and is buried in the capital's Assistens Kirkegård (p87).

For more information on Danish writers, visit www.litteraturen.dk.

TOP DANISH READS

- *The Complete Fairy Tales* by Hans Christian Andersen – The most famous Danish book in the world. Several of the stories describe real places in the city.
- *Either/Or* by Søren Kierkegaard – The first great work of the father of existentialism.
- *Miss Smilla's Feeling for Snow* by Peter Høeg – A worldwide hit set largely in Christianshavn, later filmed with Julia Ormond and Richard Harris.
- *Silence in October* by Jens Christian Grøndahl – An engaging meditation on the dissolution of a marriage, as a Copenhagen man pieces together his wife's disappearance and his own inner life. Features numerous Copenhagen locations, especially around the city lakes.

Den Kongelige Opera (Royal Danish Opera) has an ensemble of 32 singers and a renowned 60-member opera chorus.

Traditionally opera, drama and ballet were performed on rotation at Det Kongelige Teater, but opera productions moved to the new Opera House (p85) in 2005 while theatre productions will move to a new building currently under construction across the harbour from the opera house in 2008, leaving Det Kongelige Teater for the royal ballet company.

Det Kongelige Kapel (Royal Danish Orchestra) was founded in 1448, giving it claim to be the oldest orchestra in the world; it accompanies the ballet and opera performances.

Contemporary Music

Denmark's biggest selling piece of music ever is 'Barbie Girl' by the blessedly defunct Aqua, which sold 28 million copies in the late '90s. That was the first major international hit by a Danish artists since Whigfield's 'Saturday Night', which wasn't exactly a track record to be proud of, but a small trickle of rather better-quality Danish acts have followed, including Kashmir (often compared to Radiohead); Tim Christensen (a talented folk-rock singer songwriter); The Raveonettes (Denmark's answer to the White Stripes); and prog-rockers, Mew, all of whom have enjoyed significant overseas sales in recent years (the less said about the aptly named Infernal, the better). Other Danish bands you might have heard of include Saybia, drummers Safri Duo, Carpark North and The Kissaway Trail, recently compared to Arcade Fire and The Flaming Lips.

The Danish DJ and remix scene is centred on Copenhagen and is buoyant with acts like SoulShock, Cutfather and Junior Senior achieving some success abroad.

Cinema

Denmark's best-known director of the early 20th century was Carl Theodor Dreyer (1889–1968), whose films included the 1928 French masterpiece *La Passion de Jeanne d'Arc*, acclaimed for its rich visual textures and innovative use of close-ups. In the midst of WWII, Dreyer boldly filmed *Vredens Dag* (Day of Wrath), which made so many allusions to the tyranny of Nazi occupation that he was forced to flee to Sweden.

It wasn't until the 1980s that Danish directors attracted a broader international audience. In 1988 *Babette's Feast*, directed by Gabriel Axel, won the Academy Award for Best Foreign Film. *Babette's Feast* was an adaptation of a story written by Karen Blixen.

In 1989, director Bille August won the Academy Award for Best Foreign Film as well as the Cannes Film Festival's Palme d'Or for *Pelle the Conqueror*, a film adapted from Martin Andersen Nexø's book about the harsh life of an immigrant in 19th-century Denmark. August also directed *The House of the*

DANISH MUSIC: A PLAYLIST

- 'Barbie Girl' (Aqua) – As soothing as a foghorn, and as subtle as a brick, it remains one of Denmark's biggest global hits.
- *Pretty in Black* (The Raveonettes) – The latest album from Denmark's answer to the White Stripes.
- 'Played-A-Live (The Bongo Song)' (Safri Duo) – Idiomatic drum anthem from the classically trained Danish percussionists, who ought to know better.
- 'Fly On the Wings of Love' (Olsen Brothers) – 2000 Eurovision winner and Denmark's proudest music moment since... well, possibly ever.
- *No Balance Palace* (Kashmir) – The latest album from rock band Kashmir features David Bowie and Lou Reed, no less.

Film buff's choice www.dfi.dk is the website of Det Danske Filminstitut (Danish Film Institute), based in Copenhagen.

Lars Von Trier's immensely influential film production company has its own website – www.zentropa.dk.

The Danish Directors: Dialogues on a Contemporary National Cinema, edited by Mette Hjort and Ib Bondebjerg, features interviews with 20 Danish film makers exploring general contemporary film issues.

Spirits (1993), with Meryl Streep, Glenn Close and Jeremy Irons, which was based on the novel by Isabel Allende; *Smilla's Sense of Snow* (1997), based on the bestseller by Peter Høeg, starring Julia Ormond and Gabriel Byrne; and *Les Misérables* (1998), adapted from Victor Hugo's classic tale, with Liam Neeson and Geoffrey Rush.

The leading Danish director of the new millennium remains Lars von Trier, whose better-known films include the melodrama *Breaking the Waves* (1996) featuring Emily Watson, which took the Cannes Film Festival's Grand Prix, *Dancer in the Dark* (2000) starring Icelandic pop singer Björk and Catherine Deneuve, *Dogville* (2003) starring Nicole Kidman and its sequel, *Manderlay*. *Dancer in the Dark* won the Cannes Palme d'Or in 2000. Von Trier is closely associated with Dogma 95, a minimalist style of film-making using only hand-held cameras, shooting on location with natural light and refraining from the use of special effects and pre-recorded music. Von Trier also worked with Jørgen Leth, one of Denmark's leading directors since 1963, to create *The Five Obstructions (De Fem bånd)* (2004), in which von Trier challenged Leth to tell the same story five ways in the same film.

Another Dogma 95 director is Lone Scherfig, whose romantic comedy *Italian for Beginners* (2000) dealt with diverse but damaged Danes learning the language of love and became an international hit. She also directed the 2002 dark comedy *Wilbur Wants to Kill Himself*, shot in Scotland, in English. Her most recent film is the feel-good comedy, *Just Like Home*, released in 2007.

There are very few internationally famous Danish actors. Viggo Mortensen catapulted to fame as Aragorn in the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy. Although he was born in New York and has lived outside Denmark for most of his life, he retains Danish citizenship. Two female Danish actors on the international film scene are Iben Hjejle, who made her Hollywood debut with a leading role in the quirky romantic comedy *High Fidelity* (2000) opposite John Cusack, and Connie Nielsen, who costarred in the Oscar-winning epic *Gladiator* (2000) with Russell Crowe and the thriller *One Hour Photo* (2001) with Robin Williams.

Another Danish actor making a name for himself internationally is Mads Mikkelsen, the latest Dane to play a Bond villain, in *Casino Royale* (the first was Ulrich Thomsen in *The World Is Not Enough*). Mikkelsen was also the star of one of the best Danish films of recent years, the much acclaimed, Dogme-style *After the Wedding*, directed by Susanne Bier. Bier is one of Denmark's leading directors, having already made a name for herself internationally with *The One and Only* and *Brothers*.

Most Danish towns have cinemas showing first-run English-language films. Foreign films are not dubbed – movies are shown in their original language with Danish subtitles.

Food & Drink

Though the modern Scandinavian culinary revolution is in full swing in the swanky restaurants of Copenhagen and one or two other places throughout the country, for the rest of Denmark life goes on much as it always has done with the majority of Danes tucking into hearty dishes of meat and some kind of starch slathered with ‘gravy’ made from a packet. The Danes spend less (corrected for taxes and price differences) on their weekly groceries than any other nation in Western Europe.

Copenhagen has more Michelin stars (nine) than the rest of Scandinavia put together, and more than supposed culinary hot spots Milan or Brussels. But for all the excitement over places such as Noma (see p102) and Geranium (see p100), it would be misleading to say that the entire Danish nation was in the grip of a fervent foodie revolution. It isn’t. Rather, things are changing slowly but surely, in the normal Danish way. They are gradually waking up to the fact that they have a fantastic array of seasonal produce at their disposal, from great seafood to excellent pork products, root vegetables, wild berries, mushrooms and superb beef. Any Dane will tell you that their strawberries are better even than the French *gariguettes*, likewise their asparagus is as good as any you’ll find in the markets of Paris, and more and more restaurants throughout the country are changing their menus to reflect this. The word is spreading throughout Denmark, beyond the Michelin-starred tables of Copenhagen: Denmark has both produce to be proud of, and chefs with the training and skills to make the most of it.

From Sønderho Kro on Fanø to Kadeau on Bornholm (see p188) chefs are creating fresh, original, seasonal and, above all, local food worth travelling for. Meanwhile, on Jutland, Funen and Zealand there are several historic castle and manor house hotels – such as Søllerød Kro and Dragsholms Slot on Zealand and Faldsled Kro and Stensgård on Funen – where locally sourced, seasonal produce is being used by accomplished, French-trained chefs to spectacular effect. What’s more, the organic revolution is well underway here, with most supermarkets stocking a large range of organic fruits and vegetables and around 30,000 households receiving organic vegetable boxes delivered to their homes each week.

But still, we must admit, you can eat spectacularly badly in Denmark, particularly in the provinces, where awful pizzas and diabolical burgers remain the chief outsourced food stuff for the masses.

This is a shame, because, done well, even hearty Danish classics such as *frikadeller* (meat balls) and *pølser* (hot dog) can be tasty and satisfying. Everyone who visits Denmark should try a smørrebrød with all the trimmings, or some authentic pickled herring, homemade *frikadeller* or, if they are entirely at peace with their cholesterol levels, perhaps even a plate of *stegt flæsk i persille sovs* (fried pork fat in parsley sauce).

COPENHAGEN’S TOP FIVE RESTAURANTS

Ida Davidsen Lip-smacking smørrebrød (p100)

Restaurant Noma The modern Nordic revolution starts here (p102)

Geranium Beautiful biodynamic restaurant in Copenhagen’s loveliest dining room (p100)

Umami Stunning décor and extraordinary Franco-Japanese food to match (p101)

Les Trois Cochons Started the trend for great value fixed menu locals (p102)

And, late at night, after a couple of beers, and when no-one is looking, we have to admit that a hot dog – especially the *røde pølser*, the disturbingly red frankfurter – covered with radioactive tomato sauce, artificial mayo and a mustardlike substance, all stuffed into a sweet bun and wrapped up in a paper napkin in exchange for 30kr or so from the man in the *pølser vogn* (hot-dog wagon), can be damned hard to resist (the Danes eat over 130 million of them each year).

STAPLES & SPECIALITIES

Nothing epitomises Danish food better than *smørrebrød*, the world-famous open sandwich that ranges from very basic to elaborate and sculptural but is usually only served at lunchtime. The basic *smørrebrød* is a slice of rye bread topped, for example, with roast beef, tiny shrimps, the ubiquitous pickled herring, roast pork, or breaded, fried fish fillet, and finished off with a variety of garnishes, but they can get as creative as the imagination allows. *Smørrebrød* is served in many restaurants (at lunchtime), although it's cheapest in bakeries or specialised *smørrebrød* takeaway shops found near train stations and office buildings.

Another distinctively Danish presentation is the *koldt bord* (cold table), a buffet-style spread of cold foods – such as cold sliced meats, smoked fish, cheeses, vegetables, salads, condiments, breads and crackers – plus usually a few hot dishes such as *frikadelle*, and breaded, fried fish (usually plaice). The cornerstone of the *koldt bord* though is herring, which comes in pickled, marinated and curried versions. Generally a serving of herring with raw onions is treated as a starter, because it's thought to prime the stomach for the meal. Pickled herring is almost invariably washed down with cold *akvavit* (aquavit or schnapps, opposite), a type of spirit.

In Denmark the sweet pastry known elsewhere in the world as 'Danish' is called *wienerbrød* ('Viennese bread', ironically), and nearly every second street corner has a bakery with varieties. As legend has it, the naming of the pastry can be traced to a Danish baker who moved to Austria in the 18th century, where he perfected the treats of flaky, butter-laden pastry.

Working through the typical Danish food day, for breakfast Danes surprise foreign visitors by serving pastries, cake, cheeses and cold meats, often all together in one calorific, metabolism-slowng orgy of sugar, dairy produce and carbohydrates. If you are really lucky/unlucky, you will be offered a small shot of a *Gammel Dansk*, a bitter-tasting alcoholic liqueur, which the Danes believe sets you up perfectly for the day ahead. Lunch (*frokost*) will be *smørrebrød*, of course, or these days just as likely a tray of takeaway sushi from the supermarket. Dinner (*aftensmad*) for most will be pasta, pizza or some arrangement of meat and veg, unless guests are invited, in which case the latest Jamie Oliver or Sunday newspaper supplement recipes will probably be consulted.

MEET THE DANES

Meet the Danes (☎ 33 46 46 46; www.meetthedanes.dk) is a unique service that offers visitors the chance to spend an evening in the home of local people, sampling traditional Danish food and getting to know more about Denmark and Danish culture. The service can put you in touch with several host families for 'Homedinners', mainly in Copenhagen but also elsewhere in Denmark, and they usually attempt to match you up with people of similar ages and interests (there are even gay 'families' if required). Meals are either two or three courses and cost 360kr for adults and 180kr for children aged six to 14 years. If you are interested you should fill in the questionnaire at the Meet the Danes website at least one week before your arrival, or two days ahead during your stay.

Always make eye contact with everyone around the table during a toast – it's a breach of etiquette not to, and custom says it'll mean seven years of bad sex.

WE DARE YOU

The Danes' usually unimpeachable good taste reveals its 'quirkier' side in some of their most popular foodstuffs:

- Pickled herring in curry sauce – a disturbing combination that actually works surprisingly well.
- Salt liquorice – do you eat it, or dissolve it for paint stripper?
- Remoulade – a harsh, tart celery-based mayonnaise. The Danes dollop it on everything, given half a chance.
- Stegt flæsk med persille sovs – a dish of pork fat, and only fat, in parsley sauce. Mmmm.
- Peberod – or 'horseradish', which the Danes cook to accompany meat, fish and everything else.

DRINKING

The Danes are crazy about coffee, indeed they are said to be the biggest consumers of coffee per capita in the world with a total consumption of over 20 million cups per day (that's four each, for every man, woman, child and infant – no wonder they are said to be the second fastest walkers in the world). Hardly surprising then that all cafés serve *kaffe* (coffee) – many their own blend, made to perfection – as well as *te* (tea). In addition to the common brew, expect to find a good variety of cappuccino, espresso and other coffee drinks, particularly in the larger cities. Unfortunately, the usual international coffee house chains are beginning to muscle in on the Danish coffee market, particularly in Copenhagen, although places like MJ Coffee Café (see p103) are fighting a stern rearguard action with unusual blends and superb expertise.

In terms of soft drinks *Mineralvand* (mineral water) and the standard *sodavand* (soft drinks) such as Coca-Cola are widely available. Ring pull cans have been banned for years and most soft drinks, and all nondraught beers, are sold in bottles, many of which have a refundable deposit included in the price. The tap water anywhere in Denmark is safe to drink.

The most popular spirit in Denmark is the Aalborg-produced *akvavit*. There are several dozen types, the most common of which is made from potatoes and spiced with caraway seeds. In Denmark *akvavit* is not sipped but is swallowed straight down as a shot, usually followed by a chaser of beer. A popular Danish liqueur made from cherries is Peter Heering, which is good sipped straight or served over vanilla ice cream.

Danes are prodigious producers and consumers of *øl* (beer). Carlsberg Breweries, based in Copenhagen, markets the Carlsberg and Tuborg labels and is the largest exporter of beer in Europe. Not all of the brew leaves home, however: Danes themselves down some seven million hectolitres (roughly two billion bottles) of brew per year, ranking them sixth among the world's greatest beer drinkers.

The best-selling beers in Denmark are pilsners, a lager with an alcohol content of 4.6%, but there are scores of other beers to choose from. These range from light beers with an alcohol content of 1.7% to hearty stouts that kick in at 8%. You'll find the percentage of alcohol listed on the bottle label. Danish beers are classified with ascending numbers according to the amount of alcohol they contain, with *klasse 1* referring to the common pilsners and *klasse 4* to the strongest stouts.

Also note that you get a cash refund when returning empty beer bottles to any supermarket (eg Netto). That 1.5kr per bottle can add up if you're having a session or just broke and looking for secondary income!

Carlsberg's logo was designed by sculptor, house painter and Skagen resident, Thoruud Bindesboll; he charged 100kr for his artwork – imagine if he'd got royalties!

Here's a short list of beer terms:

- *øl* – beer
- *lyst øl* – light beer
- *fadøl* – draught
- *pilsner* – lager
- *lagerøl* – dark lager
- *porter* – stout

As well as keen coffee drinkers the Danes are enthusiastic when it comes to the consumption of wine too (there are even a couple of thriving vineyards in Denmark now). Over the last 30 years Danes have moved away from their favourite tiple of beer, to wine. Today they are said to be the world's largest consumers of wine per capita, at 38.9L (the market is said to be worth around \$1bn, with each adult spending \$250 per year on wine). They favour red wine 75% over white 25% and consumption is still growing. Unlike the other Scandinavian countries, the Danish government does not hold a monopoly on alcohol sales and, in fact, wine is the largest revenue category in the Danish grocery trade. Danes have a wider choice of wines in their shops than any other country in the world, and wine tends to be one of the best-value products you can buy in Danish supermarkets with even Netto having a good array of bottles for under 60kr. As with the British, the Danes' preference for New World wines has grown dramatically in recent years.

Common *vin* (wine) terms used in Denmark include *hvidvin* (white wine), *rødvin* (red wine), *mousserende* (sparkling wine) and *husets vin* (house wine). *Gløgg* is a mulled wine that's a favourite speciality during the Christmas season, served with almonds and raisins. Traditional Danish cuisine tends to favour heavyweight reds, although sharp Rieslings go well with vinegary herring dishes.

Beer, wine and spirits are served in most restaurants and cafés. They can also be purchased at grocery shops during normal shopping hours. Prices are quite reasonable compared with those in other Scandinavian countries. The minimum legal age for consuming alcoholic beverages is 18 years.

EATING

Denmark's dining possibilities vary enormously depending on where you are in the country. If you are in Århus or Copenhagen you will have a huge range of cafés and restaurants to choose from – a few of them as good as anything in Europe. Venture beyond these big cities, however, and cheap, low quality fast food tends to predominate. Every small town has pizza and burger places serving borderline edible stodge. Meanwhile Danish supermarkets lag years behind the rest of Europe in terms of quality, freshness and choice. On the bright side, most towns and villages have a local *kro* (inn), serving Danish staples to varying standards. Also, the Danes are master bakers, especially when it comes to the classic *rugbrød* (rye bread), which we suspect has been their secret dietary supplement for all these years helping them to process all those animal fats in the absence of decent fruit or vegetables.

The historic hotel castles and manor houses are one exception to the dearth of dining options outside of the capital, however, but they are all too rare and careful planning is necessary if you are hoping to eat well outside of the two main cities.

Cheap Eats

Dining out can be horrendously expensive in Denmark, particularly the gourmet places that tend to be far more costly than comparable restaurants in Paris and London on account of the Danes' high wages and rental costs. Alcohol is also spectacularly costly in these kinds of restaurants, and Danes

Smoked salmon is always served on white bread, herring on rye bread.

do not generally bring their own alcohol. Midrange dining options are also expensive, and you can easily spend 200kr on a humdrum café meal.

For cheaper food there is always *smørrebrød*, but otherwise the options are few – Thai and Chinese restaurants are common, but rarely authentic (and it is always a giveaway when a place claims to serve both cuisines, with perhaps a bit of sushi thrown in). Mediterranean buffets and Italian restaurants that serve the standard pizza-and-pasta fare are good for cheap eats. Simple Greek, Lebanese and Turkish eateries selling inexpensive *shawarma* (a filling pitta-bread sandwich of shaved meat) are another favourite alternative to the fast-food chains (which are actually not so ubiquitous as elsewhere in Europe). You can also find a cheap, if not particularly healthy, munch at one of the aforementioned *pølsemand* (the wheeled carts that sell a variety of hot dogs and sausages – usually pork).

If you are close to the coast, say on the north coast of Zealand or on Bornholm, head for the traditional smokehouses, where fresh smoked fish plates and all-you-can-eat buffets are on offer usually for around 100kr to 120kr.

As for tipping, a 15% service charge is included in your restaurant bill and Danes do not normally tip, being fully aware of how comparatively well most waiting staff are paid. However, rounding up the bill is not uncommon when the service has been particularly good.

Vegetarians & Vegans

Although strictly vegetarian restaurants are limited to larger cities (and even then there are precious few), vegetarians should be able to get by comfortably throughout Denmark. Danish cafés commonly serve a variety of salads, and vegetarians can often find something suitable at the *smørrebrød* counter.

There are a growing number of Middle Eastern restaurants with buffets that have separate meat and vegetarian dishes, the latter including sautéed vegetables, salads, rice and couscous. Most Italian restaurants will have vegetarian pasta options, and for those who eat cheese, there are scores of pizzerias all around Denmark. Of course all Indian and Pakistani restaurants will have some vegetarian-only dishes.

HABITS & CUSTOMS

Dinner is the main meal of the day. If you're at a dinner where toasts are expected, it's best to let the first toast come from someone senior to you. Make eye contact with everyone during the toast.

CHRISTMAS IN DENMARK

The year's big festival kicks off on 24 December with 'lunches', particularly in workplaces, though in practice they often take place in the evening. The menu for a Christmas lunch might include herring, a curry salad with eggs, and ham or sausages.

The centrepiece of the traditional Christmas Eve dinner with family is roast duck or goose stuffed with apples and prunes – though turkey is not uncommon – served with red cabbage.

Another Christmas Eve tradition is rice pudding, eaten warm after the meal. Hidden inside the rice pudding is a single whole almond – the person who finds the almond in his or her bowl gets a prize (eg a sweet made of marzipan). Tradition holds that the winner does not announce it until everyone has finished their rice pudding. And of course, Denmark is famous for Christmas sweets including *brune kager* (ginger cookies), *klejner* (deep fried knotted dough) and *pebernødder* (spiced cookies).

On 25 December, the leftovers make for an excellent *koldt bord* lunch. Special Christmas-time drinks include *gløgg*, beers brewed for the season and *akvavit*.

Although Danes can be quite gregarious, don't feel that you have to fill up time with conversation during a meal. Many Danes are comfortable with silence, and if you're constantly talking it may seem that you're overly chatty.

If you're invited to someone's home, be prompt since dinner is often served right away. If there's a cocktail hour, it may come after the meal rather than before. Dinners at a Danish home are prone to last a long time – as much as four hours – and it is considered rude to leave right when dinner ends. It's a nice idea to take along flowers and chocolates as gifts.

The quickest way to set the teeth of fellow diners on edge is to pick things up with your fingers and then noisily lick your fingers. It's the one big Danish dining faux pas. The Danes even sometimes eat burgers and sandwiches with knives and forks. If in doubt, follow their lead.

Before you leave the table, *always* thank your host or hostess for any food or drink, even if it's just a cup of coffee.

In terms of dining out, be aware that the Danes eat early, usually starting around 7pm, but often as early as 6.30pm, so it is rare to find a kitchen that will serve you after 9.30pm to 10pm, particularly outside of Copenhagen.

EAT YOUR WORDS

Useful Phrases

I'd like today's special, please.

Jeg vil gerne have dagens ret, tak.

yai vil *gir*-ne ha *da*-ens ret taak

A table for two, please.

Et bord til to, tak.

it bohr til toh taak

I'd like to reserve a table.

Jeg vil gerne reservere et bord.

yai vil *gir*-ne rey-ser-vey-re it bohr

Do you have a menu in English?

Har De en menu på engelsk?

har dee eyn *eng*-elsk mi-*new*

I'd like a local speciality.

Jeg vil gerne have en lokal specialitet.

yai vil *gir*-ne ha eyn lo-*kal* spey-sha-lee-*teyt*

I'd like to order the ...

Jeg vil gerne bestille ...

yai vil *gir*-ne bey-*sti*-le ...

Could you recommend something?

Kan De anbefale noget?

kan dee an-bey-*fa*-le *naw*-yet

I'm a vegetarian.

Jeg er vegetar.

yai ir vey-*gey*-*tar*

I don't eat ...

Jeg spiser ikke ...

yai *spee*-sa i-*ke* ...

meat

kød

keudh

fish

fisk

fisk

seafood

skaldyr

skal-*dewr*

The bill, please.

Regningen, tak.

rai-ning-en taak

Menu Decoder

Following is a list of Danish dishes you'll probably come across; see the following Food Glossary for more staples.

Flæskeæggekage – scrambled egg dish with bacon

Flæskkesteg – roast pork, usually with crackling, served with potatoes and cabbage

Frikadelle – fried minced-pork meatballs, commonly served with boiled potatoes and red cabbage

Gravad laks – cured or salted salmon marinated in dill and served with a sweet mustard sauce

Hakkebøf – a minced-beef burger, usually covered with fried onions and served with boiled potatoes, brown sauce and beets

Kogt torsk – poached cod, usually with mustard sauce and served with boiled potatoes

Mørbradbøf – small pork fillets, commonly in a mushroom sauce

Stegt flæsk – crisp-fried pork slices, generally served with potatoes and a parsley sauce

Stegt rødspætte – fried, breaded plaice, usually served with parsley potatoes

Food Glossary

BASICS

børnemenu

beur-ne-mey-*new*

children's menu

dagens middag

da-ens mi-*da*

set menu

dagens ret

da-ens raat

daily special

diabetes mad

dee-a-bey-tes

dishes for diabetics

forretter

for-raa-ta

starters, appetisers

frokost

fro-kawst

lunch

hovedretter

hoh-vedh-raa-ta

main dishes

middag

mi-da

dinner

morgenmad

morn-madh

breakfast

retter

raa-ta

dishes, courses

spisekart

spee-se-kort

menu

tag selv buffet

ta sel bew-*fey*

self-serve buffet

udvalg af

oodh-val a

assorted/selection of

COOKING TERMS

bagt

bagt

baked

benfri

beyn-free

boneless

dampet

dam-pet

steamed

fiskeretter

fis-ke-raa-ta

fish dishes

frisk

fresk

fresh

friturestegt

free-*tew*-re-*stegt*

deep fried

fyld

fewl

stuffing

fyldt

fewlt

stuffed

gennemstegt

ge-nem-*stegt*

well-done

glasur

gla-soor

glaze, frosting

grilleret, grillstegt

greel-ye-*ret*, *greel*-*stegt*

grilled

gyderet

grew-dhe-*rat*

casserole or stew

hakket

ha-ket

chopped, minced

hjemmebagt

ye-me-*bagt*

home-baked

hjemmelavet

ye-me-*la*-*vet*

home-made

hvid(e) sg/pl

vee-dh(e)

white (as in white potatoes, rice etc)

iskold

ees-kol

ice cold

karry

kar-ree

curry

kød

keudh

meat

kødbolle

keudh-bo-*le*

meatball

kogt

kogt

boiled

kold

kol

cold

kotelet

ko-te-*let*

cutlet

marineret

ma-ree-*ney*-*ret*

marinated

mellemstegt

me-lem-*stegt*

medium cooked

ovnstegt

own-*stegt*

roasted

pocheret

por-*shey*-*ret*

poached

rå

raw

raw

ristet

res-*tet*

toasted

<i>røget</i>	<i>roy-yet</i>	smoked
<i>salat</i>	<i>sa-lat</i>	salad, lettuce
<i>saltet</i>	<i>sal-tet</i>	salted, cured
<i>skive</i>	<i>skee-ve</i>	slice
<i>stegeretter</i>	<i>stai-e-raa-ta</i>	meat dishes
<i>stegt</i>	<i>stegt</i>	fried
<i>suppe</i>	<i>saw-pe</i>	soup
<i>varm</i>	<i>varm</i>	warm, hot
<i>vegetar, vegetarianer</i>	<i>vey-gey-tar, vey-gey-ta-ree-a-na</i>	vegetarian

DRINKS

<i>alkoholfri</i>	<i>al-koh-hol-free</i>	non-alcoholic
<i>citronvand</i>	<i>see-trohn-van</i>	lemonade
<i>fadøl</i>	<i>fadh-eul</i>	draught (draft) beer
<i>kærnemælk</i>	<i>ker-ne-melk</i>	buttermilk
<i>kaffe</i>	<i>ka-fe</i>	coffee
<i>koffeinfri</i>	<i>ko-fey-een-free</i>	caffeine-free
<i>letmælk</i>	<i>let-melk</i>	low-fat milk
<i>mælk</i>	<i>melk</i>	milk
<i>mineralvand</i>	<i>mee-ne-ral-van</i>	mineral water
<i>øl</i>	<i>eul</i>	beer
<i>skummetmælk</i>	<i>skaw-met-melk</i>	skimmed (nonfat) milk
<i>sodavand</i>	<i>soh-da-van</i>	soft drink, carbonated water
<i>sødmælk</i>	<i>seudh-melk</i>	whole milk
<i>te</i>	<i>tey</i>	tea
<i>vand</i>	<i>van</i>	water

FISH

<i>ål</i>	<i>orl</i>	eel
<i>ansjoser</i>	<i>an-shoh-sa</i>	anchovies
<i>blæksprutte</i>	<i>blek-sproo-te</i>	octopus
<i>fisk</i>	<i>fisk</i>	fish
<i>fiskefilet</i>	<i>fis-ke-fee-le</i>	fish fillet
<i>fiskefrikadelle</i>	<i>fis-ke-fri-ka-de-le</i>	fried fishball
<i>flynder</i>	<i>fleu-nuh</i>	flounder
<i>forel</i>	<i>foh-rel</i>	trout
<i>helleflynde</i>	<i>he-le-fleu-ne</i>	halibut
<i>hummer</i>	<i>haw-ma</i>	lobster
<i>klipfisk</i>	<i>kleep-fisk</i>	dried salt cod
<i>krabbe</i>	<i>kra-be</i>	crab
<i>kryddersild</i>	<i>kreu-dha-seel</i>	herring pickled in various marinades
<i>kuller</i>	<i>koo-la</i>	haddock
<i>laks</i>	<i>laks</i>	salmon
<i>makrel</i>	<i>ma-krel</i>	mackerel
<i>marineret sild</i>	<i>ma-ree-ney-ret seel</i>	marinated herring
<i>musling</i>	<i>maos-ling</i>	mussel
<i>ørred</i>	<i>eur-redh</i>	trout
<i>østers</i>	<i>eus-tas</i>	oyster
<i>rejer</i>	<i>rai-ya</i>	shrimp
<i>rødspætte</i>	<i>reudh-spe-te</i>	plaice
<i>røget laks</i>	<i>roy-yet laks</i>	smoked salmon
<i>røget sild</i>	<i>roy-yet seel</i>	smoked herring
<i>sild</i>	<i>seel</i>	herring
<i>skaldyr</i>	<i>skal-dewr</i>	shellfish
<i>søtunge</i>	<i>seu-tawng-e</i>	sole

<i>torsk</i>	<i>torsk</i>	cod
<i>torskerogn</i>	<i>tors-ke-rorwn</i>	cod roe
<i>tun, tunfisk</i>	<i>toon, toon-fisk</i>	tuna

FRUIT & VEGETABLES

<i>abrikos</i>	<i>a-bree-kohs</i>	apricot
<i>æble</i>	<i>eb-le</i>	apple
<i>ærter</i>	<i>er-ta</i>	peas
<i>agurk</i>	<i>a-goork</i>	cucumber
<i>agurkesalat</i>	<i>a-goor-ke-sa-lat</i>	sliced cucumber with vinegar dressing
<i>ananas</i>	<i>a-na-nas</i>	pineapple
<i>appelsin</i>	<i>a-pel-seen</i>	orange
<i>asparges</i>	<i>a-spars</i>	asparagus
<i>bagt kartoffel</i>	<i>bagt ka-to-fel</i>	baked potato
<i>banan</i>	<i>ba-nan</i>	banana
<i>blåbær</i>	<i>blaw-ber</i>	blueberry
<i>blomkål</i>	<i>blom-kawl</i>	cauliflower
<i>blomme</i>	<i>blo-me</i>	plum
<i>bønner</i>	<i>beu-na</i>	beans
<i>brombær</i>	<i>brom-ber</i>	blackberry
<i>champignon</i>	<i>sham-peen-yong</i>	mushroom
<i>citron</i>	<i>see-trohn</i>	lemon
<i>dild</i>	<i>deel</i>	dill
<i>fersken</i>	<i>fers-ken</i>	peach
<i>frugt</i>	<i>frawgt</i>	fruit
<i>grapefrugt</i>	<i>grayp-frawgt</i>	grapefruit
<i>grøn bønne</i>	<i>greun beu-ne</i>	green bean
<i>gulerødder</i>	<i>goo-le-reu-dha</i>	carrots
<i>hasselnød</i>	<i>ha-sel-neudh</i>	hazelnut
<i>hindbær</i>	<i>heyn-ber</i>	raspberry
<i>jordbær</i>	<i>jar-ber</i>	strawberry
<i>jordnød</i>	<i>jar-neudh</i>	peanut
<i>kål</i>	<i>kawl</i>	cabbage
<i>kartoffel</i>	<i>ka-to-fel</i>	potato
<i>kartoffelmos</i>	<i>kar-to-fel-mohs</i>	mashed potatoes
<i>kartoffelsalat</i>	<i>kar-to-fel-sa-lat</i>	potato salad
<i>kirsebær</i>	<i>keer-se-ber</i>	cherry
<i>løg</i>	<i>loy</i>	onion
<i>majs</i>	<i>mais</i>	corn
<i>pære</i>	<i>pe-re</i>	pear
<i>porre</i>	<i>por-e</i>	leek
<i>rødbeder</i>	<i>reudh-bey-dha</i>	beets, commonly served pickled
<i>rødkål</i>	<i>reudh-kawl</i>	red cabbage
<i>selleri</i>	<i>sey-ley-ree</i>	celery
<i>snittebønner</i>	<i>snee-te-beu-na</i>	string beans
<i>spinat</i>	<i>spee-nat</i>	spinach
<i>surt</i>	<i>soort</i>	pickled cucumbers or zucchini
<i>vandmelon</i>	<i>van-mey-lon</i>	watermelon

MEAT

<i>and, andesteg</i>	<i>an, an-ne-stai</i>	duck, roast duck
<i>dyresteg</i>	<i>dew-re-stai</i>	roast venison
<i>engelsk bøf</i>	<i>eng-elsk beuf</i>	steak, commonly served with onions
<i>fårekød</i>	<i>faw-re-keudh</i>	mutton
<i>gås</i>	<i>gaws</i>	goose

<i>hakkebøf</i>	<i>ha-ke-beuf</i>
<i>haresteg</i>	<i>ha-re-stai</i>
<i>høns, hønsekød</i>	<i>heuns, heun-se-keudh</i>
<i>hønsbryst</i>	<i>heun-se-breust</i>
<i>kalkun</i>	<i>kal-koon</i>
<i>kalvekød</i>	<i>kal-ve-keudh</i>
<i>kylling</i>	<i>kew-ling</i>
<i>lam, lammekød</i>	<i>lam, la-me-keudh</i>
<i>lammesteg</i>	<i>la-me-stai</i>
<i>lever</i>	<i>ley-wa</i>
<i>oksehaleragout</i>	<i>ok-se-ha-le-ra-goo</i>
<i>oksekød</i>	<i>ok-se-keudh</i>
<i>oksemørbrad, oksefilet</i>	<i>ok-se-meur-bradh, ok-se-fee-ley</i>
<i>oksesteg</i>	<i>ok-se-stai</i>
<i>pølse</i>	<i>peul-se</i>
<i>skinke</i>	<i>sking-ke</i>
<i>svinekød</i>	<i>svee-ne-keudh</i>
<i>tunge</i>	<i>tawng-e</i>
<i>vildt</i>	<i>veelt</i>

STAPLES

<i>æg</i>	<i>eg</i>
<i>æggeblomme</i>	<i>e-ge-blo-me</i>
<i>blødkogt æg</i>	<i>bleudh-kogt eg</i>
<i>bolle</i>	<i>bo-le</i>
<i>brød</i>	<i>breudh</i>
<i>chokolade</i>	<i>sho-ko-la-dhe</i>
<i>creme fraiche</i>	<i>krem-fresh</i>
<i>eddikke</i>	<i>edh-ke</i>
<i>fløde</i>	<i>fleu-dhe</i>
<i>flødest</i>	<i>fleu-dhe awt</i>
<i>flødeskum</i>	<i>fleu-dhe-skawm</i>
<i>flute</i>	<i>flewt</i>
<i>forårsrulle</i>	<i>for-aws-roo-le</i>
<i>grøn salat</i>	<i>greun sa-lat</i>
<i>grøntsager</i>	<i>greun-sa-a</i>
<i>gule ærter</i>	<i>goo-le er-ta</i>
<i>hårdkogt æg</i>	<i>hawr-kogt eg</i>
<i>honning</i>	<i>ho-ning</i>
<i>hønsekødsuppe</i>	<i>heun-se-keudh-saw-pe</i>
<i>hvidløg</i>	<i>veedh-loy</i>
<i>hytteost</i>	<i>hew-te-awst</i>
<i>ingefær</i>	<i>ing-e-fer</i>
<i>jordnaddesmør</i>	<i>yohr-neu-dhe-smeur</i>
<i>klar suppe</i>	<i>klar saw-pe</i>
<i>krydder</i>	<i>kreu-dha</i>
<i>krydderi</i>	<i>kreu-dha-ree</i>
<i>leverpostej</i>	<i>ley-wa-poh-stai</i>
<i>mandel, mandler</i>	<i>ma-nel, man-la</i>
<i>nødder</i>	<i>neu-dha</i>
<i>nudler</i>	<i>noodh-la</i>
<i>olie</i>	<i>ohl-ye</i>
<i>oliven</i>	<i>o-lee-ven</i>
<i>ost</i>	<i>awst</i>
<i>parisertoast</i>	<i>pa-ree-sa-tohst</i>

ground-beef burger
roast hare
hen, chicken meat
chicken breast
turkey
veal
chicken
lamb
roast lamb
liver
oxtail stew
beef
fillet of beef, tenderloin
roast beef
sausage, hot dog
ham
pork
tongue
game

egg
egg yolk
soft-boiled egg
soft bread roll; also a meatball or fishball
bread
chocolate, also hot chocolate
sour cream
cream
cream cheese
whipped cream
type of French bread
spring roll, egg roll
green salad
vegetables
split pea soup served with pork
hard-boiled egg
honey
chicken soup
garlic
cottage cheese
ginger
peanut butter
clear soup
crispy bread roll
spice
liver paté
almonds
nuts
noodles
oil
olive
cheese
toasted ham and cheese sandwich

<i>peber</i>	<i>pey-wa</i>
<i>pebermynte</i>	<i>pey-wa-meun-te</i>
<i>peberrod</i>	<i>pey-wa-rohdh</i>
<i>persille</i>	<i>per-see-le</i>
<i>pommes frites</i>	<i>porm freet</i>
<i>purløg</i>	<i>poor-loy</i>
<i>remoulade</i>	<i>rey-moo-la-dhe</i>
<i>ris</i>	<i>rees</i>
<i>røræg</i>	<i>reur-eg</i>
<i>rugbrød</i>	<i>roo-breudh</i>
<i>rundstykke</i>	<i>rawn-steu-ke</i>
<i>sennep</i>	<i>sey-nep</i>
<i>sky</i>	<i>skew</i>
<i>skysovs</i>	<i>skew-saws</i>
<i>smør</i>	<i>smeur</i>
<i>smørrebrød</i>	<i>smeur-re-breudh</i>
<i>sovs</i>	<i>saws</i>
<i>spejlæg</i>	<i>spail-eg</i>
<i>sukker</i>	<i>saw-ka</i>
<i>syltetøj</i>	<i>sewl-te-toy</i>
<i>tykmælk</i>	<i>tewk-melk</i>
<i>valnød</i>	<i>val-neudh</i>

SWEET THINGS

<i>ingefærbrød</i>	<i>ing-e-fer-breudh</i>
<i>is</i>	<i>ees</i>
<i>kage</i>	<i>ka-e</i>
<i>kringle</i>	<i>kreng-le</i>
<i>lagkage</i>	<i>low-ka-e</i>
<i>pandekage</i>	<i>pa-ne-ka-e</i>
<i>ris à l'amande</i>	<i>rees a la-mang</i>
<i>sød</i>	<i>seudh</i>
<i>tærte</i>	<i>ter-te</i>
<i>vaffel</i>	<i>va-fel</i>
<i>vanilleis</i>	<i>va-neel-ye-ees</i>

pepper
peppermint
horseradish
parsley
French fries, chips
chives
mayonnaise-based tartar sauce
rice
scrambled eggs
rye bread
crispy poppyseed roll
mustard
beef jelly
gravy
butter
open sandwich
sauce
fried egg, sunny-side up
sugar
jam
pourable yoghurt
walnut

gingerbread
ice cream, ice
cake
type of Danish pastry
layer cake
pancake or crepe
rice pudding with almonds (equal stress)
sweet
tart
waffle
vanilla ice cream

Environment

In many ways Denmark is a paragon of environmental virtue. It is rightly proud of its clean air, public policies that are reviving precious ecosystems and its amazingly efficient and increasingly sustainable energy generation.

The alluring image of Denmark as an environmental goody two shoes, reinforced by the ever-present wind turbines that loom on almost every horizon, is a pleasing one. The reality however, is rather more complicated. Denmark belches carbon into the atmosphere at one of the highest per capita levels in the world, its shallow coastal waters suffer almost every year from toxic algae blooms and it is eagerly jostling for position in the new Arctic oil rush that promises to create yet more atmospheric CO₂. The good news for visitors is that it is easy to travel around the country with a minimal environmental footprint.

THE LAND

Denmark is a small country, slightly larger than Switzerland or about half the size of the US state of Maine with a land area of 43,094 sq km.

Denmark is a nation with close ties to the sea. Its 406 islands, about 90 of them inhabited, and its coastline stretching 7314km ensure that no place in Denmark is more than 52km from the beach.

Most of Denmark is made up of fertile farm lowland with a few rolling hills, beech woods and heather-covered moors. The country hasn't a single mountain; the highest elevation, at Yding Skovhøj in Jutland's Lake District (called Søhøjlandet), is a mere 173m.

The Jutland (Jylland) peninsula encompasses more than half the land area of the country, stretching 360km from north to south. It's also where you'll find Denmark's only land connection to the European mainland, the 69km-long border with Germany. The capital city, Copenhagen, is on the largest island, Zealand (Sjælland). The next largest islands are Funen (Fyn), the twin islands of Falster and Lolland, and Bornholm to the east. Denmark is bordered on the west by the North Sea and on the east by the Baltic Sea. Sweden is just 5km away at its closest point, across a narrow strait called the Øresund. A bridge over the Øresund now makes for easy connections between Copenhagen and the Swedish city of Malmö.

LOCAL VOICES

Mads Flarup Christensen, programme director, Greenpeace Denmark

What's Denmark's environmental scorecard like?

Mixed. Mostly it manages its environment well but there are still beaches you can't swim on and toxic algae is a growing problem.

What about all that renewable power?

It's fantastic as far as it goes but growth in wind power generation has stalled and we still burn lots of coal. Our CO₂ emissions per head are among the worst in the world, although the way we generate power from coal is generally very efficient.

What other problems are there?

Run-off from farms is still a problem. Pig production is one of the culprits. We also import 10% of Argentina's soya crop to feed them, which leaves a big environmental footprint.

What do you think about Denmark joining in the rush for Arctic oil and gas?

It's crazy. We already have enough fossil fuels to destroy the climate so why try to find more?

Are you hopeful that it may not happen?

In some ways. The people here are putting climate change right at the top of their agenda now.

Denmark also retains administrative control over Greenland and the Faroe Islands. Greenland is the world's largest island (if Australia is regarded as a continent), with a total area of 2,166,086 sq km (of which 81% is under permafrost) and a population of about 56,400. Greenland has no arable land, but is rich in fisheries and mining resources. The Faroe Islands have a land area of 1399 sq km and a population of about 46,600. The Faroes are largely supported by fishing and have a standard of living similar to that of Denmark.

WILDLIFE Animals

The loss of so much natural wilderness habitat to cultivated farmland has long since pushed large animals out including the common Elk, bears and wolves, which are only found in zoos now. Almost 30% of all remaining mammal species and breeding birds are listed as either threatened, vulnerable or rare.

Today the most endangered mammal in the country is the freshwater otter, which was plentiful as late as the 1950s and shot by hunters until 1967. By the time protections for the otter were put in place its population had dropped to around 100, although it's now making a comeback with several hundred now reclaiming the river banks.

The largest wild species is the red deer, which can weigh more than 200kg. Denmark is also home to the roe and fallow deer, wild hare, fox, squirrel, hedgehog and badger.

Approximately 400 bird species inhabit Denmark and about 160 of these breed in the country. Some of the more commonly seen birds include the magpie, crow, sparrow, pigeon, coot, goose and duck.

The western coast of Jutland attracts migrating water birds and breeding waders such as the avocet, dunlin, ruff, redshank, lapwing and black-winged godwit. The gull-billed tern, which is a threatened species in Europe, breeds on the uninhabited fjord island of Fjandø, as do some of the country's largest colonies of the sandwich tern, arctic tern and black-headed gull.

Bornholm, the easternmost island, is home to nightingales and rooks and is a resting spot for migratory ducks and waders. The nearby Ertholmene Islands provide a bird refuge that hosts breeding eider ducks, razorbills, guillemots and other sea birds. Birds threatened by extinction – mostly because of the destruction of their habitat – include the wood sandpiper, golden plover and black grouse.

Plants

About 12% of Denmark is forested, the vast majority of it planted either for conservation and recreation purposes or for timber production. Most of the commercial forests are now planted with fast-growing conifers such as spruce and fir. The natural woodlands are largely deciduous with a prevalence of beech and oak trees. Other species in mixed woodlands include elm, hazel, maple, pine, birch, aspen, lime (linden) and horse chestnut.

Heath, bogs and dunes cover about 7% of land area and are particularly common in western Jutland. To stem coastal erosion, large tracts of the dunes have been planted with the deep-rooted lyme and marram grasses. Wild pink and white beach roses (*Rosa rugosa*) are common on sand dunes as well.

NATIONAL PARKS

Given that Denmark does not have large expanses of wilderness, it's no surprise that it does not have a system of national parks. Although a modest national park plan will create seven new national parks by 2010, Denmark's biodiversity is currently listed and protected in more than two hundred areas of environmental and scientific importance on land and sea. Its largest contiguous area

The North Sea island Rømø was formed by wind, water and sand. There's not a single rock on its beaches.

Beavers, long ago hunted to extinction, were reintroduced to northwestern Denmark in 1999. Their number has already increased from 19 to more than 50.

There are 28 million pigs in Denmark, compared to a population of 5.4 million people. That makes the pig/person ratio 5.4/1 and the pig/beaver ratio 560000/1.

of woodlands is Rold Skov, a 77-sq-km public forest in central Jutland that contains Denmark's largest national park, Rebild Bakker (p288).

Numerous state-administered nature conservation areas around the country collectively encompass about 4% of the nation's land area. These include beaches, coastal forests, heath lands and inland woods and lakes. Many are quite scenic and have been selected for a particular natural quality or historical significance. Most are crossed with hiking and biking trails and, although the majority can be walked in an hour or two, some areas are long and narrow and thus suitable for longer outings.

The country's environmentally important bogs have been all but lost to drainage, farming and peat cutting over the centuries, although a concerted effort is being made to stabilise the often dire ecological health of remaining pockets and restore them to long-term viability.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Agriculture, deforestation and urban expansion have utterly changed Denmark's habitats over the centuries, although concerted effort is now being made to restore many habitats. International trade agreements and EU quotas have brought an end to some agricultural subsidies for Danish farmers; consequently some farmland is no longer economically viable. This, along with a growing environmental awareness, has created a favourable backdrop for restoration.

Ambitious programmes from the late 20th century to restore wetlands, re-establish the salt marshes, marine habitats and realign streams to their original courses, and reforest many areas are bearing fruit.

Power

Denmark has one of the world's most extensive networks of alternative energy sources, generating 20% of its electricity needs from renewable sources. Its pioneering efforts in wind power in particular have given rise to a booming export market in the ever larger and more powerful wind turbines.

Much of Copenhagen gets its heat and electricity from one of the most efficient power generation processes anywhere in the world, a significant proportion of it from wind as well as biomass: in this case wood and straw, which is converted into pellets before being burnt in a specially adapted power station at Amager. The use of combined heat and power, in which the heat as well as electricity generated at the power station is piped to most homes and offices in Copenhagen, means 94% of energy from burning is actually used (compared with an average of around 40% in the UK for instance).

You can fill your petrol tank with biofuel at about 200 Statoil petrol stations, although arguments continue to rage in Denmark and beyond as to whether biofuel is in fact an environmentally sound alternative to fossil fuels.

All this may make Denmark seem a model of sustainable virtue, yet while it generates a relatively high percentage of renewable power, it relies for most of the rest on the dirtiest of hydrocarbons: coal. Denmark's less than wonderful ranking high up the CO₂ emissions charts is unlikely to change in a hurry; coal is just too easy and cheap to use for the country to wean itself off its use any time soon.

Denmark has also eagerly joined the rush, along with Russia, Norway and Canada to lay claim to the valuable gas and oil thought to lie under large areas of the arctic. Environmentalists fear that exploration and development in this ecologically delicate part of the world could lead to catastrophic local pollution, not to mention adding to ever-rising levels of atmospheric CO₂.

The current government has also cut renewable energy subsidies, stalling the growth in the sector and biodiversity (see opposite).

Wind energy provides over 20% of Denmark's electricity, more than any other country in the world.

Pollution

The really good news for Denmark is that its anti-pollution policies are starting to pay off. Efforts to curb run-off from farmland have restored many streams and river systems to good health.

Over recent decades air pollutants – including sulphur dioxide, a massively harmful gas that created the acidic rainfall which devastated forested areas all over the country in the latter part of the 20th century – have dropped by nearly 50%. Denmark is also one of the pioneers in terms of taxing carbon emissions. Since 1993 Danish businesses have been required to pay a tax based on their carbon dioxide emissions.

In 1971 Denmark created a cabinet-level ministry to deal specifically with environmental issues, the first industrialised country to do so. The EU has based its European Environment Agency in Copenhagen, and the Danes have taken an active role in international efforts to reduce pollution.

While successive and progressive environmental policies have improved Denmark's river, coast and land ecosystems, run-off from farms is still a serious problem. Combined with warm seas, this creates toxic algae almost every year somewhere along the coast. Although still rare and isolated it is something to be aware of during the summer months.

Sustainability

Denmark prides itself on being a leading green pioneer, especially when it comes to waste, which it treats as a resource rather than problem to be dealt with. The object is to send as little as possible to landfill, only using it as a last resort.

More than 80% of all paper produced comes from used paper and roughly half of all waste is recycled. Corporate and social responsibility is becoming an important issue for many businesses, not least the fashion industry, which is sourcing more sustainable clothing. Hotels and restaurants are also signing up to accreditation schemes, such as the Green Key scheme (p21).

Denmark hopes to claim the North Pole for oil and gas exploration by scientifically proving that the seabed beneath it was a natural extension of Greenland.

A POWER REVOLUTION?

The Danes have long known about the potential power of the wind. Windmills have been common in northern Europe for about eight centuries, and windmills have been generating power (rather than milling grain) in Denmark since the late 19th century.

With the growing demand for sustainable, low-carbon power production and growing concern over climate change, these are boom times for the industry. Far-sighted Denmark has positioned itself as a world leader in wind power. Its wind industry is the world's largest, employing more than 20,000 people and exporting some 90% of the equipment produced, with a global market share of 40%. Wind power already accounts for a world-leading 20% of Danish power needs, a percentage that is set to grow further in the next few decades.

Rows of sleek wind turbines are a common sight on the Danish landscape, particularly along breezy coastal areas. In 2001 what was then the world's largest offshore windmill park was built outside Copenhagen harbour, and its 20 giant windmills now generate 3% of the capital's electricity.

A single three-megawatt turbine can provide enough energy for 3400 households for a year, while the next generation of giant offshore turbines now being made can generate 4MW of power or more. Four more giant offshore wind farms are on the drawing board, although the ending of government subsidy support for the nation's wind industry has thrown such developments into confusion.

It is a bitter irony for the industry and environmental groups that at a time when the rest of the world has become very interested indeed in its potential the current Danish government has effectively decided to stop supporting wind power. In the year it came to power the number of new wind turbines fell from almost 600 a year to almost zero at the time of writing.

For more information on wind farms go to the Danish Wind Industry Association website, www.windpower.org.

Outdoor Activities

Denmark's long summer days make it an ideal destination for outdoor fun. Cycling, hiking, horse riding, canoeing, sailing or just soaking up the sun on the beach are all popular choices. Although small, Denmark has some great diversity for such activities, from island-hopping bike adventures, to canoeing through the Lake District along Denmark's longest river, or horse riding into a magical sunset on the west coast of Jutland.

CYCLING

Denmark is a superb country for the cyclist, with a 3700km cycle network and relatively quiet country roads through an attractive (and gently) undulating landscape. Biking holidays are becoming increasingly popular, reflecting the Danes' own love of the great outdoors.

Cycling is a very common means of transport in Denmark, as it keeps people fit, is environmentally friendly and is an easy option for city folk.

Due to cycling's standing and popularity, cyclists enjoy a variety of well-established and well-maintained routes around towns as well as through the country. These cycling routes are very well suited for recreational cyclists, including families with children.

Danish cyclists enjoy rights that, in most other countries, are reserved for motorists. There are bicycle lanes along major city roads and through central areas, road signs are posted for bicycle traffic, and bicycle racks can be found at grocery shops, museums and many other public places. Drivers are so accommodating to cyclists in this country that cycling is an almost surreal experience.

When touring the country by bike, accommodation is easy to find, be it at a small country inn or at a basic camping ground. One advantage of the small scale of the country is that you're never far from a bed and a hot shower, which can be greatly needed after a tough day on the road.

For quality rental bikes, Copenhagen (p109) and Århus (p270) are your best bets. For more information on bicycle transport see p331.

Maps & Resources

The best map for planning a trip is *Cykelferiekort* (49kr), a 1:500,000-scale map published by the Danish cycling federation, Dansk Cyklist Forbund. Each county produces its own detailed 1:100,000 cycle touring maps; many of them come complete with booklets detailing accommodation and other local information. These maps are readily available at tourist offices.

Dansk Cyklist Forbund (Map pp78-9; ☎ 33 32 31 21; www.dcf.dk; Rømersgade 5, Copenhagen K) has its headquarters in Copenhagen. Quality cycling maps can be ordered direct; jump on the internet (Danish only) or call.

FAMILY FUN

Rental chalets in dedicated, family-friendly holiday parks are a good way to combine accommodation with activities for adults and children, with forest walks, beach activities, water slides, golf, adventure parks and spas on your doorstep. Several companies offer these, including **Strand Hotellerne** (☎ 70 23 20 30; www.strandhotellerne.dk), which runs four such parks in Jutland. Stays are generally for a minimum of a weekend, sometimes a week during busier times. Many of Jutland's holiday parks are an easy drive from **Legoland** (p281). At the edge of the sleepy southern Zealand islands is **Lalandia** (p180), an extensive indoor and outdoor activity park with a waterpark, ice rink, golf courses and expanses of beach.

It is estimated that, on average, each Dane rides 3km per day.

Cycling Routes & Tours

Ten major bike routes run throughout the country, all of them in immaculate condition. In addition to the 'top 10', each county has an extensive network of bike routes that enables you to explore literally every inch of the country.

Routes 1, 3 and 5 run the length of Jutland, with route 1 covering the wind-swept west coast, route 3 cutting through the middle and route 5 hugging the east coast. Routes 2 and 4 take you out of the capital and over to Jutland's ferocious west coast, while route 6 comes out of Copenhagen, across Funen and through to the fishing stronghold of Esbjerg. Routes 7 and 9 comprehensively cover Zealand and Lolland, while route 8 sweeps across the southern leg of the country. Route 10 runs around the coast of Bornholm.

The best way to tour Denmark is by grabbing a map and planning it yourself. The routes are easy to follow and make for a great adventure. Tours, not surprisingly, are also available and are exceptionally well run although they tend to be rather pricey affairs. Denmark's cycling maps make it easy to self-plan your tour as they detail places to stay as well as all sorts of sightseeing spots, such as castles, museums and historic sights.

However, if you're interested in joining a packaged cycling tour, the following companies are worth a look.

City Safari (☎ 33 23 94 90; www.citysafari.dk; tours from 250kr) For innovative tours of the capital this company has it covered, from the relaxed informative historical viewpoint through to the Copenhagen-by-night experience. They do it well and their tours pedal to the beat of their groups.

Euro-Bike & Walking Tours (www.eurobike.com; tours from US\$2050) The tours are family friendly and, although a little pricey, they do deliver top-notch accommodation on their eight-day tour of the Danish Isles.

Scantours (www.scantours.com; 11-day tour US\$2100) A US-based company that offers seven different tours around the islands.

Classic Rides

There is incredible biking diversity on offer in Denmark. Here are three classic rides that use both national and local bike routes to give you an unforgettable biking adventure.

THE ZEALAND ISLANDS

Duration: 10–14 days

This ride is great if you have landed in the capital and want to explore the islands of the south at your own leisurely pace. The ride takes in six islands and there is plenty to see and do. You will be using three main bike routes (9, 8 and 6). Depending on how much you want to pedal, and how much you want to absorb, this ride can take anywhere between 10 days and two weeks.

It begins by taking route 9 south out of the capital and along the east coast of Zealand passing through the historic port town of Køge (p138), the yacht-infested Præstø (p153) and the medieval stronghold of Vordingborg (p154). The terrain is relatively mild and the bike tracks are tailor-made for easy riding.

When you reach the southern tip, cross the bridge to Falster (p174) and you can ride around the northwest of the island through the tiny hamlets of Nr Vedby, Vålse and Alstrup before you jump on another bridge over to the pastorally rich island of Lolland (p177).

Once on Lolland you can take in the towns of Skaskøbing and Maribo before switching onto route 8 and heading west through the town of Nakskov and on to the ferry terminal at Tårs.

Hop on the ferry over to the seaside town of Spodsbjerg on Langeland (p220) and then, depending on your time frame, you could cut a quick lap of the island or make a beeline for Tåsinge (p218) and the island of Funen (p198) and the train back to Copenhagen or west to Jutland.

Major tourist offices in Denmark stock *Cycling Holidays in West Jutland and Funen and the Isles*, and can suggest routes, things to see and do and accommodation options along the way.



SOUTHERN JUTLAND

Duration: 7–12 days

This ride takes in two glorious castles, a typically relaxed Danish island, and two wonderfully contrasting towns in Ribe and Kolding. The cycling is relatively easy unless the west coast wind blows hard.

The tour starts at Sønderborg (p250), where you can head off for a day exploring the cycle-friendly island of Als. There's a castle, lighthouse and quaint villages to see and it's well worth a day trip.

You then head west to the royal castle of Gråsten (p250), which is an ideal spot for a picnic lunch in the gardens, before cycling down to Padborg (p250) on the German border.

From Padborg you will pass through plenty of mellow fields on your way to Tønder (p247), a town rich in history. It's also 4km from Møgelstønder (p249), where you can take in what is arguably the most beautiful street in Denmark, and also see Prince Joachim's castle.

Continue west through the town of Højer past its impressive windmill, and swing up the coast 30km to the island of Rømø (p244). On your trip you

RULES OF THE ROAD

Just as cyclists' rights are taken seriously in Denmark, so too are their responsibilities. Here are some of the traffic regulations that are directly relevant to cyclists.

- All traffic in Denmark, both bicycle and motor vehicle, drives on the right-hand side of the road.
- Cyclists are obliged to obey traffic lights, pedestrian right-of-ways and most other road rules that apply to motor vehicles.
- Lights are required for night riding.
- When making a left turn at crossings, a large left turn is mandatory; that is, you must cycle straight across the intersecting road, staying on the right, before turning left into the right-hand lane of the new road. Do not cross diagonally.
- Use hand signals to indicate turns: your left arm should be outstretched prior to a left turn, and your right arm outstretched before a right turn.
- When entering a roundabout yield to vehicles already in the roundabout.
- If you're transporting children, the bicycle must have two independent brakes. A maximum of two children under the age of six can be carried on the bicycle or in an attached trailer.

will notice many money-spinning wind turbines. Rømø is normally pretty quiet but well worth a day of relaxed touring and sightseeing.

When you leave the island make a beeline for Ribe (p238), the oldest and quite possibly prettiest town in the land. While this ride is often windy, its flat surface makes it a highly pleasurable, stress-free ride.

For the final leg, you will cross a large chunk of Southern Jutland to the ever improving Kolding (p230).

BORNHOLM ODYSSEY

Duration: 4–7 days

Unique is the word to use when biking on Bornholm (p182). There is more than 200km of cycling paths around the island. They run along former railway lines and through forest trails and offer an enchanting experience. Bornholm is also home to Denmark's third-largest forest, and an impressive waterfall awaits in Dondalen. In the south the ground is covered by a 550 million-year-old layer of sandstone. You will find granite rocks on this island that are also unique to Bornholm. There's a multitude of picturesque coastal villages and medieval round churches on offer, which highlight the striking contrast that is Bornholm. You can experience it all at your own leisurely pace, spending anywhere from four to seven days exploring the island. Pick up a copy of the English-language *Bicycle Routes on Bornholm* from the tourist office.

WINDSURFING & KITE SURFING

The wild winds of the west coast have gained a lot of attention from windsurfers as the consistently good southwest–northwest conditions attract many Europeans to Klitmøller (p313) and Hvide Sande (p290).

Not only do these towns hold numerous contests each year, but they boast great terrain for all levels. Experts can carve up the wild North Sea breakers, while beginners can master the basics on the inland fjords. Klitmøller has a lovely bay that appears tailor-made for this activity, while Hvide Sande's most popular point is just off the end of the lock.

Kite surfing, the latest fad, can be carried out at both these destinations. It is a whole new concept, and is doing what snowboarding did to skiing, revolutionising the boundaries of the sport.

Copenhagen can boast that 32% of its commuters travel on two wheels, probably the highest percentage in any industrialised urban centre. Only 30% drive; the rest walk (5%) or take public transport (33%).

Windsurfers with their own equipment can pick and choose where to set sail, but for beginners the best areas are the inland lakes. You can hire equipment from Hvide Sande and Klitmøller (400/750kr per three-hour windsurfing/kite-surfing introductory lesson).

SAILING

Denmark's varied 7314km of coastline and islands are simply made for sailing, something the Danes embrace enthusiastically. The mixture of sea, calmer inshore waters and still fjords, combined with scores of pretty, cobbled and often historic harbours makes it a perfect way to explore the country. Yachts and motorboats equipped with all the necessary safety, living and navigational equipment will cost between 4300kr and 17,000kr per week. Prices vary considerably by season and size of craft.

If hiring your own craft sounds too much like hard work, all major towns along the southern coast of Funen (p198) offer sailing cruises either at sunset or during the day in the summer months. On some of them you can actively take part in the running of the ship, while on others you're invited to sit back and enjoy a glass of bubbly.

HORSE RIDING

Horse riding is excellent in Denmark, with fantastic trails and scenic rides spread throughout the country. Jutland is full of opportunities, be it up north meandering along some forest paths, or down south on the island of Rømø (p244) galloping into the glorious sunset. Icelandic horses, whose forebears were once used by the Vikings as a key mode of transport, can now be found all over the country. Rides can be organised through riding companies at very moderate prices (from 95kr per hour). See p245 for more. A number of places around Denmark offer Horse riding courses on a day, half or full board bases, costing from 2000kr upwards. See www.visitdenmark.com for details of courses by region.

CANOEING & KAYAKING

The best canoeing and kayaking in Denmark can be experienced along the rivers Gudenåen and Susåen. For more information about paddling a boat, check out The Lake District section (p274). Canoeing the small coves, bays and peninsulas of several Danish fjords is also an option, including Limfjorden in Northern Jutland and the fjords of Zealand: Roskilde Fjord, Holbæk Fjord and Isefjord.

Give the earth's tectonic plates a few hundred million years and they may have turned flat Denmark into a mountainous, white water paradise. In the meantime, the best white water you'll encounter is paddling the sea surf. The coastal kayaking opportunities elsewhere are generally excellent. For details of kayak hire and tours see the links in the relevant activities section in Visit Denmark's website (www.visitdenmark.com).

WALKING

Walking and hiking in Denmark is not as widespread a phenomenon as cycling, but it's popular nonetheless. There are some picturesque trails through Denmark's main national park, Rebild Bakker (p288). Along with some good, if not very taxing hikes within The Lake District (p274), there are also some decent tracks in southern Zealand. Aside from that, beaches are great for a stroll and none are better than those up at Denmark's most northern tip, Grenen (p305). Walkers in Denmark are allowed to explore any stretch of coast, irrespective of who owns it. Forests are fair game too, but you must stick to the paths.

Organise yacht hire through the Maritimt Center (www.maritimt-center.dk). The Denmark section of www.archipelago.nu offers a good sailing overview.

Icelandic horses are known for their special gaits. Apart from walking, trotting and cantering, they are able to *rölt* (a unique kind of ambling gait) and some can go in *skeið* (pace), where the horse moves both legs on one side at the same time. The most prized breeds can do all five gaits.

RESPONSIBLE WALKING & CAMPING

Rubbish

- If you've carried it in, you can carry it back out – everything, including empty packaging, citrus peel and cigarette butts, can be stowed in a dedicated rubbish bag. Make an effort to pick up rubbish left by others.
- Sanitary napkins, tampons and condoms don't burn or decompose readily, so carry them out, whatever the inconvenience.
- Burying rubbish disturbs soil and ground cover and encourages erosion and weed growth. Buried rubbish takes years to decompose and will probably be dug up by wild animals who may be injured or poisoned by it.

Human Waste Disposal

- Bury your waste. Dig a small hole 15cm deep and at least 30m from any stream, 50m from paths and 200m from any buildings. Toilet paper should be burnt, although this is not recommended in a forest, above the tree line or in dry grassland. Otherwise, carry it out – burying it is a last resort. Ideally, use biodegradable paper.

Camping

- In remote areas, use a recognised site rather than create a new one. Keep at least 30m from watercourses and paths. Move on after a night or two.
- Pitch your tent away from hollows where water is likely to accumulate so that it won't be necessary to dig damaging trenches if it rains heavily.
- Leave your site as you found it – with minimal or no trace of your use.

Washing

- Don't use detergents or toothpaste in or near streams or lakes; even if they are biodegradable they can harm fish and wildlife.
- To wash yourself, use biodegradable soap and a water container at least 50m from the watercourse. Disperse the waste water widely so it filters through the soil before returning to the stream.
- Wash cooking utensils 50m from watercourses using a scourer or gritty sand instead of detergent.

Fires

- Use a safe existing fireplace rather than making a new one. Don't surround it with rocks – they're just another visual scar – but clear away all flammable material for at least 2m. Keep the fire small (under 1 sq m) and use a minimum of dead, fallen wood.
- Be absolutely certain the fire is extinguished. Spread the embers and drown them with water. Turn the embers over to check the fire is extinguished throughout. Scatter the charcoal and cover the fire site with soil and leaves.

SWIMMING

Although the water temperature would worry even brass monkeys most of the year, enjoyable seaside swimming can be had in the warmer months (July and August). Generally speaking the Baltic waters will be a degree or two warmer than those of the North Sea. Outside of that nearly all regional

towns have an aqua centre with heated pools. The quality of the beaches is outstanding as the majority have clean water, silky sand and plenty of room. If you are swimming on the west coast of Jutland, caution needs to be taken with currents and undertows from the ever-dangerous North Sea. In Copenhagen, the outdoor swimming options are better than ever with the revitalised Amager Strandpark (p88) and harbour swimming pools, such as Copencabana (p88).

FISHING

Denmark abounds with streams and lakes, all well stocked with pike, perch and trout. In addition, with so much shoreline the saltwater fishing possibilities are endless, with the most common saltwater fish being cod, mackerel, plaice and sea trout. Fly fishing enthusiasts will find the best spots are the rivers in Jutland.

Both sea and freshwater anglers between the ages of 18 and 67 are required to carry a fishing licence (30/125kr per day/week); these are sold at most tourist offices and tackle shops. There are also a number of privately run 'put and take' fishing holes enabling you to fish in well-stocked rivers and lakes for a fee.

Fishing rights in natural lakes and streams are nearly always private, but are often let to local angling societies, which issue day or week cards. Not including the fishing licence, rates range from 40kr to 150kr for a day card, and 100kr to 350kr for a week card.