

Nordic (Denmark, Norway, Sweden) Trip

20 Jul 2003 to 29 Jul 2003

To many people, the Nordics countries (Denmark, Norway and Sweden) are the ideal places to live in. Due to business reasons, I have the chance to visit Sweden frequently, and gained some understanding of these countries. This time I brought my wife over and let her experience the beauty and charm of these 3 countries.

20 July

- TG flight HK to Bangkok, leaving HK at 8:45pm
- Spent 2 hours in transit at Bangkok
- TG flight from Bangkok to Copenhagen leaving after midnight, flight time about 11 hours

21 July

- Landed in Copenhagen at around 6am.
- Copenhagen airport was very nice, simple and straight forward. Lots of wood used in the interior.
- Train from Copenhagen airport to Central Station took 15-20 minutes only
- Arrived at Central Station at around 7am, walked to Copenhagen Scandic Hotel which was a few blocks way. Rain started to fall.
- Too early for checking in, only got the room after waiting for 45 minutes. Luckily we were allowed to use the coffee shop.
- Started our tour after a big nice bath, rain continued.
- Visited the "longest shopping street in the world – Ostergarde". Full of shops, bars and restaurants, Ostergarde was a nice place to walk through.
- Walked to the Little Mermaid, which took about 20 minutes. The Little Mermaid was surprisingly small, sitting lonely by the seaside.
- Returned via the route we came, and walked through the Palace Amalienborg, where the Queen lived.
- Virtually no security control in Amalienborg, only 4 guards, 1 standing at each corners of the central square. Of course we were not allowed to go inside the Palace.
- Visited Nyhavn, an old canal not in use now, lined on both sides with beautiful old buildings. All were converted into bars and restaurants. We took our lunch here, experienced the romantic atmosphere.
- Went for a canal boat tour from Nyhavn. Boats were very "flat" to accomodate the height of the bridges.
- Found Tivoli Park next to the train station, but did not enter – tickets too expensive.
- Took dinner in a Ribs restaurant next to the enterance of Tivoli – pretty nice ribs.
- Sun virtually did not set in the Nordics during summer, it was still as bright as daytime.
- Went to bed early due to Jet-Lag.

22 July

- Took train to Hillerod to visit the most beautiful castle in Denmark – Frederiskborg Slot.
- The outlook of Frederiksborg was really nice, though the interior was not particularly great. After touring the interior of the Castle and walked outside, we found beautiful sunshine greeting us.

- A beautiful garden behind the Castle, a typical European type with geometric setting. Looked at the Castle from this garden, it was really beautiful!
- Leaving Frederiksborg, we toured around the town of Hillerod and returned to Copenhagen.
- Took sandwiches as lunch in an open air bar, the serving size was rather big.
- Visited the National Museum and spent over an hour inside.
- Visited the Christiansborg Slot. This castle was still being used as government offices and we did not enter any buildings.
- Found some restaurants in front of the canal near the old Copenhagen Stock Exchange. After studying their menus, picked one that served seafood.
- Selected to sit outdoor, and ordered prawns and fish. I could tell you that this was one of the best Western food that I had ever tried so far.
- With soft breeze blowing and gentle sunshine, it was really like heaven. Spent almost 2 hours in the restaurant. What more can you ask for after having a dinner like this?

23 July

- Took a late morning flight to the second biggest city of Norway – Bergen.
- Caught the airport bus just when we stepped out from the airport, without a minute lost. The trip to the Bergen Central Station took about 30 minutes.
- Bought the ticket for the fjord trip for tomorrow inside the Train Station, and walked towards the old town.
- Just when we were very close to the harbour front and making a right turn, we suddenly entered a completely different world. Hundreds of tourist in front of us and we were in front of the famous Bergen fish market (Torget).
- Checked into the Rosenkrantz hotel. The room was a special offer and was in the top floor. The roof was sloped, a portion of the room was "cut" away.
- First visited the Torget again. Could not see raw oysters, whole tuna...etc, but most of the stuffs sold here were pre-processed and packaged. A bit disappointed.
- Right at 4pm, a big water tank truck arrived. With a big hose, they quickly washed the whole place and you could not even smell a fish after 30 minutes. Efficient!
- Visited Bryggen, the place where the Bergen merchants in the old days settled. The outlook of these houses were rather special, linked by elevated walkways, forming a small community.
- Bryggen was an UNESCO World Heritage. Many shops and restaurants were now opened inside, and became the tourist focal point in Bergen.
- An old pier near Torget was converted into a restaurant complex. Things were very expensive here. Picked a lower cost pizza house for our dinner.

24 July

- Took the train to Voss to start our Fjord trip.
- Bought the Hardanger Fjord Package yesterday, which was different from the more common "Norway in a Nutshell" package. Looking back now, this might not be the best choice.
- From Voss, changed to a bus to go to the small village of Ulvik. The scenery was very beautiful along the way.
- Weather was bad today without sunshine, but did not hurt the beauty of the place.
- At Ulvik, boarded a ferry to start the Fjord tour. The ferry sailed towards Eidfjord, which took 1 hour.
- This section of Hardanger Fjord was not too narrow and the cliffs along the river sides were not too steep. A number of small villages were built along the river. This was indeed like a heaven!
- Arrived at Eidfjord around noon, and the ferry stayed here for about 2 hours.

- Some people followed the suggestion of the crew to take a side trip to Voringsfossen (the biggest waterfall of Norway). Found it too costly so decided to stay in Eidfjord and walked around the village.
- Ferry restarted and dropped at Lofthus and finally terminated in Norheimsund. We were touring the fjord for 3-4 hours already.
- Took bus from Norheimsund back to Bergen.
- Enjoyed a nice seafood dinner in a restaurant in Bryggen. Tried the famous fish soup.

25 July

- Took the train from Bergen to Oslo.
- Train passed through the highland in Norway and was 1 of the best scenic rail track in Europe.
- Train was slow in climbing the mountains and took 6-7 hours to arrive at Oslo. It was already mid afternoon.
- Checked in Scandic Hotel next to the train station.
- Walked along the Karl Johansgate (main street) and saw the royal Palace.
- Visited the harbour front, which was converted to a shopping complex.
- Visited the old fort of Akershus, another UNESCO World Heritage.
- Found a French restaurant in Karl Johansgate and had dinner there. Things were very expensive here. Shops closed pretty early in Oslo.

26 July

- Took the bus and visited the Vikingshipuset (Viking Ship Museum) in the early morning.
- Took a ferry back to the harbour front of Oslo.
- Tried the street trams and visited Frognerparken, the park with many sculptures of human bodies. The sculptures were all very nice and described the different aspects of life.
- Took lunch in McDonalds near the train station – save some money!
- Took the train from Oslo to Stockholm.
- Arrived at Stockholm around 5pm.
- Checked in Central Hotel, very close to the Central Train Station.
- Took dinner at the restaurant near the Hotel, pretty nice seafood.
- Walked to the old town after dinner, still found many tourists in the late evening. But many shops were closed already.

27 July

- Got up late as schedule was loose for the day.
- Walk to the old Vasa Museum and saw this once sunk old war ship.
- Went back to the city and visited the City Hall. Saw the "Golden Hall" and the place where the Nobel Price Dinner was hosted.
- Went to the old town and saw the solders in the royal palace changing shift, certainly not as interesting as the one in front of Buckingham.
- Took lunch in a restaurant in the plaza of the old town.
- Joined the Stockholm water tour and saw the beautiful harbour of Stockholm.
- Strolled along the small streets in the old town again.
- Took dinner in an Italian restaurant Michaelangelo in the old town, but the taste was not good. Surprise!?
- Really feel tired and went to bed early.

28 July

- Took Arlanda Express to Stockholm Arlanda airport in the morning.
- Flied to Copenhagen and waited for a few hours for the connecting flight to Bangkok

29 July

- Arrived Bangkok in the early morning
- Changed to a flight to Hong Kong and arrived HK around noon.

****Trip ended****

This update: 6 Jan 2007