Viking Denmark [1]

A thousand years ago, the Vikings forced themselves onto the world stage and left an indelible mark on many parts of Europe. Denmark, their homeland, has been shaped by Viking culture and here are some of the places you can see this most strikingly.

Denmark's Birth Certificate

Jelling [2], in Jutland, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site [3]. Here, you can walk amongst thousand-year-old rune stones, put in place by Viking kings and still standing between enormous burial mounds. On one of the largest stones, you can read an inscription by King Harald Bluetooth. This national birth certificate claims that he united Denmark and brought Christianity to the new kingdom. The visitors' centre, Royal Jelling [2], takes you through the history of the monuments over 1000 years, while the Prehistoric Museum at Moesgård contains many more fascinating Viking rune stones.

Viking monuments

Denmark is covered with Viking monuments. The Ladby Ship [4] (Ladbyskibet) on Funen [5] (Fyn) is a Viking ship in which a Viking chieftan was buried with all his precious possessions. Also on Funen, is the Glavendrup rune stone, which displays Denmark's longest Viking inscription. You can also visit the vast ship-shaped Viking burial mounds in the area. At Lindholm Høje [6], near Aalborg [7], you can wander around the biggest ancient burial ground in Scandinavia. Take a tour of all Denmark's Viking treasures, with our Viking trail across the country [8].

Viking ships

The Vikings dominated the region thanks to their strong command of the sea and their skills as ship builders, as well as warriors. The approach of their boats would strike fear into the hearts of people and you can witness that power for yourself at the Viking Ship Museum [9] in Roskilde. Here, five original Viking longboats are on display, having been salvaged from the bottom of the nearby fjord.

Strongholds and ring fortresses

Amongst all the Viking relics still visible today, their circular fortresses and strongholds are some of the most impressive. Walk around some of the biggest at Trelleborg Castle [10] and Fyrkat [11]. All these sites have fascinating museums for you to find out more and see artefacts found in the fortresses. In the summer, you can enjoy Viking markets here and re-enactments of Viking battles.

Further reading

Read more about The History of Denmark [12].