Copenhagen's hidden gems [1]

You've seen The Little Mermaid, spent an unforgettable night in Tivoli and had your picture taken with the royal guards at Amalienborg Palace. Now it's time to explore the hidden gems of the city. With this guide to Copenhagen's best-kept secrets, head off the beaten track and truly experience the heart of the city.

The Royal Library Garden

Tucked away in Christiansborg Palace [2], the home of the Danish Parliament, you'll find The Royal Library Garden. This green oasis can be accessed through the gates on Parliament Square.

A quiet coffee

Behind Design Museum Danmark [3] (Kunstindustrimuseet) on Bredgade, lies the fine Grønnegård yard. Here you can take a break from the sights and enjoy a cup of coffee at the Museum Café [4].

Out on the range

The Shooting Range Gardens (Skydebanehaven) in the Vesterbro area of the city are hidden behind vast brick ramparts, originally built to protect passers-by from stray bullets! Once home to Royal Copenhagen Shooting Society, this is now a children's play park.

A private public garden

Classens Have (Classen's Garden) in Østerbro [5] seems at first glance like a private garden, but luckily you can enjoy it too! Access this cosy public garden through the gates on Classensgade.

Resting place of Hans Christian Andersen

Assistens Cemetery (Kirkegaard) [6] in Nørrebro [7] is a peaceful resting place for famous names such as Hans Christian Andersen, Hans Scherfig, Søren Kirkegaard and Niels Bohr. But the beautiful grounds are also enjoyed by the living and you can even take a guided tour. Check out the hip street Jægersborggade [8] just nearby.

Christianshavn

Wander along the picturesque cobbled canal streets called Overgaden neden Vandet and Overgaden oven Vandet. Lined with yachts and houseboats, you can rent rowing boats here and take a drink in the café on the water.

The Meatpacking District

Halmtorvet is a cute cobbled square lined with cafés in Vesterbro. Just beside this, you can access Øksnehallen, an alternative exhibition centre, and The Meatpacking District (Kødbyen). Once the daily stop-off for the meat industry, this trendy area is now the hottest place to go out for food and drinks in the city.

Underground museum

Cisternerne [9] in Søndermarken, right next to the impressive Frederiksberg Gardens [10], is an underground museum featuring modern glass art from Denmark and around the world.

Kayak tours of the city

Take your own tailor-made tour of the city by kayak [11] with professional kayak instructors. Make them as long or as short as you want and ask them to show you their favourite lesser-known parts of the city.

City alleyways

Copenhagen’s old centre is criss-crossed with interesting little passages and alleyways, great for exploring and taking pictures. Just head out on streets like Strøget and Læderstræde and keep your eyes open left and right for some of the best examples!

Christiania

Despite being one of Copenhagen’s most visited places, the Freetown of Christiania [12] has many quiet spots, such as the lovely walking trails along the lake behind it. Here, you’ll walk past Christiania’s unique houses and can stop in to cafes, shops and workshops around the site. Important safety note: Christiania has always been controversial and is still a very hotly-discussed area, not least because of problems with the trading of hash. The police have recently stated that they do not have free and open access to Christiania, which may cause problems for visitors. Some visitors may find Christiania, particularly the area around Pusher Street, to be rough. When entering Christiania it is therefore extremely important that you follow the Do's and Don'ts signs up at the entrances. Here you'll find advice against running or talking on the mobile phone inside Christiania. As well as this, visitors must not take photographs or film inside Christiania.

For your own safety, we recommend that you do not take cameras with you at all to Christiania. A tourist has recently been attacked inside Christiania simply for having a camera on them, even though they were not attempting to take photographs. The same applies to cameras on mobile phones.

Further reading

Read more about Copenhagen [13].

Book a hotel in Copenhagen [14]. [14]