
[The art of Danish hygge \[1\]](#)

Hard to explain and even harder to pronounce, the Danish word hygge (sounds a bit like 'hooga') roughly translates to coziness, but that definition doesn't quite cover it.

Hygge is as Danish as pork roast and cold beer and it goes far in illuminating the Danish soul. In essence, hygge means creating a nice, warm atmosphere and enjoying the good things in life with good people around you. The warm glow of candlelight is hygge. Friends and family – that's hygge too. And let's not forget the eating and drinking – preferably sitting around the table for hours on end discussing the big and small things in life. Perhaps the Danish idea of hygge explains why the Danes are often considered the happiest people in the world?

The high season of hygge

The high season of hygge is Christmas. Danes lead a secular lifestyle but when it comes to religious holidays, they pull out the stops. Danish winters are known to be long and dark, and so the Danes fight the darkness with their best weapon: hygge, and the millions of candles that go with it. If you have ever been to Tivoli Gardens or walked the streets of Copenhagen during the festive season, you have an idea of what Danes can do with lighting, mulled wine (known as gløgg for the locals), blankets and oversize scarves. If you haven't maybe it's time you try.

Summer hygge

If you plan on visiting Denmark during the summer months don't despair. Hygge is something that happens all year round. Picnics in the park, barbecues with friends, outdoor concerts, street festivals and bike rides can all be very hygge, especially when done the Danish way.

The origins of Danish hygge

Hygge didn't originate in the Danish language but in Norwegian, where it meant something like "well-being." It first appeared in Danish writing around the end of the 18th Century and the Danes have embraced it ever since. One good thing about hygge is that you can apply it anywhere, and Danes allocate it generously to everything commonplace, as you will surely find out on your visit to Denmark.