Towns and villages [1]

There are no sprawling metropolitan areas in North Zealand. The area is characterised by small fishing, harbour and ferry towns and a lovely, laid-back atmosphere.

Helsingør (Elsinore)

World-famous as the home of Elsinore, the castle of Shakespeare's Hamlet, Helsingør has long held a strategically important position at the mouth of the Baltic Sea. Feel the legacy of power here, with a trip to see Kronborg Castle, or walk the cobbled streets lined with half-timbered houses. The cathedral and monastery in town are also worth a visit.

Fredensborg

See Fredensborg Castle, the Danish royal family's spring and autumn residence, in the town of Fredensborg. The large castle park has many paths and offers great views of Esrum Lake.

Hillerød

Hillerød is the home of the dramatic Frederiksborg Castle, where you can visit the Danish Natural History Museum and its impressive portrait gallery. The castle was a royal castle for many years and you can venture out from the castle into expansive hunting forests around Hillerød town.

Frederiksværk

Between Roskilde Fjord and Arresø lake, lies the old industrial town of Frederiksværk. The Frederiksværk Industrial Museum makes a great day trip in the region and is based in an old canon foundry and gun powder factory.

Frederikssund

Frederikssund sits on the fjord and is worth a visit, not least for the museum of the painter J. F. Willumsen. At a head of the fjord, you can visit a reconstructed Viking village and experience ferocious Viking plays.

Small seaside towns

On North Zealand's coast you'll find a plethora of cosy, little seaside towns, such as Hornbæk, Gilleleje, Rågeleje, Tisvilde and Liseleje. Several of them are old fishing centres but have evolved into exclusive holiday destinations. Gilleleje still has a functioning fishing harbour.

Fishing towns in the area have played an important role in Danish history, as it was here that Danish fishermen helped Danish Jews escape the invading German forces in WWII. The vast majority of Denmark's Jewish population escaped, but some were not so lucky. Gilleleje Museum tells you the story of the 75 Jews that were hidden in the attic of Gilleleje Church, then informed on and captured.

Fishing villages

Visit Hundested, a small fishing village has developed into a busy fishing harbour. At Skansen, just outside Hundested, you can visit the home of the late polar explorer, Knud Rasmussen. To the north, Kikhavn is one of the region's oldest fishing villages and many of its thatched cottages are protected.

Further reading

Read more about North Zealand [2].

Read more about Historical Denmark [3].