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Exploring Mols Bjerger National Park

Photo by Irina Raiu/Flickr

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## Why Viking Country Is the Perfect Danish Escape

Move over Copenhagen; there's a new must-see city in Denmark.

[Mary Holland](#)

4.24.2017

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Get to know 2017's European Capital of Culture.

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[Denmark](#) used to be known for one place: the city of [Copenhagen](#). But when the Danish city of [Aarhus](#) was named a [Cultural Capital of Europe for 2017](#) by the European Union and recognized as an official [European Region of Gastronomy](#), a different part of Denmark suddenly stepped into the spotlight. Aarhus is on the Jutland Peninsula, a rugged coastline that runs along the eastern side of mainland Denmark. The region is replete with dramatic landscapes, wild seascapes, and moody skies: the perfect setting for a Viking saga. Go now when the winter is melting away and summer is about to set in; when days are long and *hygge* ([it's not just a winter feeling](#)) is on high! Here is how to make the most of Denmark's Viking country.

### Check into a classic Danish inn

In Denmark, inns are more than just roadside stops. In fact, they're quite the opposite: sprawling country lodges where many Danes spend their summer weekends. At the sea-facing [Molskroen](#) |

in [Ebeltoft](#), guests don't just check in to escape the city; they're also there for the gastronomic experience. This quintessential Danish inn is known for its remarkable Nordic cuisine, and many of Denmark's most renowned chefs have passed through its kitchen doors. With only 18 rooms and a cozy, Scandi-chic interior, it feels like a real home away from home.

### Toast to beloved local craft brews at the source

It may sound like a character from *Game of Thrones*, but [Ebeltoft Gardbryggeri](#) is actually a family-owned brewery known for its smorgasbord of cool craft beers and sodas (many of which were served at [Noma](#) |

). Sample a selection of flavors, have a pint with the very friendly brewmaster, or grab a seat outside and gaze over the craggy landscape—it's an ideal place on the peninsula to feel like a local. If you're feeling bold (and maybe a few drinks down), try your hand at pronouncing the name. But we'll warn you, the more you sip, the funnier your attempts will become.

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### **Spend a day in Aarhus**

As this year's Cultural Capital, Aarhus has been seriously gearing up for all the attention. There are a number of artsy, cultural events scheduled throughout the year (all of which can be viewed in the [online calendar](#)), but the arts aren't the city's only notable accomplishment. Aarhus's dining scene has been making international waves with three Michelin-starred restaurants and a further lineup of excellent dining options that could easily rival Copenhagen's. Try [Restaurant Substans](#) |

for Michelin-starred seasonal cuisine in a low-key environment, [Haervaerk](#) for farm-to-table fine dining, [Great Coffee](#) for, well, great coffee, [Gedulgt](#) for crafty cocktails, and [Aarhus Street Food](#) for small bites and globally inspired street food stalls.

### **Visit the Moesgaard Museum**

The [Moesgaard Museum](#), outside of Aarhus, is one of the country's most impressive museums and is dedicated to archaeology and ethnography. Home to a number of interactive exhibitions—including one in which you can experience a computer simulation of a real Viking battle—and the oldest bog body in the world (which still has its hair!), this museum is engaging for everyone from kids to history geeks. Honestly, who knew ethnography could be so interesting?

### **Get outside (if it's not cold and rainy)**

Thanks to huge swaths of open space, there is no shortage of outdoor activities on the Jutland Peninsula—the only thing that might hold you back is the weather. But if you visit during the summer, take advantage of the long days with a walk in the lush emerald hills of Mols Bjerge National Park. The park includes an ancient skeleton of a castle that dates back to 1313. Climb the stairs to the top and you'll get excellent views of the nearby bay and the surrounding landscape. Plan ahead and pack a beer from Ebeltoft Gardbryggeriand, which you can crack open at the top while drinking in the view.

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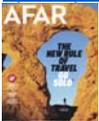
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