



## FEATURES

### FEATURES

### DESTINATIONS

### IN BRIEF

### ANALYSIS

### CITY BREAKS

### LUXURY

### FAMILY

### CRUISE

### ACTIVITIES

### SHARE THIS

### RELATED ARTICLES

#### DENMARK

Copenhagen: City Break [\[READ\]](#)

## DENMARK: LEGOLAND AND BEYOND



### Jo Fletcher-Cross extends a family trip to Denmark's home of the brick

Again! Can we go on again?" comes the cry, even before the rollercoaster has come to a stop. It's easy to appear magnanimous to our excited daughter as far as repeating rides is concerned; our trip to Legoland may be during the UK half-term holidays, but the Danes are still in school and it's incredibly quiet in the park. There's a smattering of British, German and American visitors — just enough for a nice atmosphere but not enough to cause a queue for anything. For a small girl who adores Lego, this is the perfect day, and the lack of waiting makes it pretty good for the grown-ups too: it's nice not to have to jolly along a six-year-old in a long queue. Also, we don't even have to hang back to let small kids play with the Lego; there's plenty for us all. Bonus.

We're staying in one of the park's new Ninjago cottages — based around the martial arts-themed Lego series, the small wooden cabin has a mural of the central characters on the wall of the main room, Lego throwing stars embedded high up above the sofa and, best of all, a pair of glowing ninja swords as kitchen lighting. The cottage is small but our daughter adores the bunk beds with Lego nightlights and the TV channel showing Ninjago episodes. Theoretically, it's possible to self-cater — it's fine for breakfast, but with just a little fridge and a hotplate, we decide to try the buffet dinner at the Pirate Inn. Despite slightly dreading this, it actually turns out to be pretty good. It's hard to be churlish when there's unlimited ice cream and chips in the shape of Lego bricks.

We're in the park from opening to close, and we manage to do everything we want, repeat our favourite rides a few times, and choose some new toys in the fantastic shop — one of the biggest Lego stores in the world. It felt like the perfect amount of time, and it would be perfectly possible to fly into Billund and do a quick weekend in the kingdom of bricks, then fly home again. But an extended trip here is ideal with kids.

Legoland is on the island of Jutland: we fly in to the main city of Aarhus, 2017 European City of Culture, which is just an hour from the theme park. Aarhus is a university town with an industrial edge. While the cobblestoned Latin Quarter is packed with beauty and

history, the redeveloped harbour area is exciting and worth exploring; a dancing fountain is full of squealing children and the striking Dokk1 building houses the city's main library and civic centre. It's also surrounded by imaginative play areas: we walk towards what we think is a statue, only to realise it's actually a giant wooden bear-shaped slide; around the corner, there's a field of 'bamboo' to hide in, further on a giant eagle and an exciting wooden playframe.

A short bus journey just south of Aarhus took us to Moesgaard Museum, dedicated to archeology and ethnography, with innovative interactive displays using projection, sound and even virtual reality. The cleverly designed building also has a grassed sloping roof that you can climb to the top of for fantastic views over to the sea. Back in the city, the headline cultural star is ARoS Aarhus Art Museum, which houses an excellent collection of paintings, sculptures (including Ron Mueck's enormous Boy) and installations. On top of the building, and visible from much of the city, is Olafur Eliasson's Your Rainbow Panorama, a 150-metre-long circular walkway with glass walls in all the colours of the spectrum, giving the impression of Aarhus being bathed in colour as you wander around. "I didn't know you could walk in a rainbow," was the small one's impressed conclusion.

We followed lunch at the super-trendy Aarhus Street Food Market with a step back in time at Den Gamle By (The Old Town); opened in 1914 as the world's first open-air museum of urban history and culture, it's made up of a large collection of Danish buildings transferred here and rebuilt. You can wander around in the days of Hans Christian Andersen, check out the effects of industrialisation in the 1927 quarter or stroll down a 1970s shopping street, all authentically recreated — we even bought cookies in a bakery (though we gave the gynaecology clinic a miss). Best of all, the very friendly volunteers in period dress encouraged our little girl to play in an old-fashioned fairground, to make 'dinner' from the ingredients in the fridge of the 70s apartment of a Copenhagen headteacher and to generally poke around and explore. Aarhus is a terrific family destination that works perfectly in tandem with a trip to Legoland.

#### WHAT ELSE TO DO?



Lalandia. Image: John Lewis Marshall

#### **Kolding**

Just a half-hour drive from Legoland is Kolding, on the east coast of Southern Denmark. It's a charming town, with Jutland's last royal castle, interesting design and stunning natural surroundings and activities. The Trapholt Museum of Modern Art is a must-visit; with a beautiful sculpture park, it houses a great collection of modern art and 20th-century Danish furniture, and is also the site of architect and designer Arne Jacobsen's summer cottage. Right on the lake is Kolding Hotel Apartments, with buildings shaped like triangles, squares, circles and stars. Check out Nicolai Art & Design, an arts centre with a children's section which has a cafe serving fantastic pizza. [visitkolding.dk](http://visitkolding.dk)

#### **Givskud Zoo**

Just 14 miles from Billund, Givskud is a wildlife safari park where visitors can drive among lions and monkeys — however, despite some very impressive animal sightings, our daughter was most excited by Dinosaur Park: 40 life-sized dinosaurs, from little hatchlings to giant herbivores. She would have been quite happy to spend all day running around, gazing at her favourite reptilian beasts. [givskudzoo.dk](http://givskudzoo.dk)

#### **Ribe Viking Centre**

About an hour's drive from Billund, pretty Ribe is the oldest town in Denmark and is a lovely place to wander. Just outside, the Viking Centre offers a reenactment of the Viking way of life — take a stroll through farm buildings, inns and houses, and watch one of the

many volunteers go about a variety of daily tasks. 'Cooking' over a real fire in a longhouse was a highlight for our little Viking. [ribevikingecenter.dk](http://ribevikingecenter.dk)

#### Wadden Sea Visitor Centre

A centre dedicated to the flight of migratory birds might not sound like a winner for small children but this is something special. The enchanting displays strike a beautiful balance between storytelling and art, with a dollop of interactive science. From peering at salt crystals through a microscope to watching crabs scuttle around a tank teeming with water life, there's so much to see and learn. The Digital Ornithology installation features clever projections and sound design that makes it feel as if flocks of birds are wheeling all around. [vadehavscentret.dk](http://vadehavscentret.dk)

#### Lalandia

Right next door to Legoland, holiday homes here are lovely: spacious, well-equipped and stylish, with everything you need for a relaxing stay. Within seconds of our arrival, the little one was off out the back door to the playground just seconds away, where we could watch her from the patio, glass of wine in hand. Lalandia itself is northern Europe's largest water park, with terrific water slides, a cave pool with tropical fish in an underwater aquarium, a huge wave pool and much more. This is all indoors, but there's also an outdoor pool and whirlpool bath for warmer days. In addition, there's entertainment, a winter sports area, soft play and restaurants. [lalandia.dk](http://lalandia.dk)

[visitdenmark.co.uk](http://visitdenmark.co.uk)

POSTED ON 17 AUGUST 2017



TWITTER

#### SEARCH

powered by Google

#### BLOG LATEST...



David Whitley visits the museum dedicated to the aftermath of broken hearts and lost love [\[READ\]](#)

#### LATEST ISSUE



Read the February 2018 issue of *ABTA Magazine*, featuring **Greece and China**, plus reports on **gender pay gap** and **the impact of peer-to-peer businesses** [\[READ\]](#)

#### SIGN UP TO OUR NEWSLETTER

EMAIL

OK