

Sweden publishes open letter inviting lovers, haters and hesitators to its capital

STOCKHOLM, January 9, 2018 — Today, the city of Stockholm together with Visit Sweden publishes an open letter inviting lovers, haters and hesitators to come and experience Stockholm – a city unique in its approach to openness and accessibility. Turning the words of the open letter into action, the city is also sending invites to potential visitors through social media.

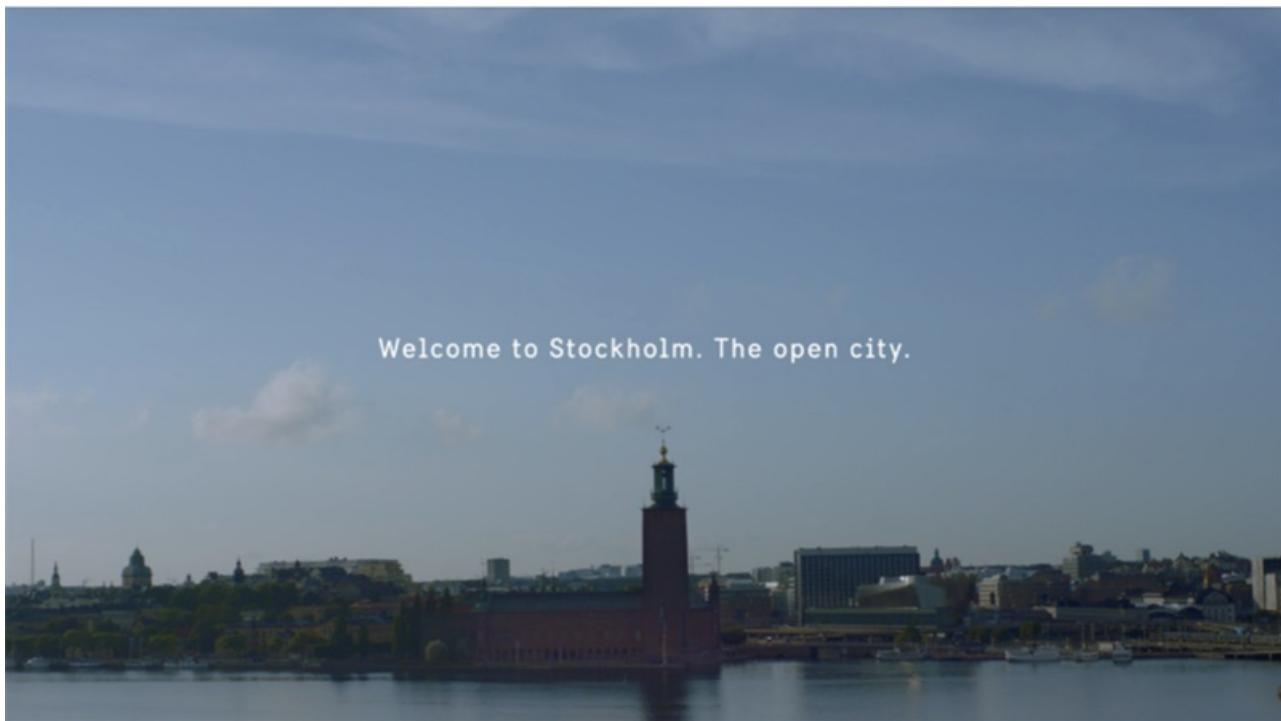


Image: still from video, Visit Stockholm & Visit Sweden

Stockholm, the Swedish capital situated on 14 small islands, is famous for its closeness to nature, booming tech-scene, gender-fluid fashion, colorful LGBT community and the Nobel prize. The one thing that really makes the city stand out internationally is its progressive values: **Stockholm is a city for all.**

In the spirit of openness, the city's tourism board, Visit Stockholm, has come together with its national counter-part Visit Sweden, to publish an open letter addressed to "lovers, haters and hesitators". The open letter is the city's way of welcoming the global public to a city built on the idea of an inclusive and open society with democracy at its core.

Karin Wanngård, the Mayor of Stockholm, praised the initiative:

"I stand behind the open letter and the initiative to reach beyond our city lines to welcome visitors to come here and explore what Stockholm has to offer as a destination – we're a city where everyone is included," she said.

"The idea that everything should be accessible for everyone is in the DNA of Stockholm. People across the world are curious about Sweden and Stockholm, in relation to our values of equality, sustainability, accessibility and much more. We believe that 'openness' is one of the things setting us apart." said **Thomas Andersson**, CEO of Visit Stockholm.

Extending the invitation online

Turning words into action, Visit Stockholm and Visit Sweden have decided to follow-up on the open letter by sending invitations to people who have mentioned Sweden and Stockholm on online platforms such as *Instagram*, *Facebook*, *Twitter*, *Reddit*, *WeChat* and *Weibo*, and even the comments field of *the New York Times*.

"We know that travelers visiting Sweden and Stockholm, are curious to learn more about our values and the Swedish lifestyle, and all that comes with it. Our visitors want to explore an open society that stands firm in its belief that everything should be accessible for everyone – from paternity leave to good design and access to nature. This democratic mind-set is also reflected in this hands-on initiative to invite people on social media to come here," said Ewa Lagerqvist, CEO, Visit Sweden.

The 'Open Letter' is published on www.visitstockholm.com/open-letter and on social media, and is accompanied by a <https://youtu.be/AyF3rs9Q5ks> shot in Stockholm last August. The video features real tourists live casted on the streets of Stockholm, and marks the start of the city's effort to both show and communicate the values of the Swedish capital.

Read the open letter below:

AN OPEN INVITATION TO LOVERS, HATERS AND HESITATORS

I don't know who you are, where you came from, who you voted for, what your family name implies, if you're a rebel or a conservative.

I don't know who you love, what you just can't stand, if you're rich, poor or somewhat in between. If you're man, woman or somewhat in between.

I don't even know how you feel about me. If you love me, hate me or if you haven't made up your mind. You are welcome anyhow, just as you are, with your dreams, beliefs, doubts and preconceptions.

Cause this is what I'm made of. Openness. The idea that everything should be accessible for everyone. That no-one should be excluded or left behind. It's in every heartbeat; the constant aspiration to challenge the existing in order to find new, better ways.

So I ask myself: What does democratic design look like? How do we make sustainable fashion? What will food taste like for future generations? Could music be made available in new ways? What does it take to make nature truly accessible for each and every one? I don't know who you are, but I would love to get to know you better. I'm fueled by new ideas and influences from around the world.

So why don't you come visit me soon? Consider this as your open invitation, you are always welcome here.

Yours sincerely,

Stockholm – The Open City

*According to a Monocle, Quality of Life Survey 2017, published June 2017.

-ENDS-

For more information about the open letter and the open invitations to Stockholm sent online, please contact:

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All press related material can be found at [Visit Stockholm's press room](#).

NOTES TO EDITORS

About Stockholm

- Stockholm and Sweden continue to rank high in global surveys and lists, Stockholm landing #11 on Monocle's 2017 Quality of Life ranking, and Sweden becoming #4 on Forbes annual Best Countries for Business ranking. The city has 9 Michelin-starred restaurants, counting 10 stars between them.
- In 2018, Stockholm is co-hosting Europride together with Gothenburg, Sweden's second largest city.

For more information about Stockholm and Sweden, see www.visitstockholm.com or www.visitsweden.com

About the open letter

The open letter has been co-written by Visit Stockholm and Visit Sweden.

About invitations sent on social media

- Starting the week prior to January 9, 2018, a team from Visit Sweden and Visit Stockholm are browsing social media like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, Reddit, Quora and online comment fields of news outlets like The Guardian, The New York Times, and so on, in search of people who write comments about Sweden or Stockholm.
- People commenting about Sweden and/or Stockholm might receive an open invitation to come visit Stockholm – and are offered a free two-nights-stay at a hotel in the city.
- Stockholm has a total of 50 hotel nights reserved for visitors invited through social media. The campaign will go on until all of the rooms have been offered to someone online.
- Visit Stockholm will tailor their visit to match the interest of invited visitors with the offerings of the city.

Social Media

Visit Sweden: [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#),

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#theopencity