Swedish Christmas in one sheet

Dates, what's open, julbord, markets and gifts for Christmas 2026 and New Year 2027

GOOD TO KNOW In Sweden, Christmas is celebrated on 24 December, not 25. Shops, restaurants and transport change their hours every year, so check each place before you go.

1 Key dates 2026/27

Date	What happens
Sun 29 Nov	First Sunday of Advent. Many homes light the first of four Advent candles.
Sun 6, 13, 20 Dec	Second, third and fourth Sundays of Advent.
Sun 13 Dec	Lucia. Choirs in white sing by candlelight in churches, schools and workplaces.
Thu 24 Dec	Julafton, Christmas Eve. The main day: julbord, Kalle Anka on TV at 15:00, gifts in the evening. **Not a public holiday**
Fri 25 Dec	Juldagen, Christmas Day. Early church service julotta in the morning. **Public holiday**
Sat 26 Dec	Annandag jul, Boxing Day. **Public holiday**
Thu 31 Dec	Nyårsafton, New Year's Eve. Dinner with friends and fireworks at midnight. **Not a public holiday**
Fri 1 Jan	Nyårsdagen, New Year's Day. **Public holiday**
Wed 6 Jan	Trettondedag jul, Epiphany. **Public holiday**
Wed 13 Jan	Tjugondag Knut. Christmas ends and the tree comes down.

Most people are also off on 24 and 31 December, even though these are not public holidays.

2 What's open

Systembolaget is the only shop that sells wine, spirits and strong beer.

	23 Dec	24 Dec	25–26 Dec	31 Dec	1 Jan	6 Jan
Systembolaget	until at least 19:00	closed	closed	until 15:00	closed	closed

Local stores may differ. Check your store on systembolaget.se.

Shops There is no national rule. Each shop and supermarket sets its own holiday hours, so check the page of the store at your address.

Transport Trains and buses usually run a Saturday timetable on 24 and 31 December and a Sunday timetable on 25 and 26 December, 1 and 6 January. In Stockholm, check your trip in the SL app or on sl.se the day before.

Health For health advice day and night, call 1177 or go to 1177.se. In an emergency, call 112.

READ MORE What's open at Christmas

BUY BEFORE 24 DECEMBER Wine and spirits: Systembolaget is closed from 24 to 26 December. Food, medicine and anything else you need for three days, since holiday hours vary.

3 Julbord: the Christmas table

IN SHORT

Julbord means Christmas table: a buffet of cold and hot Christmas dishes. Restaurants usually serve it from late November until about 23 December. At home, families eat it on 24 December.

HOW TO BOOK

Book ahead, especially for Fridays and weekends. Plan for two to three hours. Ask what is included and check the cancellation terms.

IN WHAT ORDER

1. Look at the whole table before you start.
2. Herring and other fish, with potatoes and bread.
3. Cold meats, such as Christmas ham (julskinka).
4. Small hot dishes: meatballs (köttbullar), small sausages (prinskorv) and Jansson's temptation (Janssons frestelse).
5. Sweets last. Take small portions and go back for more.

WHERE IN STOCKHOLM

Wärdshuset Ulla Winbladh · Djurgården · Classic julbord, 19 Nov – 23 Dec.

Restaurang Kvarnen · Södermalm · Julbord, 23 Nov – 23 Dec.

Den Gyldene Freden · Gamla stan · Julbord, book on the restaurant's website.

READ MORE How to eat a julbord

4 Christmas baking and drinks

IN SHORT

In December, cafés and homes bake and serve the same few Christmas treats. You will find them at markets, in bakeries and at most workplaces.

TRY

- **Lussebullar** · Saffron buns, also called lussekatter, baked around Lucia.
- **Pepparkakor** · Thin ginger biscuits.
- **Glögg** · Hot spiced wine, served with raisins and almonds. Also sold without alcohol.
- **Julmust** · A dark Christmas soft drink without alcohol.

READ MORE Swedish Christmas bakes

5 Lucia and Kalle Anka

IN SHORT

Two traditions almost every Swede knows: the Lucia procession in December and the Disney cartoon hour on Christmas Eve.

LUCIA, 13 DECEMBER

A choir in white walks in with candles, led by Lucia with a crown of candles, and sings Lucia and Christmas songs. In Stockholm, Lucia concerts take place in many churches from early December. Many need a ticket, so book early on the church's website.

KALLE ANKA, 24 DECEMBER AT 15:00

Many families watch Kalle Anka och hans vänner önskar God Jul, Donald Duck and his friends, on SVT1. It has been shown every Christmas Eve since 1960. It is live on SVT Play only, and only in Sweden.

READ MORE Kalle Anka on Christmas Eve

6 Christmas markets

IN SHORT

Christmas markets in Stockholm usually run from mid or late November until just before Christmas. Some are open every day, others only at weekends. The oldest is on Stortorget in Gamla stan.

WHAT TO DO

1. Check dates and hours on the organiser's website before you go: they change every year.
2. Some markets charge an entry fee, others do not. Check before you go.
3. Look for handmade decorations and crafts, seasonal food, glögg and gingerbread.

READ MORE Christmas markets in Sweden

This page (in Swedish) lists the main markets with their 2026 dates.

7 Gifts to take home

IN SHORT

Popular gifts from Sweden: polkagris (striped peppermint rock), salty liquorice, gingerbread, wool mittens and scarves, glass and ceramics, and Sámi crafts.

WHERE IN STOCKHOLM

Gamla Stans Polkagriskokeri · Stora Nygatan 44, Gamla stan · Polkagris.

Lakritsroten · Västerlånggatan 65, Gamla stan · Liquorice.

Pärlans Konfektyr · Nytorgsgatan 38, Södermalm · Caramels.

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BEFORE YOU GIVE

1. Wine, spirits and strong beer must not be given to anyone under 20.
2. With food, ask about allergies first.
3. For colleagues, check your workplace rules on gifts.
4. Returns of items that are not faulty depend on the shop's terms, so keep the receipt.

READ MORE Gifts to avoid in Sweden

8 Your 24 December: a simple plan

IN SHORT

On Christmas Eve most Swedes are at home with family. Plan the day in advance and it will be easy.

WHAT TO DO

1. By 23 December, buy wine, food and anything you need until 27 December.
2. Book your julbord for an earlier day: the julbords in this sheet end on 23 December.
3. Eating out on 24 December? Book a restaurant that confirms it is open that day.
4. At 15:00, watch Kalle Anka on SVT1 or SVT Play.
5. The day before, check your SL trips for 24–26 December in the SL app.

IF IT IS DARK, COLD OR CLOSED

Walk through Gamla stan and the city centre to see the Christmas lights in the afternoon. Check museum hours for 24–26 December on their own websites. Early on 25 December, many churches hold julotta, the Christmas morning service.

READ MORE Public transport at Christmas

Dates and hours are for Christmas 2026 and New Year 2027. They can change: check each place before you go.

More on SverigeGuide

Christmas articles, restaurants, shops and practical tips for Sweden

Christmas and New Year

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