

COPENHAGEN

SOUNDING OUT

The sound of Copenhagen is the sound of hybrids. It can't be any different in a town where the architecture is a mix-and-match of historic buildings rubbing shoulders with steel, glass and the clean lines of Danish design.

REM's Michael Stipe once said this patchwork of past and present makes Copenhagen look like the visions of the future he has in his dreams. The singer is a frequent visitor to the city, where he can shop and relax without being stalked.

Copenhagen is situated by the Øresund – the narrow strait between Denmark and Sweden. The huge, ten-year-old bridge that knits the two countries together has made regional commuting easy. Many Danes buy houses in Sweden, and thousands of Swedes work in Copenhagen, making it the gateway to Scandinavia.

If you come looking for traditional

Danish music, you will be disappointed. The Danish capital is not a place for musical archaeology. Folk music has a stronger foundation in other parts of the country: the Music Conservatory of Odense does a great job of educating Denmark's future troubadours and fiddlers.

Musicians in Copenhagen, however, have fun with exciting patchworks of sound. There's a strong klezmer movement, and bands like Klezmofobia and Mames Babegenush reach out to a growing audience including fans of punk and dance music.

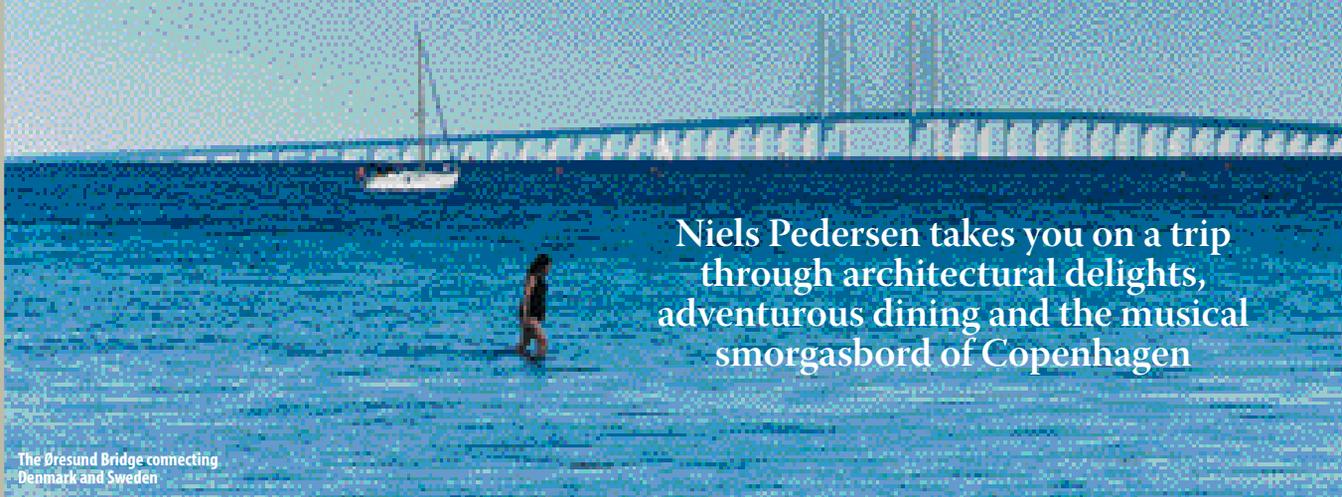
Reggae is another vital part of the city sound, and the scene has fostered oddballs Bikstok Røgsystem – who translate dancehall into Danish.

Many of the modern sounds of Copenhagen are created in the ethnically diverse districts of Nørrebro and Vesterbro. These traditional, working-class neighbourhoods have always housed artists

on the hunt for cheap rents, and even though house prices have exploded, the areas still play a key part in the musical landscape of the city.

And it's a growing city. People move to Copenhagen in large numbers and new parts of the town are being developed. Visitors to the WOMEX trade fair in November will be introduced to Ørestad, an area of dazzling architecture that is rather lifeless and spooky at night. It's home to DR, the Danish Broadcasting Corporation, and the WOMEX showcase concerts will be staged in its controversial, new concert hall, designed by French architect Jean Nouvel. The project was so costly that DR had to fire hundreds of employees and cut down on programming to pay for the giant, blue cube.

Later this year Copenhagen is also the host to the UN Climate Change Conference. Denmark is one of the world's leading nations in green energy. Even the once-



The Øresund Bridge connecting Denmark and Sweden

Niels Pedersen takes you on a trip through architectural delights, adventurous dining and the musical smorgasbord of Copenhagen



Vega's minimal, wood-lined interior is popular with local music-lovers

VENUES

Vega

As the powerhouse of the Danish live music scene, Vega is the preferred venue for upcoming rock bands and major world music stars like Khaled, Youssou N'Dour and Salif Keita. The musical multiplex has four stages and a popular nightclub.

Enghavevej 40, +45 33 25 70 11, www.vega.dk

Nørre Allé 7, +45 50 58 08 41, www.globalcph.dk

Loppen

For three decades Christiania, in the borough of Christianshavn, has been a city within the city, with a world-famous hash market. Plans are now in place to control the free town, and police activity in the area has increased. Christiania is also the home of Loppen – a laid-back venue with a hippie

Global

A non-commercial venue dedicated solely to world music. Members and volunteers create a relaxed mood in the middle of the vibrant Nørrebro neighbourhood. Balkan beats, African newcomers and Latin stars mix with young Danish folk players.

vibe and an anything-goes music policy.

Christiania, South Area 4B, 1st floor, +45 32 57 84 22, www.loppen.dk

Copenhagen Jazzhouse

Last year renowned jazz bassist Lennart Ginman became musical director of the Jazzhouse, creating a succession of club nights. The cosy venue is also home to the Danish World Awards.

Niels Hemmingsens Gade 10, +45 33 15 47 00, www.jazzhouse.dk

Mojo

Every night is blues night at Mojo, the only venue in Copenhagen serving music 365 days of the year. The hardcore fans still dig the old sounds of Chicago and Memphis, but you will also hear folk pickings, soul and zydeco in this intimate venue.

Løngangstræde 21C, +45 33 11 64 53, www.mojo.dk

GOING TRAVELLING?

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polluted Copenhagen harbour has been cleaned, and you can actually take a great swim from one of the new city beaches.

Apart from saving the planet, listening to new music and drinking coffee and beer, another favourite pastime of Copenhageners is eating. Copenhagen has become the food capital of northern Europe, with Michelin stars sprinkled on 11 restaurants.

And whether you choose to splash out on a dinner of nouveau Nordic cuisine of musk ox tartar and blobs of oyster emulsion at the Noma (voted third best restaurant in the world!), or you just grab a cheap falafel in Nørrebro, Copenhagen really is an eating town. And don't forget the hotdogs!

CD SHOPS

Tranquebar

The internet has swallowed several specialist music shops in Copenhagen. At the time of writing, Tranquebar was fighting creditors and it would be a blow to many if this globe-trotting bookshop with a café and a small, well-picked music selection were to go under.

**Borgergade 14, +45 33 12 55 12,
www.tranquebar.net**

RADIO

DR Spillemand

World and roots music only takes up a tiny corner of the Danish airwaves. But log on to the website of national broadcast corporation, DR, and you will find two channels devoted to world music, plus DR Spillemand with non-stop traditional Nordic folk styles.

www.dr.dk/netradio

LISTINGS

The Copenhagen Post

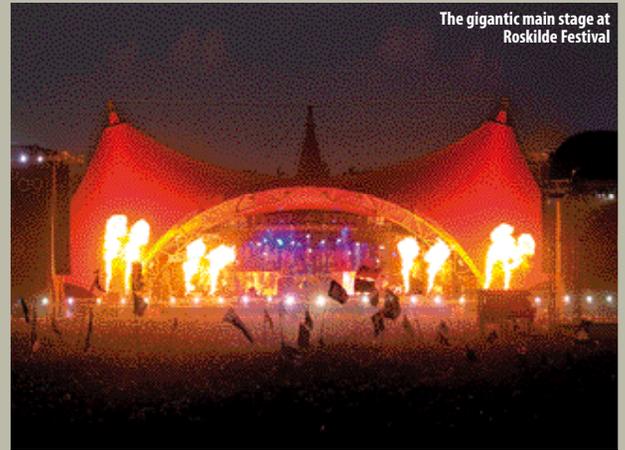
This English language weekly newspaper has both current affairs and entertainment guides. You can pick up the print edition in most hotels and the internet version will help you before you even leave home.

www.cphpost.dk

CEES VAN ROOIJEN



Copenhagen's futuristic skyline



The gigantic main stage at Roskilde Festival

KLAUS BO CHRISTENSEN

FESTIVALS

Roskilde Festival

Half an hour's drive from Copenhagen, this not-for-profit festival has been going since 1971. Every July this rock colossus entertains 70,000 fans with a substantial amount of world music. This year Amadou & Mariam attracted a huge audience at one of the rock stages.

July, www.roskilde-festival.dk

Distortion

This anarchistic party festival has become a favourite with many underground scenes as every June huge sound systems fill up the streets and turn large chunks of Copenhagen into a wonderful street carnival.

June, www.cphdistortion.dk

CLUBS

Club Mambo

The mix of hot dancing, excellent cocktails and frequent visits from international stars like Isaac Delgado, Charanga Habanera and Spanish Harlem Orchestra has made Club Mambo more than just a salsateque. It's a lively, entertaining nightclub – even for wallflowers.

Vester Voldgade 85, +45 33 11 97 66, www.clubmambo.dk

Islands Brygge Kulturhus

Islands Brygge is on Copenhagen's regenerated waterfront. Have a coffee in the Kulturhus, watch the long spread of office buildings and new housing, and stay the evening for the concerts. Klub Koldbrand (Club Gangrene) hosts new Nordic folk bands every month.

**Islands Brygge 18, +45 82 33 47 80,
www.k-i-b.dk**

ROSE BRACKS

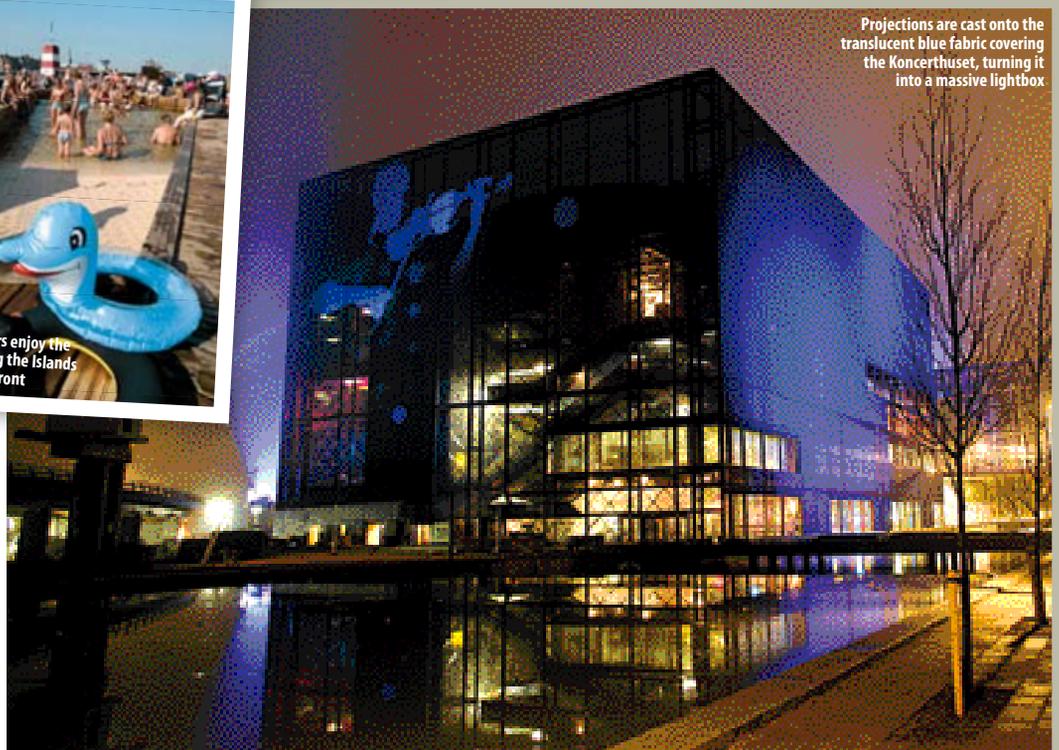


Copenhagens enjoy the sunshine along the Islands Brygge waterfront

Koncerthuset

When Copenhagen's brand new concert hall opened in January, *The Financial Times* said: 'For now this is the most expensive concert hall in the world. Soon it will just be one of the best.' It consists of four halls with the main auditorium seating 1,800 people.

**Emil Holms Kanal 20, +45 35 20 30 40,
www.dr.dk/Koncerthuset**



Projections are cast onto the translucent blue fabric covering the Koncerthuset, turning it into a massive lightbox

DIANE BERGUS FERNANDEZ