

Beer in Denmark

From Viking brews to modern craft – your guide to Copenhagen, Bornholm, and beyond

A Nation Shaped by Beer

Beer has been part of Denmark for more than 5,000 years. Archaeological finds show that people brewed with grains, berries, pollen, and herbs long before the Vikings raised their horns. The famous Egtved Girl, buried around 1370 BC, was laid to rest with a bucket of beer by her side. Fast forward to the 19th century: J.C. Jacobsen founded Carlsberg in Copenhagen (1847), and Emil Christian Hansen's discovery of pure yeast strains in 1883 revolutionized brewing worldwide. For decades, golden pilsner dominated the Danish market, while small breweries vanished. Everything changed in 1998 when beer enthusiasts founded Danske Ølentusiaster. From just 13 breweries back then, Denmark now boasts more than 260—one of Europe's highest brewery densities. Today, Danish beer is a lively mix of heritage and innovation.

Breweries to Know

- Mikkeller – The globe-trotting pioneer that put Danish craft beer on the world map. Known for experimental recipes, creative bars, and festivals.
- Amager Bryghus – Famous for hop-driven beers and bold collaborations. Their taprooms make it easy to try the latest creations.
- To Øl & BRUS – From classroom brewing to international success. Visit their Nørrebro brewpub BRUS for fresh, experimental beers and food.
- Nørrebro Bryghus – One of Copenhagen's earliest brewpubs (2003) with an outsized influence on Denmark's brewing talent.

Beer & Food Experiences in Copenhagen

- Home of Carlsberg – Explore the birthplace of modern lager, with cellars, brewing history, and tastings.
- Warpigs Brewpub – A lively hall with on-site brewed beers paired with authentic Texas BBQ.
- SKAAL – 100+ craft beers on tap and bottle in the heart of the city.
- BrewPub København – Cozy courtyard brewpub near City Hall with beer-infused dishes.
- Selma – Michelin-recognized smørrebrød and rotating craft taps.
- Barr – Nordic-inspired fine dining with one of Denmark's best curated beer lists.

Must-Visit Beer Bars

- BRUS – To Øl's bustling brewpub with 30 taps and gastropub fare.
- Taphouse – 61 rotating taps from around the world; a paradise for variety seekers.
- Fermentoren – Intimate Vesterbro bar with Dry & Bitter beers and summer patio.
- Peders – Basement bar in the Latin Quarter; conversation-focused and cozy.
- Charlie's Bar – Authentic English pub atmosphere and rare cask ales.
- ÅBEN – Modern, airy taproom in Kødbyen showcasing new-wave brewing.

Festivals & Events

- Ølfestival (Copenhagen Beer Festival) – Denmark's largest, with 1,000+ beers from 70+ breweries every May.
- Mikkeller Beer Celebration Copenhagen (MBCC) – A curated international craft festival drawing top breweries worldwide.
- Øllets Dag (Beer Day) – First Saturday in September, nationwide celebrations with tastings and events.

Practical Tips

- Getting Around: Use Metro, S-trains, and buses. Most beer spots are within walking distance or short rides.
- Payment & Tipping: Cards accepted everywhere; no tipping required.
- Prices & Servings: Expect 50–90 DKK for a craft beer (20–40 cl pours).
- Culture: Most bars are casual and seat-yourself. English widely spoken. Drinking in parks and public spaces is legal.

Beyond Copenhagen

Copenhagen is the epicenter, but great beer is found across the country:

- Aarhus (Jutland) – A vibrant city with a growing brew scene.
- Odense (Funen) – Home to traditional breweries like Refsvindinge and Ørbæk.
- Bornholm – Island breweries with unique local flair and scenic settings.
- Aalborg – Northern Denmark's beer hub.

Wherever you go, expect a warm welcome, innovative beers, and the chance to discover Denmark's blend of tradition and creativity.