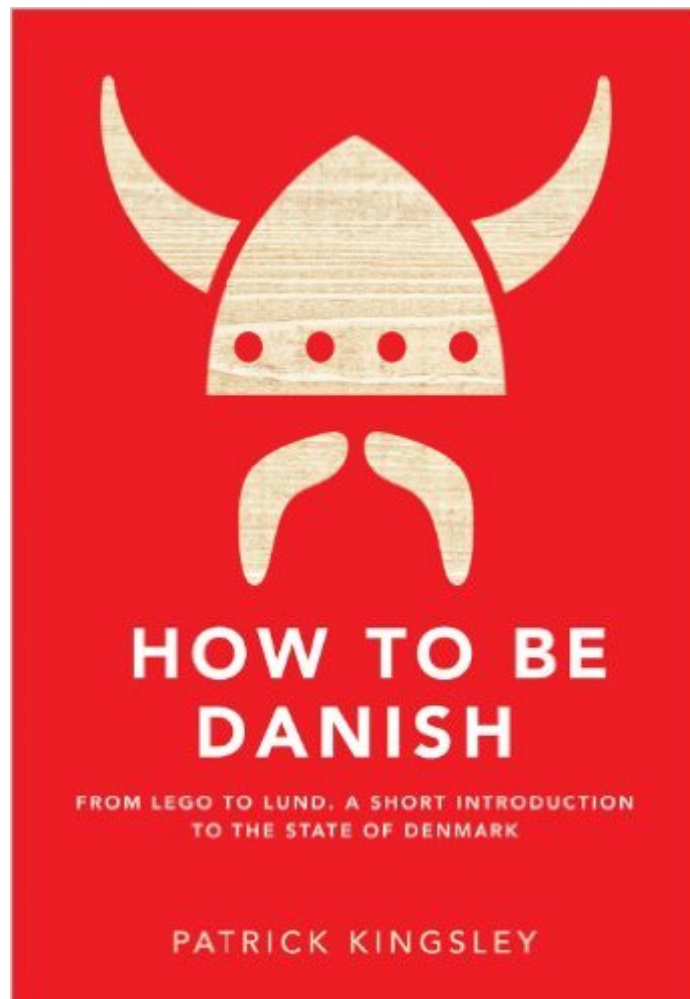


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How To Be Danish: A Short Journey Into The Mysterious Heart Of Denmark



Synopsis

Denmark is the country of the moment. Recently named the happiest nation in the world, it's the motherland of *The Bridge*, *Borgen*, and *The Killing*, and home to Noma, the world's best restaurant. But though we wear their jumpers and watch their thrillers, how much do we really know about the Danes themselves? Part reportage, part travelogue, *How to be Danish* is an attempt to fill in some of the gaps - an introduction to contemporary Danish culture that spans television, food, design, architecture, politics, and race. From the set of *The Killing* to the chefs of Noma, via the woman who knitted *that* jumper, Patrick Kingsley takes us on a journey to the mysterious heart of Denmark.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Brief, lively, very readable book. Yet still provides plenty of substance about the origins and contradictions of the mysterious alternate universe called Denmark. This is a country so cooperative that -- thanks to strong unions and a redistributive tax system -- doctors and lawyers average less than twice a garbage collector's salary. Statistically, it's the most egalitarian country on the planet. But despite the very generous welfare state, many immigrant refugees feel isolated and excluded. There's a 180% excise tax on buying a car, and some 2/3 of trips in KÃfÃ¸benhavn (a/k/a "Copenhagen," don't call it Frisco) are reportedly made by bicycle. Yet Denmark's deeply ingrained green culture -- bike lanes everywhere, pedestrianized streets, neighborhoods centrally heated for efficiency, and manufacture of about half the world's wind turbines -- dates only to the 1970s. It was a small, resource-poor nation's pragmatic response to getting whacked by that decade's oil-price shocks. Danes are ruthlessly committed to honesty. They'll meticulously avoid giving you a bad deal, or selling you any product they don't have faith in, or withholding information. But they'll also stare at

you disapprovingly -- and cops will swiftly give you a ticket -- for jaywalking on a street with zero traffic. Danes are stereotyped as Scandinavia's most outgoing people, and Denmark frequently leads international surveys (and definitely Disneyland) as "the happiest place on Earth." But interviewees clarify that they're really more like "content." And let's face it, Sweden is more fun. (More competition, lower prices, greater acceptance of foreign transplants, and you bet it's OK to jaywalk politely.

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