

## Visit Stockholm and learn about Sweden

In October 2014, a new option was added to BMS' and LTM's destinations for excursions – Stockholm, Sweden.

This 4-day excursion offers an **introduction to Swedish business, culture, history and current affairs**. It is organized by the firm *Schwedenkontor* in Greifswald (a small town near Stralsund) and supervised by Prof. Fanning at the FH Stralsund.

In October 2015, the programme comprised the following highlights:

- A discussion with a member of parliament in the Swedish **RIGSDAG**,
- A visit to the **RIDDARHUSET**, the central meeting place for the Swedish nobility,
- A tour of **SKANSKA**, a large construction firm,
- Discussion rounds in the umbrella organisation of Swedish trades unions, **LO**, and the **Employers' Association** of the service sector.
- A visit to a local **vocational school** in Haninge, a suburban quarter of Stockholm,
- A visit to the **VASA MUSEUM**, the most visited museum in the Nordic countries.

And here is some more information on two of the highlights – one historic, one modern:

### **RIDDARHUSET:**



Located in today's old town centre, Gamla stan, it was built between 1641 and 1674 as meeting place for the nobility of Sweden. We started our tour of the Riddarhuset in the entrance hall, which was very spacious, because the Riddarhuset was originally planned to be larger.

Then we stepped into the *Hall of Knights*, where 2337 family arms are kept and where concerts are held, because the acoustics are excellent.

Since 1866 no more people have been ennobled. Up to today, 600 families are alive, all in all 27,000 people.

The Swedish nobility prefers to keep its affairs private. Most noblemen/-women have normal jobs, often in politics or in business. What we were told, though, is that liberal membership fees are used for financing 325 scholarships for young members and for keeping the building and its collections in a good state.

Eventually we visited the conservatory in the basement, where the old documents of the families are carefully preserved.

## SKANSKA

SKANSKA is Sweden's largest construction company, and besides enjoying a nice *Fika* (the typical Swedish coffee break), we were not only introduced to this exceptional company but also to its no less remarkable home, Entré Lindhagen.



SKANSKA, founded in 1887, is not only Sweden's largest construction company, but also one of the world's largest product development and construction companies in the world with a total workforce of 58,000 people.

According to the "*Engineering News-Record*", SKANSKA is the 8<sup>th</sup> biggest contractor in the world due to its revenue of approx. SEK 145bn (EUR 15bn). Almost half of its revenue is generated in the Nordic countries, a third is earned in the United States and the rest in other European countries. (SKANSKA 2015c), (ENR 2015)

Apart from that SKANSKA strives for reducing the environmental impact of their projects. That is why they require projects to fulfil at least three of their six "zeros": which are

- near zero carbon in construction
- zero waste
- zero hazardous material
- zero unsustainable materials
- net zero primary energy for buildings and net positive primary energy for civil/infrastructure projects
- net zero water for buildings and zero potable water for construction in civil/infrastructure

With this focus on green solutions, ethics, occupational health and safety, SKANSKA was awarded the title "Best Green Company" of the United Kingdom in 2011. The company is also a member of the FTSE4GOOD INDEX, an ethical investment stock market, which aids investors in finding sustainable corporations.

In terms of forward thinking workplace culture, Entré Lindhagen promotes a concept called *Activity Based Workplace (ABW)*. This model provides each employee with a home zone, but also gives them a variety of alternate locations to choose from anywhere within the building. This way, an employee can adopt that kind of workplace that suits her needs, preferences or tasks best and communication between departments is stimulated.



## And what about 2016?

While the general profile of the excursion remains the same, with the companies visited being different ones, a special highlight will be attending the **award ceremony** of the **Nobel Prize for Literature** in the Nobel Museum.

