

A short guide to surviving a few days in Dronninglund

A day in a Danish family

Danes usually get up around 7 o'clock in the morning. We have a quick shower and get dressed.

For breakfast Danes have cereal, white bread or yogurt with tea, coffee, milk or juice.

In the weekend many families buy fresh bread at the baker's.

After every meal we say "tak for mad" (thanks for the meal) to whoever prepared the meal (according to the statistics: most likely the mother) and help clear the table.

Most Danes do not wear their out-door shoes inside.

Even though the unemployment rate has gone up due to the recession, in most families both parents have jobs. Most families only own one car. Petrol and cars are very expensive in DK. The cost of living is said to be one of the highest in the EU.

Many families have pets, usually a cat or a dog.

Divorce is quite common; a little less than half of all marriages end in divorce

About 3-4 p.m. some families find time for a coffee or afternoon tea with cake, white bread or a biscuit before they start cooking dinner

Danes usually have dinner, which is the most important meal of the day, together between 6 and 7 p.m. The meal is most often home made. After dinner teenagers see friends, do homework or sports activities. Before going to bed most Danes watch TV – and they might have yet another cup of coffee or tea.

Danish homes

Most Danes live in single-family houses with gardens. About 3 out of 10 live in flats. In most Danish homes each child has a room of his/her own, with a TV and a DVD.

Many Danish homes have 2 bathrooms. Sometimes there is a bathtub in the bathroom but most Danes only have showers.

Danish beds are equipped with sheets that you lie on and duvets for cover. No blankets.

Danish food

In the old days Danes ate a lot of fat foods, mostly meat but these food habits have largely been banished.

Danes still eat a lot of meat, though; mostly pork (meat balls), beef and chicken.

Though we are surrounded by the sea, we do not eat a lot of fish.

Potatoes are one of the basic foods, but pasta and rice are also very popular. We also eat salad, of course, but mostly we just mix up tomatoes, cucumber and lettuce.

Other popular dishes are pizza, pasta and pita bread. Although these dishes are more or less new in Denmark, we have come to think of them as Danish. Danish helpings are large – you will not go to bed hungry, we hope!

The life of a Danish student

Most Danish children's lives are much institutionalized: Kindergarten at 3, infant school at 6, primary school at 7. Primary school and lower secondary school is one institution in Denmark and is called "Folkeskole" (the folk school).

At 16 about half of all young people go to "general gymnasium" which is similar to high school or a Sixth Form College (A levels). There are also business high schools and technical colleges for young people.

It takes 3 year to graduate from a gymnasium. You can choose to specialise in science and math, modern languages, social studies or music.

School lasts from 8.10 a.m. till 2.45 p.m. and the day is divided into 4-5 lessons and 3 breaks.

Great emphasis is put on the students taking an active part in class discussion. If we want to say something, we are to raise our hands. We do not say Sir or Madam. We call all of our teachers by their first names.

We get a school report (grades) three times a year. Many students find the gymnasium very competitive but at the same time most students like to go to school, as do most children in Denmark.

Most students go to school by bus or car as Dronninglund Gymnasium is situated in a rural area, but some who live close by go by bike.

Most students bring packed lunches to school but you can also buy various foods at the school canteen.

Most students do homework and written assignments (about two a week) after school and during the weekends, but many also work to earn extra pocket money.

The Danish state pays student grants to all students from the age of 18. The rate is about 200 euros a month depending on the parents' income.

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