Swedish Wooden Architecture

Architects Sweden
When you think of Sweden, you probably think of nature. Nature is prevalent everywhere in Sweden, even in the cities. Naturally, in Sweden, we have a long tradition of using nature’s raw materials in our built environment. The publication you now hold in your hands is designed to show how Swedish architects have combined innovation and experience to create unique wooden architecture based in our cultural heritage. Wood is also a sustainable product that is an essential part of our common future. My wish is that the contents inspire you and open your eyes to all the possibilities wood has to offer.

Welcome to Woodland Sweden!

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Sweden is synonymous with timber. It mines iron ore too, and in such quantities that the very bedrock beneath the city of Kiruna is at risk of collapsing, with the entire community having to shift east. But it is timber that thaws out frozen souls. Its honey glow is soothing. And from the air you can hardly see the towns for all the trees.

Most of this timber goes to sawmills. There it is sawn or planed into planks for the construction industry. It is an industry that previously built only small scale – the little red cottage is for Sweden what the skyscraper is for the USA – but which today has its sights fixed on large constructions and mass production.

This renaissance has one main explanation. Towards the end of the 19th century a law was passed in Sweden forbidding the building of wooden apartment blocks taller than two floors. Concrete became the norm and wood was turned into paper pulp, and it was only in 1994, a good 100 years later, that the law was repealed. Nowadays, according to the Swedish Wood Building Council, some ten to 15 per cent of all new apartment blocks are in wood. And the figure increases year by year.

From an ecological perspective this is of course a measure that makes sense – timber is both a renewable and recyclable resource. But also from an architectural point of view; judging by the large number of progressive timber projects on architects’ drawing boards, the corps have long yearned for this
chance to exploit the medium’s ductile and tactile properties. The most original instances are to be found in small-scale projects – private houses and holiday cottages, modernist interpretations of traditional building techniques. No dragons’ heads crowning roof ridges here but gable roofs and rib flange facades still prevail, often accompanied by unconventional window arrangements, open plan interiors and intimate respect for the surrounding terrain. Craftsmanship is strongly noticeable, together with the experimental urge that comes with it. But today even large-scale projects are breaking new ground. The poor man’s architecture has been replaced by a more hi-tech approach and several local authorities are making their mark in wood. It is hardly surprising if well forested districts choose to build most of their major structures in timber, but now the Swedish capital itself is joining the throng. Such prizewinning architectural firms as Wingårdhs and Tham & Videgård are now competing for the chance to erect the world’s tallest timber building, 20 to 22 storeys high. The idiom is cutting edge, the towers rising up delicate as latticed espaliers. But the construction technique is almost ancient. By looking back Swedish architects are leading the way forward.
Nature occupies a special place in Swedish society. Our first national park opened in 1909, making us the first people in the world to dedicate an area of land solely for wildlife conservation.

Swedish architecture has a long and honourable tradition of coordinating wood with nature. From the tree-like pillars of Asplund’s world famous Woodland Chapel to the distinctive designs of “Naturum” visitor information centres where you can learn more about the geology, flora, fauna and cultural heritage of the local area, Swedish wooden architecture imitates nature and lives in harmony with it.

Swedish nature also challenges architects to build alliances with Sweden’s varied topography. From villas in rocky terrain, to early 20th century housing estates that have been skilfully integrated into the landscape, Swedish architects today face the same challenges when designing country houses and apartment blocks that tactfully complement the local landscape.

In this chapter, we take a look at buildings that borrow elements of nature or harmonise with the local terrain. Buildings whose design creates spaces that emulate nature or windows that frame nature in all its glory.
1 & 4 National Park, Hamra
Architect: White Arkitekter
www.white.se
Client: Länsstyrelsen, Gävleborg
Photographer: Henrik Lindvall

2 Naturum Laponia
Architect: Wingårdhs
www.wingardhs.se
Client: Länsstyrelsen, Norrbotten
Photographer: Jann Lipka

3 Naturum Vattenriket
Architect: White Arkitekter
www.white.se
Client: Kristianstads kommun
Photographer: Åke E:son Lindman

4 Naturum Tåkern
Architect: Wingårdhs
www.wingardhs.se
Client: Länsstyrelsen, Östergötland
Photographer: Åke E:son Lindman

5 Restaurant Laddjujavri
Architect: Murman Arkitekter
www.murman.se
Client: Laddjujavri Båttrafik
Photographer: Andreas Sarri

6 Country house, Kyrkesund
Architect: Mattias Gunneflo
Email: mattias@matiasgunneflo.com
Client: Private
Photographer: Åke E:son Lindman

7 Country house
Architect: Lowén Widman Arkitekter
www.lowenwidman.se
Client: Private
Photographer: Rikkard Häggblom

8 Country house
Architect: Max Holst
www.maxholst.se
Client: Private
Photographer: Hannes Soderlund

9 Country house, Vindö
Architect: Max Holst
www.maxholst.se
Client: Private
Photographer: Hannes Soderlund
EVERYDAY WOOD

Everyday buildings have almost always been made of wood in Sweden – our architecture and timber go hand in hand. The Swedish philosophy that beautiful everyday objects should be within the reach of everyone, means that what they are made of must be readily available and not too expensive. Wood is used indoors to create a tactile and inviting environment. Similarly, we encounter wood in play areas and on the outside of many schools and daycare centres.

In this chapter, we take a look at wood we like to have close to our skin, wood we touch and hold that stands up to being used on a daily basis. Here we find homes, parks, daycare centres and furniture that cries out to be climbed and played on and offers a relaxing refuge to rest in. We also pay homage to the playful properties of wood and everyday objects that age beautifully. Whether light and temporary – or robust and eternal.
10 Park, Drakensberg
Architect: Nyréns Arkitektkontor
www.nyrens.se
Client: Stockholms stad
Photographer: Sten Jansin

11 & 13 Tellus Nursery School
Architect: Tham & Videgård Arkitekter
www.tvark.se
Client: Private nursery school
Photographer: Åke E:son Lindman

12 Chair Woodstock
Designer: Woodstock
www.woodstockholm.com
Designer: Lars Stensö
Client: Woodstock
Photographer: Pelle Bergström

14 Student housing,
10 smarta kvadrat
Architect: Tengbom
www.tengbom.se
Client: AF Bostäder & Martinsons
Photographer: Bertil Hertzberg

15 Office, Ryska Posten
Architect: VIDA arkitektkontor
www.vidastockholm.com
Client: Ryska Posten
Photographer: Robin Hayes

16 Playground Park,
Blomsterdalen
Architect: Andersson Jönsson Landskapsarkitekter
www.aj-landskap.se
Client: Stockholms stad
Photographer: Kasper Dudzik

17 Public Parklet, installation
Architect: Tengbom
www.tengbom.se
Client: Tengbom
Photographer: Frida Möller/Studio Emma Svensson
18 Villa Eder Hederus
Architect: Kod Arkitekter and General Architecture
www.kodarkitekter.se
www.generalarchitecture.se
Client: Private
Photographer: Mikael Olsson

19 Country house, Ljungdalen
Architect: Löwen Widman Arkitekter
www.lowenwidman.se
Client: Private
Photographer: Daniel Widman

20 Restroom and paddling pool, Tornparken
Architect: Marge
www.marge.se
Client: Sundbybergs stad
Photographer: Johan Fowelin

21 Three country houses, Åre
Architect: Waldemarson Berglund
www.wbarkitekter.se
Client: Private
Photographer: Åke E:son Lindman
Public Spaces in Wood

Wooden constructions lend themselves to the creation of large open spaces with uninterrupted floor areas. Large expanses can be spanned with wooden beams or glulam elements, in generous spaces where the underlaying construction is often visible. Public buildings are frequently shaped in wood to create spaces that vibrate with life, giving them tactile properties and excellent acoustics.

In this chapter, we take a look at some examples of public spaces, both intimate rooms and magnificent arenas, all of which have a clear feel for materials and honestly presented constructions. You gain a true sense of typical Scandinavian style in these environments, the way the wood ages and the detailing evoke memories of woods and the places where we played as children. The Chapel as a cozy tree house made of planted poles, the lecture hall as a pine-scented space.
22 Aula Medica
Architect: Wingårdhs
www.wingardhs.se
Client: Akademiska Hus
Photographer: Wilhelm Rejnus/www.barabild.se

23 Dressage hall for police dogs
Architect: Aix arkitekter
www.aix.se
Client: Statens fastighetsverk
Photographer: Peder Lindbom

24 Chapel, Livered
Architect: Malmström Edstom
www.malmstromedstrom.se
Client: Svenska kyrkan
Photographer: Ulf Celander

25 KTH School of Architecture
Architect: Tham & Videgård Arkitekter
www.tvark.se
Client: Akademiska Hus
Photographer: Åke E:son Lindman
Before nails and screws, buildings were constructed using the dovetailing technique, where the wood was held together with the help of various kinds of ingenious joinery. Such professional know-how lives on and drives the creation and development of new all-wood products. Today’s architects evaluate these old designs with a view to reinterpreting them to create modern architectural prototypes.

In this chapter, we examine furniture and houses made purely of wood, along with playful variations on classic Swedish houses.

The wood industry is actively engaged in developing solid wood architecture. A Nordic research project has resulted in recognised solutions for apartment blocks that meet fire safety standards. Using prefabricated construction elements in solid glulam wood, daintily proportioned beams are built that can span large widths, allowing more liberal floor plan solutions.
26 Villa N1
Architect: Jonas Lindvall
www.jonaslindvall.com
Client: Private
Photographer: Åke E:son Lindman

27 Villa Moelven
Architect: Arkitektstudion Widjedal Racki
www.vetak.se
Client: Private
Photographer: Åke E:son Lindman

28 Coffee Table, S-wood
Designer: Emma Ulbers
www.emmaulbers.se
Client: Interiör
Photographer: Örjan Henriksson

29 Villa, Brännö
Architect: Johannes Norlander
www.norlander.se
Client: Private
Photographer: Rasmus Norlander

30 Country house, Krokläda, Öland
Architect: Löwen Widman Arkitekter
www.lowenwidman.se
Client: Private
Photographer: Rikard Häggbom

31 Timber house, Roslagen
Architect: Gustav Appell Arkitekter
www.gustavappell.se
Client: Private
Photographer: Gustav Appell

32 Stable, Lillskansen
Architect: Landström Arkitekter
www.landstrom.se
Client: Skansen Openair Museum
Photographer: Åke E:son Lindman

33 Country house, Husarö
Architect: Tham & Videgård Arkitekter
www.tvark.se
Client: Private
Photographer: Åke E:son Lindman
The first kit houses in Sweden arrived in the first half of the 19th century. These were easy to assemble and light to transport. Swedes have been experimenting with modular housing ever since. Producing a prefabricated house in a dry and well-lit factory is the best way to guarantee quality and ensure greater construction safety.

In this chapter, we take a look at buildings based on rational modules on larger and smaller scales. Turnkey homes, from apartment blocks to individual houses. Catalogue houses – buying a finished house out of a catalogue – is a chapter in its own right in the history of Swedish wood and an area where we are now seeing new development and fresh innovation. Leading architects are now engaged in creating turnkey, prefabricated homes of the highest architectural quality.
34 Eco-house  
Architect: Belatchew Arkitekter  
www.belatchew.com  
Client: Private  
Photographer: Göran Uhlin

35 & 36 Terraced houses  
Architect: Kjellander + Sjöberg  
www.kasaki.se  
Client: Hemgården, Botkyrka kommun  
Photographer: Johan Fowelin

37 Villa Wallin  
Architect: Erik Andersson  
Arkitektbyrå  
www.erikandersson.se  
Client: Private  
Photographer: Åke E:son Lindman

38 Villa, Arkitektthus  
Architect: Claesson Koivisto Rune  
www.claessonkoivisto rune.se  
Client: Private  
Photographer: Åke E:son Lindman

39 Terraced houses, Ångnäs glänta  
Architect: Joliark  
www.joliark.se  
Client: Åke Sundvall  
Photographer: Alpar Asztalos

40 & 41 Apartment block, Skagershuset  
Architect: OWC Arkitekter  
www.owc.se  
Client: Åke Sundvall  
Photographer: Rasmus Norlander
Wood can be heavy, coarse, shaped, hewed or solid. It can be dovetailed and notched together. But it can also be fine, fragile, delicate, light and precise. It can be curved, planed, turned and woven into delicate shapes, detailing and exquisite patterns. Swedish furniture art, where different kinds of Nordic wood and techniques take centre stage, is exported the world over. As far back as the 1920s, Swedish classicism proved a huge success with what became known as the "Swedish Grace" style.

This chapter looks at projects and details whose aesthetic, tactile characteristics and space-creating qualities are united by a sense of exclusivity and craftsmanship.
42 Restaurant, Wood Stockholm
  Architect: Lars Staļo
  www.woodstockholm.com
  Client: Wood Stockholm
  Photographer: Erik Vallsten

43 Restaurant, SK Mat & Människor
  Architect: Okidoki arkitekter
  www.okidokiarkitekter.se
  Client: Götaplatsgruppen
  Photographer: Ulf Celander

44 Öjared Hotel
  Architect: Kjellgren Kaminsky
  Architecture
  www.kjellgrenkaminsky.se
  Client: Öjared Country Club
  Photographer: Åke E:son Lindman
45 Cupboard Rivö
Designer Jonas Olsson
www.mobelverket.se
Client: Mobelverket
Photographer: Jonas Olsson

46 Shop Aesop, SoFo interier
Architect: In Praise of Shadows Arkitektur
www.inpraiseofshadows.se
Client: Aesop
Photographer: Ludger Paffrath

47 Chair Välja 3
Designer: Jonas Bolin
www.scandinaviandesign.se
Client: Gemla
Photographer: Klara G

48 Shell Arch
Designer: Note Design Studio
www.notedesignstudio.se
Client: Fogia
Photographer: Mathias Nero

49 Country house, Kyrkesund
Architect: Mattias Gunneflo
Email: mattias@mattnas.com
Client: Private
Photographer: Åke Edson Lindman

50 Chair Österlen
Designer: Inga Sempé
www.garsnas.se
Client: Garsnas
Photographer: Lennart Durehed

51 Country house, Husarö
Architect: Okidoki Arkitekter
www.okidokise.com
Client: Private
Photographer: Mikael Olsson
Many Swedish architecture practices are now being commissioned to design apartment blocks in wood by clients who believe wood reduces environmental impact, shortens construction times and cuts costs. Architects are responding to this challenge by designing rich urban sites where the playful look of wood plays a key role in creating environments that are synonymous with everyday life. With wood you can build tall and rational housing, whilst the building material itself gives the structure a human scale. This chapter illustrates both an exposé of exciting projects still on the drawing board and examples of completed homes and structures in an urban environment.

In towns and cities, wood is excellent for use in extensions and new projects on complex sites. Urban development today waits for no man – a bridge, an extension or a new build can be prefabricated and rapidly lifted into place without the need for establishing long-term construction sites that are a disturbance to local infrastructure and the ongoing hustle and bustle of city life.
52 Apartment block, Strandparken
Architect: Wingårdhs
www.wingardhs.se
Client: Folkhem
Photographer: Petra Bindel

53 & 54 Wooden ventilation tower, Royal National City Park
Architect: &Rundquist
www.rundquist.se
Client: Transportstyrelsen, Kungliga Djurgårdsförvaltningen
Photographer 53: Robert Andersson
Photographer 54: Kasper Dudzik

55 Apartment block, Fredhäll
Architect: Hermansson Hiller Lundberg arkitekter
www.hhl.se
Client: Folkhem
3D illustration: Hermansson Hiller Lundberg arkitekter

56 Apartment blocks, Klockstapeln
Architect: Tengbom
www.tengbom.se
Client: Förvaltaren
3D illustration: Tengbom

57 Apartment block, Visby
Architect: Murman
www.murman.se
Client: Ariba
3D illustration: Murman

58 Apartment blocks, Älvsjö
Architect: Arkitema
www.arkitema.se
Client: Folkhem
3D illustration: Arkitema

59 Apartment blocks, Loudden
Architect: Tham Videgård Arkitekter
www.tvark.se
Client: Folkhem
3D illustration: Tham Videgård Arkitekter

60 Science Village, Lund
Architect: Fojab
www.fojab.se
Client: Science Village Scandinavia
3D illustration: Fojab
Architects Sweden is a professional organisation for all architects and architecture students in Sweden, working on its members’ behalf to optimise working conditions for the architect’s profession.

Architects Sweden has a wide-ranging agenda. In addition to union activities and professional development, the association is engaged in opinion formation and addresses professional and architectural issues. The prime objectives are to make a difference to society and to highlight the importance of architectural opportunities.

“Architect” is used here as a collective designation for building architects, landscape architects, planning architects and interior architects.