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## **Danish** Riviera

The country's quiet North Zealand coast is an ecofriendly beach vacation spot best experienced on two wheels. by Lisa Abend

DANES WILL BE the first to tell you that the Danish Riviera is nothing like its more famous Mediterranean namesake. But what it lacks in movie-star glamour and predictable sunshine, the North Zealand coast makes up for in tidy little towns, windswept beaches edged with wild roses, and a relaxed, wholesome charm that is the embodiment of Scandinavian summer. And because it's just 90 minutes by train from Copenhagen, and easily traversed by bike once you're there (rentals are common), this region makes for one of the more carefree—and environmentally friendly—beach holidays in northern Europe.

Extending some 125 miles across the northern tip of Zealand, from Hundested in the west to Hornbæk or Helsingør (definitions differ) in the east, the Danish Riviera became a popular vacation destination for Copenhageners in the 1930s, once beach-bound trains were more common. To fully experience the area's nostalgic spirit, check into a seaside badehotel (bathing hotel). There's one in nearly every coastal town, most dating from the turn of the 20th century but with modern amenities. Once settled, find the nearest bike path. Wide trails run along the scenic coast, connecting one town to the next. Don't miss a visit to the dramatic sculpture garden of the Rudolph Tegner Museum in Dronningmølle. Also worth a stop: the busy fishing harbor of Gilleleje and the candy-striped beach huts of Rågeleje. Locally minded restaurants are bountiful, such as the cozy Tinggården in Frederiksværk, which grows herbs in its own garden, and the lively bistro Knud in Hundested, where you can try mussels straight from Isefjord. And, of course, there are the beaches, with dunes that go on for miles and that, unlike Cannes or Antibes, almost never get packed.

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of the Danish Riviera. Kronborg, the imposing 15th-century castle that supposedly inspired Hamlet, can be found here. Now a UNESCO World Heritage site, it has hosted performances of the play most summers since 1937.

## Make it happen

To experience the Danish Riviera from the sea, take a kayak tour around Liseleje and Hundested with Frederiksværk-based Comfort Adventures.

