

Sigtuna!



Walking along one of the oldest main streets in Sweden, you won't find any building taller than two stories. Cafes and restaurants lined either side and each building had a little plaque for it describing its history. I stopped first for food at Café Myntet. The crispy, dense ciabatta bread sandwich filled me up and I felt ready to explore.

I came here excited to see the runes and it was a bit like a scavenger hunt trying to find them. You can stop in the town hall off the main street to get a map of the area, although whoever drew the map wasn't that great with scale. Each rune that can be found in town is marked on the map with a Viking-esque "R" and you might have to wander a bit in the area to find it. Just seeing the runes is a treat – there's nothing like it back home. I ran my fingers along the etching and tried to imagine myself transported back to 1000 AD when these were erected as memorial stones for those gone, or soon to be gone.

We actually started by visiting St. Mary's Church, which is the oldest brick building in the Lake Malaren area. A walk through the large church graveyard led you to the front door of this old church. Inside this church was quite simple compared to the ornate statues and crypts of Stockholm's Cathedral and Ridderholm. Artifacts can be found from earlier days – don't miss the three Saints on display on your way out of the church.



Across from the church is the first of three church ruins – left from Medieval times, these churches were abandoned and left for derelict once other churches were erected. Information boards can be found in front of each one with a sketch to help you imagine what the once prominent church would have looked like. Construction fences keep you from getting too close, although I might have come across an open spot and the American in me compelled me to take a closer look.



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The rune stones themselves were a blast to find. Orienting the map, I tried to follow along where we were walking. They weren't too difficult to find but I loved the idea of the stones being like a scavenger hunt. There are over 40 rune stones in Sigtuna, but save your time and just try to see the stones that are along your pathway. Trust me, you'll see plenty of stones

Ending my time in Sigtuna, I popped into the Sigtuna Museum. I wouldn't recommend paying to visit the museum but I wandered downstairs and got to check off one more rune stone off my list. Instead, spend your time wandering through some of the smaller side streets and see how Swedes live their everyday life!

