Denmark's Famous Skagens Museum Reopens With New Contemporary Gallery

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North Jutland's famous Skagens Museum has reopened its doors this month with the addition of a new beautifully constructed modern 2000 m2 building. Adorned with a thought-provoking new exhibition -**'Collection & Contemporary'** - which juxtaposes some of the finest pieces from the museum's permanent collection with art works from 14 of Scandinavia's best contemporary artists, the opening marks the completion of phase one of an extensive renovation programme which is set to enhance the museum's status as an international exhibition space.

Originally opened in 1928, the museum became renowned for showcasing the works from the many painters who, attracted by the unique quality of light and sun-kissed coastal setting, flocked to the aptly coined 'Land of Light' at the turn of 19th century. Forming a thriving artist's colony, the reputation of the town and its museum soon grew in popularity and still remains one of North Jutland's most popular destinations.

Drawing on the historic surrounds and complementing the 87 year old museum's innovative Ulrik Plesner design, acclaimed architect firm Friis & Molke have cleverly merged the old with the new to create a new highly architectural and functional space. In contrast to the old building with its many smaller exhibition rooms, the newly designed slate clad building houses large administration and temperature controlled storage areas as well as an expansive 300 m2 window-less exhibition hall with moveable walls in order to offer a fully flexible solution to layout and lighting for accommodating more diverse exhibitions.

Showcasing 'Collection & Contemporary', visitors will be able to enjoy provocative depictions of life in Skagen at the end of the 19th century painted by well known artists such as P.S Krøyer, Anna & Michael Ancher and Laurits Tuxen with modern pieces from Christina Malbek, Eske Kath, Peter Carlsen and Knud Odde, in this new space until 31 October 2015.

Following on from phase one, the second phase will include the complete refurbishment of the existing red building as well as a south-facing extension based on drawings that Ulrik Plsener had made in the 1930. Due to be completed in early 2016, it will bring the total exhibition area to 917 m2 - almost doubling the space.

Combining great art with superb food, Skagens Museum will also be opening a 'pop'up' café called Café Atelieret'. Run by one of Denmark's best chefs Kasper Rune Sørensen, who has worked in the Michelin-starred restaurants Kong Hans Kælder and Kommandanten in Copenhagen, the café will offer a menu of light lunch dishes, local delicacies, freshly baked cakes and fine wines over the summer months.

Staying there
For the complete 'artists colony' experience, stay in the late 19th century Brøndums Hotel - a favourite haunt frequented by the famous painters whose artworks are housed at the Skagens Museum. Over its 140 year old history, the restaurant has long been a central focal point for its visitors offering a mix of classical and seasonally inspired dishes coming mainly from locally sourced ingredients. Given the painters appreciation of great wine, it also continues to stock an extensive selection of 'old world' vintages from France, Italy, Spain and Germany.

Getting there…
Norwegian offers two direct weekly flights from Gatwick to Aalborg in under two hours with return flights starting from £28.20/person one-way. Skagen is an easy drive or train journey from Aalborg.

Useful Facts:

- Architects: Friis & Moltke.
- Today Skagen Museum also includes the preserved artist's houses of the Skagen Painters Michael and Anna Ancher and Holger Drachmann. The houses are restored and kept just as when the artists lived there. Visitors can buy a combined ticket for 17 GBP including entrance for Skagen Museum and the two artist's houses. The tickets can be used on separate days.
- When the current museum building opened to the public in 1928, the collection consisted of 325 works. After merging with two other local museums; the homes of Holger Drachmann and Michael and Anna Ancher, the museum currently owns nearly 9000 works.
- Skagens Museum is the fifth most visited art museum in Denmark and is visited by between

100,000-160,000 guests annually.
- The museum has two listed buildings: The old Garden house which serves as a café and Krøyers first studio in Skagen, the tiny whitewashed grain warehouse in the back of the garden. The Plesner building is not listed, but is considered worthy of preservation.
- For more information on North Jutland and Denmark.

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