On the Road With Art Nowak: Göteborg, Sweden

Dr. Art Nowak, professor emeritus, Pediatric Dentistry, attended the annual meeting of the Swedish Dental Association, which was held October 24-26 in Göteborg. It is Sweden’s second largest city as well as the country’s most important industrial and commercial city seaport. It has been described as very clean, with tree-lined boulevards.

Art stayed at the Scandic Rubinen Hotel, a smaller European-style hotel. He describes it as “comfortable and quiet, with great breakfasts.” The hotel is situated on Kungsportsavenyn (“strolling street”) or, as it is more popularly known, Avenue 24. The street runs three miles from the harbor, where the new symphony hall is located, to Chalmers University of Technology. Public transportation includes buses and trolleys; no cars are allowed. As Art discovered, the street is busy with pedestrians day and night. During the daytime there are many shoppers, tourists and business people on Avenue 24. At night the people are drawn to the street’s restaurants, cultural activities, discos, or casino, which attracts many gamblers.

Avenue 24 is very convenient to shopping, including Nordstan, the largest shopping mall in Sweden, which has nearly 150 stores. The farmer’s market is open year round and is located across the street. The market is replete with small cafés where visitors can dine on wonderful soups and bread for a reasonable price.

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Art was impressed with Göteborg’s walking and biking trails. While the trolleys are the primary transport downtown, bikes are the main method of transportation in other areas of the city. The trails run are extensive and bikers can reach the harbor and/or the university.

Göteborg’s Universeum, the city’s national science discovery center, was the location for a conference cocktail party that Art attended. Visitors are put on a tram and delivered to the 6th floor. From the top story tourists amble down from mountains to sea level, with each level displaying parts of Sweden’s natural habitat including animals, fish, plants and trees. A river flows through the center of the exhibit and passes through ponds.

Dr. Nowak enjoyed several restaurants in Göteborg. The buffet-style Evas Paley café is one block from the university campus. Restaurant Linnea is a four-star dining delight. Art’s favorite meal was at the Fisk & Skaldjurs Restaurant where he ordered the Swedish rendition of bouillabaisse. He describes his dinner as a two-foot wide bowl with a six-inch rim on which were placed shrimp, mussels, scallops, lobster, and three kinds of fish. The bowl contained bouillabaisse broth into which the various seafood pieces could be dipped. Art’s comment: “It was an unbelievable presentation.”

For collegiate faculty, staff or students who may be headed to Göteborg for the upcoming International Association for Dental Research meeting (or for future vacations), the city offers fine restaurants, cultural opportunities, and even the Liseberg Amusement Park (similar to Copenhagen’s Tivoli Gardens). Art adds that there is good limo/taxi service from the airport, which is a 20-minute ride. For visitors whose language skills are Swedish-challenged, he says English is spoken everywhere. Unlike many of Europe’s countries that have converted their currency to euros, Sweden’s currency remains the kronor.

For visitors who wish to maximize their free time while in Sweden, remember there will be ample daylight hours to enjoy the city’s evening amenities: in June the sun does not set in Göteborg until nearly 11:00 p.m.

Enjoy the city’s fine Swedish food, cultural opportunities, excellent shopping and beautiful parks. Skål!