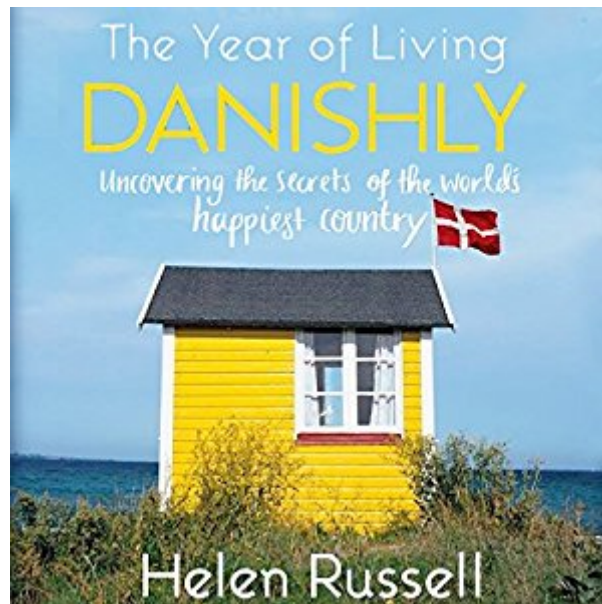


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# The Year Of Living Danishly: Uncovering The Secrets Of The World's Happiest Country



## Synopsis

When she was suddenly given the opportunity of a new life in rural Jutland, journalist and archetypal Londoner Helen Russell discovered a startling statistic: the happiest place on earth isn't Disneyland but Denmark, a land often thought of by foreigners as consisting entirely of long, dark winters, cured herring, Lego and pastries. What is the secret to their success? Are happy Danes born or made? Helen decides there is only one way to find out: she will give herself a year, trying to uncover the formula for Danish happiness. From child care, education, food and interior design to SAD, taxes, sexism and an unfortunate predilection for burning witches, *The Year of Living Danishly* is a funny, poignant record of a journey that shows us where the Danes get it right, where they get it wrong, and how we might just benefit from living a little more Danishly ourselves. Helen Russell is a journalist and former editor of *MarieClaire.co.uk*. She now lives in rural Jutland and works as a Scandinavia correspondent for the *Guardian* as well as writing a column on Denmark for the *Telegraph*.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I'm actually still a Dane but haven't lived in Denmark for several years now, so this gives me an update on current mores that I'd otherwise not get, and it's fascinating! I have known for a long time that I can never "go back to Denmark." What I knew as Denmark has altered almost beyond recognition. I think it's a change for the better: it's a more egalitarian society and very few people are forced into drudgery to stay alive. After 45 years in the United States I'd find it very difficult to live there now, excellent as it is in many ways. Having no Danish background at all, Helen Russell

observes the Denmark of today with eyes uncontaminated by distant memories, but prejudiced in favor of the Danes being the happiest people on earth. This makes the book pleasant, interesting and funny to read, as well as quite informative. I really enjoyed it!

Loved the book! Our family was very fortunate to live in Denmark for 3 yrs. in the early 90's. We lived as guests as we worked for NATO. Viborg was our home and we loved the community. The book explains some of the cultural practices we were not aware of as "Guests". I enjoyed reading about many of the experiences the author encountered, as we too lived "Danishly" In many cases. Loved the culture, and the people and valued our time there. In all fairness I cannot see America being able to adopt many of the social policies that the Danes live by, as we are such a large country, filled with so many cultures. I applaud the authors refreshing take as an outsider willing to give it her all in adopting a new homeland.

i completely enjoyed this book. so well written with lots of humor and even more research. it is about a husband and wife living and working in denmark for 1 year. we have a lot to learn from denmark and, after all, it is the happiest nation on the earth.

Being a Dane, born and raised in DK, but living in USA i can relate very much to the book and her musings and facts etc all written lovely and so funny that I am laughing out loud many times and it got me to miss DK at times, yes pastries especially! love it and I will buy several more copies to give to my Danish friends here. Thanks Helen, it's wonderful book.

A witty and enjoyable memoir about the land of Lego. Enjoyed Helen's musings of the Danish culture, of which I knew little beforehand. Made me want to read more about the Danes and possibly put Denmark on my travel bucket list. Be forewarnedâ you'll crave pastries ("Danish") and probably make a few trips to the bakery, as did I!

This lady can really write! I enjoyed her book very much. I enjoyed reading about the people and places and customs. I loved it that she got pregnant, and I worried about the health of her child. I looked for other books of hers to read. And Denmark is an interesting subject in itself. Behind it all hovered my questions about politics and any possible exportable Scandinavian goodies of policy or practice. I can understand why she stayed, but I would not like to be born there. Russell gives small hints of possible points at which Denmark's system may fit into the world. Violence, especially

among young males; diminished industrialism; immigration; private schools; unequal restaurants; the owner of Lego. She did not mention Thatcher seriously. And why did they want her husband in the first place? What did he add? She did not need to go into these things, but I do. Her book was delightful without them. Thanks, anyway, to the author. Write some more!

This memoir was not quite what I expected. I would rate it 3 1/2 stars, if that was possible. It is extremely well written, and Helen Russell is a very witty writer with a great sense of humour, which I loved. However, I did not quite expect a treatise (or should I say a thesis) on Danish culture! In some respects her research and observations were very interesting and often laugh-out-loud funny, but some chapters bored me. What I felt the story lacked was more about Helen's day to day life and observations. These are present -- but there's not enough of it. My overriding perception of life in Denmark was that it was -- let's be honest -- boring, and Helen's study of the Danish character and culture was necessary to flesh out the book. (Maybe you'll forgive me if I add that I live in South Africa, where life is so much more colourful and unpredictable!) The weather of Scandinavia does not entice ...! But I liked the very happy ending (or new beginning) in the last chapters!

An interesting look at Danish life through the eyes of an expat Brit. The anecdotes of daily life are entertaining - the author doesn't take herself too seriously and provides us with insight into the ups and downs of relocation and (hopefully) integration. The interviews with experts in various fields plus input from Danish locals made the account seem well-rounded.

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