



1. If you are a frequent flyer in Europe, you must have a sizeable travel expenses budget because a visit to Stockholm shall create an irrepressible will to see Venice! That's right, Venice! After seeing the Venice of this, the Venice of that, and finally the Venice of the North, you cannot help but plan your next destination to be the actual thing, *the Venice*!
2. In your next visit to your holy shrine, please spare some time for a prayer to the soul of Birger Jarl, and souls of the looters who have long gone, because it's believed that he founded this spectacularly lovely city to protect towns like Sigtuna against the 'looting' urge of foreign navies.
3. You'd better get ready for a parade of taxis when you come out of the airport, especially when you were warned not to take the wrong kind of'em! There were approximately 453 different types waiting outside, and trying to pick the right one was a nightmare. So I said, "Forgive me Father for I will sin", and took the first one in line in the first row. In the car I thought, "Times have changed, man! People used to build cities to protect themselves against outsiders, now they try to welcome you with as many cabs as they can come up with!"

4. If you are not very “unlucky”, your “List of items to take with” should never include sunglasses; you can actually add a torch instead because it’s usually pretty dark out there. The daylight of the fall is not like the daylight we know in the part of the world where I live. The funny thing is I missed it on the first day as it was dark when I was walking to the conference venue at around 9:30 in the morning, and dark yet again when I left a bit early at around four in the afternoon!
5. If you’re a smoker, you’d rather stay home than go to Stockholm and freeze your a... out there. Smoking will eventually kill you anyway, so why try harder to kill yourself in such a miserable way instead of this beautiful, warm way of doing so. Besides, the smoking “area” in the Arlanda airport is no bigger than the extra wardrobe I have in my bedroom to keep my shirts and ties only!
6. You should expect nothing less than a well-organized event but keep in mind that they entertain you with a lovely keynote speech of a balanced combination of information and fun first, and then they scare the s.... out of you with a presenter they invite from their National Security Agency; thanks to the presentation, now I see “pink elephants” that keep on changing into dark colors everywhere!
7. Remind yourself that the social hour organized for the benefit of Translators Without Borders, now a benchmark of NTIF, is good fun for a very good cause, and just don’t get very hopeful that your employees will have the same enthusiasm when they’re back to work as the one they had when participating in the sponsored events.
8. Don’t forget to tell your wife/husband, girl/boyfriend to remind you to stuff a few extra pretzels, cookies, crackers, biscuits (anything that’s edible!) into your luggage because the dinner we were served at Stallmastaregarden, a wonderful hotel overlooking the beautiful Brunnsviken Bay with comfortable and cozy rooms for any time of the year, was so excellent yet so little (especially for us guys/gals from around the Mediterranean coast). Now I know why Swedish girls are so slim, but I haven’t a clue how they manage to be so beautiful and tall!?! If I lived in Sweden I’d probably find no ‘suitable’ girlfriend, or I’d be wasted while trying to go up to kiss and down to...
9. You must book the night of the event’s last day for a dinner with your friends which is what I did, and we had excellent time except when a piece of meat from Anu’s plate catapulted into Marek’s lap, but no worries, the guy will bike more than a thousand miles next spring so he needs some extra protein anyway!
10. Here’s the last but of course not the least tip that can save your day: do your best to stay away from the kissing frenzy of Joaquim of Jaba Translations. When we decided to leave the bar late at night, he kissed each and every girl in the bar (at least once!) including those who did not belong to NTIF gang!

That’s all folks; see you all in the next event...