

Christianshavn – a short introduction

Christianshavn was founded as a fortification in 1618 ff. During the reign of King Christian IV. Canals, streets and square were, inspired by the Dutch, established on the basis of a symmetrical town plan, surrounded by ramparts and bastions.

The town, an independent municipality 1639-1674, developed into an international city of shipping and craft. The 17th century saw the blossoming of commercial houses, importing valuable goods from all over the world.

In 1807 the English stole the Danish naval fleet from Holmen. Hereafter Christianshavn declined into one of the poorest districts of Copenhagen. However, later in the century huge inovative industries and shipyards were established.

Throughout three centuries the Danish Nay resided on the five manmade islands, making up Holmen. In the 1990s The Navy abandoned most of the area, and the old the old ship yards, gunboat sheds, smithies and barracks, today contain homes, creative businesses and The National Film School, The National School of Performing Arts, The Rhythmic Music Conservatory and The National School of Architecture. The island is home to the Royal Danish Opera as well.

On the Island of Nyholm Mastekranen and a number of old maritime installations have been preserved, although The Navy during the second world war, lowred the hole navy, before the germans could take it. Other military grounds have been converted into the Free City of Christiania, which is characterised by alternative ways of living.

A lot of the Renaissance houses, dating from the 16th and 17th century, the warehouses from the period of flourishment, the Church of Our Savior with its famous steeple, the old buildings of the naval station, gunpower sheds and workshops remain intact as a result of the town never having been the scene of large fires or bombardments. Together with the ramparts these buildings represent some of the best preserved in Denmark. After restoration several of them have been converted into culturel institutions, public administration and housing.

Today, 13,500 people live in the district. Most are aware of the district's uniqueness and many are engaged in local social and cultural contexts, in order to continue to ensure cohesion between the citizens and to be a district with high ceilings.

