

EMBRACE HYGGE, THE ART OF COZINESS AND CHARM

Residents of the Pacific Northwest experience more rain and cloudy days than most—meaning we take to shelter inside for the better part of the year. Our natural inclination to move indoors and find comfort in our dry homes has created a culture that craves cozy, comfortable living.



WRITTEN *by* SAMANTHA LUND



That oh-so-Seattle style landed our community in the top spot for America's "Most Hygge City," according to *Sperling's Best Places*. Hygge (pronounced hue-guh) is a Danish word used when acknowledging a feeling or moment, whether alone or with friends, whether at home or out, as cozy, charming or special.

In the last two years, United States pop culture has obsessed over hygge. In 2016, the Oxford Dictionaries put hygge on the shortlist for "Word of the Year" and book after book was published about the concept of Scandinavian coziness.

Hygge is not to be overlooked as a lifestyle craze that comes with a whiff of smugness but is gone the next season. Several studies about happiness land on Scandinavian countries as having the "most happy people." With that in mind, what harm can come from adopting a few of their lifestyle habits?

Seattle's reign as "most hygge" is due to our abundance of coffee shops and love of reading. We are a population that enjoys indoor board games and other activities, as well as our constant rain, which keeps us indoors often.

If you want to bring a little more hygge into your home for comfort and coziness 24/7, try a few of these Danish decorating tips:

BRING THE OUTDOORS INSIDE

With the long winters and dreary skies, the Danes bring natural elements like twigs, plants, and nuts indoors. There's also something about kindling, a roaring fireplace and its warmth that makes people feel closer to nature. That simple pleasure and its smell is very hygge. The Bellevue Nursery is a great source for indoor plants perfect for this environment.

LIGHT A CANDLE OR TWO

No recipe for hygge is complete without candles. Turning down the electric lights and lighting candles throughout a room can transform the environment. Add an aromatherapy candle to the mix for ultimate hygge. Stop by Glassybaby's Bellevue location for a simple, sweet votive to enhance the environment.

FILL YOUR SPACE WITH COMFORT

Pillows and blankets are a must. But just like a cozy sweater, the cushions in your house are a very personal decision. Cotton? Wool? You choose. West Elm, Pottery Barn and Pier 1 are all here in our backyard.

UNPLUG

Creating a hygge atmosphere is only half the fun; you could adjust your habits too. Try unplugging your TV or keeping your phone in another room. Have one or two rooms in your home dedicated to hygge—comfortable, soft, natural and distraction-free. Instead of looking at a screen, try reading a good book or playing board games with friends. ■

