

# Nordic Noir



Nordic noir, also known as Scandinavian or Scandi Noir, is a genre of crime fiction set in a Nordic country that's operatic and usually written from a police's perspective. These thrillers are defined by their dark narratives, murky settings and troubled protagonists.

Some of the key elements of a Nordic Noir plot include:

- Bleak settings, usually in remote landscapes and bland, unassuming streets.
- Plots that involve brutal crimes like murder, misogyny, misandry, racism and rape.
- A troubled and tortured protagonist battling their inner demons.
- A solid story with complex themes, fatalistic storylines and twists.
- A social critique that sheds light on the flaws of society and the underbelly of society.
- Tales that move at a melancholic tempo with slow, minimalistic background music.

You can find Nordic Noir in either the Fiction or the Mystery section of the Library.

## Denmark

### Jussi Adler-Olsen

One of Denmark's most popular crime authors, Adler-Olsen is unapologetically dark in his disturbing Department Q novels featuring Detective Carl Morck of Copenhagen's cold cases division. Start with *The Keeper of Lost Causes*.

### Katrine Engberg

The Kørner & Werner series follows detectives Jeppe Kørner and Anette Werner as they tackle complex and chilling murder cases in Copenhagen. Start with *The Tenant*.

### **Peter Hoeg**

It wasn't Stieg Larsson who sparked Americans' current love affair with Nordic crime novels. It was Hoeg, whose Greenland-set crime thriller *Smilla's Sense of Snow* became a surprise best seller when it was translated into English in 1993.

### **Lene Kaaberbol and Agnete Friis**

Their disturbing novels, all exposés of social injustice, are led by the righteous Red Cross nurse Nina Borg. Start with *The Boy in the Suitcase*.

## **Iceland**

### **Arnaldur Indridason**

The cynical, solitary, chain-smoking curmudgeon Inspector Erlunder Sveinsson is the heart of complicated relationships with his children make him a fascinating hero. Set in a darkly atmospheric Iceland, the books explore the violence and loneliness of an isolated culture. Start with *Jar City*.

### **Ragnar Jonasson**

Although he specializes in classically crafted whodunits, Jonasson has a gift for describing his starkly beautiful Icelandic settings.

### **Yrsa Sigurdardottir**

Yrsa Sigurdardottir writes dark, intense, intricately plotted mysteries featuring, featuring the psychologist Freyja and the police officer Huldar. Start with *The Legacy*.

## **Norway**

### **Thomas Enger**

In his series, Enger follows the high-octane exploits of an investigative journalist named Henning Juul.

### **Karin Fossum**

Karin Fossum has won international acclaim for her character-driven Inspector Sejer series, starring the taciturn widower Konrad Sejer. A violent crime occurs in each novel, and descriptions of the insular Norwegian setting create a dark tone. Start with *Don't Look Back*.

### **Jo Nesbo**

Nesbo's twist-filled, fast-paced crime stories frequently feature the personally troubled and substance-abusing Detective Harry Hole as he wades through the seedy underbelly of Oslo to solve brutal murders. Start with *The Bat*.

## **Sweden**

### **Arne Dahl**

Dahl writes about a team of Swedish investigators, Stockholm's Intercrime team, who investigate violent, international crime.

### **Kjell Eriksson**

Kjell Eriksson writes solidly-composed police procedural novels with deep psychological and sociological insight into human nature.

**Lars Kepler**

The husband-and-wife team behind Kepler — Alexandra Coelho Ahndoril and Alexander Ahndoril — has a taste for the macabre and a surefire recipe for the lurid serial-killer thriller. Start with *The Hypnotist*.

**Camilla Lackberg**

Camilla Lackberg is best-known for her Patrik Hedstrom series of police procedurals-cum-thrillers, set in small-town coastal Sweden. Start with *The Ice Princess*.

**Asa Larsson**

Prior to becoming a full-time writer, Larsson was a tax lawyer, a profession she shares with the heroine of her novels, Rebecka Martinsson.

**David Lagercrantz**

Lagercrantz is best known for *The Girl in the Spider's Web*, the fourth installment in the Millennium series.

**Stieg Larsson**

He revived the craze for Scandinavian mystery with *The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo*, and his work continue to influence the genre.

**Henning Mankell**

Known as the father of Swedish crime fiction, Henning Mankell's popularity has spread far and wide due to his well-crafted mystery series featuring Kurt Wallander, a troubled police detective whose cases bring to light the insecurities and anxieties of modern Sweden, above and beyond the crimes themselves. Start with *Faceless Killers*.

**Liza Marklund**

Liza Marklund writes suspense tales set in Stockholm, often starring complicated female investigative journalists on the hunt for a dangerous assortment of murderers, perverts, and psychopaths.

**Hakan Nesser**

An award winning crime writer best known for his Inspector Van Veeteren series as well as his Inspector Barbarotti series.

**Roslund & Hellstrom**

Anders Roslund and Borge Hellstrom have a knack for transforming social scourges into taut, gritty thrillers involving eccentric, hard-bitten detectives and their demimonde. Start with *The Beast*.

**Emelie Schepp**

In her trilogy about an aloof and unlikable public prosecutor with a hidden past, Schepp takes on such thorny issues as class prejudice, exploitation and broken trust.

**Karin Smirnoff**

In 2021 Smirnoff was announced as the new author of books in the best-selling and award-winning Millennium series, originally created by Stieg Larsson.

**Johan Theorin**

Theorin, a journalist and author, improvises on the traditional recipe for Nordic thrillers by adding generous sprinklings of folklore and the supernatural.