



## Guide to Danish Supermarkets

If you come from a country where the supermarket scene is dominated by a handful of players, Denmark (and certainly Copenhagen) seems to have more supermarket chains.

But most except Aldi, Lidl and Rema 1000 are owned by three companies with two – COOP DK and Dansk Supermarked A/S owning the most. On the whole you will find the same kind of products in all the supermarkets here with a small amount of differentiation but in some cases a great difference in price. Most in the city are pretty small supermarkets by British or American standards with the exception of Bilka at Fields and Meny at the Rotunda in Hellerup. Føtex and Kvickly also have larger stores. You will often find three or four different supermarkets within stone's throw of each other which may seem odd but I often find that I need to go to more than one store to get all I need.

### **'POSH' SUPERMARKETS – IRMA AND MENY**

By this I mean the ones that sell a more upmarket range of products and can have the price tag to match, in many cases on everyday products. I like to buy food from these stores at times. I like the quality of Irma products but there isn't a very wide selection and Meny also has probably the widest selection of groceries in the city. If you are looking for English or American foods or an experience that is closer to these country's supermarkets then a visit to Meny at the Rotunda is for you. This is the only supermarket location to have dual signage in English and Danish as 25% of the customers are expats. You will find a cheese, fish, meat and deli counter in this store too, something that is rare in other supermarket chains.

### **BIGGER SUPERMARKETS – KVICKLY, FØTEX, BILKA, SUPER BRUGSEN**

These are the ones with larger stores offering more than just food with clothing and homeware sections. Kvickly is the biggest bike seller in Denmark and a great place to get affordable kids' bikes. Much the same selection of daily groceries as the discount supermarkets but a wider and more reliable selection. The exception is Bilka at Fields which is the closest you will get to a hypermarket type store here.



## **DISCOUNT SUPERMARKETS – FAKTA, NETTO, ALDI, LIDL, REMA 1000, KIWI**

Discount supermarkets here are not to be sniffed at. They are still nicely laid out, clean and tidy and in recent years have offered the same selection of food and household cleaning items as the other stores but at a lower price. The specials they carry in Netto are particularly good both on food and toys etc. One thing, don't expect to find the same special products in again so destroyer tactics are always worth considering especially on special shampoos for example. Aldi's face creams are amazing too!

Normal, a new player on the market, is worth noting for toiletries and cleaning products.

## **MINI SUPERMARKETS – IRMA CITY/LILLE, FAKTA Q, NETTO DØGN, LOCAL BRUGSEN**

Many of the supermarkets have little brothers, usually smaller, stocking more basics and open longer hours.

## **ONLINE – NEMLIG, IRMA AND ÅRSTIDERNE**

Online grocery shopping took a while to get to Denmark but now there is a tiny selection to choose from. Nemlig.com is probably the best. They are not tied to one supermarket so you get a good range of products, you can book an hourly slot and they have always been reliable for me and they carry the shopping up to your door. Irma also has an online delivery service and if you are looking for fruit and veg boxes then Årstiderne is the place.

## **OTHER THINGS TO NOTE**

- There isn't the same kind of loyalty card system here as in the UK but you can collect stickers in some stores such as Netto to buy some special products at a discount (currently it is Rituals products) and some also give away little packs of themed cards for kids to collect (a very cynical marketing ploy). You can also get members cards, which you may pay for in the first instance, and then get discounts in store with them. I know that Kvickly and Kiwi offer these. Supermarkets in the COOP chain have a loyalty card and app.
- Hard alcohol/spirits are not on the shelves in the supermarkets and you need to go to the kiosk at the front of the big stores or ask at the till in smaller ones for these drinks.



- There are, of course, lots of little greengrocers around the city and I favour these for my fresh fruit and veg if I can.
- To get an idea of the type of products, prices and discounts in the supermarkets near you the adviser (brochures) — either the ones through your door or the online versions if you want to save trees — are invaluable.
- Discounts here are a cut in the normal price not bulk buying.
- You need to take your own bags or pay for a carrier bag at the till. You need to pack your own groceries but there is less stress as there is usually a divider on the conveyor belt so your goods stay separate from the next person's. Danes are used to this system so don't hurry you too much.
- If you want to use a trolley you need either a 10 or 20 kroner coin or one of the special trolley coins sold in some supermarkets.
- There are places in most supermarkets for you to return your soda/beer cans etc to get your deposit back on the form of a voucher for the shop which can be redeemed against your bill or as cash. Remember only cans and bottles with a PANT symbol on them can be return.