Although few murders are actually committed in Sweden, the Swedish crime novel has become a modern classic and has gained a worldwide reputation in just a short space of time. From Gotland in the east to Fjällbacka in the west, from Ystad in the south up to Kiruna in the north, the country is seen in a new perspective: via murder investigations where the focus is not only on the crime but also on the Swedish welfare model and human psychology. The Swedish crime novel was in fact born over a century ago with the publication of "The Stockholm Detective" in 1893, written under the pseudonym of Prins Pierre.

The original golden age of the crime genre in Sweden was the 1950s, when Stieg Trenter’s Stockholm series competed with Maria Lang’s “feel-good” novels set in both Stockholm and Bergslagen. But today’s crop of authors is infinitely larger. Sweden’s current crime fiction phenomenon has largely been shaken out of the shabby overcoat of Inspector Martin Beck, the protagonist in “The Story of a Crime”, the legendary ten-book series by Maj Sjöwall and Per Wahlöö. “Roseanna”, 1965, marked the arrival of the modern Swedish crime novel, rich in social criticism and portraying fairly ordinary characters trying to deal with a crumbling society.