Last Look
The Knights of COVID-19
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It looks like a scene out of Monty Python. Knight Thomas Lindgren (left), on the horse Soprano, and Knight Anders Mansson, on Sara, ride through Visby, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and the most popular tourist destination on the Swedish island of Gotland.

The province hired the gallants from the knight society Tornamenteum to patrol the medieval town to encourage tourists to practice social distancing and to wash their hands. Unlike most nations around the world, Sweden has kept its borders open throughout the coronavirus pandemic and rejected lockdown restrictions or quarantine measures, even refusing to mandate masks.

Early this spring, Sweden had one of the highest COVID-19 infection rates in Europe. But according to data from the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control this September, Sweden currently has one of the lowest infection rates on the Continent.

The Swedish model of relying more on civic-minded ethics than on government restrictions has proved to be an outlier worldwide as quixotic as Visby’s knights-errant. —MARCIE BIANCO