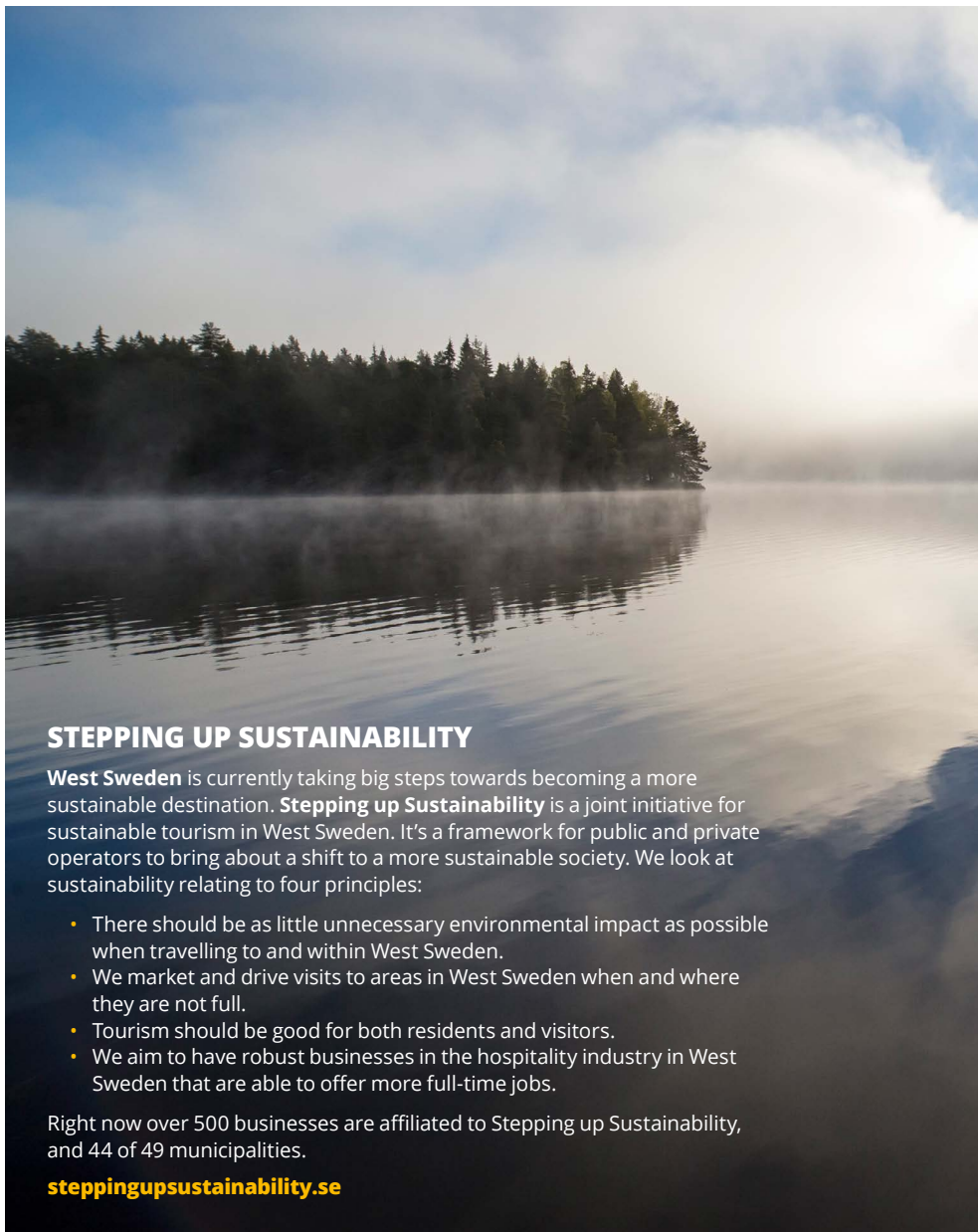


# NEWS AND IDEAS FOR STORIES FROM WEST SWEDEN 2023

West Sweden, with Gothenburg as its gateway, has a rich variety of natural landscapes. From our beautiful coastline with its islands and skerries, to plateau mountains and fertile plains, not to mention the unspoilt forests dotted with lakes with water so clean you can drink it. In West Sweden, we are doing our best to work sustainably. When we talk about sustainability we mean the whole package – economic, environmental and social sustainability.

[westsweden.com](https://westsweden.com)

WEST SWEDEN



## STEPPING UP SUSTAINABILITY

**West Sweden** is currently taking big steps towards becoming a more sustainable destination. **Stepping up Sustainability** is a joint initiative for sustainable tourism in West Sweden. It's a framework for public and private operators to bring about a shift to a more sustainable society. We look at sustainability relating to four principles:

- There should be as little unnecessary environmental impact as possible when travelling to and within West Sweden.
- We market and drive visits to areas in West Sweden when and where they are not full.
- Tourism should be good for both residents and visitors.
- We aim to have robust businesses in the hospitality industry in West Sweden that are able to offer more full-time jobs.

Right now over 500 businesses are affiliated to Stepping up Sustainability, and 44 of 49 municipalities.

[steppingupsustainability.se](https://steppingupsustainability.se)



## Gothenburg celebrates 400 years!

For six times in a row, Gothenburg has ranked as [the world's most sustainable destination](#) according to the Global Destination Sustainability Index. Gothenburg will be celebrating its 400 year anniversary in 2023. Here are [14 reasons to visit Gothenburg this year](#).





# STEPPING UP SUSTAINABILITY AWARD WINNERS OF THE YEAR, 2022

## PLATÅBERGENS GEOPARK

### Category: Civic Initiative

Sweden's first UNESCO listed Geopark, containing a biosphere reserve designated by UNESCO with the aim of creating long term sustainable relationships between people and the environment. The best way to explore it is via the 138 km Biosphere Trail, accessible by train from Gothenburg to Lidköping, which also visits stunning places like Kinnekulle and Läckö Castle, both next to Sweden's largest lake – Vänern. The idea behind the [Platåbergen Geopark](#) is that both visitors and residents should learn more about the table mountains and their surroundings, and what role they have played throughout history. This is done via hiking trails, exhibitions, dramatisations, guided tours, and virtual reality/animations. The Geopark also collaborates with local tourism operators to drive sustainable tourism.

Anna Bergengren, coordinator Platåbergen's UNESCO Global Geopark, says *"There are only 177 UNESCO global geoparks in the whole world - and the key to reaching this status is having commitment from the local community, local authorities, private individuals, and associations. Sustainability is not just about using sustainable products and reducing emissions – it is also about social sustainability and generating commitment among those who live in the local area. We believe in, and work hard to create, added value for our visitors and for those who live here"*.

The Geopark is also part of the new national cycle route going round Lake Vänern – the Vänereden.

[platabergensgeopark.se/en/start-en/](https://platabergensgeopark.se/en/start-en/)



## WRÅGÅRDEN

### Category: Tourism Business

[Wrågården](#) was originally a traditional family farm which, under Henrik Alexandersson's leadership, has expanded to include a range of different activities: Restaurant, moose park, moose hotel, bison breeding, football golf, padel, beer and whisky tasting, conference, farm shop, café, and much more. Ever since he took over 22 years ago, he has focused on creating a sustainable business – not least from a personnel perspective.

*"Today we have nine people permanently employed all year round. One of our aims has been to develop our activities beyond the high season in order to have more security for our employees. In the past it was difficult to achieve year-round sustainability – we made more money during the summer and Christmas seasons – then the surplus from that had to cover the deficits in the quiet months. It's very tough to work like this indefinitely, so it feels great to have found a solution where our staff are secure and can enjoy and be passionate about what they do",* says Henrik.

*All meat produced at Wrågården is raised organically, and everything served in the restaurants is Swedish. Even the animal feed is organic. Henrik Alexandersson believes that it is important to benefit Swedish farmers.*

*"It's huge for us to receive this award. Sustainability is really something we want to be associated with, and with which we have worked for many years. We have had a long development process in our business and started by doing things from scratch - it feels good that it's paying off,"* says Henrik Alexandersson, who is the fifth generation of his family to run Wrågården.

[wragarden.se/en/](https://wragarden.se/en/)







# INTERNATIONALLY RENOWNED ARTISTS WILL BE EXHIBITING ON TJÖRN – ISLAND OF ART

Internationally renowned artists working to the theme of: **WATER, NATURE, and SUSTAINABILITY** will be exhibiting on the island of Tjörn, one hour north of Gothenburg.

From the jetty at the Nordic Watercolor Museum, you can dip your paintbrush in water while you dip your toes in the sea. Gaze out to sea with the Anna sculpture by your side, from the rocky outcrops in the ancient landscapes of Sculpture in Pilane. Across the water stands Pater Noster, the king of lighthouses, with a world class design hotel that offers you a home on the horizon. Explore the island of Tjörn easily by bike.

[vastsverige.com/en/sodra-bohuslan/tjorn-island-of-art/](https://vastsverige.com/en/sodra-bohuslan/tjorn-island-of-art/)

## The Chinese artist Ai Weiwei will exhibit at Sculpture in Pilane

The Chinese artist Ai Weiwei – one of the foremost sculptors in the world – will exhibit seven works from a series, underpinned by political activism in the global environmental debate, at this scenic [open air sculpture park](#) on the island of Tjörn. The Weiwei exhibition, ROOTS, will be open May 13-September 24.

[hallbarhetsklivet.se/en/organizations/skulptur-i-pilane/](https://hallbarhetsklivet.se/en/organizations/skulptur-i-pilane/)

## The Nordic Watercolour Museum, Animal Kingdom

7 May-3 Sep

This exhibition was due to be shown 3 years ago when the The Nordic Watercolour Museum celebrated its 20th anniversary, but will be shown this year instead. Visitors can enjoy fantastic watercolours of animals and nature from the 17th century to the present day.

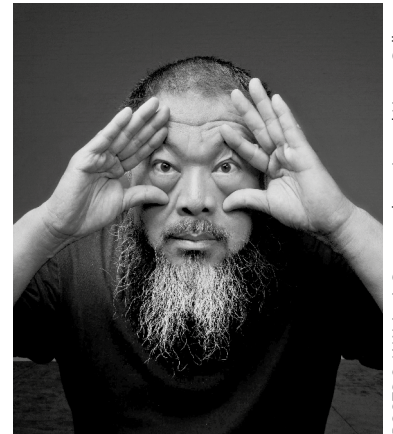
[akvarellmuseet.org/en](https://akvarellmuseet.org/en)

## Pater Noster (lighthouse) – a home on the horizon

1 June-30 August

Guardians of Water, a photo art exhibition, will be shown on the island during the summer. It's a collaboration with Up On Walls, the agent for artists Christy Lee Rogers and Zena Holloway.

[en.paternoster.se/](https://en.paternoster.se/)



ROOTS © Ai Weiwei. Courtesy the artist and Lisson Gallery. Photographer: Gao Yuan.







Hiking in West Sweden gives you the best of many different worlds. From the picturesque villages and islands of the West Coast, and the silent wilderness of Dalsland, to Västergötland's historic landscapes.

Some new hiking trails have been opened, and there are many existing ones to discover:

[vastsverige.com/en/nature-experiences/walking/](https://vastsverige.com/en/nature-experiences/walking/)

### Walk Pilgrim Paths in West Sweden

There are several Pilgrim Paths in West Sweden. The newest is the Pilgrim Path Göta Älv which starts in the centre of Gothenburg. The Pilgrim Path Västergötland is getting a new stage between Hjo and Kungslena, and there's also a Pilgrim Path in Dalsland.

[vastsverige.com/en/nature-experiences/walking/hiking-trails/walk-along-the-pilgrim-paths-of-west-sweden/](https://vastsverige.com/en/nature-experiences/walking/hiking-trails/walk-along-the-pilgrim-paths-of-west-sweden/)

#### New! Pilgrim Path Hjo – Kungslena

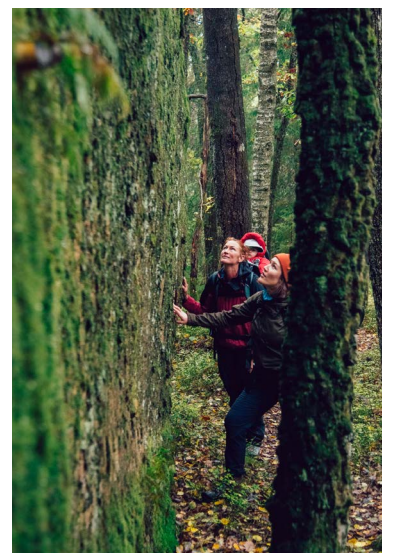
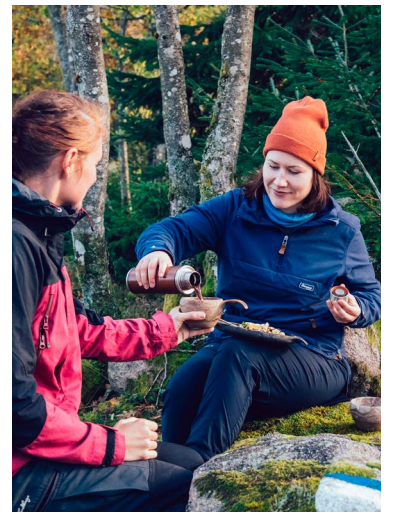
44-55 km, will be opened in autumn 2023, exploring beautiful and historic landscapes. Can be reached on public transport. More information will be available in spring.

[pilgrimsledhjokungslena.se/the-trail/](https://pilgrimsledhjokungslena.se/the-trail/)

#### New! Pilgrim Path Göta Älv

10 stages in total over 143 km, starting with a historic city walk through Gothenburg before heading into the leafy green scenery of the Lärjeån valley and the Vättlefjäll nature reserve. Explore using public transport and combine with accommodation in Gothenburg.

[vastsverige.com/en/nature-experiences/walking/hiking-trails/pilgrim-path-gota-alm/](https://vastsverige.com/en/nature-experiences/walking/hiking-trails/pilgrim-path-gota-alm/)





## OTHER HIKING TRAILS:

### The Gothenburg Archipelago Trail

A 27 km long trail over the idyllic islands of Hönö, Fotö, Öckerö and Hälsö, a short ferry ride from the city centre. The trail is part of the Kuststigen Coastal Path which stretches through Bohuslän up to Oslo. The new Skärgårdshotellet and a cluster of businesses in Hönö Klåva, as well as several other operators are working on packages and travel guiding.

[westswedentrails.com/en/etapp/goteborgs-skargardsled-etapp-1-av-3](https://westswedentrails.com/en/etapp/goteborgs-skargardsled-etapp-1-av-3)

### Kuststigen Coastal Path Lysekil

Exploring the sculpted rocky landscapes and picturesque seaside villages along the coastline, including Stångehuvud, Skaftö, Grundsund and Fiskebäckskil. The trail is part of the Kuststigen Coastal Path which stretches through Bohuslän up to Oslo. Combine with a fishing trip or seal safari out to sea, cosy accommodation and high quality food experiences.

[vastsverige.com/en/nature-experiences/walking/hiking-trails/kuststigen/?site=5](https://vastsverige.com/en/nature-experiences/walking/hiking-trails/kuststigen/?site=5)

### Biosphere Trail, Rail & Trail

Travel by train to explore this trail, stretching 138 km from Mariestad to Läckö Castle, via Kinnekulle, through the UNESCO biosphere area described at the top of the newsletter. Take the train from Gothenburg to Lidköping and see the Swedish porcelain collections at the newly re-opened Rörstrand Museum as well as the Andreas Eriksson exhibition in Lidköping Museum. Andreas Eriksson is an internationally renowned artist who studied at Konsthögskolan in Stockholm. Trees, nature and the landscape are his main inspiration and motifs. He has exhibited all over the world. There will be a major exhibition at Lidköping's art gallery from mid-June to August 2023

[vastsverige.com/en/nature-experiences/walking/hiking-trails/the-biosphere-trail/](https://vastsverige.com/en/nature-experiences/walking/hiking-trails/the-biosphere-trail/)

### The Kroppefjäll Trail

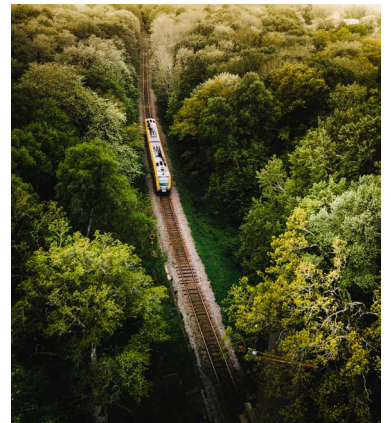
Hike over high plateaus and through forested rift valleys, by mighty lakes and mysterious tarns. Stages 1 and 2 explore one of West Sweden's largest wilderness areas. Kroppefjäll B&B offers a great package with accommodation and the chance to make food in the open air. Guests can order a carefully composed lunch or dinner bag containing quality ingredients, an easy recipe and everything they need to cook a meal outdoors.

[vastsverige.com/en/nature-experiences/walking/hiking-trails/the-kroppefjall-trail/?site=5](https://vastsverige.com/en/nature-experiences/walking/hiking-trails/the-kroppefjall-trail/?site=5)

### Gotaleden, Rail & Trail

The Gotaleden is a 71 kilometre hiking trail between Gothenburg and Alingsås. Also known as the Capital of Fika, the town is this year celebrating 290 years of café culture. The trail is characterised by beautiful scenery, pitstops near to town and proximity to train stations making all the stages easily accessible. Accommodation and places to eat along the trail include Garveriet, Aspenäs Manor and Nääs.

[vastsverige.com/en/nature-experiences/walking/hiking-trails/gotaleden/](https://vastsverige.com/en/nature-experiences/walking/hiking-trails/gotaleden/)







# NEW NATIONAL CYCLE ROUTES IN WEST SWEDEN

**More than half of Sweden's national cycle routes are found in West Sweden.**

You'll find more than half of Sweden's national cycle routes in West Sweden, where you'll cycle through beautiful scenery with many interesting places to visit along the way. And the best thing is that the next food or fika stop is never very far away.

[vastsverige.com/en/nature-experiences/cycling/cycle-paths/national-cycle-routes/](https://vastsverige.com/en/nature-experiences/cycling/cycle-paths/national-cycle-routes/)

## **Göta Canal Trail**

**200 km, Sjötorp – Mem**

Flat and family friendly. Can be combined with boat and other experiences along the canal. Crosses the Vänerleden at Sjötorp. Planned opening in June 2023.

## **The Unionsleden**

**350 km Moss – Karlstad**

Cycle between two countries. This scenic, undulating route is along mostly gravelled roads. Crosses the Vänerleden at Bengtsfors and Fengersfors. Inaugurated in 2021 but opening delayed until 2022 because of the pandemic.

## **The Vänerleden**

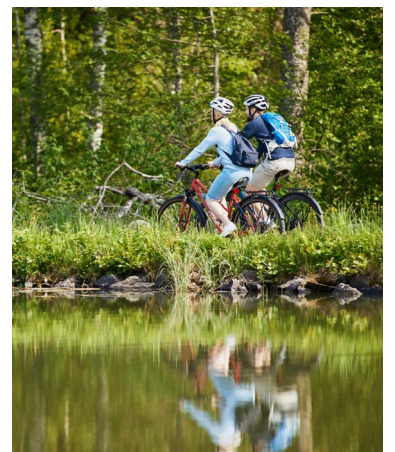
**640 km around Lake Vänern**

Sweden's longest trail, looping around Lake Vänern, with varied terrain which is hilly in Dalsland. Nominated as Cycling Route of the Year in the Netherlands. Combines nature and culture: Porcelain town Lidköping, Läckö Castle, Kinnekulle table mountain and the Platåbergens Geopark. Opened in 2022.

## **The Ätradal Trail**

**200 km Falköping – Falkenberg**

Flat, with 50% of the trail on railway embankments. Family friendly. Combines culture, food and history in landscapes dotted with idyllic small towns. Crosses the Kattegatt Trail (Kattegattsleden) in Falkenberg. Opened in 2022.







# New close to nature accommodation on South Koster, by the Kosterhavet National Park

A new business on South Koster, opening on 15 May. Explore the Kosterhavet National Park, Sweden's first marine national park, with underwater trails and a visitor centre. Get there by ferry from Strömstad, reached by train from Gothenburg.

Boutique B&B with 6 new apartments, each with a terrace and galley kitchen. There are also 2 glamping tents and a cosy farmhouse on two floors, sleeping 5. On site is a brewery, farm shop, bakery and restaurant as well as bar and

a little private lounge area for 4. Guests can make food over an open fire using local ingredients, and do beermaking courses and beer tastings, as well as go fishing and hiking. Open most of the year. On South Koster you can also hike and cycle. Visit the Naturum Kosterhavet to learn all about the marine national park, go on guided boat trips and paddle kayaks.

[klapphagen.se](http://klapphagen.se)

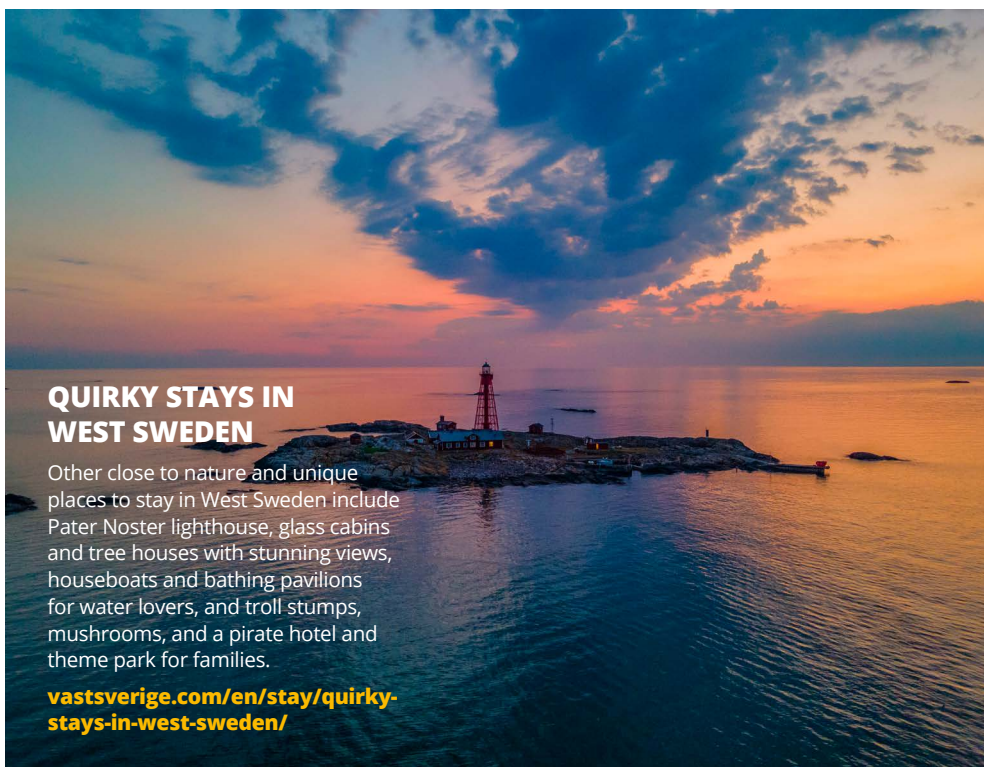
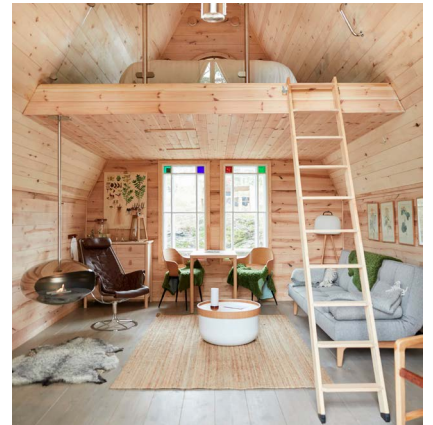
[vastsverige.com/en/kosterhavet/](http://vastsverige.com/en/kosterhavet/)



## Discover West Sweden's four National Parks

There are four National Parks in West Sweden: Tresticklan, Kosterhavet, Tiveden and Djurö. Each has a very different character but what connects them all is that they offer epic nature experiences. Altogether there are around 30 National Parks in Sweden and four of them can be found in West Sweden.

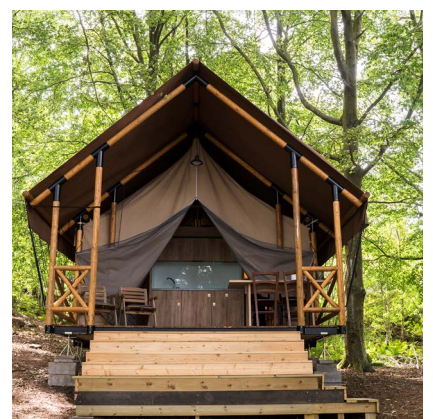
[vastsverige.com/en/nature-experiences/national-parks/](http://vastsverige.com/en/nature-experiences/national-parks/)



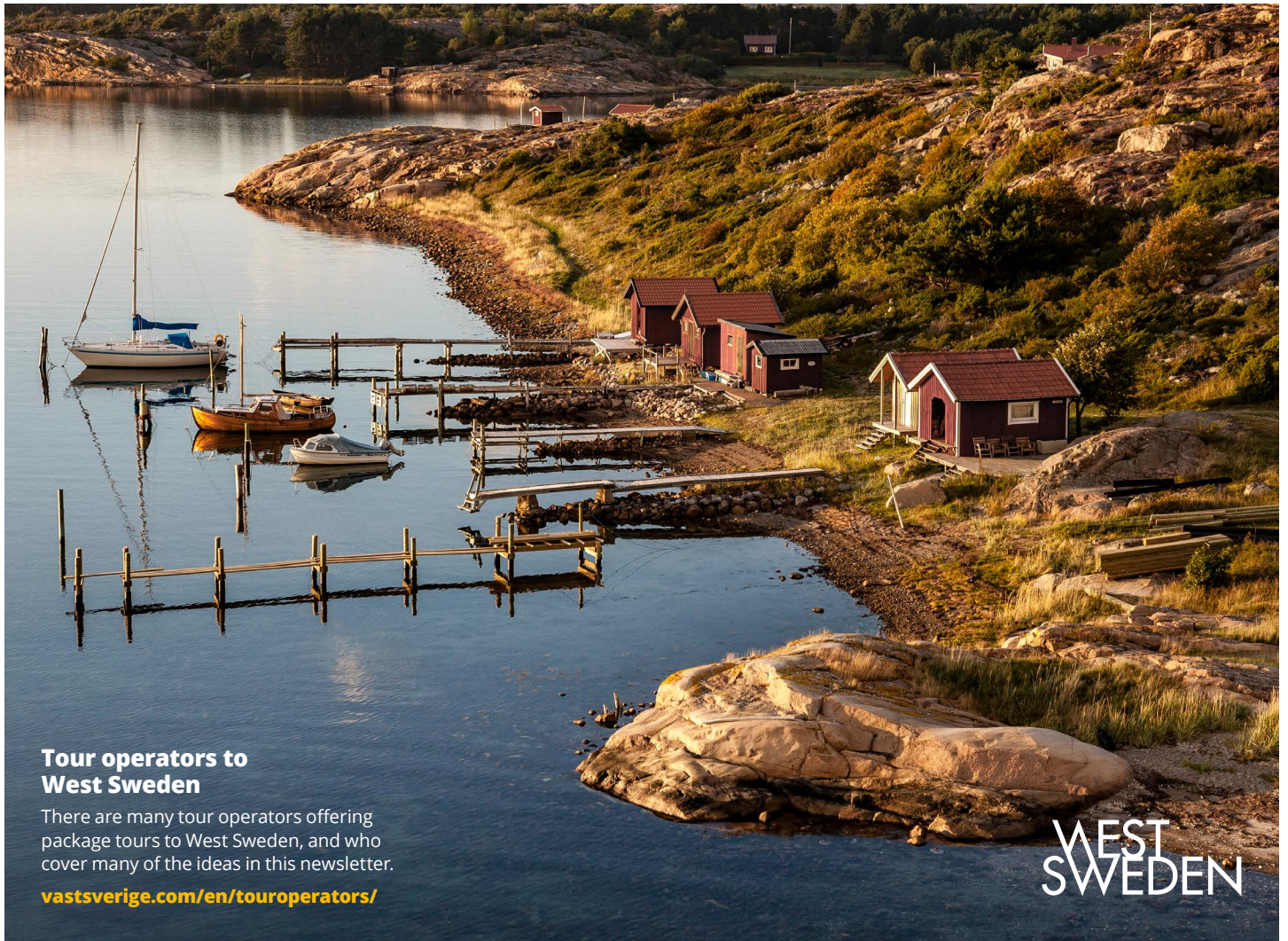
## QUIRKY STAYS IN WEST SWEDEN

Other close to nature and unique places to stay in West Sweden include Pater Noster lighthouse, glass cabins and tree houses with stunning views, houseboats and bathing pavilions for water lovers, and troll stumps, mushrooms, and a pirate hotel and theme park for families.

[vastsverige.com/en/stay/quirky-stays-in-west-sweden/](http://vastsverige.com/en/stay/quirky-stays-in-west-sweden/)







WEST  
SWEDEN

## Tour operators to West Sweden

There are many tour operators offering package tours to West Sweden, and who cover many of the ideas in this newsletter.

[vastsverige.com/en/touoperators/](https://vastsverige.com/en/touoperators/)

## MEET US AT ITB IN BERLIN!

### Ann-Charlotte Carlsson Chevrier

Head of Marketing & Communications

West Sweden Tourist Board, will be at ITB from 7-8 March, at the Visit Sweden stand 200E, Hall C.

Phone: +46 730 21 21 14

Email: [ann-charlotte.carlsson@vastsverige.com](mailto:ann-charlotte.carlsson@vastsverige.com)



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More pictures: [mediabank.vastsverige.com](https://mediabank.vastsverige.com)

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