

NEWS AND IDEAS FOR STORIES FROM

# WEST SWEDEN

2026

**To international media and tour operators:**

Natural, progressive, and a bit different – welcome to West Sweden. In West Sweden, slow travel meets diverse landscapes, local culture, and many small-scale businesses. This newsletter presents news, story ideas, and bookable products for 2026. All featured companies and destinations share a commitment to Stepping up Sustainability, working together to create responsible and meaningful travel experiences.

Welcome to West Sweden 2026!

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

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WEST  
SWEDEN



# WELCOME TO WEST SWEDEN

## – A Region of Contrast

West Sweden consists of **Bohuslän**, **Dalsland**, and **Västergötland**, each with its own distinct character. **Gothenburg** is the capital of West Sweden, Sweden’s second-largest city, and the natural gateway to the wider region.

The landscape of West Sweden includes forests, lakes, plateau mountains, agricultural areas, and cultural heritage sites. The region also has a marine coastline and shorelines along Sweden’s two largest lakes, **Vänern** and **Vättern**. All this variation, in experiences, nature, and landscapes, is never more than three hours from Gothenburg.

For travellers choosing public transport, **Västtrafik** provides train and bus services within Gothenburg and across West Sweden.

The west coast archipelago stretches along the **Bohuslän** coast and is made up of thousands of islands and skerries, granite cliffs, and sheltered waters. Many of the inhabited islands are car-free, and you’ll find charming fishing villages, boat life, and cuisine that champions fresh seafood, including the ingredient of the moment – seaweed!

**Dalsland** has been called Sweden’s lake district. It is a little more remote, less densely populated and nudges up against Norway. The landscape is mostly dense forest scattered with crystal clear lakes and shared with all the Swedish wildlife you might expect, including moose and beaver. The scenic Dalsland Canal connects many of the lakes and is a lasting reminder of Dalsland’s rich industrial heritage.

**Västergötland** is dominated by the UNESCO-listed plateau mountains, Lake Vänern – with its freshwater archipelago – the historic Göta Canal, and fairytale Läckö Castle. 12th century Varnhem Abbey and Viking era Kata Gård are emblematic of this historically important area known as Sweden’s Cradle.



# 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. Right now, over 800 businesses are affiliated to Stepping up Sustainability, along with almost all of West Sweden's 49 municipalities.

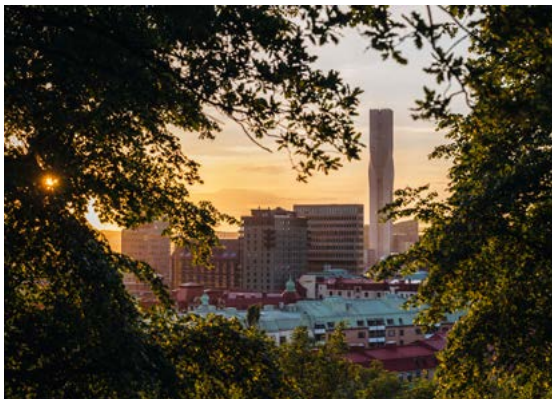
## The winners of Stepping up Sustainability 2025

Every year, Stepping up Sustainability winners are chosen in two categories: Municipal Initiative and Tourism Business.

This year, the winner in the **Municipal Initiative category** is **Alingsås municipality / Alingsås Energi**. The award recognises their long-term efforts to integrate sustainability into local energy systems and urban development. Alingsås, located about 45 km east of Gothenburg, is known for its many cafés and is often referred to as the capital of fika. Through collaboration, innovation, and clear climate targets, the winner's sustainability initiatives demonstrate how municipalities and energy companies can drive the transition to a more sustainable society at local level.

In the category for **Tourism Business – hospitality and visitor destinations**, the award goes to **Läckö Castle**. The prize highlights the work combining cultural heritage preservation with sustainable tourism development. Läckö Castle is a well-preserved Baroque castle located on the Kållandsö peninsula by Lake Vänern, approximately 140 km northeast of Gothenburg. By improving accessibility, extending the visitor season, and integrating sustainability into daily operations, the destination shows how historic sites can remain relevant and resilient while protecting their cultural and natural surroundings.

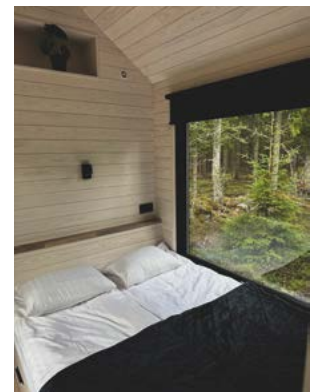
[steppingupsustainability.se](https://steppingupsustainability.se)



## Gothenburg selected as UN's new Sustainable Lifestyle Hub

The honour of being a UN sustainability hub places Gothenburg at the forefront of climatesmart living. It also presents a unique opportunity for travellers to visit and experience the city that is moulding the future of travel. 96% of hotel rooms in Gothenburg are eco-certified, one of the highest rates globally. Also, 95% of Gothenburg's public transport is powered by renewable energy and the whole city, including the archipelago, is easy to reach by tram, bus, or ferry.

[goteborg.com/en/guides/gothenburg-a-forerunner-in-sustainability](https://goteborg.com/en/guides/gothenburg-a-forerunner-in-sustainability)



## Climate smart holidays

To show that people can travel climate-smart without compromising on comfort, five tourism businesses, in collaboration with West Sweden Tourist Board, have developed package trips with the lowest possible carbon dioxide emissions. Accommodation is in unique buildings, such as glass cabins and off-grid tiny houses. Visitors are encouraged to travel by train and can be picked up at the station in electric vehicles for the last stretch and meals are prepared using high quality, locally produced ingredients. The CO2 emissions for the whole trip can be calculated, so guests can be fully informed on the low climate impact of their trip.

[vastsverige.com/en/climate-smart-holidays](https://vastsverige.com/en/climate-smart-holidays)



An aerial photograph of a large, multi-story wooden treehouse cabin nestled deep within a vast, dense forest of tall evergreen trees. The cabin features a dark, gabled roof and a wide, elevated wooden deck with railings. The surrounding forest is lush and green, with sunlight filtering through the canopy.

# HOTEL NEWS FROM WEST SWEDEN

## Hyssna Forest Resort – Two new tree-top cabins

Hyssna Forest Resort is about 55 km east of Gothenburg, surrounded by forest and lakes. The resort's five cabins have been built by two brothers, with a clear focus on craftsmanship, nature, and small-scale design. Two new forest cabins are available for 2026: The Ranger's Cabin (sleeps 4) and The Skyland Cabin (sleeps 2), and the resort continues to offer unique accommodation in the Treetop Cabin, Cliffhang Cabin, and Creek Cabin. All cabins include a private outdoor area with hot tub and grill, kitchen and bathroom. Breakfast is delivered directly to the cabin, and optional meal packages are available. Guests have access to nearby lakes for swimming, kayaking, and fishing, and hiking along the Hyssnaleden trail.

More information: [hyssnaforestresort.com/en](https://hyssnaforestresort.com/en)



## Hotel Strana – New seaside houses

In summer 2026, Strana in Hälleviksstrand on the island of Orust, approximately 80 km north of Gothenburg, will open 19 new seaside houses. Following the opening of its spa in 2025, Strana continues to develop as a modern boutique hotel by the sea. With the Strana Ocean Spa, two restaurants, and a year-round programme of cultural and music events, Strana has become a natural meeting place for visitors and locals. Guests can swim in the sea or unwind in the spa, and the scenic Kuststigen hiking trail runs nearby.

More information: [hotelstrana.com](https://hotelstrana.com)

## Anfasteröd Gårdsvik – New glamping tents

Anfasteröd Gårdsvik, about 70 km north of Gothenburg, is a resort owned and developed by the same family for generations. It is set on a forested hillside overlooking the inner archipelago, with easy access to forest and sea. In June 2026 Anfasteröd Gårdsvik will add three new glamping tents, bringing the total to 10. Each tent offers two beds plus sofa beds for 2–4 additional guests. The tents do not have private kitchens or bathrooms, these are available in shared service buildings.

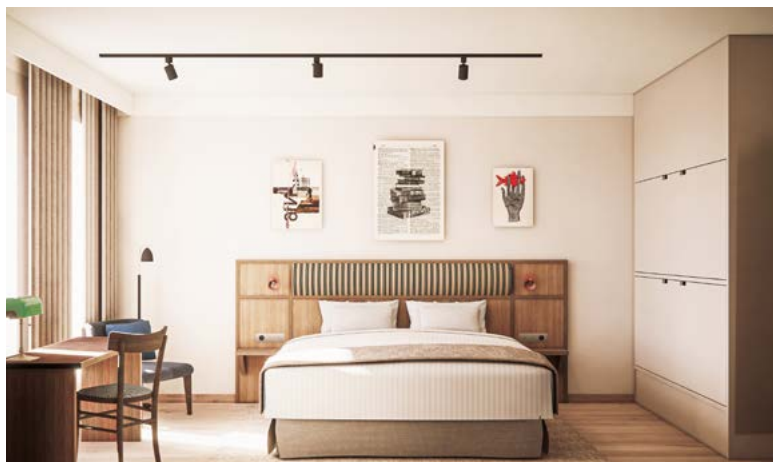
The resort also offers cabins and cottages, a seasonal seaside restaurant, a kiosk for snacks and ice cream, a floating sauna, and a wide range of nature-based activities such as kayaking, swimming, hiking, and boating.

Nearby in Lyckorna, eco-friendly restaurant Musselbaren focuses on mussels as a sustainable and nutritious local ingredient harvested from the surrounding waters. Guests can join guided mussel expeditions and harvest their own dinner aboard M/S Märta.

More information:

Anfasteröd Gårdsvik: [anfasterod.se](https://anfasterod.se)

Musselbaren: [musselbaren.se](https://musselbaren.se)



## Quality Hotel The Book will open in Gothenburg

In June 2026, Quality Hotel The Book will open in Gothenburg with 215 rooms. The hotel is next to Liseberg and the World of Volvo, placing it in one of the city's most visited quarters. The new 16-storey building will include its own restaurant and bar. The architecture and interior design draw inspiration from the site's history as a former printing house, adding a local narrative to the modern hotel concept.

More information: [strawberryhotels.com](https://strawberryhotels.com)

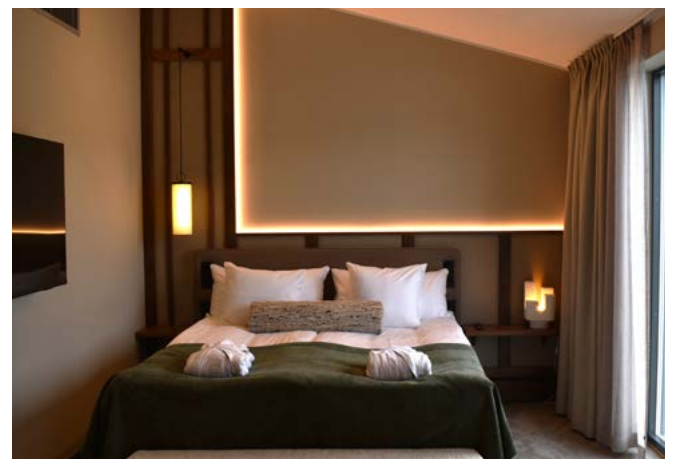


## Hällsnäs Hotel – New rooms, spa, and Michelin-starred dining

Hällsnäs Hotell & Restaurang, about 15 km east of Gothenburg by Lake Landvettersjön, is expanding with 32 new rooms including four luxury suites. The development includes renovations to existing rooms and the main building. A spa area features a floating wood-fired sauna, an infrared sauna, and outdoor hot tubs available year-round, with the option of lake swimming directly from the shore.

Food plays a central role at Hällsnäs, where nature and the changing seasons guide the kitchen. Led by award-winning chef Thomas Sjögren, the team works with carefully selected ingredients, mostly sourced from local producers. Guests can choose between Sjöö, the hotel's restaurant offering well-crafted dishes in a relaxed setting, and Signum, the culinary flagship awarded two Michelin stars and a Green Star for its sustainable and creative cuisine.

More information: [hallsnas.se/en](https://hallsnas.se/en)





## CULTURAL NEWS

### Smögen Island Of Light 2026

From 4 to 13 September 2026, **Smögen** is transformed into a large-scale stage for light art, where installations interact with the sea, the cliffs and the Bohuslän landscape. The festival brings together Swedish practitioners with internationally recognised light artists to present works along the Smögen boardwalk, in the harbour and across the rocky shoreline. With a focus on art, light, nature, and sustainability, the festival has quickly established itself as one of Sweden's most striking cultural events. A key collaboration is with **Sotenäs Marine Recycling Center**, which recovers ghost nets, discarded fishing gear and ocean plastics that are reused as material for several of the light installations.

Located in Bohuslän, approximately 140 km north of Gothenburg, Smögen is a coastal destination where the festival also contributes to more sustainable tourism, giving hotels and restaurants in the area an opportunity to extend their operating season beyond the summer months. The programme for 2026 will be announced at a later date.

More information: [islandoflight.art](https://islandoflight.art)



### Bohuslän Chamber Music Festival 2026

**The Bohuslän Chamber Music Festival** returns for its second edition from 25 to 28 June 2026, presenting nine concerts over four days across the coastal region of Bohuslän. The programme includes work by Vivaldi, Beethoven, Brahms and Tchaikovsky. Among the participating artists is **Malena Ernman**, an internationally recognised Swedish opera singer.

Concerts take place in a range of distinctive settings, including the **red wooden church in Hälleviksstrand**, **Societetshuset Marstrand** and includes an outdoor performance at **Pilane Sculpture Park**. The festival opens in **Gothenburg**, where American actor and film director John Malkovich will appear at **Stora Teatern** in a performance of the dramatic musical work *Report on the Blind*.

More information:

[k-v.se/en/festivals/bohuslan-chamber-music-festival](https://k-v.se/en/festivals/bohuslan-chamber-music-festival)



## Pilane Sculpture Park marks 20 years

In 2026, **Pilane Sculpture Park** marks its 20th anniversary, highlighting the milestone with British sculptor Tony Cragg as the headline exhibiting artist. Pilane has become a benchmark for contemporary sculpture set in a historic coastal landscape.

Pilane is on the island of Tjörn, about 60 km north of Gothenburg, and is part of **Tjörn – Island of Art**, together with the **Nordic Watercolour Museum** in Skärhamn and **Pater Noster – A Home on the Horizon**. The sculpture park is set in an ancient burial ground and on open grazing land, integrating large-scale sculpture with nature. One of its most recognised works is **Anna by Jaume Plensa**, a monumental sculpture that has become a lasting symbol of the site. Pilane 2026 opens on 14 May and closes on 27 September.

More information on Pilane: [pilane.org](https://pilane.org)

More information on Tjörn – Island of art: [vastsverige.com/tjorn/se-och-gora/island-of-art](https://vastsverige.com/tjorn/se-och-gora/island-of-art)

## Borås Art Biennial opens – Design, Textiles, and Street Art

**Borås** hosts its 9th Art Biennial, running from 30 May to 27 September, exploring the city's industrial heritage and its contemporary identity. Borås has a 400-year history in the production of textiles and is internationally recognised as a centre for textile design and innovation, driven by advanced research, education, and close collaboration between academia and industry in sustainable fashion and smart textiles. Today, the city also functions as an open-air art gallery, featuring around 120 public sculptures, installations, and street art within 1.5 km.

Borås is approximately 65 km east of Gothenburg, is easily accessible and is home to three leading museums: **Textilmuseet**, focusing on textile heritage and innovation; **Borås Konstmuseum**, dedicated to contemporary art; and **Abecita Popkonst & Foto**, showcasing international photographers.

More information: [boras.com](https://boras.com)



## Art, Design and Heritage by Sweden's largest lake

The **Kinnekulle area by Lake Vänern**, Sweden's largest lake, combines distinctive natural landscapes with a strong cultural offering. The area is dominated by the table mountains of Kinnekulle, part of a **UNESCO Global Geopark**, and cultural sites such as **Läckö Castle**, one of Sweden's best-preserved Baroque castles. It also includes key cultural destinations such as **Rörstrand Museum** in Lidköping and the **Svenstorp Art Centre**, situated between Lake Vänern and the Kinnekulle table mountains.

More information: [vastsverige.com/en/lacko-kinnekulle](https://vastsverige.com/en/lacko-kinnekulle)

## Rörstrand Museum – 300 years of porcelain, 50 years as a museum

In 2026, **Rörstrand Museum** marks a double anniversary, celebrating 300 years of Rörstrand porcelain and 50 years as a museum. Founded in 1726, Rörstrand is Europe's oldest porcelain brand and one of Sweden's most recognised names in design history. The anniversary will be commemorated by a major exhibition at Rörstrand Museum, complemented by a programme of activities throughout the year focusing on design, craftsmanship and cultural heritage. Rörstrand's official 300th birthday will be celebrated on 13 June 2026, with a full day of public events and activities. In addition, a special exhibition will be presented at Läckö Castle, placing Rörstrand's legacy in a wider historical and cultural context. Rörstrand Museum is in Lidköping, approximately 130 km from Gothenburg, with easy access by train and just 25 km from Läckö Castle.

More information: [en.rorstrand-museum.se](https://en.rorstrand-museum.se)





## Art Centre featuring photography by Erik Johansson

A permanent art centre dedicated to the work of **Swedish photographer Erik Johansson** opened in 2025 at **Svenstorp Farm**, outside Göteborg. The centre is located between Lake Vänern and the Kinnekulle plateau and presents Johansson's surreal photographic imagery, characterised by meticulous digital composition and reality-defying visual narratives.

Johansson has exhibited internationally, and at Fotografiska in Stockholm, and he is an ambassador for Hasselblad. The art centre includes an on-site café serving homemade pastries on tableware from the local brand Rörstrand. The 2026 season opens on 2 May and runs until September.

More information and details on current exhibitions:  
[svenstorp.artcenter.com](https://svenstorp.artcenter.com)



## A unique art collection in Skara

**Skara Stadshotell** marked its 150th anniversary last year, accompanied by an expanded permanent art collection. Now more than 100 works by Lars Lerin, one of Sweden's most loved contemporary artists and known primarily for his large-scale watercolours, are displayed throughout the hotel's public areas.

Skara is one of Sweden's oldest towns, home to **Skara Cathedral**, and close to **Lake Hornborga**, famous for its rich birdlife and annual crane migration. Skara is also a key stop along **the Pilgrim Trail** from **Falköping** to **Husaby**.

More information: [skarastadshotell.se](https://skarastadshotell.se)

More information on hiking the new Pilgrim Trail:  
[vastsverige.com/en/nature-experiences/walking/hiking-trails/pilgrim-path-skara-husaby](https://vastsverige.com/en/nature-experiences/walking/hiking-trails/pilgrim-path-skara-husaby)

## West Sweden at the heart of Nordic Noir

In 2026, **Camilla Läckberg's** latest novel in the **Fjällbacka series**, *The Weeper*, will be published across Europe, underscoring the international reach of Nordic Noir. The series is rooted in Fjällbacka, a fishing village on Sweden's west coast that has become one of the genre's most recognisable real-world settings. Visitors to Fjällbacka can take guided walks in Camilla Läckberg's footsteps, exploring key locations from the novels with **Kustguiden**.

**Ann Rosman** places much of her crime fiction in **Marstrand**, drawing on the town's maritime history and island environment and in **Göteborg**. **Åke Edwardson's** Inspector Winter novels use the city's streets and harbour as their backdrop.

These authors have helped establish West Sweden as one of the most distinctive and accessible landscapes of Nordic noir, where internationally successful crime fiction is closely linked to real places.

More information:  
[vastsverige.com/en/cultural\\_experiences/literature/west-swedish-crime-fiction-and-nordic-noir](https://vastsverige.com/en/cultural_experiences/literature/west-swedish-crime-fiction-and-nordic-noir)

More information on cultural highlights: [vastsverige.com/en/cultural\\_experiences](https://vastsverige.com/en/cultural_experiences)





# SWEDISH TRADITIONS

## The Things That Bring Sweden Together

Some of the best ways to understand Sweden have nothing to do with museums or guidebooks.

They happen with fika – the much-loved tradition of taking a break for coffee and something sweet – or around a maypole at midsummer, the highlight of the Swedish calendar. They can be found in the many small, everyday rituals too such as getting cosy on a Friday night – fredagsmys – or taking an invigorating dip in a winter sea.

From the smells of dill and crayfish at an August crayfish party, where silly hats are non-negotiable, to the candlelit Lucia celebrations that brighten the dark of midwinter; from pea soup every Thursday to cinnamon bun day in October, the calendar is full of events that bring people together.



# DISCOVER WEST SWEDEN ON FOOT

West Sweden offers a wide range of quality-assured hiking trails through landscapes of distinct character. Coastal paths run through the windswept archipelago of Bohuslän, historic pilgrim routes cross the cultural plains of Västergötland, forest and lake trails define Dalsland, and urban walking routes start in the centre of Gothenburg.





## New Pilgrim Path Läckö Castle to Hjo

West Sweden offers an extensive and interconnected network of historic Pilgrim Paths, combining long-distance hiking with cultural heritage, varied landscapes and good accessibility by public transport.

New in 2026, is a **Pilgrim Path from Läckö Castle to Hjo**. Currently under development, the new route will be approximately 155 km long and divided into 14 stages. It will include existing trails and new sections, stretching from Lake Vänern, Sweden's largest lake, to Lake Vättern, the country's second largest. The route forms part of a longer pilgrimage journey towards Vadstena, associated with Saint Birgitta. The path offers peaceful hiking through a rich cultural landscape, passing major highlights such as Läckö Castle, Lidköping, Lundsbrunn, Skara Cathedral, Varnhem Abbey, the Hornborga Nature Reserve, known for the annual gathering of tens of thousands of cranes each spring, Gudhem, and the dramatic descent from Falköping across the plateau landscape towards Hjo. The middle part of the trail, **The Pilgrim Path Falköping – Varnhem**, is well suited for shorter pilgrimages and weekend hikes, offering a 44 km route through a gently rolling cultural landscape, past the ruins of two medieval monasteries and the sensational birdlife around Lake Hornborga.

**The Pilgrim Path Göta Älv** begins in central Gothenburg and runs for 143 km across 10 stages, moving from urban heritage sites into the Lärjeån Valley and the Vättlefjäll Nature Reserve. In inland West Sweden, **The Pilgrim Path Dalsland** stretches 100 km through one of Sweden's most lake-rich landscapes, characterised by almost untouched forests and notable wildlife, including moose, beaver and lynx.

Together, these routes position West Sweden as one of Scandinavia's most diverse destinations for cultural long-distance hiking, where historic pilgrimage traditions meet contemporary trail infrastructure.

More information on Pilgrim paths in West Sweden:

[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)



## Rail & Hike – scenic trails reached by train

Hiking routes easily accessible by train have become increasingly popular. One example is the **Gotaleden Trail**, a 99 km route from Gothenburg to Vårgårda via Sweden's Capital of Fika – Alingsås – with train stations along the route enabling hikers to access individual stages. The **Biosphere Trail**, a 138 km route from Mariestad to Läckö Castle, passes through the UNESCO-designated Plåtåbergens Geopark and connects to Lidköping, home to the Rörstrand Museum and Lidköping Art Hall.



## Island Hiking

**The Kuststigen Coastal Path** runs from Gothenburg to Oslo, following rocky shorelines and visiting traditional fishing villages of wooden houses. Several sections cross car-free or low-traffic islands, including Dyrön, Ramsvik, Bohus-Malmön and Skaftö, where hiking can be combined with fishing trips and seal safaris. Closer to the city, **the Gothenburg Archipelago Trail** covers 34 km across the islands of Hönö, Fotö, Öckerö, Hålsö, Källö-Knippla and Hyppeln. The islands are easy to reach by public transport, offering a quick transition from city streets to car-free island life.

More information on hiking in West Sweden: [vastsverige.com/en/nature-experiences/walking](https://vastsverige.com/en/nature-experiences/walking)

# EXPLORE WEST SWEDEN ON TWO WHEELS

West Sweden's diverse landscapes are the perfect setting for anyone wanting to explore the world on two wheels. You'll find a great choice of stunning cycle routes that all the family will love. Choose between peaceful cycle paths, MTB tracks that'll get your pulse racing and winding country roads.





## Ljungleden – New 170 km cycling route in West Sweden

In spring 2026, **Ljungleden** opens as a 170 km long cycling route **linking Gothenburg and Falköping**. The trail introduces a new long-distance cycling connection through West Sweden, combining urban sections, cultural landscapes and rural countryside.

Starting in Gothenburg, the route progresses from an urban environment into smaller towns and agricultural landscapes. Early highlights include **Nääs Fabriker**, a former 19th-century industrial area by Lake Sövelången with cafés and walking paths, and **Alingsås**, widely recognised for its café culture and known as the “Capital of Fika”.

Further along the route, cyclists pass **Dahlbogården**, a traditional countryside stop associated with local food, accommodation and rural heritage, and **Herrljunga**, a small market town offering accommodation and services for longer cycling journeys.

Ljungleden also establishes a new link between two of Sweden’s best-known long-distance cycling routes: the **Kattegattleden** on the west coast and the **Ätradalsleden** in inland Västergötland, enabling extended cycling routes across southern Sweden.

More information on Ljungleden:

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



## Dalsland – Sweden’s Gravel Cycling Destination

**Dalsland** has strengthened its position as one of Sweden’s leading destinations for gravel cycling, now offering more than 850 km of gravel roads. Cycling routes wind through forests and beside lakes, with minimal car traffic, creating long, uninterrupted rides in a largely untouched landscape. The region offers 17 curated gravel routes, all with available GPX files, making it easy to plan anything from single day trips to multi-day tours. There is an excellent infrastructure for cyclists, including bike-friendly accommodation with bike rentals also available on site at several locations. Gravel cycling in Dalsland is easy to combine with cultural highlights and local food experiences, adding variety and supporting longer stays. On **19 September 2026**, Dalsland will host **the Dalsland Gravel Race**, with distances ranging from 40 to 320 km, attracting recreational riders and endurance cyclists.

More information about gravel cycling in Dalsland:

[vastsverige.com/en/dalsland/cycling/gravel-cycling](https://vastsverige.com/en/dalsland/cycling/gravel-cycling)

## Mountain biking highlights in West Sweden

### Högaliden MTB Arena, Hjo

The MTB arena at Högaliden, just outside Hjo, is approximately 180 km east of Gothenburg and offers flow trails, jump and skills trails for all levels. Hjo lies on the shores of Lake Vättern and is known for its historic wooden houses.

### Ski Bike Hike, Ulricehamn

About 100 km east of Gothenburg, Ulricehamn features a family-friendly MTB area with 14 downhill trails and a dedicated skills zone. In winter, the area operates as an alpine ski resort.

### Billingen, Skövde

The plateau mountain Billingen rises above Skövde, approximately 150 km northeast of Gothenburg. The area offers an established MTB arena with pump tracks, jump lines and access to extensive XC, trail and enduro riding. Accommodation is available at Hotel Billingeus on the edge of the plateau. Skövde has direct rail connections to Gothenburg and Stockholm.

More information on mountain biking:

[vastsverige.com/en/nature-experiences/cycling/mountain-biking](https://vastsverige.com/en/nature-experiences/cycling/mountain-biking)



# NATIONAL CYCLE ROUTES IN WEST SWEDEN

West Sweden has more than half of Sweden's national cycle routes. The Göta Canal Trail was awarded 'European Cycle Route of the Year' 2025 at the Fiets en Wandelbeurs in Utrecht, Netherlands.



## **The Vännerleden** **640 km around Lake Vänern**

Sweden's longest trail, looping around Lake Vänern, with varied terrain which is hilly in Dalsland. Combines nature and culture: Porcelain town Lidköping, Läckö Castle, Kinnekulle table mountain and the Platåbergens Geopark.



## **Göta Canal Trail** **200 km, Sjötorp – Mem**

Flat and family friendly. Can be combined with boat and other experiences along the canal. Crosses the Vännerleden at Sjötorp. The Göta Canal Trail was awarded 'European Cycle Route of the Year' 2025.



## **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.



## **The Unionsleden** **350 km Moss – Karlstad**

Cycle between two countries. This scenic, undulating route is along mostly gravelled roads. Crosses the Vännerleden at Bengtsfors and Fengersfors.

More information on national cycle routes in West Sweden:

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



# SWEDEN'S LARGEST CAMPING REGION

West Sweden is Sweden's largest camping region, with around 50 campsites affiliated with **Svensk Camping\***. The region attracts visitors throughout spring, summer and autumn, with several sites also open through the winter. Camping is a popular way to experience West Sweden's varied landscapes — from the coast and archipelago to forests and lakes inland. Accommodation ranges from modern cabins with high standards, including private kitchens and bathrooms, to glamping tents and pitches for caravans and motorhomes. Many campsites are located right by the sea or by lakes, and many are family-run and have been welcoming guests for generations.

West Sweden's campsites have received significant international recognition. **Ramsvik Stugby & Camping** and **Hafsten Resort & Camping** were named **Campers' Choice 2025** – Camping with the most beautiful location in Sweden. **Daftö Resort in Strömstad** was ranked as an **ADAC Top Campsite for 2024** and awarded the prestigious **"Superplatz"** rating for 2025, making it the only campsite in Sweden to hold this distinction. In addition, **Johannesvik Camping & Stugby** received the **2025 ACSI Award for Best Campsite Location in Sweden**, based on votes from campers across Europe. Together, these awards highlight West Sweden's leading position as a camping destination, combining high-quality facilities with scenic locations and access to outdoor experiences.

More information about camping in West Sweden & Gothenburg:

[vastsverige.com/en/stay/camping](https://vastsverige.com/en/stay/camping)

\*Svensk Camping is the trade organisation for Sweden's camping and cabin businesses: [camping.se/en](https://camping.se/en)





# WEST SWEDEN FOR FOODIES

## – Local flavours and new openings

### Signum – Nordic Cuisine with two Michelin stars

**Signum**, located at **Hällsnäs Hotel & Restaurant** just outside Gothenburg, is a two-Michelin-starred restaurant celebrated for its Nordic tasting menus. The kitchen's focus is fish and seafood, using exclusively Scandinavian main ingredients and complemented by vegetables, herbs, and wild ingredients from the surrounding Swedish landscape.

Led by **chef Thomas Sjögren**, the team works closely with local fishermen, farmers and producers, while also cultivating their own ingredients such as seaweed grown off the coast in Bohuslän. The menu follows the rhythm of the seasons, emphasising purity of flavour and sustainability, an approach recognised with **two Michelin stars** and **a Green Star**. Also at Hällsnäs, is **Restaurant Sjö**, where Swedish seasonal cuisine is served for lunch and dinner.

Hällsnäs is expanding in 2026, with 32 new hotel rooms, including four suites with private saunas and lake views, allowing guests to combine fine dining with an extended stay close to nature.

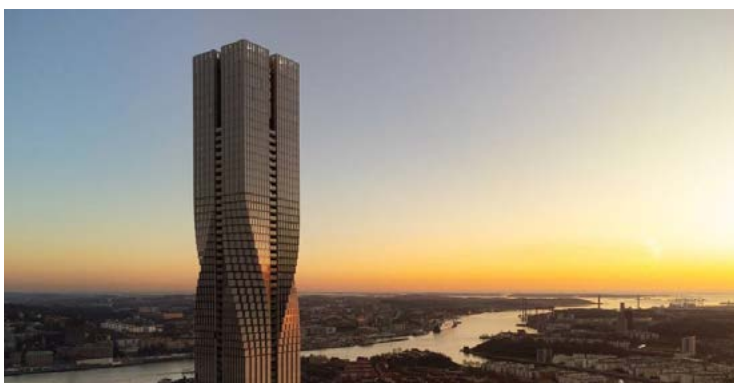
More information: [hallsnas.se](https://hallsnas.se)



### New street food market opening in Gothenburg 2026

In spring 2026, **Vassen Street Food Market** is set to open in central **Gothenburg**. Built from recycled shipping containers and surrounded by small green pocket parks, the market is designed as an urban meeting place where global street food meets local creativity, culture and community. Vassen will bring together food stalls, vintage shops, jewellery makers, craft bars, and workshops, all run by local entrepreneurs, and adding a new layer to Gothenburg's contemporary food scene.

More information: [vassenmarket.se](https://vassenmarket.se)



### New restaurant and observation deck at Sweden's tallest building

At 246 meters and 74 floors, **Karlatornet** is the tallest building in the Nordic region, and it's in the middle of Gothenburg. On the 69th floor will be the Gothenburg View observation deck and a restaurant. Visitors will get a completely unique Gothenburg experience with breathtaking, miles-wide views from 220 metres up. The observation deck and restaurant opens to the public summer 2026. (opening June 2026)

More information: [gothenburgview.se](https://gothenburgview.se)

### New dining at Billingeus

**Restaurant Urtid** opened in 2025 at the newly renovated **Billingeus**. Inspired by the landscape of Billingen, the restaurant focuses on Nordic flavours and locally sourced ingredients, paired with panoramic views from the edge of the plateau. Urtid is a central part of Billingeus' new culinary direction. The hotel has undergone an extensive renovation led by architect Gert Wingårdh, where the original 1970s architectural character has been carefully preserved and reinterpreted. A new spa adds a wellness dimension, complementing the hotel's historic connection to nature and outdoor activities on Billingen. Billingeus is located in **Skövde**, approximately 150 km northeast of Gothenburg, and is easily accessible by train.

More information: [billingeus.com/en/food-drink/urtid](https://billingeus.com/en/food-drink/urtid)



## Swedish Fika – Sweden's coffee culture

Fika remains central to Swedish everyday life. Alingsås, often referred to as the Capital of Fika, is located around 40 minutes by train from Gothenburg and is known for its high concentration of cafés, several listed in Sweden's White Guide. The town also offers guided fika walks, placing Sweden's coffee break tradition in a cultural and historical context. Fika culture peaks on Cinnamon Bun Day (Kanelbullens dag), celebrated nationwide on 4 October. In 2025, West Sweden's best cinnamon bun was chosen by public vote, with the winning bun baked by Brödfabriken i Jonsered, approximately 10 km east of Gothenburg.

More information:

[vastsverige.com/en/eat-and-drink/swedish-fika](https://vastsverige.com/en/eat-and-drink/swedish-fika)

## Local flavours across West Sweden

West Sweden's food culture is closely tied to its landscapes and seasons. The waters off **Bohuslän** are regarded as one of northern Europe's richest larders, known for oysters, mussels and shellfish, at their best in spring and autumn. Inland, the **forests of Dalsland** provide mushrooms, berries and wild game, while **Västergötland** is known for Vånerlövrom, vendace roe from **Lake Vänern**, and a strong tradition of artisanal cheese production. The regional initiative **A Taste of West Sweden** highlights restaurants, farm shops and producers working with local ingredients and transparent food chains.



## Blue food from the sea

Interest in blue food is growing as chefs and producers turn to nutritious, low-impact seafood. **Mussels** are central to West Sweden's food story; often described as the sea's natural cleaning system, mussels filter large volumes of water, removing excess nutrients while requiring no feed, or fertilisers. This makes them one of the most climate-efficient protein sources available. In Ljungkile, **Musselbaren** has played a key role in putting Swedish mussels on the culinary map. The restaurant regularly invites guests out on the fjord to experience mussel harvesting first hand, followed by meals centred on mussels and shellfish.

The cold, mineral-rich waters of Sweden's west coast provide ideal conditions for **oysters**, and Bohuslän is home to the majority of the country's wild oysters, primarily the native European flat oyster (*Ostrea edulis*). **Klemmings Ostron** in Grebbestad is run by Lotta Klemming, Sweden's only female oyster diver. For more than 40 years, her family has harvested wild oysters by hand in Bohuslän's sheltered waters, using selective methods to protect biodiversity. Klemmings Ostron offers small-group oyster experiences, where guests join the harvest by boat and prepare oysters and local seafood by the sea. Nearby at Grönemad, **Everts Sjöbod** serves oysters just metres from the shoreline, known for its simple, seasonal approach and close connection to the surrounding waters. They also offer overnight stays in their boathouse, oyster tastings and seafood safaris.

**Seaweed** is increasingly popular in West Sweden's kitchens. Rich in minerals and vitamins, it has a low environmental footprint and supports healthy marine ecosystems. In the Gothenburg Archipelago, **Algblozman** offers guided seaweed safaris, foraging walks and outdoor cooking experiences, introducing edible seaweed and its culinary potential through hands-on activities.

More on food culture, restaurants and local produce: [vastsverige.com/en/eat-and-drink](https://vastsverige.com/en/eat-and-drink)

More on seafood experiences: [vastsverige.com/en/bohuslan/seafood-safaris](https://vastsverige.com/en/bohuslan/seafood-safaris)

More on Blue food – Sustainable food from Swedish waters: [vastsverige.com/en/eat-and-drink/blue-food-from-the-sea](https://vastsverige.com/en/eat-and-drink/blue-food-from-the-sea)



# WEST SWEDEN FOR FAMILIES

## What to do

Nature becomes the playground in West Sweden. Families can slow down, spend time together and explore the outdoors with simple, hands-on activities adapted for all ages.

In **Gothenburg**, major attractions are close together and easy to combine. Family favourites include **Liseberg**, one of Europe's leading amusement parks; **Universeum**, with aquariums and a rainforest; and **World of Volvo**, offering hands-on experiences in innovation and design. Along the coast in **Bohuslän**, families can cycle and explore car-free islands, swim from smooth granite rocks, enjoy boat trips, and discover wildlife from a kayak, including the chance to spot seals in their natural habitat. Children can try classic west coast activities such as crab fishing from jetties, beachcombing and fishing. Families interested in animals and history can visit **Nordens Ark**, a wildlife park safeguarding endangered species, and **Vitlycke Museum**, which brings the **UNESCO-listed Bronze Age rock carvings of Tanum** to life.

Inland, activities in **Dalsland** include canoeing on sheltered lakes, beaver safaris, high-ropes courses and accessible hiking in forests and nature reserves such as **Kroppefjäll** and **Ragnerud**.

In **Västergötland**, families can cycle traffic-free paths along the historic **Göta Canal** or explore shipwrecks in **Lake Vänern**, Sweden's largest lake. The region's distinctive table mountains, part of Sweden's first **UNESCO Global Geopark**, include **Billingen**, offering adventure trails, mountain biking, winter activities and outdoor cooking areas.

These experiences make West Sweden an attractive choice for active, nature-based family travel, with a wide variety of activities easily combined across coast, countryside and city.

More information: [vastsverige.com/en/west-sweden-for-families](https://vastsverige.com/en/west-sweden-for-families)





## From coast to countryside: A wide range of family accommodation in West Sweden

West Sweden offers a broad range of accommodation for families, right across the region's diverse landscapes — from city and coast to forests, lakes. The region's family accommodation reflects its geography, with options that combine proximity to nature, activities and cultural attractions.

In Gothenburg, families can stay at **Liseberg Grand Curiosa Hotel**, a fantastical family hotel next to **Liseberg**, designed with families in mind and offering easy access to the city's main attractions. Along the west coast and archipelago, accommodation includes seaside and island-based options such as **Skärgårdshotellet Hönö**, **Dyröns Vårdshus**, **Hönö Sjöbodar** and **Kajkanten Vrångö**, where families stay in traditional boathouses at the water's edge. Or there are car-free islands like idyllic **Lilla Brattön**, while **Tanumstrand SPA & Resort** combines accommodation with coastal activities and facilities for families.

Flexible accommodation in glamping tents and newly renovated cabins can be found at campsites and cabin resorts, including **Daftö Resort**, **Hafsten Resort & Camping**, **Ragnerud** and **Lagunen Camping & Cottages**. There are also campsites close to Gothenburg, such as Lisebergsbyn Camping and Borås Camping. In rural and inland areas, families can stay at small-scale countryside accommodation, including **Toric Farmlodge**, **Hällesdalens Gård**, **Lekanders Bär & Boende**, and **Kroppefjäll B&B**, with easy access to nature, animals, and outdoor activities.

West Sweden is also known for distinctive and playful accommodation concepts aimed at families. These include tree hotels at **Islanna** or **Hyssna Forest Resort**, as well as themed accommodation where families can sleep inside a giant moose at **Wrågårdén**, or in **tree stumps** and **mushroom-shaped cabins** at **Norrqvarn Hotel** on the **Göta Canal**. **Billingeus** on the **Billingen plateau** above **Skövde** offers accommodation with direct access to hiking, cycling and year-round outdoor activities, while **Tjörnbrö Arena** provides family-friendly and active accommodation at the coast.

Together, these options illustrate the breadth, flexibility and regional spread of family accommodation in West Sweden, allowing families to choose stays that match the interests experiences they are searching for.

More information on family travel:

[vastsverige.com/en/west-sweden-for-families](https://vastsverige.com/en/west-sweden-for-families)



## New family products from international Tour Operators

Interest in family travel to West Sweden is growing, with international tour operators increasingly developing family-adapted nature experiences combined with time in Gothenburg. The region's mix of accessible outdoor activities, coastline, lakes and a compact, family-friendly city make it well suited to multi-generational travel. Below are two recent examples of new family products now offered by international tour operators:

### KE Adventure Travel

**KE's family adventure** on Sweden's west coast focuses on active outdoor experiences in the **Bohuslän archipelago**, combining sea kayaking, rock climbing and mountain biking in a coastal landscape. A key highlight is guided wild camping on an uninhabited island, offering families a structured yet adventurous introduction to outdoor life close to the sea.

More information: [keadventure.com/holidays/west-sweden-kayaking-family-adventure](https://keadventure.com/holidays/west-sweden-kayaking-family-adventure)

### Regent Holidays

**Regent Holidays' Family Great Outdoors Adventure** combines time in Gothenburg and the Gothenburg archipelago with inland experiences around **Läckö Castle** and **Kinneulle**. Activities include cycling through the cultural landscape and paddling on **Lake Vänern**, Sweden's largest lake, illustrating how city life and nature can be combined in a single itinerary.

More information: [regent-holidays.co.uk/tour/family-great-outdoors-adventure](https://regent-holidays.co.uk/tour/family-great-outdoors-adventure)

More information on tour operators:

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





# THE WEST COAST ARCHIPELAGO

## – Slow travel among 8,000 islands

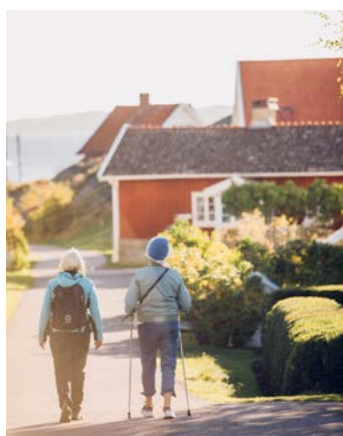
Stretching from Gothenburg's southern archipelago to the Norwegian border, Sweden's west coast archipelago comprises more than 8,000 islands, islets and skerries, shaped by coastal communities and maritime traditions.

Reached by ferries and public transport, the archipelago is well suited to slow travel. In the southern **Gothenburg archipelago**, islands such as **Styrsö** are easy to reach from the city and offer car-free environments for walking, kayaking and swimming. Further north, the historic sailing town of **Marstrand** combines island life with maritime heritage, while nearby **Dyrön** and **Ästol**, reached via **Tjörn**, are known for coastal hiking routes and granite landscapes. Classic Bohuslän island scenery can also be enjoyed on **Käringön** and **Gullholmen**, where colourful wooden houses cluster around sheltered harbours.

Across the archipelago, visitors can kayak between granite skerries, follow coastal hiking routes along **Kuststigen**, and enjoy wild swimming directly from the rocks. At the northern end of the coast lie Sweden's westernmost islands – **Väderöarna (The Weather Islands)**, and further north is the **Kosterhavet Marine National Park** — Sweden's first marine national park, known for its rich marine life and opportunities for kayaking and boat excursions.

Spring and autumn are particularly good times to visit, when the islands are calmer and fresh seafood and shellfish are at their best, offering an ideal moment to experience everyday island life at a relaxed pace.

More information: [vastsverige.com/en/things-to-do/explore-the-west-coast-by-boat](https://vastsverige.com/en/things-to-do/explore-the-west-coast-by-boat)



## IN TUNE WITH NATURE IN WEST SWEDEN

Escape to a place where time slows down and nature takes the lead. In West Sweden, deep forests, tranquil lakes, and a rugged coastline invite you to reconnect with yourself and the nature around you.

Here, wellness is a way of life. Stay at accommodation immersed in nature, like the **72 Hour Cabin**, embrace digital detox, silence, and discover the healing power of the natural world. Experience forest yoga at **Anfasteröd Gårdsvik**. Kayoga with **Skärgårdsidyllen**, and lose yourself in forest bathing at **Ragnerud**. For complete stillness, join a silent retreat at **Tofta Retreat**, or unwind by the sea before warming up in a sauna and taking an invigorating cold water swim.

As night falls, enjoy the stars – West Sweden's low light pollution makes the night sky clear and bright. Taste the seasons through local food and foraging experiences that connect you to the land.

More information: [vastsverige.com/en/wellness-and-fitness](https://vastsverige.com/en/wellness-and-fitness)



# TOUR OPERATORS TO WEST SWEDEN 2026

A growing number of international tour operators are featuring West Sweden in their programmes, reflecting increased demand for nature-based, family-friendly and slow travel experiences. The products cover many of the themes highlighted in this newsletter, from archipelago life and outdoor activities to cultural sites and city breaks. Below is a selection of tour operator products for 2026.

A full list of tour operators can be found at: [vastsverige.com/en/travel/tour-operators](https://vastsverige.com/en/travel/tour-operators)

## Netherlands & Belgium

### BBI Travel – Outdoor Adventures in Dalsland

A family-focused stay in Dalsland, centred around Lake Ragnerud. The programme offers outdoor activities such as cycling, hiking and canoeing, combined with accommodation in cabins or at the lakeside campsite. Local food and easy access to nature are key elements.

[bbi-travel.nl/zweden/vakantiewoningen/SEWO278WEEK](https://bbi-travel.nl/zweden/vakantiewoningen/SEWO278WEEK)

### SNP NATUURREIZEN

#### – Slow travel from city to archipelago and Lake Vänern

A slow travel itinerary combining Gothenburg, island life on Hönö, and hiking around Lidköping and Läckö. The journey highlights contrasts between city, archipelago and countryside, travelling by train, ferry and bus.

[snp.nl/reis/zweden/goteborg-archipel-en-vanern-meer-wandelvakantie](https://snp.nl/reis/zweden/goteborg-archipel-en-vanern-meer-wandelvakantie)

## Germany

### Reisen mit Sinnen

#### – Swedish Summer Light & Culture around Lake Vänern

An eight-day journey exploring central West Sweden, combining Gothenburg's relaxed urban life with the tranquil shores of Lake Vänern, Sweden's largest lake. With Mariestad as a base at Vänerport, the itinerary includes excursions to the archipelago, Kinnekulle Biosphere Reserve, and the Göta Canal, alongside local food experiences and traditional Swedish fika. The programme also allows time in Lidköping.

[reisenmitsinnen.de/europa/schweden/reisen/vaestergoetland-im-schwedischen-sommerlicht](https://reisenmitsinnen.de/europa/schweden/reisen/vaestergoetland-im-schwedischen-sommerlicht)

## Austria

### Kastler Reisen – The Sound of the Archipelago

An 8 days cultural journey through Bohuslän and West Sweden, centred around the Bohuslän Chamber Music Festival. The programme combines art, culture and nature, with four chamber music concerts staged in distinctive settings — including an outdoor performance at Pilane Sculpture Park. The itinerary offers a rare blend of music, coastal landscapes and cultural heritage.

[kastler.at/busreisen/oe1reisen-und-kooperationen/oe1-reisen/der-klang-der-schaeren--175739](https://kastler.at/busreisen/oe1reisen-und-kooperationen/oe1-reisen/der-klang-der-schaeren--175739)

## United Kingdom

### Discover the World – West Sweden's Coast and Forest Escape

A self-drive holiday exploring contrasts between the Bohuslän coast and the forests and lakes of Dalsland. The itinerary includes stays at Villa Sjötorp and Swedish Country Living, with experiences that change with the seasons.

[discover-the-world.com/holidays/west-sweden-coast-and-forest-escape](https://discover-the-world.com/holidays/west-sweden-coast-and-forest-escape)

### KE Adventure – West Sweden Kayaking Family Adventure

A guided family adventure along the Bohuslän coast, combining sea kayaking, climbing and mountain biking. The programme includes one night of wild camping on the coast.

[keadventure.com/holidays/west-sweden-kayaking-family-adventure?ccy=GBP](https://keadventure.com/holidays/west-sweden-kayaking-family-adventure?ccy=GBP)

## France

### Cercle des Voyages

#### – Family Adventure in Gothenburg and Lake Vänern

A family-oriented programme combining Gothenburg and Lidköping, travelling by public transport. Highlights include Liseberg amusement park, a seal safari on Hönö, and a treasure hunt at Läckö Castle.

[cercledesvoyages.com/voyage/ma-famille-en-suede-le-gotaland-en-train](https://cercledesvoyages.com/voyage/ma-famille-en-suede-le-gotaland-en-train)

### Amplitudes – Road Trip Along Sweden's West Coast

A nine-day self-drive journey through Gothenburg, Fjällbacka, Gullmarsstrand and Kroppefjäll, combining coastal villages, inland landscapes and local food experiences.

[amplitudes.com/voyage/voyage-suede/circuit-suede/sejour-suede/au-fil-de-louest.html](https://amplitudes.com/voyage/voyage-suede/circuit-suede/sejour-suede/au-fil-de-louest.html)

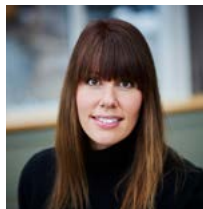
## Sometimes the accommodation *is* the experience. Extraordinary places to stay in West Sweden.

West Sweden is lucky to have a lot of small, independent tourism businesses that are founded on principles of sustainability. Very often these are the most unique and unusual places to stay as well, with a closeness to the sky, the forest, seas, lakes and wildlife. Perfect for refreshing all the senses and reminding us what a truly beautiful planet we share.

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



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