



Stockholm archipelago



Östermalms Saluhall, Stockholm

# Highlights of Stockholm and the surrounding countryside

To whet your appetite, we have compiled details of some of the primary attractions in Stockholm and the countryside, regions of Sörmland and Västmanland.

## Stockholm:

The capital of Sweden is a most varied and interesting city to visit. Boasting 38 parks; over 100 art galleries and 75 museums; extensive shopping opportunities; a choice of restaurants to suit all tastes and budgets; a stunning archipelago and one of the cleanest environments of any European capital city, Stockholm has something for everyone.

### Museums:

The city with its narrow cobbled streets, vast parkland, and scenic waterfront promenades is best explored on foot. Commence your tour of the Swedish capital in **Gamla Stan**, the historic centre of the city and allow yourself to get wonderfully lost in the maze of medieval lanes.

Continue your tour by hiring a city bike or by taking a leisurely walk or boat ride to the island of Djurgården, home to some of the city's most popular attractions and museums. One of our personal favourites is the **Vasa Museum** which houses the 17th century, Vasa warship and a fascinating exhibition. This is a wonderful museum and in our opinion a must for any visitor to the city. Close to the Vasa Museum is **Skansen**, the most popular visitor attraction in Sweden and the world's oldest open-air museum – highly recommended.

Before returning to Norrmalm, Stockholm's 'city centre', take a detour to **Kaknästornet** communications tower from which there is a magnificent view over the city. On a clear day you can see for miles around.

Other sights worthy of a visit include: The **City Hall**, the **Nobel Museum**, the **National Museum**, the **Fotografiska Museum** and the **Modern Art Museum**. To get a true feel of life in Stockholm, we would recommend a visit to the residential island of

**Södermalm** with its trendy restaurants, café bars, boutiques, fashion shops and art galleries. Södermalm is also the setting for the Millennium trilogy of books written by Stieg Larsson, now a hollywood film starring Daniel Craig and Rooney Mara..

### The archipelago:

Consisting of more than 30,000 islands, rocks and skerries the spectacular Stockholm archipelago has to be seen to be believed. Why not take a day cruise into the inner-archipelago and experience first-hand the delights of islands such as **Grinda** (1 ½ hours each way), **Vaxholm** (1 hour each way), **Sandhamn** (3 ½ hours each way), **Utö** (3 ½ hours each way) and **Finnhamn** (2 ½ hours each way)? Pine forests, pastoral lands, small sandy beaches and rocky headlands await visitors.

The archipelago stretches 100km from **Arholma** in the north to **Landsort** in the south. From Nynäshamn, close to the Nynäs Havsbad (page 14) and Haringe Slott (page 15), it is possible to reach the islands of **Nättarö** and **Rånö** – renowned for its sandy beaches and pine forests. Even during the summer months, when the archipelago is brimming with life, it is not hard to find your own private space.

### Royal Palaces:

Rub shoulders with royalty at the **Royal Palace**, the official residence of the King and Queen of Sweden and his family. Open for visitors throughout the year, a tour of the palace will guide you through the banqueting rooms, guest apartments, the Hall of State, the Royal Chapel and the treasury.

Alternatively board a cruise boat in the heart of Stockholm and sail to **Drottningholm Slott**, the private

residence of the Royal Family (Open all year excluding 15Dec-01Jan. Cruise available May-Sept). Located on the island of Lovön in Lake Mälaren, the palace, its 16th century theatre, Chinese pavilion and gardens have been declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

### Special offer

Sunvil Discovery is pleased to offer a complimentary Stockholm Pass to each client booking a stay in Stockholm. The pass provides free admission to 75 museums and attractions, several sightseeing tours on selected 'Historical Canal' tours and free travel on public transport. Discounted prices also apply on selected 'Royal Canal' tours.

**Attractions include:** The spectacular Vasa Museum, Skansen open-air museum, Swedish Museum of Natural History, The Royal Palace, Drottningholm Palace and Gripsholm Castle (Mariefred).

## Sörmland:

The province of Sörmland adjoins Stockholm to the south and west, and is an unspoiled landscape of lush open countryside, picturesque villages and 400 historic manor houses bordered by the immense waters of Lake Mälaren and the Baltic Sea.

### Lake Mälaren:

Lake Mälaren, Sweden's third largest lake, measures 1140km<sup>2</sup> and stretches from the small town of **Köping** in the west to Stockholm in the east. Lined with historic towns, cultural sites and wonderful countryside, the



Västerås



Moose

lake, Stockholm's freshwater archipelago, is accessible on a day's excursion from the capital. It is also an ideal destination for a touring holiday.

Of the islands on the lake, the closest to Stockholm are the islands of **Ekerö**, three of which have UNESCO World Heritage Sites: The Viking age settlements of Birka on the island of **Björkö** and Hovgården on the neighbouring island **Adelsö** and Drottningholm Slott on the island of **Lovön**.

#### The manor houses:

Sörmland is famed for its array of manor houses and castles, many of which are open to visit. Some of our favourites are the 17th century **Nynäs**, 17th century Skokloster Castle 18th century **Tullgarn Palace** and the red-brick Royal Castle of **Gripsholm**, home to the largest portrait collection in Sweden.

#### The countryside:

The Sörmland countryside is verdant, quiet and peaceful. The woods are full of birdsong and the fields and pastures bloom with wild flowers.

The 1000km marked **Sörmlandsleden walking trail** winds through the county affording the opportunity to immerse in the unspoiled landscape; passing lakes, open countryside and running alongside the spectacular Baltic coastline. Circular walking routes, of varying lengths, are available.

#### Stendörren nature reserve:

For nature lovers a visit to the **Stendörren nature reserve**, situated between Trosa and Nyköping, is highly recommended. Via suspension bridges you can explore a number of small bare rock islands on the Sörmland archipelago, enjoy the tranquillity of the islands and the variety of flora and fauna on show or take a picnic and watch the world go by.

#### Picturesque villages:

Small quaint towns are a plenty in Sörmland. The picturesque waterfront town of **Trosa**, the market towns of **Malmköping**, **Mariefred** and **Nyköping** are worthy of a visit, as are **Sigtuna** and **Uppsala**, the ecclesiastical capital of Sweden, in neighbouring Uppland.

#### The archipelago:

An extensive archipelago stretches along the Sörmland coast. During the summer months (End June - mid August) it is possible to cruise along the coastline from Nyköping and Trosa to the islands of Ålo, Krämö or Askö.

## Västmanland:

#### Västerås:

The regional capital and Sweden's 6th largest city, **Västerås** sits on the shores of Lake Mälaren surrounded by parkland and an archipelago of 332 islands. During the summer months ferry boats provide access to the islands of Östra Holmen, Ridön, Skåpholmen, Almö-Lindö and Elba and offer the opportunity for hiking, cycling and sunbathing.

The landscape of the city is dominated by the 13th century cathedral, the third largest in Sweden and a network of pedestrianised shopping streets and squares. For the best view of the city and its imposing cathedral visit the hilltop park of Djäkneberget; or if you wish to step back in time visit the charming Kyrkbacken district.

#### Svartådalen:

The **Black River Valley** (Svartådalen) stretches from Västerås and the shores of Lake Mälaren to the forests of Bergslagen. The district is renowned for its rich history; spectacular landscape created by people and farming, wetlands and picturesque countryside. A 70km marked hiking trail runs through the valley and a host of excursions – canoeing and cycling tours – are available.

#### Industrial heritage:

Västmanland was the birthplace of industry in Sweden thanks to its extensive forests, long waterways and mineral rich soils. Evidence of this past is visible across the region.

Worthy of a particular mention is the **Sala Silvermine**; one of the best preserved mine settings in the world, and today offers guided tours through its dark winding galleries and vast caverns to magical underground lakes. Fascinating stories about life in the mine and the industrial heritage of the area are told.

Another excellent example of Swedish industry can be found on the shores of Lake Åmanningen. **Engelsberg Ironworks** near Fagersta is an outstanding example of European industry from the 17th to 19th centuries, and has been inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List. The site is a complete Ironworks with timber-clad blast furnaces, smelting houses and a manor house.

#### Self guided canoe tour:

This 14km canoe tour follows the meandering River Svartån from Norrsalbo to Hällsjö immersing the visitor in natural beauty and total tranquillity. This is the territory of White-Tailed Eagles, Osprey and Black Terns. A packed lunch is provided and on arrival at Hällsjö, the end of the trail, a campfire and evening meal, using locally ecologically produced food, is served.

**Includes:** Return transfers from the meeting point in Hällsjö to the start and end of the tour; Canadian open canoe (per couple); lifejackets, paddles, waterproof storage; map; packed lunch and evening barbecue. Transfers to and from the tour are not included.

**Price:** £70.00 per person

#### Moose tour:

The deep forests of Bergslagen are the natural habitat for moose and this tour has an almost 100% record of sightings. Led by a wilderness guide, visitors will learn how to track the 'king of the forest' on foot, communicate with the mammals and search for footprints – all of which increase the chances of an encounter.

**Includes:** Wilderness guide, transportation and an evening meal in a forest setting. Transfers to and from the tour are not included.

**Available:** May-Sept (specific dates). Duration: 4-6 hours (evening).

**Notes:** This tour is not suitable for clients with walking difficulties. Maximum 8 participants per guide.

**Price:** £106.00 per person

#### Beaver tour:

Led by a wilderness guide, this evening boat tour takes you in search of beaver and other wildlife. Quietly cruising the shoreline of the lakes and river, this tour offers the opportunity to get up close with the 'engineer of the forest'.

**Includes:** Wilderness guide, transportation and an evening meal in a forest setting. Transfers to and from the tour are not included.

**Available:** May-Sept. (specific dates) Duration: 4 hours (evening).

**Notes:** Maximum 9 participants per guide.

**Price:** £106.00 per person