

Kingdom of Sweden

Travelling Sweden by motorhome

BY THE MOTOROAMERS



WWW.MOTOROAMING.COM



1 INTRODUCTION

The Kingdom of Sweden is the third of our ***Summer in Scandinavia*** trilogy and has been a joy to put together. Caught in the unprecedented year that was 2020, composing this eBook has been a wonderful journey down memory lane, taking us back to the summer months of 2019.

We invite you to step into this book with intrigue as we set the scene for your Swedish road-trip.

Come on our journey with us that introduces you to the magnificence that is the Kingdom of Sweden.

ABOUT THIS CAPTIVATING GUIDE

Sweden seems to be hidden behind Norway's skirt tails, as every conversation we heard prior to our visit to Scandinavia was always about the enigmatic Norwegian king of scenery. What could Sweden possibly offer with such a mighty neighbour? As a result we arrived with low expectations and we were royally smacked across the legs for even thinking that Sweden was a runner up in the tourist destination race. So we have chosen to devote an entire guide to our surprising love for Sweden - which, dare we say it, edged above Norway? Such was our connection to this beautiful country, much like our feelings towards Denmark, we feel that Sweden needs to be promoted to the Premier League of Scandinavian destinations. We hope this guide will go some way to convincing you to come visit, if like us, you want to explore new lands.

Who are we?

Officially, we are Karen and Myles; digital nomads who are inspired to discover the world with the freedom and choice that this travelling lifestyle has gifted us.

More lovingly we are known as ***The Motoroamers*** and in March 2016 we packed up and packed in our life in England for a gap year of travel whilst we sold property. The grand plan was to put down our roots in the UK's south-west and find the 'good life', once we had sown our travel seeds.

With visions of a small-holding, donkeys, chickens and soil tarnished fingernails put aside, we hit the road in our motorhome Scoobie. We were ready for adventures and exploration that would soothe our curious spirits and satiate our inner-adventurer. Yet a few weeks into our trip we discovered that this was the life we wanted permanently and that 'going back' was not an option. So from that moment on, 'home' became the place where Scoobie's tyres rested. We found love in every dawn, each

new vista cleansed our eager eyes and fed our desire to live with freedom, courage and choice.

In our first year with our trusty stead, a Pilote 740 (7.5m), we visited 10 countries and covered 12,000 miles; from Spain to Slovenia, to France, Belgium and Netherlands. A rich array of adventures that tempered our need to feel alive after too many decades of corporate stress and burn-out. Since then we have scoured Europe for new experiences, cultural inspiration and natural wonders reaching as far west as Portugal, south to Morocco, east to Bulgaria and Romania and north to Norway. All corners of this continent have wowed us and endeared us into their hearts with many countries deserving a return or three.

This book is the third in our 2019 Summer in Scandinavia trilogy and for the time being, completes our Nordic adventures. Finland and Iceland will have to wait for another time.

Whilst we realise that a book like this can never be completely conclusive, we have shared our personal highlights.

So sit back with a coffee, put your feet up and let us entertain, inspire and give you something to think about as you begin to plan your next trip.

Karen, Myles and Scoobie



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2 WHY SWEDEN?

So maybe the call to Scandinavia is dominated by the sexy Norwegian king of all destinations. And why not - it is spectacular. Although we implore you to consider taking a tour through Sweden's diverse land.

With easy access from Denmark's or ferries from Germany, Sweden is a breeze to get to and in this guide we want to take you on a Swedish adventure that will colour your plans with dreams of reindeer, canals, coastal inlets and magnificent forest. Come with us for a surprising and joyful experience.



With three coastlines to choose from each with a different personality, a spinal region full of Sami culture and a landscape carved by forest, over 90,000 lakes, a canal, cosmopolitan cities and 30 National Parks, Sweden has everything you could wish for.

This vibrant, young and pragmatic country caters beautifully for the outdoor explorer and motorhome. With English as its second language, Sweden will give you a joyous ride. Through the sophisticated south with its modern city structures through to the north with culture and nature working side by side, the call to stay in Sweden and satiate your curiosity will be strong.

Clean air, green forest, lupin covered coastal landscape and the odd herd of reindeer or moose will plant you firmly in a very special land. It aims to please you although cares not whether you fall in love, because it humbly holds onto its beauty and traditional roots without need for approval.

Serenity, beauty, kindness, charm and a special welcome awaits you as you begin your adventures to Scandinavia's Sweden.



3 OUR ROUTES
THROUGH SWEDEN



We had 5 weeks in Sweden over two visits, with Norway nestled in between the two. We have split our Route Itinerary into four parts for ease.





4 ROUTE 1 - GÖTA CANAL TO STOCKHOLM

The next few chapters are dedicated to giving you a detailed insight into our routes through Sweden.

From our crossing in Denmark over the famous Øresund Bridge, to our meeting with our Swedish friends on the Göta Canal and our adventures north, across the Arctic Circle to the land of the Midnight Sun. A bucket list tick at the Ice Hotel and across into Norway at Abisko. Then we enjoyed a second entry into Sweden after 7 weeks in Norway, as we headed south to Trelleborg for our ferry to Sassnitz in northern Germany. Come read more....

Route 1

Göta Canal to Stockholm

Must-sees;

* Landskrona Citadel

* Strandlycan Beach

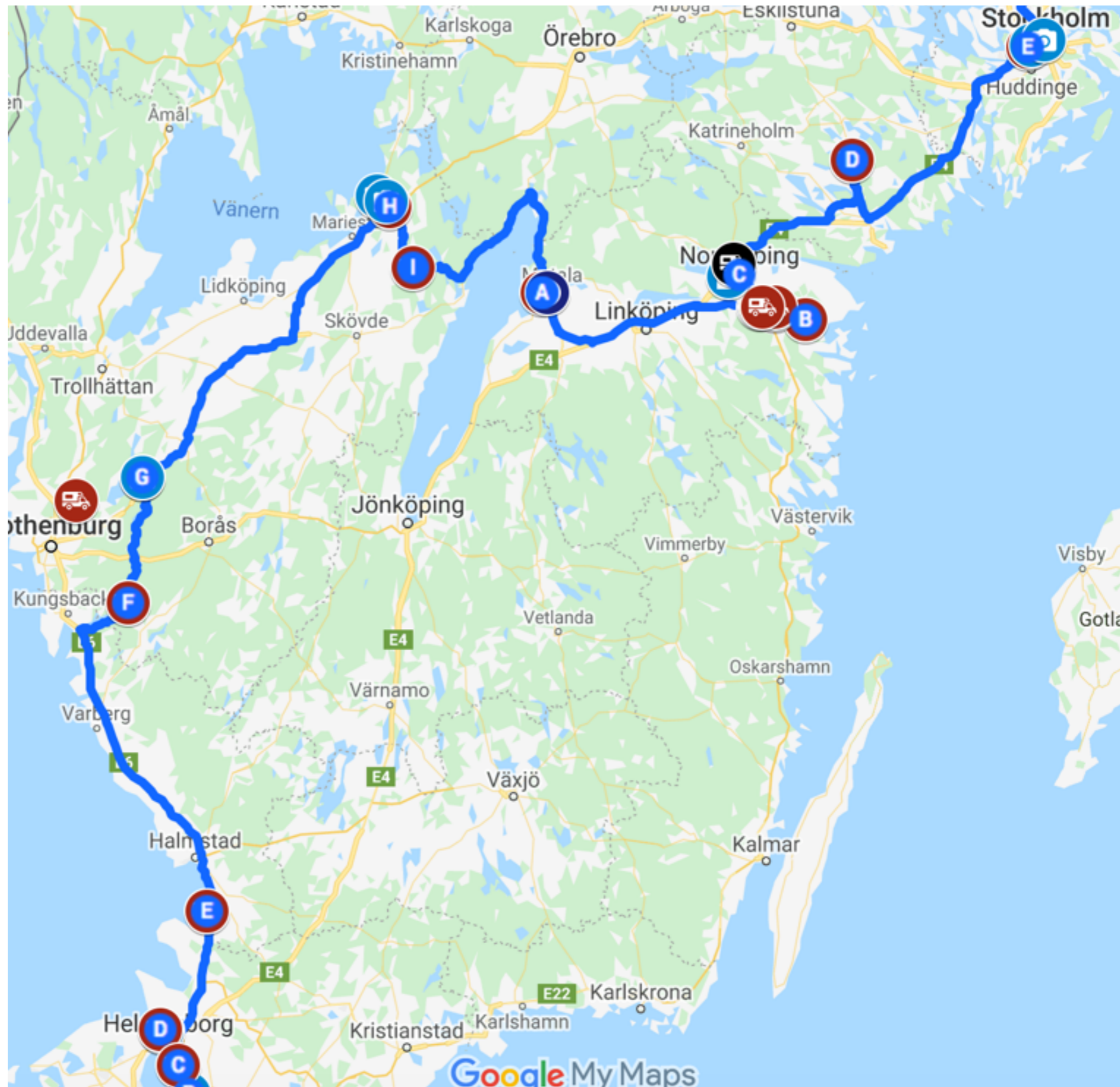
* Flohult Bad lake

* Alingsås for Fika

* Göta Canal west to east

* Stegeborg Castle

* Stockholm if you are a city lover





Landskrona Citadel

UP THE COAST TO STRANDLYCAN

After a much needed fill up of LPG in Malmö, we headed up the west coast just south of Gothenburg. As we had a rendezvous with friends in Alingsås, a mere 200 miles north, we didn't do too much sightseeing. And, if we're honest, we were already a bit burnt out after our three weeks in Denmark. So as a little diversion, we stopped at the Star Citadel at **Landskrona**, just north of Malmö.

We really enjoyed the Star Fortresses of the Netherlands, so we were intrigued to see what Sweden had to offer.

Dating back to medieval times, Landskrona was originally a fishing village, which, with its deep, natural port and coastal position made it a much envied location. In 1413, King Eric of Pomerania founded the market town taking advantage of its coastal prowess and

establishing it to control trade and Customs' revenue. The citadel itself was built from 1450 evolving its fortress walls over the centuries. Coming under Danish rule at the time, it wasn't until the 17th century that Sweden took control of the area after many bloody battles.

The fortress was built by 1000 men, many of whom were either soldiers or Polish and Russian prisoners of war. In the 19th century it was a county and Crown prison, the last inmates only being moved in 1919. From that point forward, it became a women's labour institution, a textile factory and a laundry. During WWII the military moved in and from the end of the war up until 1953 there was a refugee camp established here. A year later it opened to the public and is still free to enter. It's a great spot to explore.

The coastline from here north is pretty and there are opportunities for 'on the beach' camping. Whilst our experience of driving on the sands of Rømø in Denmark had mixed blessings, we couldn't resist the chance of parking up somewhere so unique. Previous reviewers had offered positive experiences staying overnight so we gave it a go. It was a fabulous sunset and definitely worth trying if you are feeling brave.

Further up the coast, as we edged towards Helsingborg and Gothenburg, we started to feel a little more uncomfortable. We found a great spot for an overnight, looking out across the straight separating Sweden and Denmark, with Hamlet's castle as our vista. Although a suspicious blacked-out car did two slow drive-bys, so we left, not feeling at all safe.

It was a shame as I really fancied checking out the **Sofiero Palace**, which has been voted as Europe's most beautiful park. If you can

time your visit during rhododendron season then you will be in for a treat. The prices though were a little off-putting, so it was clearly not meant to be, this trip. [Here's a link](#) if you want to tie this into your visit.





Flohult Bad

EN ROUTE TO ALINGSÄS

Leaving the coast behind us, we headed inland for a rendezvous with friends. Sadly the weather at the end of May, early June was unfriendly, at best. So when we arrived at a fabulous spot by one of Sweden's gazillion lakes and the sun came out, we started to feel the Swedish love.

Flohult Bad just had our name written all over it and with a lakeside walk and time for rest, it was a great retreat for a couple of days.

Alingsås is very much an off the beaten track place. Of course many of us with limited time to explore can't see every town on the map. So we are grateful to our friends for introducing us to our first

Swedish community. The town, with a great free aire on its fringes, is a delightful overnight stop. It was founded in the 16th century by a community made homeless by the war with Denmark when their city was destroyed by fire. It was given the Royal Charter in 1619 and was most significantly known for its cloth making industry.

We love off the beaten track places where few tourists visit. And we would definitely put Alingsås in that category. Take time to treat yourself to a **Fika** - tea and cake and watch the world go by.



Alingsås





Göta Canal artwork

Göta Canal

With over 350 miles of waterways, the **Göta Canal** is a popular destination for locals. When we think about places to visit in Sweden, I am confident that the canal system wouldn't be high on the tourist's list. We certainly didn't know about it until we arrived on Swedish soil. Although let's put an end to that right now. You must go!

The **Göta Canal** joins the west coast of Sweden with its eastern board cousin and offers three characters of waterways to explore. It is a man-made waterway constructed in the 19th century connecting Gothenburg with Söderköping, just south of Stockholm. The entire stretch is 382 miles (614km) and its navigation takes on three very distinct personalities;

1) The Tröllehätte Canal from Gothenburg

2) Two major connecting lakes, Vänern and Vättern

3) The Göta Canal

The canal's vision was the brainchild of Hans Brask in the 16th century although it took another 300 years for it to come to fruition. Thanks to the efforts of Von Platten, a German-born officer in the Swedish Navy, the revived plans got Royal approval with King Charles XIII believing that it would give Sweden a modern edge. So in 1810 the canal's construction began. It took a massive 22 years to complete with the help of canal guru Thomas Telford from England and was mostly dug out by hand, by 58,000 men.

It was officially opened in 1832 although sadly it never really became the success that Von Platten had anticipated. The railway

soon took over as the favoured form of transport given that it was quicker and was unaffected by the winter, unlike the easily frozen canal.

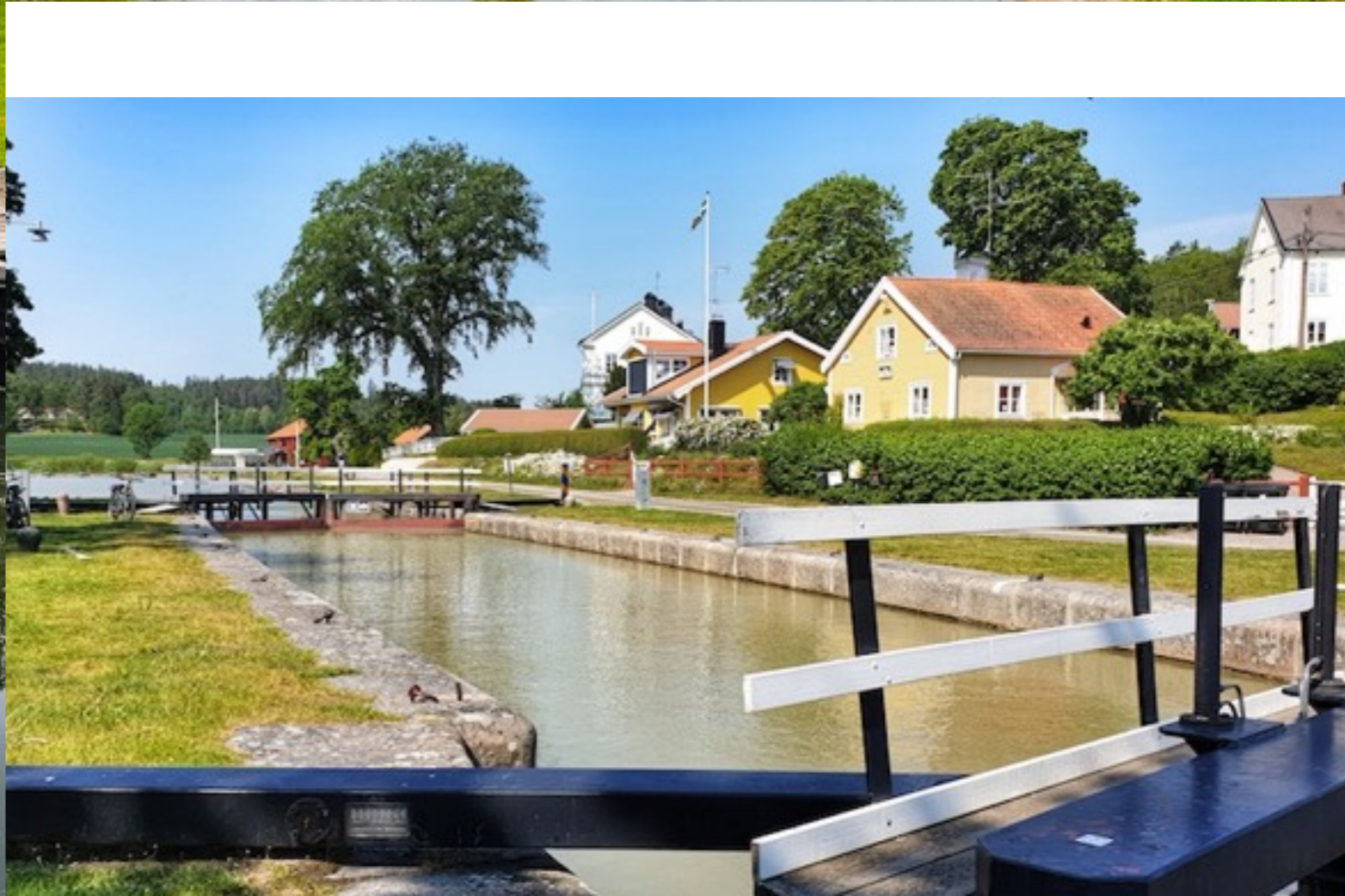
Now the Göta Canal's only commerciality is its tourist value – which ranks as one of the most popular destinations for Swedes. With its route crossing the entire country, this is an incredible way to experience Sweden; whether alongside the waterways on its well organised tow-paths or with a watery perspective, aboard boats or cruise liners.

Starting (or ending depending on your perspective) officially at **Sjötorp** at the easterly edge of the Vänern Lake, the Göta Canal begins its journey. Winding through gorgeous countryside, through small towns that have grown up along its path, taking you on a colourful cultural experience with an historical tone. Ending up at **Mem** where the canal then accesses the Baltic Sea, where the salt tantalises the canal's fresh waters. This canal is a beautiful work of art to be admired and enjoyed.

The 58 locks along its 120 mile route (190km) offers the sailer a challenge of manually operating these feats of engineering. With two or three locks in close or immediate succession, this is a steep learning curve for the inexperienced boat handler. Although with plenty of marinas en route to offer sanctuary for frayed nerves, the canal soon casts its magical spell. After all who can be stressed going 3 mph?

There are plenty of aires along the canal that you can stay at and we highly recommend a little bit of exploration of this fabulous area. For more information check out our blog by clicking [here](#).





Check out our
Göta Canal video
by clicking the
image below.

MOTOROAMING TV

GÖTA CANAL, SWEDEN

DESTINATIONS





Stegeborg Castle

STEGEBORG CASTLE, THE END OF THE GÖTA CANAL

It was great to follow a large portion of the Göta Canal and to head to Mem at its end. As the final lock releases its canal water into the Slätbaken Bay, there is just one more treat in store. The **Stegeborg Castle** sits just 12 miles (20km) from Söderköping (which by the way has one of the best ice-cream shops ever. Check out **Smultronstället** - follow the queue, you'll not regret it.)

It is definitely out of the way and not on the tourist agenda, which made it all the more appealing to us. Arriving at a small community dominated by a marina, the tower of the original castle rises above the inlet on which it was built. There is a new campsite being built although sadly not open when we visited in 2019. So instead we

wild camped right beneath the castle in a car park, which was perfect.

The castle dates back to the 13th century and with its strategic position, it was seen as an important defence for Söderköping, which was a major city at the time. It is classed as one of Sweden's most important strongholds and remained a Royal Castle from the 16-18th century. It has fallen into disrepair although is now a protected building and you can visit the castle and its grounds all year round. It costs 40SEK - £3.50. You can also take the **free** ferry just at the end of the peninsular, which saves you the long trip back around the bay via Söderköping.





Stockholm's old town

STOCKHOLM - A CITY OF ISLANDS

As you may know we are not huge city fans, although some have surprised and delighted us. So we do tend to battle through our aversion. Our mindset is that every place has its own magic and sometimes you need to give a place a chance to wow you. Depending on how we feel when we're in its midst, will often dictate how long we stay.

As a city and of course Sweden's capital it felt appropriate to take a look, especially given its island status - giving it a unique feel. We camped about three miles outside of the city so we didn't get involved in city charges. Our strategy - well mine if I'm honest, as Myles just tags along to my research planning... was to find the alternative side of Stockholm. The side that most tourists don't see,

exchanging them for the lure of the sexier main attractions. And boy did we see some sights that most tourists would miss. See more about our 24hrs in [Stockholm here](#).

On the edge of the Baltic Sea, Stockholm is built on and around an archipelago of 14 islands and is the largest city in Scandinavia. It has 50 bridges that connect the islands and ferries regularly buzz around ferrying inhabitants and tourists alike. Of course you have the typical city features such as the 'old town', known in Swedish as Gamla Stan. There is the Royal Palace, the Storkyrkan Cathedral and umpteen museums. What makes Stockholm a really interesting visit are its unique characteristics; Its **metro system** is one of the most fascinating we have ever seen. The underground art exhibition

is absolutely worth seeing and is known as the longest gallery in the world.

Check out the **Nobis hotel**, which saw the 1973 bank heist from which the famous *Stockholm Syndrome* originates. Perhaps you could climb the narrowest street in the world or visit the **Nobel Museum**. Maybe one of the other 50 museums that form an integral part of Stockholm's city culture might while away a few hours.

Look out for the **ancient rune stone** built into the wall of the old town or search out the secret underground swimming pool. Perhaps learning more about Alfred Nobel's career in dynamite might intrigue you. Get out of the city to find **Örnsbergs Klippbad** where you can rub shoulders with the locals to watch the sun set or see the panorama of the cityscape from the viewing point at **Södermalm** where you will find no tourists. Stockholm will fascinate you for sure and is well worth a visit. We would return if only to visit some of the islands next time.







5 ROUTE 2 - EAST TO THE HIGH COAST

What a busy first fortnight Sweden offered us. Time for some respite along the east coast.

We were rewarded with very long days as we approached mid-summer and presented with a plethora of wildlife and lupin covered roads as we headed north towards a bucket list visit. More on that soon.

Route 2

East, High Coast

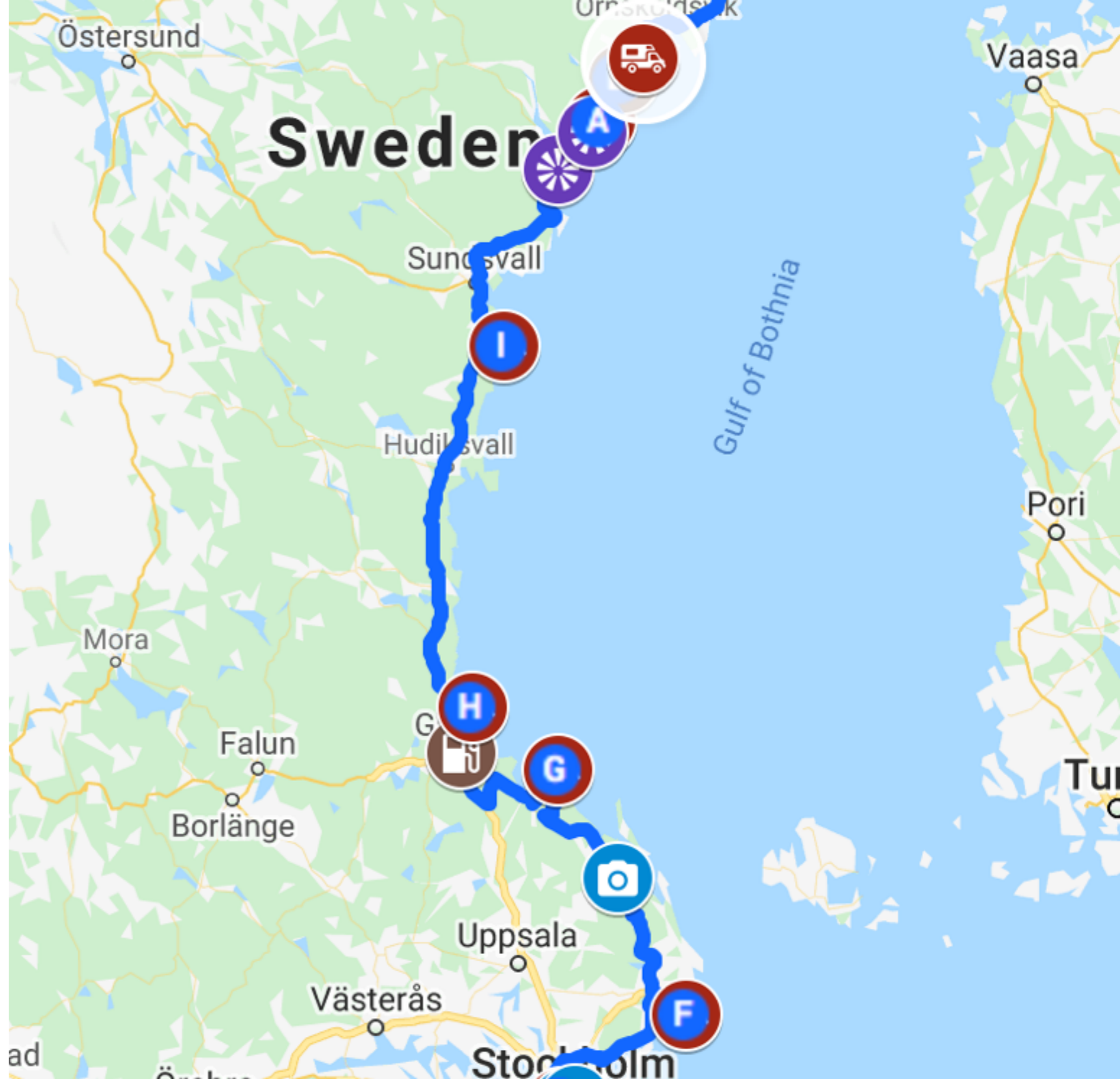
Must-sees;

* Fågelsundsdet

* Galström - Iron Works museum

* High Coast route

* Skuleskogen National Park - UNESCO





Fisherman's hut, Fågelsundet

FÅGELSUNDET HARBOUR

As you head north of Stockholm, Sweden takes on a completely different personality. The largely populated south is in stark contrast to the north, of what feels like an imaginary line drawn across the country.

We heard so many reports of a “**boring north**” as you head through the thousands of acres of forest that dominate the landscape. Although boring **it is not**. As we came to learn, Sweden has many faces that portray very different aspects of Swedish culture and natural biodiversity. The east coast is very much indicative of this as the rugged coastline offers hidden coves, harbours and communities that rely on the sea for their survival.

Although only a few hours away from Sweden's capital, it might as well be on another planet. Wild nature has shaped the landscape *and* people's lives. It was here that we had our first taster of Sweden's authentic side.

Fågelsundet was off the beaten track on the coast just north of the capital and with a place for us to wild camp, it allowed us to really connect with Sweden's simplicity.

The first thing that we loved was the partnership of red, wooden clad fishermen's huts set against the blue of the sea. On a palette you wouldn't dream of putting blue and red together, although in Sweden it works. In fact it is one dichotomy that makes Sweden what it is.

The second thing we loved was the feeling of community spirit; something that was less *talked about* and more *felt*. We noticed this on both of Sweden's coasts. Villages huddled together bordering the ocean had a shared respect for each other and the sea given that it had such a huge influence upon their livelihoods. Simplicity, hard work and partnership seemed to entwine the villages here. I guess with communities few and far between they know the importance of togetherness; and that's with each other and with Mother Nature. It was one of the many things we loved about this country.

Fågelsundet was charm personified and for one night the community happily welcomes up to two vans without cost. With a few walks along the coast, there isn't much to do, although if you are a photographer or painter, then this place will provide sufficient entertainment. Plus after the frenetic energy of the capital, this provides a super retreat just for a night.

The magic of the impending longest day also made its presence known here. With just a few hours of darkness, a new shade of night became apparent. A pink hue woke me up at 3.00am and greeted me with a beauty that can only be found through an artist's eyes.

We so wanted to sample some fish by way of a thank you for our overnight stay. We boldly knocked on the door of a fisherman's house and with a bit of basic Swedish and thankfully a lot of great English on their part, we chatted to the couple. They offered us fish the next day although in the meantime they brought out a saucepan with the leftovers from their lunch. Intrigued, I opened the lid to find potatoes and herring cooked in a sauce with onions and herbs. It was delicious. Such was the kindness of complete strangers. Our hearts ached having to leave this slice of heaven.





A peak into Fågelsundet's fishing community





Galström Overnight Parking

GALSTRÖM

As we inched north with only the Midnight Sun as our timepiece, we cut off the main-road. Now one thing you will get used to in Sweden's northern landscape is more forest than people. Cars are just a novelty in these parts.

We were welcomed by warning signs of bears and, as seems to be a pattern in our travel adventures around the world, we saw no bears. We don't believe they exist - well certainly not on our visits anyhow. The signs though did offer us a mixture of excitement and trepidation. Would this trip be the one where we saw these illusive creatures? Alas not!

The route however was worth the off-piste decision as despite the road not being great, the forest opened up into yet another hidden

community. Galström was a small estate that was built around Iron Ore mining.

Established in 1673, this tiny community oozes character and you could easily have a couple of days here exploring its history. Despite its compact and bijou status, over 30,000 visitors come here during the year, such is its draw. Whilst now a museum, you can wander through the woods, down to the water's edge a mile from the hub or take a steam train around the community. You can get access to the old mines and pop into the miners' cottages. It's a real find and not on a typical tourist agenda, despite what visitor numbers might suggest. And with a great, free overnight spot with services, this place is an absolute must.





Lupins of the High Coast

HIGH COAST EXPLORATION - HÖGA KUSTEN

The Höga Kusten is not only a beautiful region with incredible biodiversity, it is a protected area thanks to its membership of UNESCO. It is the highest region of the Baltic Coast reaching 280m at its highest point at Slåttdalsberget, which rises directly from the sea.

You arrive into this vast UNESCO site via the **Höga Kusten Bridge** or Veda Bridge to give it its formal name. It is the 16th longest suspension bridge in the world and the 3rd longest in Scandinavia. It's a pretty spectacular sight, and it heralds your visit to this incredible National Park.

With roads lined with the invasive lupin, June is a great time of year to visit. With empty roads, long days to explore and bears, lynx and

other wildlife to feast your eyes upon, the High Coast needs a good week of your time.

You weave in between forests, lakes and coast with inlets and little fjords that are dotted with the classic red fishermen's huts. You will find plenty of places to park up for the night, both wild spots and aires, in this motorhome friendly country.

We would definitely come back and spend more time here and do some of the spectacular walks.





Myles at Skuleskogan

SKULESKOGAN NATIONAL PARK

The subarctic National Park of Skuleskogen is definitely worth visiting if you love a hike. With just under 12 square miles of forest, granite outcrops, valleys and caves, you will not be bored here. It is a fabulous destination.

There are three different entrances to the park that you can choose from and it appears from Park4Night that some people have stayed at the car parks overnight. Each of the three ways into the park will give you a different perspective. We chose the middle one as, on this trip we were just passing through. We had a date with the longest day at Arjeplog, so needed to keep on trekking.

The park is a lovely blend of forest walks with gentle boardwalks to follow and more adventurous outcrop hiking. With over 18 miles of

tracks you will be spoilt for choice and you can travel through the entire Park from south to north and stay overnight at the cabins along the way if you are a serious Rambler. (Currently with Covid restrictions @November 2020 overnights are not recommended in the cabins.)

For more information click this link [here](#).





6 ROUTE 3 - SWEDEN'S NORTHERN SPINE

This third leg of our Swedish adventure was where my butterflies became increasingly active. We were now heading for Bucket List territory for so many different reasons.

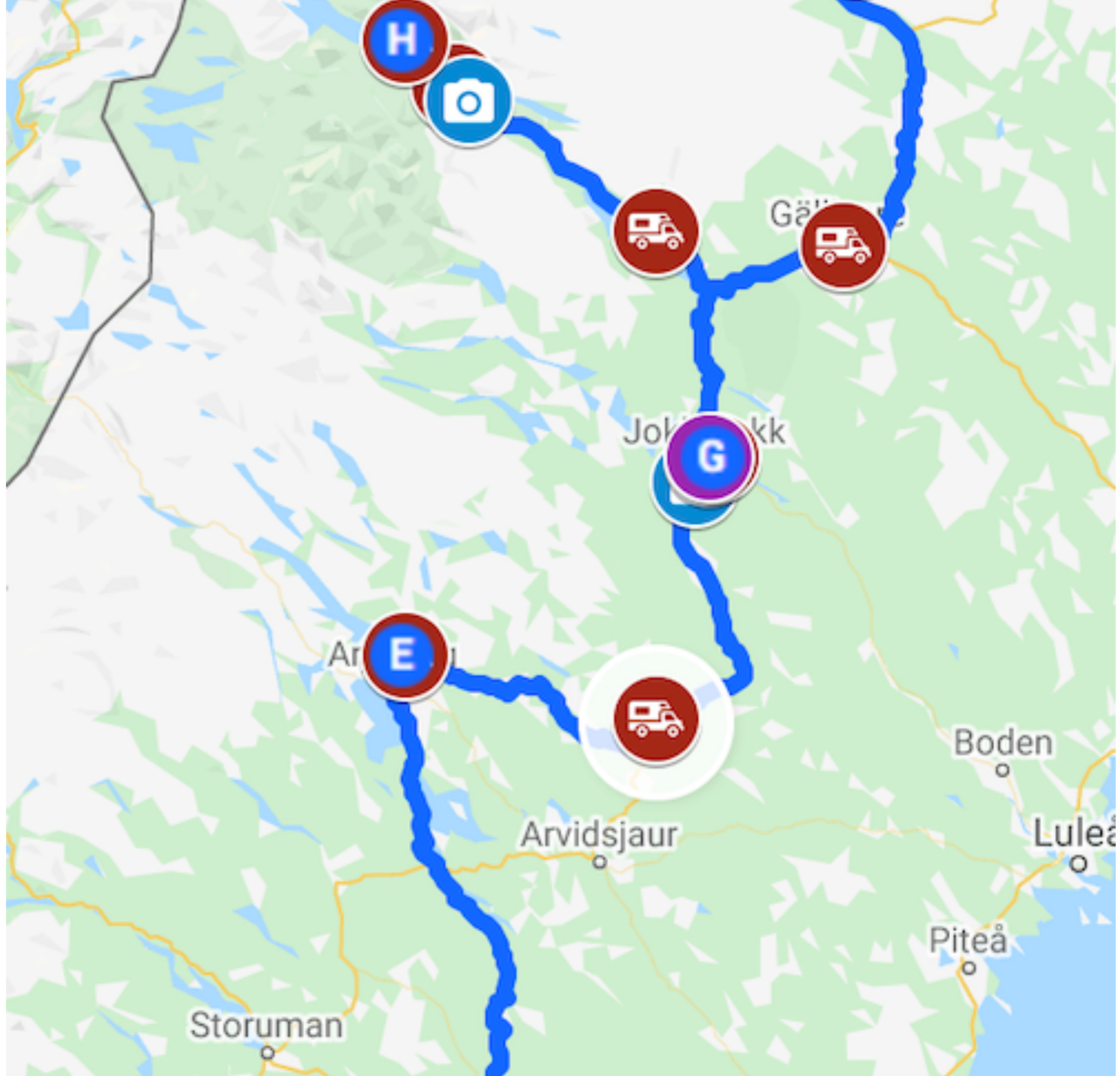
The wildlife, the Midnight Sun and the Ice Hotel. And that's before the desire to uncover the Sami culture that I first learnt about thanks to Dave and Si from the Hairy Bikers. So this was a rich variety of travel experiences that would add so much colour to my life particularly.

Route 3

Sweden's northern spine

Must-sees;

- * Vormforsen Rapids
- * Arjeplog for the Midnight Sun
- * The Arctic Circle
- * Jokkmokk Sami Museum
- * Laponia - Stora Sjöfallet
- * Jukkasjärvi Sami village and the Ice Hotel
- * Abisko National Park
- * E10 border crossing into Norway





VORMFOSEN RAPIDS

As we headed inland, we used Sweden's spine to guide us. We had an ulterior motive for turning left just north of Sundsvall; the Midnight Sun at the iconic Arjeplog on 21 June. Now let me be clear - Sweden has a lot of forest in this region of the country. When you google how many hectares it simply says 'a lot'! With over 57% of the country covered in forest, acres and acres of trees stretch out in front of you - could you class it as one dimensional?

As we said earlier, not for us. It was a beautiful aspect of Sweden's natural landscape. In part because the forest would only mean one thing... well two if you are going to be picky; reindeer and moose. The forests in these northern parts are homeland to these beautiful creatures and the prospect of seeing them, drove us onward through the corridors of pines. The lupins of the coast seemed a long time past.

Before we romantically allure you here, we have to offer a little warning about the roads in these here parts! With such long and dark winters, spring and summer are when the road network that cut deep through the 23 million acres of forest are repaired. We don't just mean a small stretch from one pine tree to another. No, we mean 23 miles of dreadful roads surpassed only by Italy. Given that these routes are crucial for foresters and the remote communities hidden amongst the trees, repairs are vital. Although blimey they are tough going in a motorhome. Because there are so few route options, once you are on an unsealed road you are committed. So a Sat Nav two hour journey could easily take you four if you encounter any such roads.

Don't let that put you off though as the journey is well worth the pain of those potential drives. You will be able to count passing traffic on



one hand. In fact the biggest hold up you will experience will be a family of reindeer aimlessly walking across your path. Remember they most likely came here well before you, so give way to them and watch them in awe.

After enduring one of these *roads under repair*, we were in need of an overnight stop. On the map I found a 'fosen' which translated means rapids or waterfall. So this had to be a great overnight stop right? Well yes and no.

It was undoubtedly and incredible park-up with the regular features of picnic benches and toilet drop. The roar from the swollen Vindelälven river, just north of Lycksele is certainly a sight to see and a sound to hear. With a nine metre drop over 500 metres this is a popular place to visit despite its northern position.

Our lack of sleep that night was not, as you might imagine, from the crashing, crunching and coursing of the river. No it was the nightmare sound of one trillion mosquitos dive bombing us. And I exaggerate not!

They found every little nook and cranny through which they could feast upon their prey, namely us. For hours we battled to rid our home from these pesky pin-head battalions. We had reinforced the skylights as these seemed to be their entry points to dinner. Needless to say despite the beauty of this place, we are scarred by these minute insects. We do though highly recommend stopping here for a picnic lunch, just not over night in mid June!





Arjeplog church

ARJEPLOG

Arjeplog may seem like an innocuous village in Aside of its beautiful archipelago, Sami cultural museum and imposing lake-side church, Arjeplog is the first location from which you can experience the power of the Midnight Sun.

On top of that, would you believe that Arjeplog is the testing site for the Asian and European car industry? Of course in the summer there is nothing to see, as we found out to our disappointment - it is during the winter, when the lake has frozen that it attracts the specialist car testers and the likes of the *Top Gear* team.

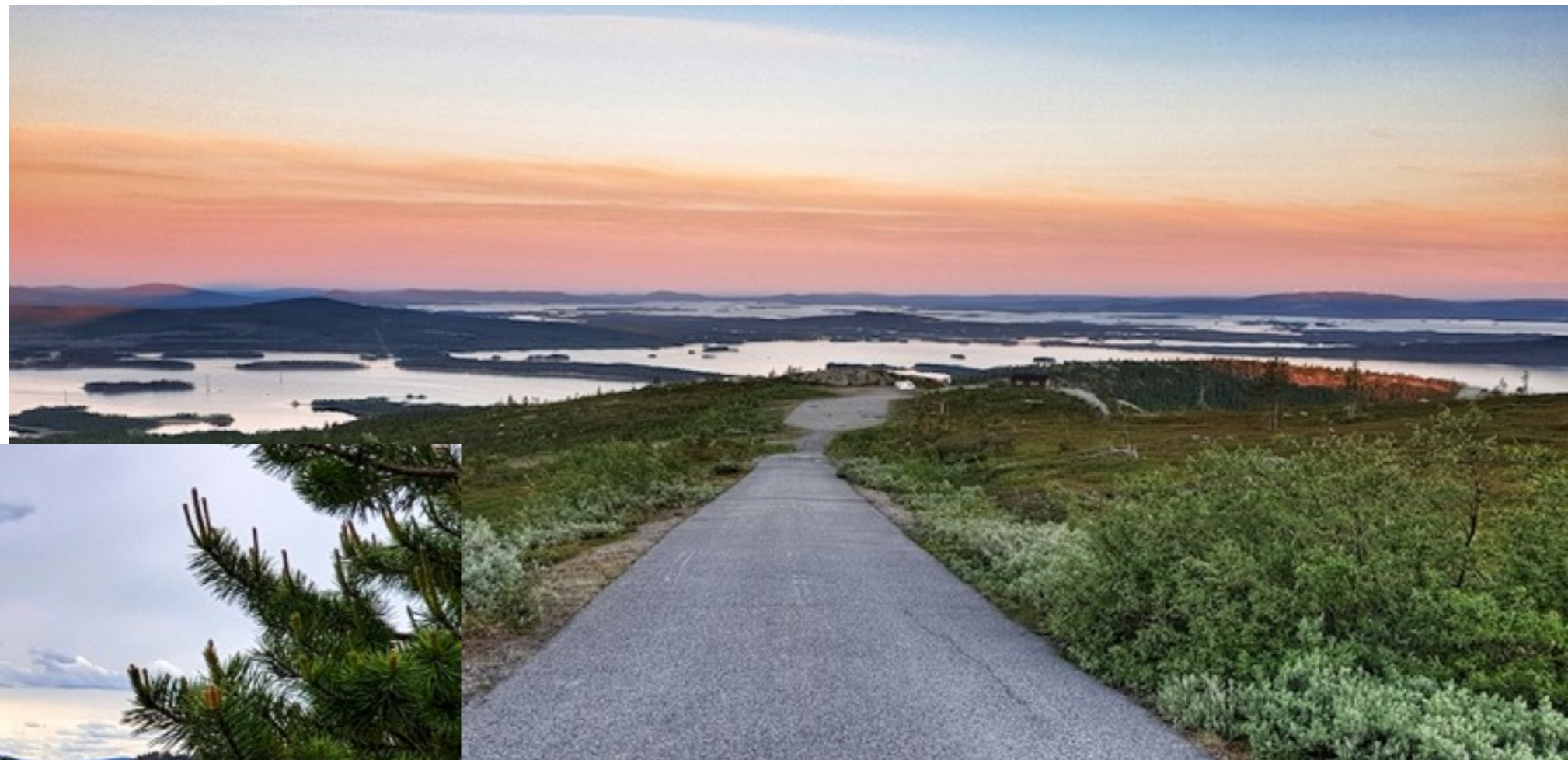
From the moment we left the UK in April I had this moment in our sights. Focused like a focused-thing, we drove north to get to Arjeplog for mid-summer. That equinox moment where, at this

latitude the sun never sinks below the horizon. What a phenomenon that is, which I'll tell you more about later.

We chose a wild spot high up above Arjeplog overlooking the greatest inland archipelago at **Galtispuoda**. It remains one of most memorable moments of my life on the road. Taking a short hike up the hill to witness the sun just lightly tickles the horizon before it continues its path back up into the sky; it was a magical moment despite being so late. What an utter privilege.

Back in the town you have a good range of shops and the **Silvermuseet** where you can learn more about the Sami who live in this region and their culture. Do keep your eyes open for Rudolph.

Above and below; view down to Scoobie's overnight spot and archipelago



Rudolph taking his annual holiday in Arjeplog





Arctic Circle, Sweden

ARCTIC CIRCLE - ANOTHER 1ST

Travel is all about creating memories and experiencing firsts - and Sweden certainly gave us plenty of those. To start with we had the Midnight Sun and then, we crossed the Arctic Circle. It is one of the moments that is really hard to describe. I'm rarely lost for words although crossing this invisible line and entering for us, virgin territory was quite moving. We both sat for a while in silence such was our contemplation.

So ok it was a grey and miserable day and not very welcoming at all. Although how many times in life can you say that you have crossed the Arctic Circle and placed your lickle toes into a new

space on the globe? Suddenly we were in Santa-land and a whole new set of Arctic experiences - and I was excited.

I was interested to learn that the Circle, whilst understood to be positioned at specific latitude, in fact moves every year. To quote the information board, the Circle is “..defined by the inclination of the earth’s axis, which varies under the influence of the sun, moon and planets.”

The Visitors’ Area is a great place to stop for photos or even stay overnight as there is an aire here with services. So time it right and you can sleep at the Arctic Circle with 24hrs daylight; how cool.

Scoobie's arrival at the Circle!





Ájtte Museum, Jokkmokk

JOKKMOKK - SAMI CULTURAL CENTRE

After the moving visit to the Arctic Circle we tootled north a bit more, landing in Lapland's Jokkmokk. I had researched this place after friends had visited some three years earlier and was intrigued about its Sami cultural significance. Whilst the town itself is nothing much to write home about, you come here because of the Sami.

Loosely translated as River's Curve, **Jokkmokk** is seen as a central hub for all the Sami tribes who live in the forests with their reindeer herds. Since 1605, Sami have made the pilgrimage from across Sweden to attend an annual market held in Jokkmokk. Taking place on the first Thursday in February each year, often in sub-zero temperatures, the **Jokkmokk market** is an ancient tradition where the community come together to trade and celebrate life together. After their isolated existence throughout the year, this is an important event in their social and business calendar.

If you come to Jokkmokk for no other reason than visiting the **Ájtte Museum** you will not be disappointed. An interactive museum of both cultural and natural history, it takes you on a journey that helps you learn about the Sami heritage and how their lives are evolving in today's economic world.

It is well worth a couple of hours with great exhibitions in Swedish and English. In 2019 it cost 90SEK to enter which is around £7.60, give or take, depending on the exchange rate.

A short walk into the town will take you to two authentically run Sami shops offering handmade goods from local tribes. They are run by the Tourist Office and you may be able to talk to a local Sami to find out more intimate details about their culture.





Stora Sjöfallets National Park.

LAPONIA - WORLD HERITAGE AREA

As we headed deeper into Swedish Lapland, a magical air seemed to envelop us. With regular sightings of Rudolph and his mates and a few of the more illusive moose, we decided to head off the beaten track once again. Despite a distinct lack of vehicles, there were plenty motorhomes up in this neck of the woods. Although don't expect to see many locals, as according to our Swedish friends, not even the Swedes go north of Stockholm.

Our courage to head off into the wilderness rewarded us with a World Heritage area called **Laponia**. One of Europe's oldest National Parks (1910), Stora Sjöfallets was calling us. Wrapped in our winter garb, we drove the *one way in and one way out* highway for a couple of days and if you love wildlife, scenery and hiking, then

this place is an absolute must. With snow still clinging to the mountain giants that line the lakes along this route, you are transported into a completely new Swedish experience. Up to this point Sweden has offered plenty of forest, stunning coastline and canals. Now something altogether quite different will feed your hungry eyes. Mountains greet you - not just hills, proper mountains. Crystal blue waters, cascading waterfalls and icicles even in late June is a surprisingly warming affair as you soak up this landscape.

You can drive the 190 mile round trip although the road is a bit rough in places. The further into the wilderness you go the more tricky the drive is. It is reputed to have a campsite at the end, that the Tourist

Information said was mostly for hikers with their tents. So not recommended for us intrepid lot.

Half way up the National Park route is the **Naturum Visitors' Centre**. This is a fabulous place for a bite of lunch and to look across at the man-made lakes used for hydro-electricity. Keep your eyes peeled for eagles who frequent this area for their prey. You will be welcomed with a pair of slippers and really knowledgeable people who are just so enthusiastic about this area and the hikes available. You can plan your visit in time for the many talks that are put on for the tourists focusing on the natural diversity, hiking and Sami culture. Highly recommend a little visit here for sure.

We had two nights wilding in the plentiful parking places along the roadside, which is not busy. We asked if we could park up in the car park of the **Natruum Centre** and they whilst they didn't confirm we could, they motioned that if they didn't see us then it was completely fine to stay overnight. Such a refreshing attitude.

If you nip just an hour or so up the road, not only will your eyes pop with the scenery, you will also come to a junction of the **Kungsleden Trail**. With 240 miles (400km) of outstanding hiking that starts at the **Abisko National Park** in the north and heads south along the Norway border to Hemavan in the south.

It is a hike for the adventurous and serious trekkers, taking up to 13 days through Sweden's most incredible mountain scenery.

We highly recommend taking a drive along this road, even if you're not big hikers, just to appreciate the change in landscape and to marvel at the herds of reindeer that you will undoubtedly come across on this isolated and wild land.





Stora Sjöfallets UNESCO National Park





Jukkasjärvi Sami church altar carving

JUKKASJÄVI - SAMI MUSEUM, CHURCH AND THE ICONIC ICE HOTEL

When I think about Sweden, my mind immediately jumps to the Midnight Sun, the Northern Lights and the Ice Hotel. So on this trip ticking off two out of three was pretty good in my book.

Watching James Bond - *Die Another Day* whetted my appetite for visiting the Ice Hotel and as luck would have it we would be driving right past it!! It would be rude not to eh?

Jukkasjärvi is a small community 120 miles above the Arctic Circle, so you can imagine what the winter months are like that far north. The river Torne that runs alongside the hotel comes to a standstill as the Arctic weather descends and holds everything in perfect ice-animation. It is this river that gifts its icy offerings for this living, breathing work of art. From December to April a uniquely designed

winter hotel is crafted by individual artists who apply to be Ice Hotel creators each year and, if they are successful must deliver their icy designs themselves. Once spring comes the winter hotel melts, sliding gracefully back to its watery source, the river Torne.

During the summer you might imagine that there's very little to see - after all it is an ICE hotel! Although summertime is incredible thanks to the **365 Summer Hotel**. A permanent building that provides an all-year-round art gallery that you can stay in at any time of the year. In temperatures of a constant -5°C these rooms are exquisitely designed and it is a completely sensory experience. You can visit the rooms during the day and buy a drink at the iconic Ice Bar, drinking a warming tippie from an authentically crafted ice glass.

The tradition is then, once drunk, you throw the glass back to the Torne.

[Read more about our experiences here](#) There is a great little aire just across the road from the hotel so there is a **'no ice'** stay in the comfort of your home if you would prefer. It's a fabulous place to visit and a serious bucket list tick for me. I can't wait to go back there for the Northern Lights and brave out a night in one of these incredible art rooms.

A few miles down the road from the hotel you come across Jukkasjärvi. This tiny hamlet oozes culture and Sami heritage, that originates back to the 17th century. The first settlers were actually Finnish although the Swedish Sami soon turned it into a local market. The 1605 church is a must visit. The local Sami guide will tell you the story behind the incredible alter which is a highly crafted wooden piece of artistry that tells a Sami tale legacy and history.

Next door is a museum that is great for the kids with a super little cafe for mum and dad. You have to try the coffee cheese. I'll say no more - it has to be experienced just once in your life!





Here's another one of our video masterpieces that show off the brilliance of the Ice Hotel. Taken with their permission

MOTOROAMING TV

ICEHOTEL, SWEDEN

DESTINATIONS





Abisko gorge, northern Sweden

ABISKO NATIONAL PARK

After the heady heights of the Ice Hotel, I wondered what else might top off that experience.

Before we hit Norway, we decided to do one last shopping run in Kiruna. As the main airport serving the Ice Hotel, this town has very little more to sell to the visiting tourist. In fact we were struck by the town's industrial nature. Yet strangely whilst it is Sweden's most northerly town, Kiruna has a bit more significance than its latitude alone. Kiruna is also home to some important iron ore deposits, hence the large mining community that is so evident. It is because of these earthly properties that the Germans set their sights firmly on this seemingly inconspicuous town during WW2. This also helps us to understand why there were so many attacks at Narvik, just across

the border as they battled through Norway to secure access to the mines as a source for their artillery.

Still there is little more in Kiruna to be wowed by although in fairness we didn't stay for long so may be we are being a bit judgemental.

Imagine our surprise after the let down of Kiruna to be faced with the mountainous beauty of **Abisko**. The last resort and area of significance before you hit the border. We were not expecting to see such an incredible landscape. With deep gorges, snow capped mountains and forest, it was instantly easy to see why Abisko is a destination for nature-lovers and hikers alike. Especially as this is where the **Kungsleden Trail** starts, or finishes depending on which way you look at it.

We had three nights in this mountainous National Park, free camping at the Ski Lift. Despite being in the heart of summer, we sat in awe as a snow storm thundered through, casting a white blanket everywhere. It was quite magical, if not a tad cold.

The hikes are second to none in this area. Whether you are a seasoned walker or just a rambler, this place has it all. You could easily have a week here exploring the gorges, the lakeside or looking for moose in the dense forests. Or perhaps you could take the ski lift up to the mountain top for a panoramic view of the park. There is a fabulous information centre in the village with a restaurant, hotel and a few places to camp along the roadside.

Whether you choose summer hiking or winter snow sports you will be in for a treat. With the added benefit of catching both the Northern Lights and Midnight Sun we can't recommend Abisko highly enough. Here are some images to whet your appetite.









E10 from Abisko, Sweden to Narvik, Norway

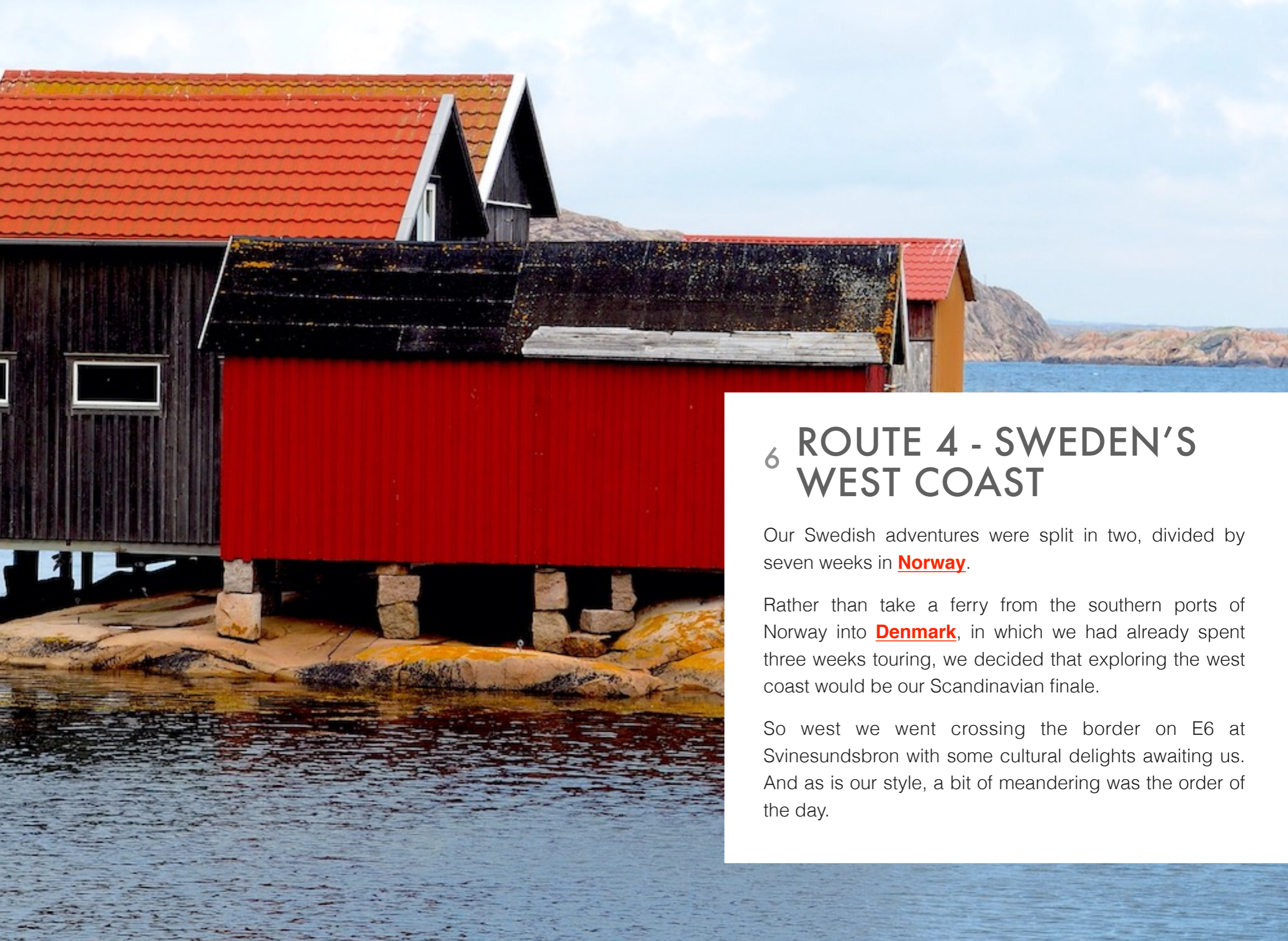
E10 SWEDEN/NORWAY BORDER CROSSING

Of all the borders we have crossed in the last four years, the E10 into Norway must be one of the most spectacular. It is almost as if Sweden is offering one last parting gift as it prepares you for what is to come.

The E10 from Absiko takes you along the lakeside, hugging the mountains that provide a magnificent backdrop to the highway. With snow still clinging to the hills even at the end of June, you get a real sense of the scenery that lies ahead. Lush green forest slowly gives way to an undulating landscape, icy streams that weave through the undergrowth and wows that await you around every corner. This is one spectacular journey and it rounded off our Sweden road trip with drama and a crescendo.

Click the image below to see our 3 minute video of our route across the border.





6 ROUTE 4 - SWEDEN'S WEST COAST

Our Swedish adventures were split in two, divided by seven weeks in [Norway](#).

Rather than take a ferry from the southern ports of Norway into [Denmark](#), in which we had already spent three weeks touring, we decided that exploring the west coast would be our Scandinavian finale.

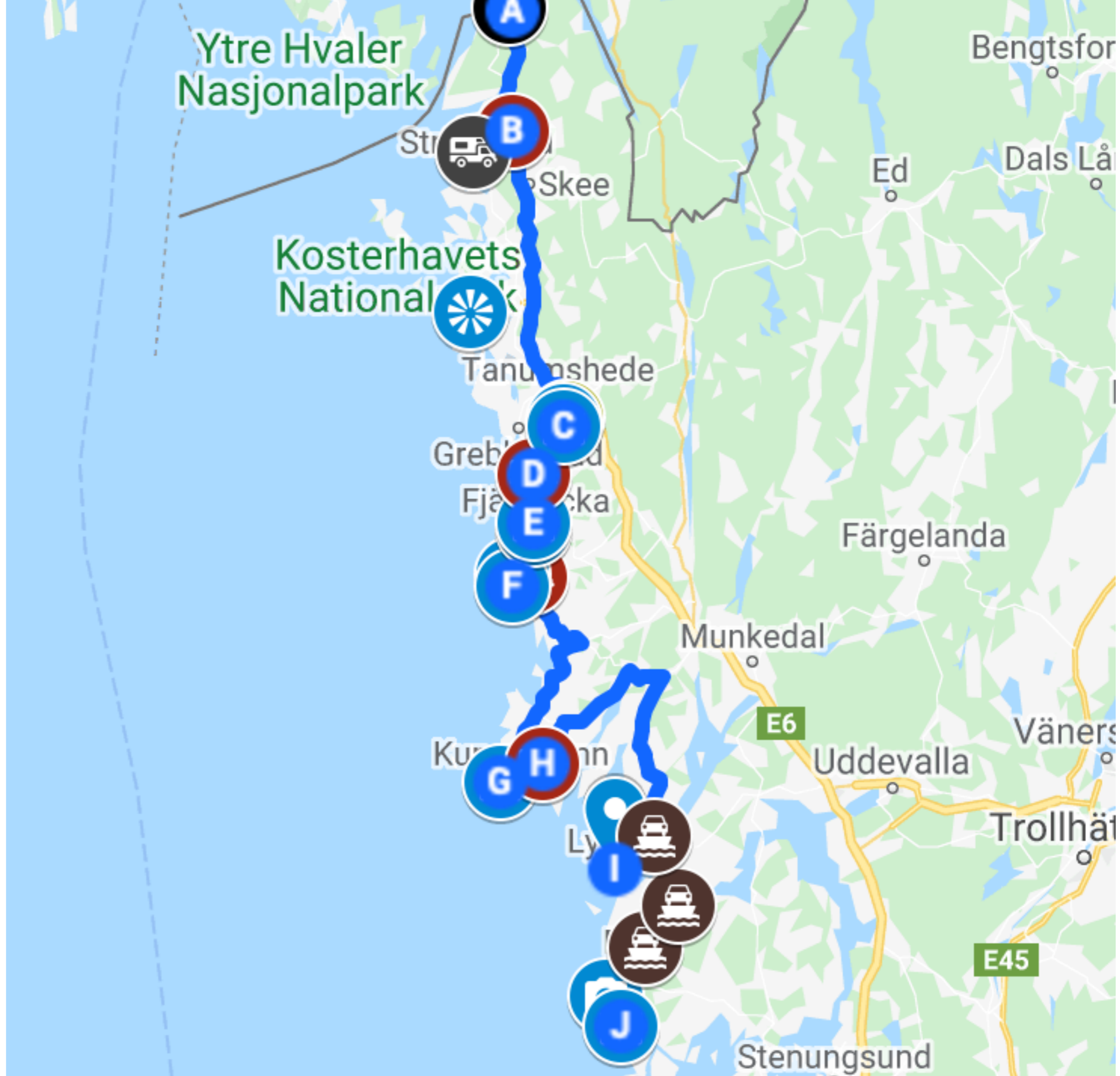
So west we went crossing the border on E6 at Svinesundsbron with some cultural delights awaiting us. And as is our style, a bit of meandering was the order of the day.

Route 4

Sweden's western coast above Gothenburg

Must-sees specifically along the Kosterhavets National Park;

- * Blomsholm
- * Resö
- * Tanumshede ancient rock carvings
- * Kämpersvik
- * Fjällbacka
- * Hamburgö island
- * Smögenbruggan





The Ship grave

BLOMSHOLM THE STONE SHIP BURIAL GROUND

No sooner had we landed back into the arms of Sweden we uncovered a fabulous piece of history. The [Stone Ship at Blomsholm](#) is just one of the ancient series of pre-historic remains that are of archeological significance. The burial ground is said to date back to 400-600AD and due to its shape and size, is thought to be the grave of someone pretty important.

The tradition of ship burial grounds is a custom of Scandinavia, northern Germany and Baltic regions. The death of a nobleman was marked by a grave surrounded by stones laid out in the shape of a ship as a way of representing his earthly status.

This is the third largest stone ship in Sweden and Bolmsholm offers other neolithic graves and stone circles in the area. So it is definitely worth exploring, and there was a free parking spot for overnight overlooking the stones. We've stayed at some interesting places

over the years and this was definitely one of the more obscure 'homes for the night'.





Resö archipelago

KOSTERHAVET - RESÖ

Sweden's first marine national park, **Kosterhavet**, has been a protected area since 2009 offering 6000 marine species, 200 of which can only be found in this part of Sweden. It is a haven for coastal and sea lovers, with sailing, fishing and diving amongst its water-pursuits.

Resö at the southern entrance of the park is a small fishing community that we stumbled upon and could be so easily missed. With its roots back to the 16th century, Resö has maintained its fishing legacy. Given its easy access to the ocean the fishing of lobster and prawn is the village's main source of income. Add to that the small marina and this could easily be a top tourist destination. In a way, I hope it's not, as the charm and isolation of this beautiful red-hued village deserves so much more.

As you scramble along the rounded granite rocks, you get a real sense of the sheltered position that this village is awarded and to us really sums up what authentic Sweden is all about. It had so many similarities to its cousin on the east coast mentioned earlier, Fågelsundet.

We wild camped in a small car park and watched the osprey dive for their tea and cycled in to the village. Although we learned on the day of departure that despite the car park being devoid of "no camping" signs, overnight stays were prohibited. There is a campsite not too far away at Kyrkvikens, which is a good alternative if we returned to this very special area of Kosterhavet.





Ancient rock drawings

TANUMSHEDA ROCK CARVINGS - UNESCO

Taking the E6 inland from the coast gave us the opportunity to check out a bit more ancient history. Tanumshede, just south of Resö dates back 3000 years and is of major historical significance. Back in the day when Tanum was a fjord, this area was rich agricultural land and home to Bronze Age farmers. Their tradition of rock carvings is to be seen beautifully at two sites in the region thanks to the prolific granite rocks deposited from the Ice Age 14,000 years ago. These rocks have provided an outstanding canvas legacy and these monuments are free to explore.

The **Vitlyke Museum** is the first stop-off point. There is plenty of good parking for motorhomes and you can easily while away an

hour or so walking through the woodland looking for Bronze Age artefacts and burial mounds. There is a huge concentration of carvings on an expansive rock boulder, which is easy to access for disabled visitors via their boardwalks and just a five minute walk across the road from the museum.

Whilst it is clear that the paintings have been enhanced and protected, their origins can not be disputed and such is the archeological importance of the area that it has been designated as a UNESCO site. There are 1,500 sites in the region of Bohuslän that evidence Bronze Age carvings and these two at Tanum with their form and sheer numbers make it an important historical site.

The museum itself is also well worth a look, which again is free to explore and so very interesting. And their lunch is second to none. Probably one of the tastiest and cheapest meals we had in Sweden - three courses for a mere £12 - bargain certainly on Swedish standards.



Just down the road at **Aspeberget** is another site which is thought to be the largest collection of carvings in the world. They have a much more authentic feel to them; they have been left in their original state, making them less noticeable perhaps, although far more real, in my mind. I suspect there are less coaches arriving here because there are no shops or cafés, or maybe we're just a bit cynical.

Again there is easy parking for a motorhome and it is free to walk around the granite landscape. It will take you about 45 minutes to explore this site. We would highly recommend a visit to both areas to soak up some ancient Swedish culture.





Kämpersvik overnight stop

KÄMPERSVIK

As you probably know by now, we love a bit of **off the beaten track** exploration. Sweden's vastness really encourages this style of travel, especially on the west coast. With its archipelago, fjords and coastal inlets, Sweden hides so many hamlet secrets to keep even the most intrepid explorer satisfied.

Kämpersvik is one of those such secrets. Perhaps it's all in the name, although whatever the reason we found ourselves looking for an overnight stop; and this gorgeous fishing village, of no more than 50 houses, had our names all over it. In the heat of a Scandinavian summer, locals come down to swim and walk along the granite coastline and quite simply BE. There's nothing here by way of restaurants or shops, although it was charm personified.

There was a fab spot to park up, for which of course we asked permission from the locals, who were only too happy to oblige. They seemed proud and willing to share a little slice of their heaven with us. And grateful we were too.







Fjällbacka arial view

FJÄLLBACKA - INGRID BERGMAN'S PARADISE ON EARTH

Not far down the coast from the ancient carvings, we stumbled upon Fjällbacka. I love finding places that at first viewing on a map look of some interest and then in the flash of a flashy thing turns into a place of intrigue and fascination. Fjällbacka is one such place.

We found a place to park Scoobie high up on the northern edge of what looked like a popular town. It gazed down at the now familiar sight of orange roofed buildings and red-wood fishermen's huts. Surrounded by granite outcrops sheltering this classic fishing village, Fjällbacka oozes character, ocean tales and infamy. Who could have imagined that a famous star would have sought sanctuary here and made it her summer home and retreat? Ingrid

Bergman came here frequently with her family and she even had her ashes scattered around the shores of the island they called home.

Fjällbacka has its history shaped around fishing, as you can imagine. Although lesser known is that a fish canning owner invented the spiced sprat in the village - later known as the **anchovie**. Its herring oil was also sold to Paris as fuel for their lights. So not such a sleepy village as we first imagined.

As we walked through the village you could instantly see it was a community of two halves. The old fish manufacturing aspect to the north and then the newer developments and marina to the south. Carving a physical division between the two is the **Fjällbacka rock**, from which the village gets its name. And there is a fabulous, if not

hairy hike up through the granite outcrops from which the views across the bay are incredible on a good day.

It would be easy to while away a couple of days here, as there are boat trips from the harbour out into the bay of islands and plenty of fishmongers from which a veritable array of fish will tempt your palate. You can hike, photograph to your heart's content or simply bird watch in the village's near-by nature reserve.

Then for lunch why not treat yourself to the treasure from which this village evolved from 1600s - its fish. It is seriously worth investing in something as these pure waters produce the most incredible fare. I couldn't resist some fresh prawns caught that morning for my lunch.



We had a fabulous day here. It is yet another place we would return to, to simply soak up the enigmatic yet silent atmosphere of this small community tucked up under the rocks. If it's good enough for Ingrid, it's good enough for you and I.

Do not drive by Fjällbacka - you'll not be disappointed





Swimming at Boviksvagen on the secret hide-out of Hamburgö island

HAMBURGÖ ISLAND

One of the many things we adore about Sweden is its plentiful and free ferries. Unlike Norway that has charges that sting (unless you have their discount card), Sweden has chosen a free-for-all approach. Much like its dramatic neighbour, the western coastline ferries are a life-line to the locals and tourists alike.

Just 20 minutes south of Fjällbacka we stumbled across **Hamburgö** - a name you cannot forget. This small island required just a five minute ferry to transport us to its sanctuary and whilst overnight camping was, unusually for Sweden prohibited, a day trip was great. The roads however we must give you fair warning, were a bit bum-clenchingly tight. So if you have anything bigger than a 7.5m

rig, I would park up on the mainland at Hamburgsund and take your bikes across on the ferry.

We found two amazing spots on the island; the first was **Boviksvagen**; an isolated and sheltered spot that during a hot summer's day has a deluge of locals looking to bask on the granite rocks like seals. A walk around this spot and a picnic lunch was delightful and it was a shame we couldn't stay overnight, although the signs were clear as were the unwelcoming looks from the locals.

The second hidden gem was just along the coast to a fishing hamlet called **Hamnebukst**. Just a handful of fishermen's houses although quaint and photogenic for sure.

Hamnebukst - fishing hamlet





Smögenbryggan harbour and fishing huts

SMÖGENBRYGGAN

"At the far end of the North Sea, where the water is the saltiest and clearest and the winds freshest, lies one of the west coast's largest and most interesting fishing villages - Smögen."

This was a quote from a tourist brochure from 1911 - over a century of people flocking to this unique and lovely seaside town. Out of season this place is delightful, although during the summer Smögenbryggan's population doubles!

Actually an island linked to one of the coastline's many finger-shaped peninsulas, Smögenbryggan is a popular destination for city-dwellers due to its proximity to Gothenburg. It has a classical seaside feel to it, although Swedish style! No stereotypical 'Kiss me Quick' hats or bucket and spade shops.

No this has a classier feel to it, with posh seafood restaurants with staggering waterside views and boutique shops to appeal to Gothenburg's urban locals.

Its unique 2000ft long wooden pier is just one of the many characteristics that make Smögenbryggan a photographic wonder. Along with its fishing huts you cannot help being wowed.

If you like nightlife, this is for you. If you love nature, this is for you. If you love photography - you'll not be disappointed. We adored it, although we were very happy not to have the crowds that the inevitable summer holidays will attract.

There's an aire just across the bridge costing 200SEK and a free parking area by the Smögenbryggan harbour for motorhomes, from which you can cycle easily into the hub of the resort.







INTERACTIVE ROUTE-MAP

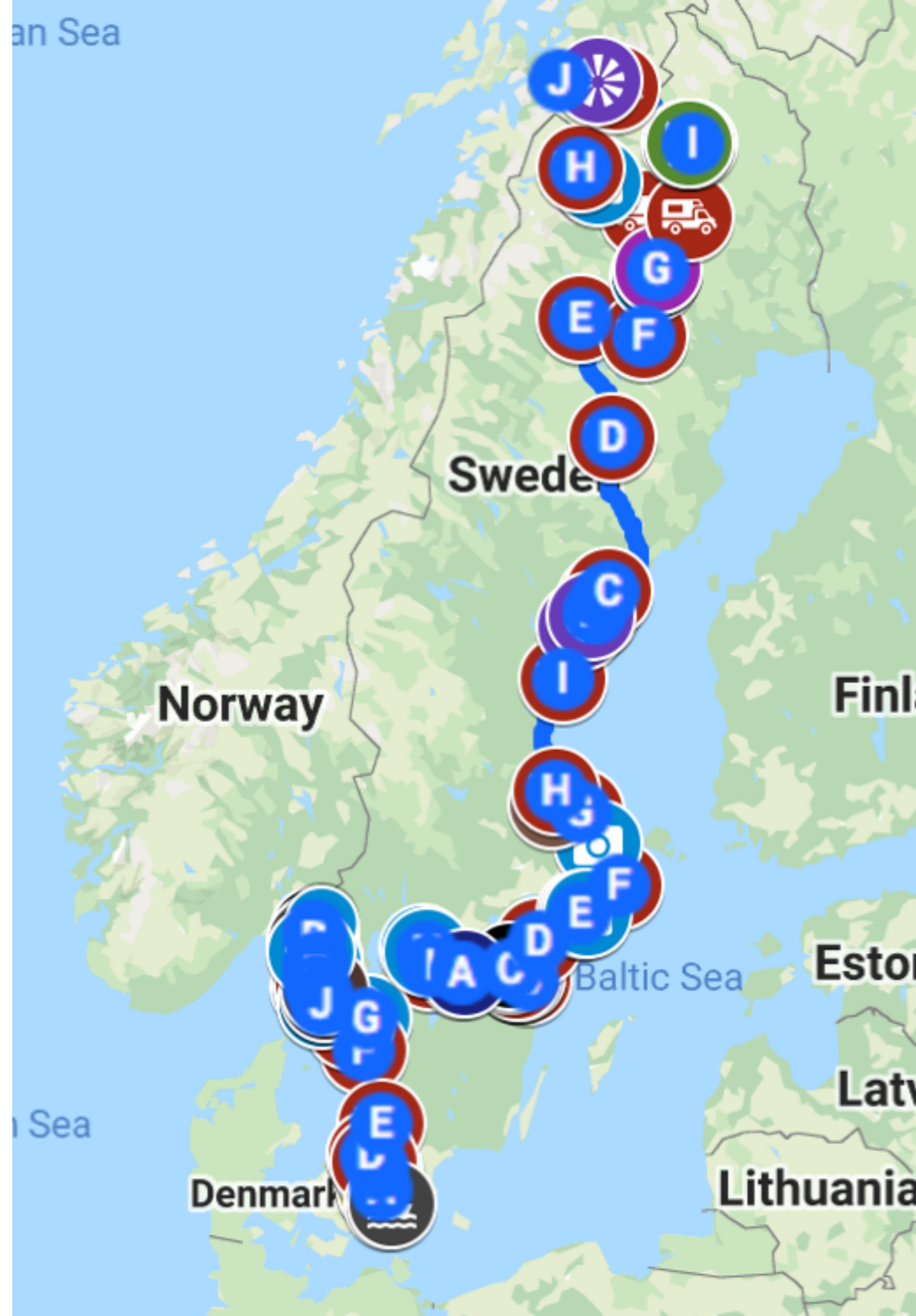
And so that concludes our four main routes through this European gem. A secret of sublime cultural secrets that just enliven your senses. As we headed south to Trelleborg for our ferry out of the country, we can look back with so much fondness at this wonderfully long country.

With the detail of our four major routes in June 2019, we hope we have whetted your appetite just a little.

Those delectable sights, sounds and senses to experience, perhaps it's left you wanting more. Well more there is.

Here is our interactive map, which gives you the specific roads we travelled, the places we stopped with images and most importantly the coordinates for each of those overnight stays.

Just click [here](#) for immediate access to your own copy of the map and allow the excitement of a Scandinavian adventure begin.





8 SWEDEN PRACTICALITIES

Sweden is one of those countries, unlike [Morocco](#) or [Norway](#) that is blessed by very few pre-planning requirements. Apart from deciding where you will cross into the country, there is nothing else to co-ordinate before you leave for home. Now you can just work on understanding the practicalities.

This chapter is devoted to all things Sweden; from what it's like driving, camping, budgets and generally how to make this Scandinavian beauty your home for a while.

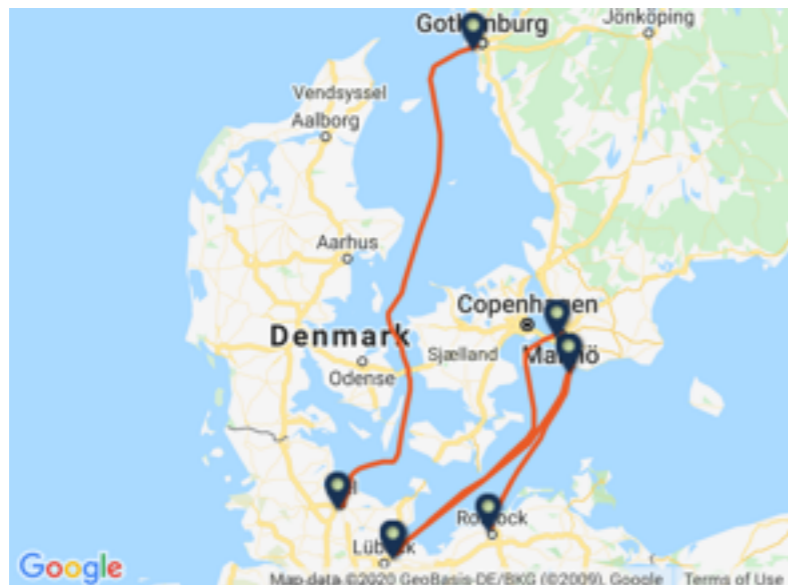
Arriving

Sweden is one of the most easily accessible Scandinavian countries with ferries, roads and flights getting you access to this delightful landscape. With ferries coming from a number of destinations, such as Germany, Finland, Estonia, Russia, and Poland, there are over 549 ferries arriving here per week across 31 routes. Add to this the central hubs of Stockholm and Gothenburg for flights - getting here is not a problem. Although for our purposes this section is centred around entry into Sweden through four main routes; via ferry from Germany, over the Denmark bridges, through Norway or via Finland. So depending on where your starting point is, you have options.

1. Ferry from Germany

There are four ports from which you can sail from Germany offering up to 64 sailing per week. **Sassnitz**, **Rostock**, **Kiel** and **Travemünde** arriving in Trelleborg, Gothenburg and Malmö. So there's plenty of options if you want to avoid Denmark. Here's a link to more info from

[Direct Ferries](#).

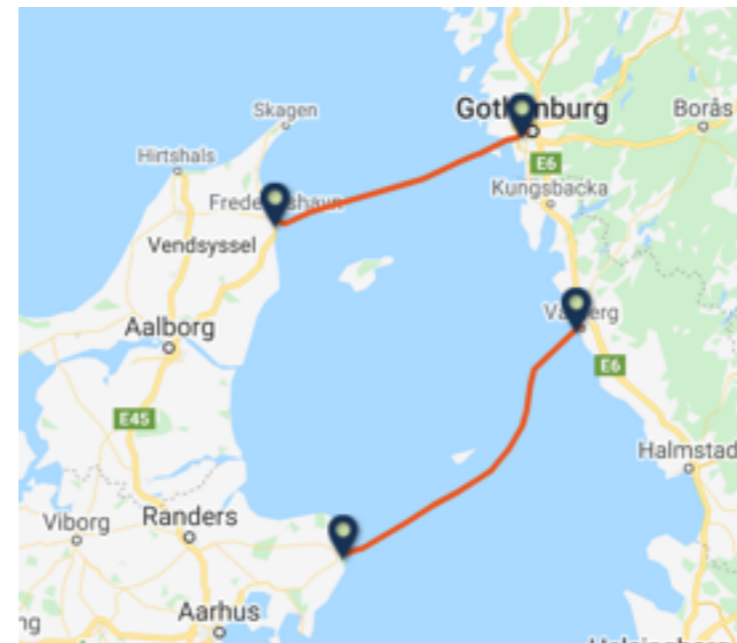


We left Sweden by sailing from the southern port of **Trelleborg** to **Sassnitz** in Northern Germany. We were so impressed with the efficiency of the booking, embarkation and the boat itself and it cost a mere €120 one way. Bear in mind that we booked just 48 hours ahead so we paid a premium for our crossing. Friends who booked further ahead got it for €80. So advanced booking is recommended.

2. Via Denmark; road or ferry

If **Denmark** is on your list, and quite honestly why not - it's a wonderful country, then you can reach Sweden either by road or ferry.

If a ferry is your desired option then there are 48 weekly sailings from Denmark from either **Frederikshavn** in the north, **Grenaa** or **Halmstad**. All three routes cut out the bridge and a fair bit of the southern end of Sweden. This is particularly useful if you want to experience the west coast, perhaps en route to Norway. So it all depends what your travel itinerary and timescales are. Here's a link to [Direct Ferries](#) information page.



If you prefer Denmark's **Storebælt** and **Øresund** bridges then you will pay an expensive set of toll fees, although they are a real experience.

The **Storebælt** is an 11 mile (18km) structure that is payable at a Toll Booth. You can pay by cash, Euros, Krone or credit card. Prices are based on



the length and height of your vehicle. Based on 2019 prices for a camper/motorhome over 6m long and max 3.5T it cost €52; €85 if you are under 10m and over 3.5T. Make sure you take your registration paperwork in case of any dispute about charges based on your length. (Remember you must include any trailers or bicycle racks in your total length).

The **Øresund** is a road and rail route into Sweden and is just under 10 miles (16km) long including the tunnel. It's quite a sight. If you plan on returning from Norway/Sweden this way, then it is worth buying a **Bropass**. It's an annual pass that costs around £37 to register, although it will save you 50% on each of your crossings. Given the fee to cross is €124 (summer price – out of season is slightly cheaper) then if you come back this way, the Bropass is valuable. If you are unsure about your route home, then we recommend paying the one-way fee. You can buy ON-LINE at least one hour before you cross, saving 10% which is valid for 30 days. [Here's the link.](#)

3. Crossing the border from Norway

Norway and Sweden are both signatories of the Schengen Agreement and so have no border controls. However, with Norway not being part of the EU, two of the road crossings Orje/Han and Svinesund have Customs' stations operated by both Sweden and Norway. An additional 30 roads cross the border but have no Customs' stations. We crossed from Sweden into Norway from the north on E6 between Narvik and Kiruna.

4. Entry via Finland

There four crossings running along the Finland/Sweden border although the main ones are **Karesuvanto** in the north and **Haparanda** in the west along the shores of the Gulf of Bothnia.



All things driving related

Driving around Sweden is, on the whole a dream. Whilst the country is twice the size of UK it only has a population the size of London. So that will give you some idea about the volume of traffic. In fact Sweden has some of the most deserted roads we've ever seen.

Let's start off with **driving rules** and things to take with you.

- * As with any trip to EU you must drive on the right and so **headlamp beam deflectors** will be required.
- * **Lights:** It is compulsory for all motor vehicles to use dipped headlights during the *daytime*, all year round and on all roads.

- * Drink driving is not tolerated under any circumstances.
- * **Warning Triangle:** It is compulsory for foreign registered vehicles to carry warning triangles if so required in the country of registration.
- * You must carry your country of origin **Driving License** as normal although given Brexit, you may need an **International Driving License** depending on deal or no deal. We will update this section when it is clearer. We have bought both IDPs to be on the safe side so that we are covered either way.
- * You may need a Green Card for entry into Scandinavia depending on the outcome of Brexit negotiations. Please refer to your

insurance company for any trip to EU and inclusion of your trip to Sweden or any region of Scandinavia.

- * Make sure you carry your **V5** and your insurance documents.
- * Have a **GB sticker** on the back of your van as we would normally have for trips to EU.
- * **Dial 112** for an emergency situation or accident and of course contact your EU Breakdown cover supplier where necessary.

Winter Driving (as per RAC website)

Whilst late spring and summer are the best times to experience Sweden, in our opinion, you may have desires to experience your three months in autumn or winter. From October the weather, especially in the north becomes unpredictable, so winter tyres or snow socks are sensible precautions.

Further more, from **1st December to 31st March** all vehicles (also trailers and vehicles >3.5t total weight) must use winter tyres marked M+S (with or without spikes) when there are winter road conditions - that is, the road is covered with ice or snow, or the road is wet and the temperature is around or below 0°C.

It is permitted to fit and use snow chains on any kind of vehicle in Sweden if the weather or road conditions suddenly change.

It is compulsory for drivers to have some antifreeze in the vehicle, windscreen fluid and a shovel to clear the snow. It is recommended to also have a tow rope, some jump leads and a reflective jacket.

Speed limits

There are speed limits on all roads. They are no longer based on the category of road, but on the quality and safety of the actual road itself. Speed limits may consequently vary along the same road. Road signs on both sides indicate when the speed limit will change. Reminding road signs will appear at frequent intervals.

Motorcycle, private car, campervan (< 3.5t)

- * Built-up areas: 30, 40, 50, 60 or 70km/h.
- * Outside built-up areas: 70, 80, 90 or 100km/h.
- * If in doubt, or if no speed limits are indicated, drivers are advised to keep to 70km/h until a speed limit sign turns up.
- * Motorways: 90, 100, 110 or 120km/h.

The police are authorised to impose and collect on-the-spot fines for minor traffic offences. Fines are generally paid at a bank, normally within 2-3 weeks. Non-residents may be asked to pay cash to the policeman (if so, a receipt will be issued. Credit cards are not accepted). There are often a lot of speed cameras, especially heading up on the east coast, so do beware. They are also signposted, although there are so many that they are easily missed.

Motorways.

Six of the seven motorways (**Motorväg** in Swedish) are all in the south, linking the main cities and conurbations - there is just one, the E4 that travels up the east coast to just north of Skellefteå.

We didn't travel on many motorways although the few we did were all excellent quality and had regular rest areas called **Rastplats**.

There are around 350 places to rest on Sweden's motorway network and major trunk roads. Most importantly some of them allow you to empty your toilet cassette. Look for the **Latrine Emptying** icon. We found this website really helpful, which lists the country's Rastplats, whether they allow toilet emptying and general traffic conditions. [Trafikverket](#). Please note that they do not allow overnight camping.

Bear in mind that Sweden's motorway network does not fit our experience from the UK; three lanes of wall to wall traffic. They are often only dual carriageways at best and generally pretty quiet except around the cities.

Toll Fees and Congestion Charges

Unlike its Norwegian cousin, you'll be pleased to hear that Sweden has relatively few tolls and there are no motorway charges.

Gothenburg and Stockholm both have **Congestion Charges** during specific hours of the week, payable by Vehicle Registration Recognition. Prices will vary according to the time and your vehicle. Weekends and Bank Holidays are *always* free. Although these roads can always be avoided by using the ring roads.

There are also two bridges that have toll fees (see our map across);

Motala in central south at the Göta Canal and **Sundsvall** on E4 heading north as indicated on this map.

We managed to avoid both these tolls very easily. That said as tolls go, they are very cheap.

Motala is around 5SEK (.50c) and Sundsvall is 9SEK (1€) *correct at the time of writing*.

Non-Motorway Roads

Generally speaking the roads in the **south** are terrific and we have no memories of anything tricky for our motorhome whatsoever. The further north we travelled, things weren't quite so rosy.

With such long winters and so much snow, the roads north of Gävle are a bit more unpredictable if, like us you enjoy going off-piste. Most particularly as we headed up Sweden's middle, road repairs were rife. Now repairs might not scare you in principle, although many of these forest roads as you head towards Arjeplog and the Arctic Circle are, what can we say? Long!



So if you get caught on an unsealed road, then you have to double your journey time. You will not be able to go above 15 mph if you are lucky. And often there is no alternative route that doesn't take you around the wrekin! There are rarely any signs that indicate how long the road repairs are likely to be; our longest was over 30km. It was a tough old day! Although they are few and far between so don't let it put you off going north - just be mindful of their presence.

Watch out for unsealed roads - they can add another hour or two to your journey!

Roads and wildlife

One last comment to make here about roads in the north of Sweden is being mindful of wildlife. You know how it is in UK when we are warned about deer!

Well Sweden's road hazards as you head north of Stockholm are bears, moose and reindeer. In truth the first two are more unlikely as they are both shy and not likely to cross your path. Although reindeer I would be surprised if you don't see at least a handful of families on your road-trip. Particularly watch out if you are driving at night.

Watch out for reindeer as their movement is often erratic and they will weave across your path.



Road Sign Language

Road signs use standard international symbols and sometimes include Swedish phrases. So hopefully this list from ***Tripsavvy*** might help and I dare you not to have a child-like giggle at some!

Entrance:	Infart
Exit:	Utfart
Motorway exit:	Avfart
Highway entrance:	Påfart
Speed:	Fart
Reduce speed:	Sänk farten
Speed bumps:	Farthinder (love this one!)
Mind the speed limits:	Tänk på hastigheten
Road construction area:	Vägarbetsområde
Unpaved road:	Grusväg
Private road:	Enskild väg / Privat väg
Road closed:	Vägen avstängd
Closed:	Stängd / Stängt

Diesel and LPG

Sweden is a game of two halves when it comes to fuel. Naturally, in the south, where there is the greatest concentration of urbanisations, you can expect to find plenty of stations.

Bizarrely, we found the prices more expensive in the south and, as we headed east towards Stockholm, it was cheaper. In June 2019 prices ranged from 16.30SEK around Malmö to 15.39SEK in Sundsvall. Most garages also had water filling facilities and latrines for your toilet.



In the north, buy petrol when you see a station even if you don't need it. It may be many miles before the next station.





In terms of LPG this is called **Gasol** and stations are usually found in industrial estates. So arm yourself with your [LPG.eu](https://lpg.eu) app and its map of GASOL stations.

As you will see by clicking the link above, there are some stations, although you will need to plan your filling carefully especially the further north you go. It's certainly not as challenging as Denmark although you will need to aim for Sundsvall for a fill up before you head north.

Costs will be around 11-13SEK per litre. We found that there was always a man to fill up our tank for us rather than self-serve.

If you are heading north fill up at Sundsvall as stations are few and far between from this point up.

Ferries

As we mentioned earlier, on Sweden's west coast, the ferries interlinking the small islands and fjords are free. They run regularly and take between 5 and 30 minutes. They are generally low-loader style ferries and simply require a *drive-on and drive-off* style. They are totally fabulous. Well done Sweden.





All Things Camping

Sweden is one country above all the others we have visited in the last five years that embraces motorhomes; locals and foreign visitors. They have around 1200 campsites although it is their openness to wild camping that is so refreshing.

They take their camping so seriously that there is a body called the [Swedish Camping Association](#) that has been created to “*Make Sweden Europe’s best camping destination.*” And in our opinion they are definitely succeeding on that score.

Campsites

We didn’t stay at many sites during our five weeks touring. In fact I can count just two. One in Swedish Lapland and one in Stockholm so we could safely visit the city. They were both more than

adequate as campsites go and at each one we were able to catch up on our washing and give our batteries a boost. They cost us 345SEK per night (£30) including EHU. The washing machine cost 100SEK (£8.75) for a three hour slot. The typical routine is that you book a slot and you can do as many washes and tumble dries as you like during this period. Although be warned the cycles can take a while so don’t expect to get more than two loads completed in the time. Some charge for this service and others it is free.

Check out [this site](#) for more campsite information. If campsites are your preferred style of ‘home’, for more information and reviews, check out [Search for Sites](#).

Wild Camping and Aire overnighters

Camping in Sweden is effortless whether you like wild camping or the security of an aire or campsite.

If you enjoy the in-between version of an aire – Sweden call them **Campingplats**, then there are lots of these too – especially in the south and around the Göta Canal. They all have full facilities and idyllic locations. Be aware though that many of them are payable by **Swish**, which is a Sweden specific mobile payment system. Generally for us foreigners, there is a warden who will come around to collect your money. This is the one time that having cash will be important. Expect to pay around 200SEK (£17.50)pn with EHU.

We are wild camping lovers and Sweden is bar far the best country we have visited that offers effortless overnight parking. And after the joys of **Greece**, that really is saying something. Whether it is parking up on a sandy beach (yes, right on the sand is permitted and safe), alongside rivers and lakes ideal for swimming or beside authentic fishing villages in the middle of no-where; Sweden offers it all. Just be mindful that in the summer mosquitos come out to play and with so much water it can be a bother. We had one particularly bad night, although otherwise it wasn't as bad as we expected.

As with most countries, wild camping in National Parks is prohibited.

In terms of emptying and filling, this is simple too. With free services for motorhomes dotted everywhere, dry toilets that allow you to eek out your own facilities, and garages where you can also fill up with water, it really is so easy. We used **Park4Night** for a majority of our overnights, together with Google Earth to find our own quiet spots. I have never felt so safe as in Sweden (bar one incident) and we really did end up in some remote spots.

Sweden has a **freedom to roam policy**. So if you are coming with a tent or camper, then this is camping heaven. You are allowed, by law to camp, walk, pick berries and kayak in the wilderness. In fact you

can stay anywhere as long as it is not in a private garden or close to residential dwellings. Respect those guidelines and you'll not have a problem. Check out our blog on **[10 Tips for Camping in Sweden](#)**.





Cost of Living

In Norway's eBook, the *Cost of Living* section made for essential reading given its reputation for expense. Sweden is certainly cheaper although by UK standards it is still on the pricey scale. Whilst Norway is definitely top end Waitrose, for Sweden think Marks and Spencer or Carrefour in Europe. At the end of this section we have summarised our specific spending to help you although in essence;

- **Food bills** for our 40 day stay was £661.72, which is a weekly average of £132, which is on a par with UK, based on 2020 prices.
- **Diesel** averaged around 13-16SEK (£1.14 per litre)
- **Entrance Fees and Attractions.** Unless you go to Stockholm which has 53 museums, then Sweden is mostly about the landscape where you will pay nothing. Although our one attraction, if you can call it that was the Ájtte museum in Jokkmokk which cost

me 90 SEK (£7.50). In stark comparison, the museum at Tanumshede Rock Carvings on the west coast was free to enter, albeit on a much smaller scale.

Shopping

Having experienced Denmark's cost of living hike, we felt ready for Sweden. It was certainly a good test-bed for higher prices.

Given that our ultimate destination was Norway, we had our 'end of the world' stock piled garage that we dipped into a couple of times. Although our shopping experience in Sweden definitely caused a sharp intake of breath from time to time. Although it was a great opportunity to try some of their delicacies such as;

- Reindeer
- Pickled herring
- Meatballs with mash potatoes and lingonberry jam,



- Gravlax
- Coffee cheese (a Sami dish)
- and of course savouring their very own **Fika** - tea/coffee and cake.

Sweden has a range of supermarkets although ICA and Lidl are the main two we shopped in. Lidl is significantly cheaper, relatively speaking.

The biggest thing to know is that Sweden has a **strict alcohol policy**. After a heritage of alcoholism, today's Sweden is a very difficult culture when it comes to drinking. You are not allowed to consume alcohol outside and you can only buy alcohol over 3% from **Systembolaget** which is a Government run store, allowing consumption to be monitored. Some low % beers and ciders can be bought from supermarkets or garages.

Systembolaget has strict opening hours, Monday-Friday, 10-6pm and Saturday 10-1pm, so don't get caught short.

If you talk to a Swede about their relationship with alcohol, it will create an interesting debate. For many they are ambivalent and recognise the need for controls. You will rarely find a Swede drinking during the week, although they will absolutely make up for it at the weekend. Systembolagets are always busy on a Friday afternoon in readiness for the weekend's drinking.



DIY Emergencies

Whilst we hope it doesn't happen, life on the road can mean technical issues. Although don't be alarmed if this happens in Scandinavia as you have **Biltema**. We needed them a couple of times whilst in Sweden and they sell almost everything and they speak excellent English, which helps when you have a technical requirement!



Our Sweden Actuals

Spending	Price in £	Comments
Food	661.72	This was inclusive of alcohol that we purchased for our Norway trip.
Diesel	404.72	
LPG	27.83	
Campsites/Aires	143.77	This is based on 6 nights over five weeks.
Tolls	Nil	We avoided the tolls and congestion charges
Ferries	Nil	The ferries on the west coast are free. Stockholm ferries will be chargeable.
Eating out	89.74	
Laundry	8.23	One of our laundry sessions was included in the campsite fee.
Total spend	1335.77	This equates to £33.39 per day all inclusive, which we thought was great.

Currency

A quick note on currency before we move on. Sweden, although part of the EU has its own currency and not the Euro. So use a currency conversion app like [Xe](#) to work out your exchange rate. At the time of writing November 2020 the exchange rate was;

Euro Exchange

1 SEK = 0.09c

Sterling Exchange

1 SEK = 0.08p

Sweden is a mostly cashless society. So don't take out huge amounts of their local currency, Krona. Even the smallest amounts we generally paid by card using our pre-loaded Caxton card - others are available. Also Sweden will not accept Euros unless in the tourist hot spots.

The only places where cash was required were;

- Some aires where we couldn't pay by Swish; generally our overnight fee was collected by a warden.
- Coins required for washing machines or tokens.
- Some markets in the north may only accept cash.
- Some smaller stores or snack bars may accept cash if you want something small and cheap.

Our advice would be to take 1000SEK which is around £100 in notes either from a local ATM or brought with you.

When to visit Sweden

This is an easy one for us to answer, unless you are a hardy adventurer with a winter rig. For sure spring and summer are perfect times for Sweden, barring of course the local summer crowds around the west coast and the southern lake network and cities. Of course the midges do tend to take their holidays around August too, although they weren't as bad as we expected or as we have experienced elsewhere.

May to September are great months, especially the shoulder seasons when the crowds will be less obvious. In the north, you might find that May still has a fair bit of snow around so exercise caution. Even at the end of June, we had snow in Abisko,

Past September the weather gets a bit more unpredictable and the days shorter. So more planning may be needed in terms of winter tyres and LPG for heating; so just give all this some thought as you map out your itinerary.

For us our goal was to head to Sweden over the course of mid-summer so that we could experience the Midnight Sun. This was a serious bucket list for me and drove us north, possibly a bit quicker than we would have liked, if we're honest.

Midnight Sun

Before we move on, a little word about the Midnight Sun. If you decide to head to Scandinavia in the spring, then as you travel north, you will begin to notice a change in the light. It is so different to the UK, however far north you go. For a true experience then you must head towards the Arctic Circle. The most southerly point that you will experience this natural phenomenon is at Arjeplog.

Although as we travelled further north each night we had a new experience as we adjusted to just a few hours of dark. The colour of the skies at 2.00am were just staggering and worth waking up for.

To be outside at 11.30pm with a pink duskiness and hearing the natural world still vibrating energetically as if it were midday is just an incredible experience. The night of mid-summer was a precious memory and definitely worth staying up for. 24 hours of sunlight, the sun just flirting with the horizon was just fabulous.



Midnight Sun Top Tips

The sun that never sleeps - wow it really does take some getting used to for us southern sorts. Although you do adjust especially your sleep patterns. Here are some tips to help you get used to 24 hours of daylight.

- * Shut **all** the curtains and blackout blinds.
- * Take eye masks if you are really sensitive to light and struggle sleeping at the best of times.

- * Despite the lightness, still go to bed at the same time and keep up with your normal patterns otherwise it could be more difficult to fall



asleep.

- * Whilst the light might tempt you to travel further and longer, we recommend not to. The straight roads of the northern territories are tiring at the best of times, so keeping to regular stopping times felt important to us.
- * Get to Arjeplog for your first taster of the never sinking sun especially on 20th/21st June.
- * The Midnight Sun around the Arctic Circle will reward you with 30 glorious days of 24hrs daylight. As you move further north then you will have a Midnight Sun window from around 27 May to July 18.

For more information check out [Visit Sweden.](#)

What to pack

Summertime in Scandinavia is not the archetypal seasonal holiday destination. Forget beach-towels, swimwear and flipflops. Now I'm not saying don't pack them, although don't expect these to be your daily wear.

Instead think layers!

The weather can vary from mid 20's to the heady lows of 5° with snow up in the north. Whilst there can be some awesome weather, if you think Scotland then you'll be on the right lines.

Pack good, strong walking boots.

Pack waterproofs and windproof attire for hiking.

Grab your camera, binoculars and your travel journal.

Rucksack or three.

Bicycles (such great cycling especially in the south)

Mosquito repellent

Communicating

Data and Telephone Connectivity

We had no connectivity issues whatsoever whilst in Sweden, even up at the northern corners. How things will change for those from UK post Brexit with the bilateral roaming agreements we will have to wait and see. We will update this section when we know what has been negotiated.

Speaking their tongue - Getting by in Swedish

English	Swedish
Hello	Hej hej
Goodbye	Hej då
Thank you/please	Tack
Can I have	Kan jag på
Is it possible?	Är det möjligt
Do you speak English?	Pratar du engelska?
Yes and no	Ja och nej
Can I pay?	Kan jag betala
Can I stay?	Kan jag stanna
One night please	En natt tack



Wildlife

Sweden's wildlife is iconic and in our opinion marginally better than Norway, which was a complete surprise. You will without doubt see plenty of reindeer both alone and in herds as you travel north from Sundsvall. As the summer progresses the herds flock south from their northern winter retreats. In spring and summer you will often see families of reindeer with their young, which is incredible, especially as they will often sidle up alongside your vehicle.

Moose are harder to spot partly because they are so shy. So you will need keen eyes to spot these gorgeous creatures. We saw a few females although no male horns sadly.

Aside of that keep your eyes open for eagles, buzzards, ospreys, Arctic terns at the coast and a host of other bird of prey if you're a keen twitcher. Bears are known to roam the northern Sweden countryside although are not common to encounter. So enjoy this veritable feast of amazing wildlife.







9 CAMPING OPTIONS

Like Norway, camping in Sweden is easy and pretty much a flexible affair. They are streets ahead of some countries in terms of their welcoming of motorhomes. Mobilhus as they are known in Swedish are extremely common-place and so they have responded well to the travel culture.

Wild camping is generally prohibited and with some having services both paid and free, it's a fabulous country to tour.

Here's all of our overnight stops with co-ordinates to whet your appetite.



Wild camping at Fågelsundet, east coast

1. Rydebäck (55.966443, 12.758814)

Our first stop after paying for services at Landskrone Marina for 50SEK (55.861362 12.850853) we found a fabulous sheltered spot by the coast. It was a great family spot and had a shower and toilets.

2. Södra Kustvägen (56.090785, 12.645823)

In theory a fantastic spot for the night on a quiet residential road overlooking the channel between Sweden and Denmark. Although this is where we had our slow drive by - so we moved on.



3. Beach Parking Laholm (56.49139, 12.934955)

After being spooked, we found this idyllic spot, parking up right on the sand, which was compact and completely safe. Absolutely stunning.



4. Flohult Bad wild camping (57.521617 12.443029)

Heading inland towards a rendezvous with friends we found this spot beside the lake. Some nice walks although nothing close by - a great spot for respite from a lot of driving. 24hrs permitted stay.



5. Alingsås Aire (57.933671, 12.54049)

Friends brought us here to their home town and with its huge hardstanding aire right on the edge of town, it was a great spot and free.



6. Lyrestad Göta Canal (58.803374, 14.056396)

So many great little aires along the canal with walks and canal side pitches. Many with showers and services. This cost 225SEK about £18 inc EHU. Mini golf, canal walks and showers for a 100SEK deposit.



7. Tåtorp Aire Göta Canal (58.609546, 14.192817)

This was a stunning aire on the edge of the canal before it reached one of the large connecting lakes. There was a Swish payment here, although we have no facility to pay, so it was a free overnight.



8. Stegeborg Castle Parking (58.441256, 16.599945)

A super little car park beneath the castle. We couldn't work out the payment machine. There's a free ferry across the lake, a marina and a new aire being built across the road. Great spot.



9. Sibrobadet wild camping (58.950797, 16.885192)

An authorised parking area with gorgeous lakeside views. No people about to talk of, even on Sweden's National Day. There was a toilet here although no other services.



10. Klubbensborgs Camping (59.307134, 17.961666)

This was a quirky campsite about 3 miles west from Stockholm, within easy cycling distance. There are some incredible walks from the campsite including the Alfred Nobel mines! Just £18pn.



11. Fågelsundet wild camping (60.601406, 17.938275)

This is one of our top overnight stopovers, ever. You were allowed to stay here for 24hrs and the fishing community here was just such an intimate glimpse into Swedish culture. An absolute highlight and a privilege.



12. Galve Forest wild camping (60.831851, 17.271684)

We stumbled on this forest clearing along the coast I guess it was set aside for fishermen and campers. We know that because there was a toilet and free firewood and fire pit. Just brilliant and so very peaceful.



13. Galstrom Aire (62.163142 17.50049)

This was an incredible spot. With an authorised aire down on the water which was the basis for the mining village just one mile up the road. As a museum it's worth exploring and there are free services here too. Fantastic.



14. High Coast wild camping (62.965122, 18.254349)

As we headed up into the High Coast National Park, we found this little park up area by a lake where the locals come to swim. There was loads of evidence that moose come here, yet no sightings.



15. Köpmanholmens Forest wild camping (63.180322, 18.59383)

The last night before we headed inland and north, we found this great spot that had sheltered parking for shade or a beach aspect, which we chose. Great opportunity to chill on the beach or swim. Free toilet and changing rooms and bar-b-que available.



16. Vormforsen Rapids wild camping (64.868277, 18.721914)

A great spot for overnight on a quiet road alongside one of the largest rapids in Sweden. Whilst the noise sent us to sleep the kamikaze mosquitos that managed to infiltrate every nook and cranny made for an unpleasant couple of hours.



17. Forest Aire near Arctic Circle (65.952065, 19.518883)

This popular wild spot, spitting distance from the Arctic Circle, was super popular for campers and lorries. So not the quietest spot we had as it was a pretty busy arterial road. Still there were free services here. There was an aire at the Arctic Circle if you prefer for 140SEK - £12 approx.



17. Jokkmokk river wild camping (65.952065, 19.518883)

After crossing the Arctic Circle and exploring the Ájtte museum, we headed out of town to a river-fronted overnight spot. The forest road to it was a bit rough for a couple of miles although the riverside parking was great. There was a toilet and water available in the main car park, sheltered by trees if you wished.



18. Laponia National Park 1 (67.163755, 19.503796)

The Störa National Park is heavenly and such a stark contrast from the forests. Despite being a NP, there are so few people here, wild camping seems to be tolerated. We did ask permission and it was granted inadvertently with a smile, a wink and a nod. Our first night was in a forest close to an ancient church ruin.



19. Laponia National Park 2 (67.50562, 18.263038)

After a trip to the museum we continued down the one way in and one way out road for a great night alongside the lake with herds of reindeer around us. Plenty of walking too. Further along the road there are plenty of places to park up, so you have plenty of choice.



20. Gallivare Campsite - (67.128128, 20.674147)

A large campsite with riverside camping or hard standing pitches available. You could have EHU or not as you wished. You could book a 3hr washing slot which was included in the price of 200SEK - £17.50.



21. Ice Hotel Aire - (67.850861, 20.598927)

We had booked an overnight stay here, which is an official aire attached to the Ice Hotel. It was just across the road from the famous spot where you can visit the 365 Ice Hotel at any time. The aire was equipped with EHU and your fee included the showers and sauna inside the 'warm hotel' area. 350SEK - £30, so not cheap although worth every penny in my book.



22. Jukkasjärvi wild camping - (67.846972, 20.651713)

A peaceful spot close to the river. Perfect for a visit to Jukkasjärvi museum and church which are both well worth seeing. Also an alternative to staying at the Ice Hotel aire if their prices don't appeal.



23. Abisko Ski Lift wild camping - (68.361526, 18.769672)

This is a stunning National Park and although camping is generally not allowed, we had two nights here without any problems. And there were no No Camping signs around and nobody bothered us. A few others stayed up here too.



24. Blomsholm Stone Ship - (58.973864, 11.244897)

A great welcome back into Sweden after seven weeks in Norway. This Stone Ship burial site was a great spot to call home. No services here though and lots of coaches park up here during the day.



25. Kragenäs wild camping - (58.804548, 11.241152)

Although the translation on the noticeboard did not say 'No camping' we were told by locals that it was prohibited. So we moved on immediately. Although to watch the ospreys here was just magnificent. Also there is good cycling into Resö from here.



26. Kampersvik Harbour parking - (58.648805, 11.284897)

A lovely harbour location with a parking area just beneath houses. We asked permission to stay from the locals and they were very relaxed. There are no services or shops although you may be able to fill your water tank from the marina taps. Great swims and walks.



27. Hamburgsund Football parking - (58.551146, 11.274888)

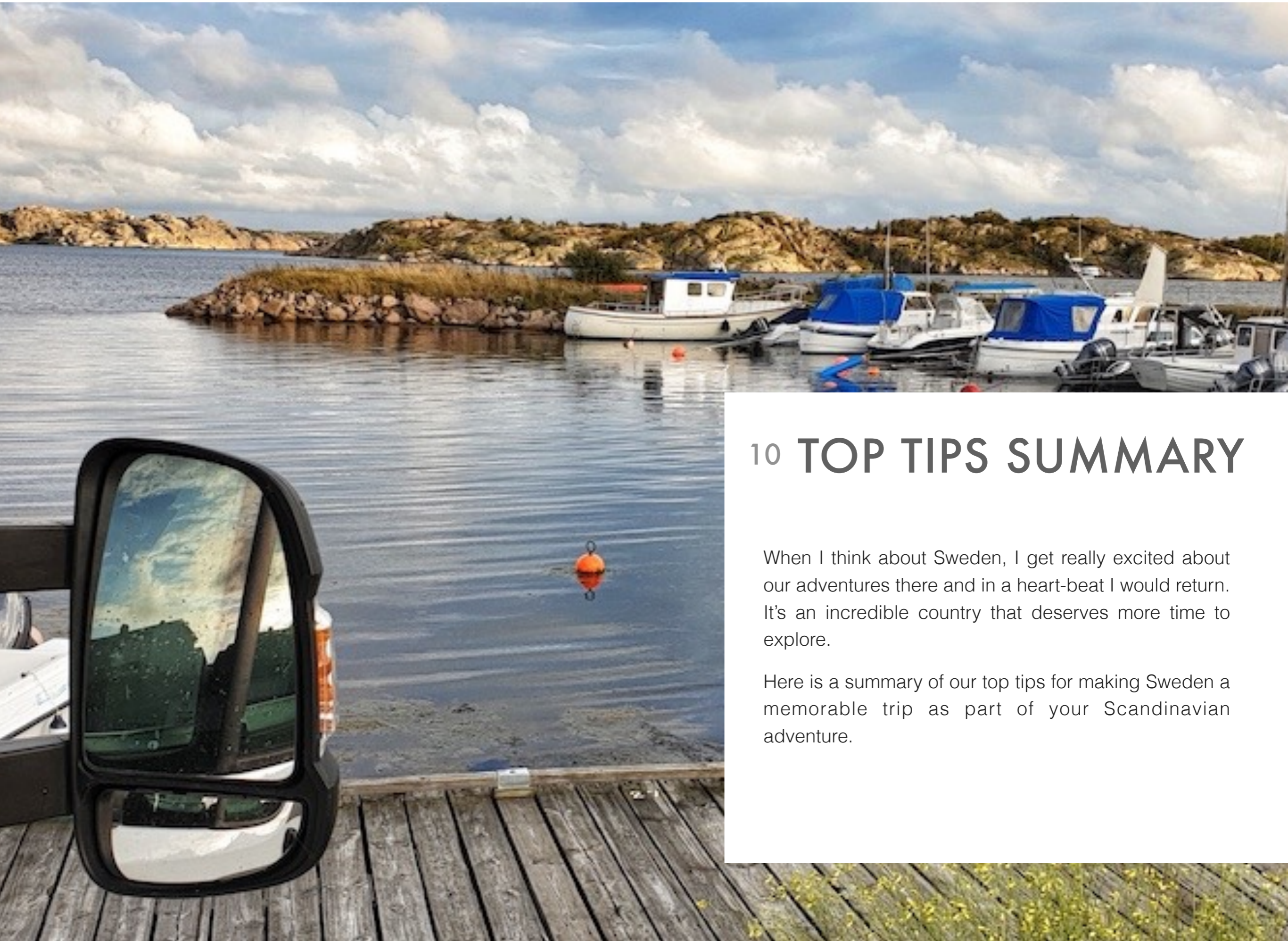
A small parking area with nine spaces for vehicles no longer than 7.5m. Supermarkets in town and a free ferry to the Hamburgö island which is worth cycling too. Not the quietest spot although fine for one night.



28. Hovenåset wild camping - (58.372624, 11.301657)

A fabulous freebie on the harbour, which out of season is fine to park up at. If busy then just a few metres beyond the gravel parking there is a small road taking you up to a grass parking area for the community beach. Great swimming opportunities here. No services.





10 TOP TIPS SUMMARY

When I think about Sweden, I get really excited about our adventures there and in a heart-beat I would return. It's an incredible country that deserves more time to explore.

Here is a summary of our top tips for making Sweden a memorable trip as part of your Scandinavian adventure.

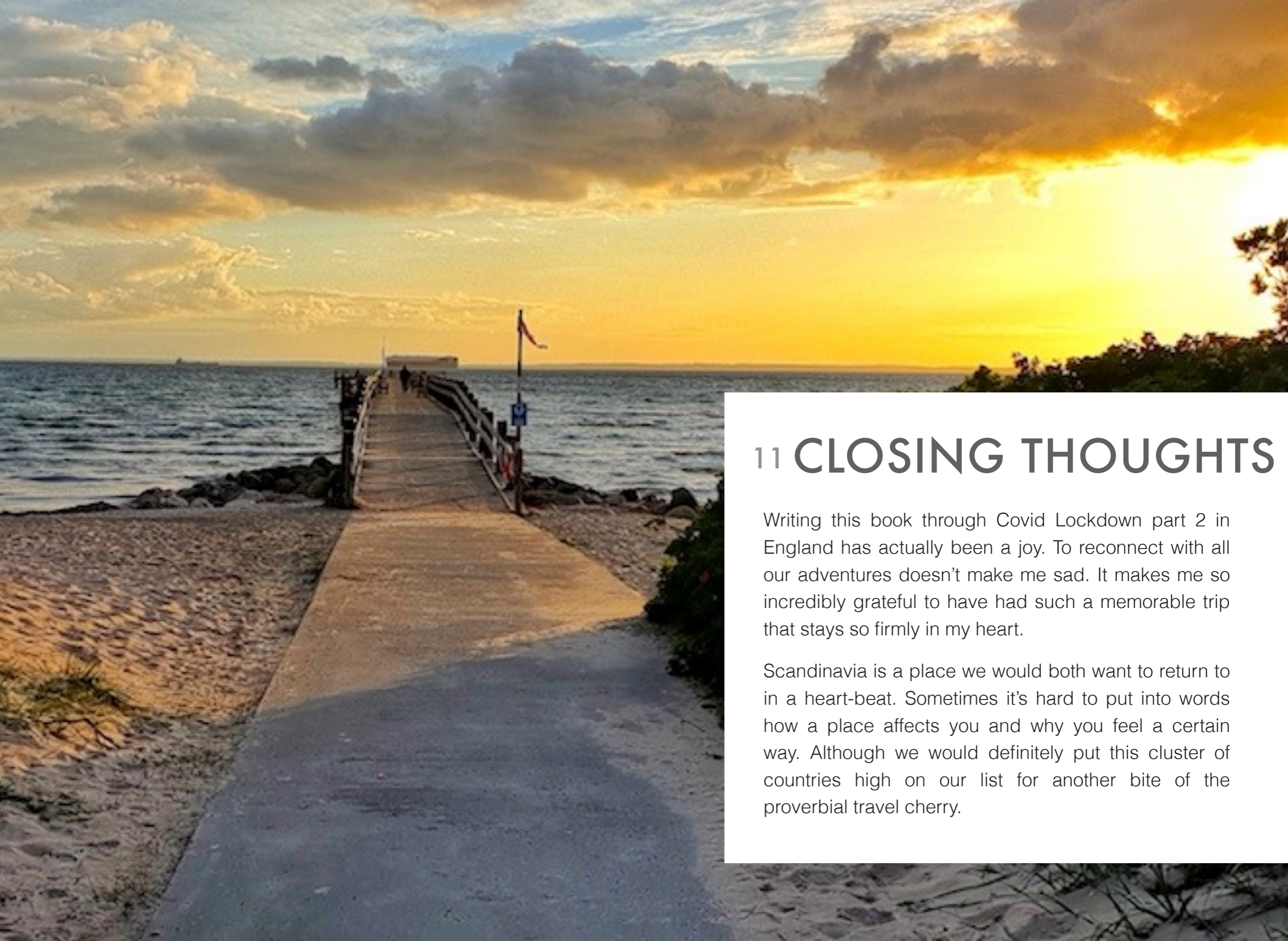


TOP TIPS SUMMARY FOR SWEDEN

1. **Do a big shop in Germany for alcohol** prior to your ferry or travelling through Denmark as it is uber expensive.
2. **Head over in the spring** to make the most of the flowers and the warming weather. Or enjoy the shoulder season of September as the locals head back to school and work.
3. There are plenty of campsites to stay at, although Sweden is at its best when you use their aires and wild camp responsibly.
4. If you head north, then prepare yourself for some unsealed roads that are being repaired and double your travel time.
5. Don't forget that the currency is **Swedish Krona**. Keep an app like [Xe.com](https://www.xe.com) to hand to help with the conversion.
6. Scandinavia is generally a cashless society. We do though suggest that you **take approximately 1000SEK** (£100) for incidentals.
7. Remember that **most ferries in Sweden are free of charge** especially on the west coast.
8. Most wild spots have **dunny-style toilet and often firewood with barbeques for you to use**. Please be responsible and leave the place as you found it.
9. **Motorways and some garages have latrines** where you can officially off-load your black waste.
10. **LPG** is found in industrial estates and not in Petrol Stations.

11. **Pack eye masks** if you struggle with sleeping in daylight, if you visit during June/July.
12. If you are heading over in Oct/Nov or March/April make sure you pack **snow socks** or **winter tyres/chains**.
13. **Drinking in public is not allowed.** Alcohol can only be purchased from Government run Systembolaget stores.
14. **Don't miss the Göta Canal.** It's not a common feature of a Sweden itinerary yet totally worth it.
15. **Eating out** is generally quite expensive - think London or capital city prices.
16. When travelling north, make sure you **fill up with diesel when you see a station** as the distances are vast and towns sporadic.
17. **Mosquitos** can be a problem around lakes and the coast, so make sure you have some repellent.
18. **Give way to cyclists under all circumstances.**
19. **In the north, watch out for unpredictable reindeer** in particular. They can be very erratic in their behaviour.
20. **Tolls** on the Sundsvall and Motala bridges and the congestion charges in Stockholm and Gothenburg **can be avoided** by using the ring roads. The tolls though are not expensive.
21. **Internet connectivity** is pretty good across the country.
22. **Safety is not an issue** in Sweden except for the general mindfulness around cities and tourist hotspots.
23. Experience a **Fika** whilst there and the **coffee cheese** is an experience.
24. If you want a night at the **Ice Hotel** or to book into the aire, we suggest that you book well in advance.
25. Do **support the local Sami trade** and involve yourself in their culture when you can.
26. Sweden has **English** as their second language so don't be scared about not being understood.
27. **Post-Brexit, for a visit to Sweden** you will only be allowed 90 days out of a rolling 180 days. So you will need to plan your journey carefully, if UK is your originating country.

Follow these guidelines and you'll not go wrong with a Sweden tour and we promise you'll not be disappointed by what it can offer you. Whether you take your own home or decide to hire, Sweden by motorhome is just a perfect way to explore.



11 CLOSING THOUGHTS

Writing this book through Covid Lockdown part 2 in England has actually been a joy. To reconnect with all our adventures doesn't make me sad. It makes me so incredibly grateful to have had such a memorable trip that stays so firmly in my heart.

Scandinavia is a place we would both want to return to in a heart-beat. Sometimes it's hard to put into words how a place affects you and why you feel a certain way. Although we would definitely put this cluster of countries high on our list for another bite of the proverbial travel cherry.

Sweden is like this for me. I just have a real connection with its culture and diverse landscape. And I'm sure my bucket list ticks have a huge influence to how I feel.

We are fast developing a list of places that we would love to return to for our 90 days. Yet there is still so much more to explore that I'm sure our tyres will take us to.

If you decide to put Sweden on your list - and why wouldn't you, you'll not be disappointed. Norway is incredible for sure, although we found Sweden to be so much more charming with a 3D experience, much like we found in Morocco. So please don't be blinded by Norway's draw without giving Sweden a chance.

We are so grateful for all that Scandinavia brought us and the memories that will never leave us. And as we bring this **trilogy** to a close, we leave you with a basket of incredible memories from our Summer in Scandinavia and hope that it inspires to you go or return very, very soon.

If you have any questions, why not drop us an email at themotoroamers@gmail.com or check out the website for all our blogs and vlogs <https://www.motoroaming.com>.

Karen, Myles and Scoobie



Click the book covers to access our Scandinavian trilogy.

