

EUROPE

# Sweden West Coast

## *Bohuslän Archipelago Adventure*

10 day trip • 2018 Itinerary



# West Coast Sweden: Bohuslän



## 10 day trip 8 days kayaking

Sweden is the third largest country in western Europe and is made up of over 220,000 islands. Southern Sweden is located between the Baltic Sea on the east and the Skagerrak Sea on the west. The Skagerrak is an offshoot of the North Sea, influenced by the warmer Gulf Stream and partially protected by Denmark and Norway.

The Swedish west coast north of Göteborg, with its thousands of islands and islets, is known as Bohuslän. A mecca for sea kayaking, the outer Skärgård (sheltering islands) provide many different routes through these craggy, granite archipelagos to explore. On this trip, we mix camping on wild and beautiful beaches with cosy lodge stays in quaint fishing villages. We'll explore a variety of nature reserves and sample tantalising local seafood. We finish our adventure in far north Bohuslän at the town of Stromstad. Join us on a smorgasbord of Swedish adventure!

## A Quick Itinerary

B = Breakfast • L = Lunch • D = Dinner

**Day 1:** Meet at Lysekil sjukhus bus station. Guesthouse accommodation. D

**Days 2-8:** Self contained sea kayak trip through Bohuslän. B • L • D

**Day 9:** Paddle to Stromstad. Guesthouse accommodation. B • L

**Day 10:** Trip concludes after breakfast. B

## Meeting Place and Time

We meet in front of the Lysekil sjukhus bus station. The time will be confirmed closer to trip departure but will be around 1.30pm. Please advise us if you're traveling by train as the train line does not connect directly with Lysekil. We suggest staying a pre-trip night in Göteborg to avoid the risk of being delayed and missing the meeting and transfer.

## How to Get There

The main airport in Göteborg is Landvetter airport, which is 25 km southeast of the city. Göteborg City Airport is about 15 km north of the city. There are several buses per hour from the airports to Nils Ericsson Central station. Buses run every hour from Goteborg to Lysekil on route 841 and the journey takes about two hours. The bus schedule is available at [www.vasttrafik.se](http://www.vasttrafik.se). Buy your ticket at Vasttrafik ticket office in Nils Ericsson bus terminal (contiguous with Goteborg central train station).

## Sea Kayaking

This trip is designed for people with previous paddling experience. You do not have to be an expert or know how to roll, however, you should have practiced a wet exit and assisted re-entry before the trip. This can easily be practiced in waist deep water at home with a friend's help or under tuition. We are always happy to discuss your experience and can often suggest how you might gain additional skills to prepare for the trip. It may also be possible to arrive at Lysekil a day early to do a refresher skills day (costs on enquiry). We require all participants to complete and return the kayak experience form shortly after booking.

We predominantly use single kayaks on this trip, but doubles can be requested if preferred. The degree of difficulty of the trip will depend on the weather we encounter. With many islands along our route, we do have the advantage of being able to choose an "outer" or "inner" path if we need protection from the weather. We may be on the water for five to six hours per day, including shore stops for lunch and regular breaks. It's important to realise that the group will kayak at the speed of the slowest members. All participants should feel confident in swimming.

The kayaks we use are stable, easy to paddle and control. They are designed as expedition boats and it's important to keep gear to a minimum as we carry all our food and equipment. Our guides are highly experienced sea kayakers. On Day 2 of the trip you will be given a thorough briefing on sea kayaking techniques with ample time to practice and familiarise yourself with your kayak.

As with most activities, the fitter you are, the more you will enjoy the paddling. It's a good idea to take some regular exercise like paddling, walking, jogging, cycling, aerobics or swimming ahead of the trip.

## Proposed Itinerary

The following itinerary should be seen as an approximate guide only. Our aim is to have a real Swedish adventure and a great time, rather than being governed by a rigid schedule. Our program may change to take advantage of opportunities as they arise, to suit local conditions and according to the preferences of the group. Please note that weather conditions, breakdowns and other factors can cause alterations and delays to our itinerary.

**Day 1:** Meet at Lysekil sjukhus bus station at 1.30pm (time will be confirmed closer to trip departure). Your guide will transfer you to the guesthouse accommodation. A trip briefing will be held at the guesthouse and the guide will distribute dry bags to use while kayaking. Extra luggage not needed while paddling will be transferred to our finish point in Stromstad. The group will enjoy a short tour of the area before dinner.

D / GUESTHOUSE ACCOMMODATION

**Day 2:** Immediately after breakfast the group will transfer to the nearby fjord for a safety briefing and a short practise session. The kayak adventure begins in the sheltered waters of the fjord with its protected bays and colourful houses. We paddle southwest to the mouth of the fjord and navigate through a maze of islands. Our first campsite will be on a picturesque granite island.

B • L • D / CAMPING

**Day 3:** Weather depending, we have a choice of routes through the inner waterways or in the granite islets off shore. We head towards the delightful fishing village of Smögen and our cosy guesthouse. Seaside boardwalks and painted fisherman's houses are a perfect setting for a tasty seafood dinner.

B • L • D / GUESTHOUSE/HOSTEL ACCOMMODATION

**Day 4:** Today we make our way up the narrow Sotekanalen by passing an exposed outer coast. Tidy summerhouses and small private marinas line the sides of a rocky channel situated beside a nature reserve. We'll look for our next campsite as we break out of the channel and enter the next cluster of islands.

B • L • D / CAMPING

**Day 5:** As we paddle north through the Fjällbacka archipelago, we enjoy clear aquamarine waters and a multitude of seabirds. Campsites along the coast are open with good views and great locations to stretch the legs.

B • L • D / CAMPING

**Day 6:** After a day exploring the archipelago, we arrive at Valön and treat ourselves with a stay at a delightful guesthouse (and a welcome shower).

B • L • D / GUESTHOUSE/HOSTEL ACCOMMODATION

**Day 7:** Paddling around hidden coves and among the granite outcrops, we'll discover some stunning white sandy beaches. Tonight we hope to reach the outer edge of the archipelago and enjoy the sunset looking out towards the Atlantic.

B • L • D / CAMPING

**Day 8:** Weather permitting, we meander through a final assortment of inner islands before reaching the Kosterhavet National Park. The first national marine park in Sweden, it borders the Norwegian marine park of Ytre Hvaler and is home to some 6000 marine species. The myriad of islets and islands are a kayakers paradise.

B • L • D / CAMPING

**Day 9:** Today we cruise through this amazing island maze, heading for our accommodation in Stromstad. We'll enjoy comfy beds and a well deserved shower at our hotel. Although dinner is not included tonight, we'll head out together and perhaps sample the delicious local seafood.

**B • L / GUESTHOUSE/HOSTEL ACCOMMODATION**

**Day 10:** After a gourmet breakfast, the trip concludes. The bus and train stations are within walking distance of the accommodation. Alternatively, you may choose to overnight in Stromstad.

**B • / END OF TRIP ARRANGEMENTS**

## End of Trip

Stromstad is conveniently located about midway between Goteborg and Oslo, about a three hour train journey to either city. Please note that accommodation on Day 10 is not included in the trip cost.

## Climate

Summer weather in Sweden can be variable. The months of June and September are cooler but often drier than July and August. Sometimes you'll be able to wear shorts and a t-shirt, at other times a rain jacket and pants will be required. Day temperatures can range from 10 to 20 degrees C, but the sea breeze can make the temperature seem cooler.

## Accommodation and Camping

Our guesthouses/hostels in Lysekil, Smögen, Valön and Stromstad will be simple and clean, providing twin-share bed and breakfast accommodation.

When camping, group shelter and communal cooking equipment will be provided. A camping kit comprising a high quality tent, Thermarest, plates and cutlery is provided for the trip.

**\*\*Please Note:** It is essential to bring your own sleeping bag as they are not available for hire.

## Trip Organisation

Our paddling days will start early to make the most of each day. It's a good idea to pack your dry-bag before breakfast, prepare your personal items for the day and take down your tent so that loading for departure can be organised.

For five nights we camp wild on beaches, which means that there are no organised facilities.

On arrival in camp you will be expected to unload your own boat and you and your partner will be responsible for your own tent site. The guides will appreciate your assistance with camp duties.



## Food & Water

While camping, your guides will prepare healthy and hearty meals.

Lunches will be picnic style, not sit down restaurant meals.

Guesthouse stays include breakfasts and while staying in coastal villages we'll be sure to sample the local seafood for dinner.

**We are happy to cater for vegetarians and for other special dietary requirements. Please let us know at the time of booking.**

## Expedition Staff

There will be one to two kayak guides depending on group numbers. The guide's role is to co-ordinate the expedition and ensure the safety of the group. They will answer questions and inform you of the objectives and progress of the trip. They will decide on safety matters and administer the medical kit. Should you have any inquiries during the trip, feel free to ask your guides.

## Conservation

It has always been our motto that "we take only photographs and leave only footprints". We are keenly aware of the ecology of the areas we visit and try to limit our impact on them. We ask that each person takes out everything they bring in including sweet wrappers, batteries, etc.

## Photography

A salt water environment can damage the delicate electronics in cameras. Therefore, you might consider bringing a waterproof camera or a small plastic waterproof case or dry-bag with a supply of silicon packs. Ensure you have sufficient memory storage and batteries as there is no opportunity to purchase batteries or access electricity during our island stay. It is wise to keep lenses to a minimum. One variable lens will reduce your load and the amount of your equipment that can be damaged. If you are buying a new camera, consider a waterproof one and get it well before departure so you can practice with it.

## Travel Arrangements

Should you voluntarily decide to alter your travel arrangements after commencement of your trip, Southern Sea Ventures is not responsible for any additional charges involved. Our staff will assist you if possible but you are responsible for organising these arrangements yourself. Delays may occur due to weather or transport difficulties and Southern Sea Ventures will do its best to rectify the situation and will appreciate your patience.

## Travel Insurance

It is necessary to take out a personal insurance policy to cover yourself against sickness, accident, loss of baggage, trip cancellation due to weather or other reasons, and in the unlikely event that you need emergency, evacuation by plane or helicopter due to illness or accident. Ensure you have read the policy thoroughly and are familiar with the claim process in case it becomes necessary to make an emergency claim. We will require proof of your insurance prior to departure.

## Passport

Make sure that you have a current passport and that the validity will extend to six months after the date of your return.

## Visas

At the time of writing, Sweden is a party to the Schengen Agreement. Citizens from Australia, Canada, NZ, UK, and USA are issued a 90-day tourist visa on arrival. Please check with your closest Swedish embassy for visa conditions if you are a different nationality.

## Excess Luggage

Any excess luggage that you do not take kayaking can be transferred from our start point at Lysekil to our finish point at Stromstad. You should bring your passport with you while kayaking.

## Security

Before leaving home, photocopy your passport, airline voucher and make a note of your credit card and ATM card numbers in case you lose or misplace them. Theft is a consideration in Sweden (like at home) so it is always a good idea not to leave things unattended. Do not carry large amounts of cash with you and always be aware of what you are carrying, especially personal valuables like cameras, jewellery and watches. Do not display valuable items or leave them lying around in such a way that might tempt a thief. It is a good idea to use a money belt or neck wallet.

## Money Matters

### **Your tour cost includes:**

- Bed and breakfast accommodation for four nights on a twin share basis.
- Expedition kayaks, paddles, life jackets and safety equipment.
- Camping group shelter and cooking equipment.
- High quality tents and sleeping mats.
- Watertight bags for your personal gear.
- Professional guides.
- All meals from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 10, excluding dinner on Day 9.

### **Your tour cost *does not* include:**

- Any flights.
- Sleeping bags (NOT available for hire).
- Dinner on Day 9.
- Travel insurance.
- Accommodation for the night of Day 10.
- Alcohol.
- Items of a personal nature such as postage and laundry.
- Transfers to Lysekil and from Stromstad.



## Money to Bring With You

Even though Sweden has been part of the EU since 1995, the currency is still the Swedish krona. There are ATM machines in the main centres and this is the most efficient way to obtain krona. Credit cards are accepted in larger stores or hotels but don't rely on being able to use one in the outer islands. Traveller's cheques and foreign cash can be changed at banks in the larger towns and cities.

During the trip you will need money for dinner on the last night, some bottled water, soft drinks, alcohol and for any shopping you intend to do. You should bring krona to pay for these extras.

## Tipping

Tipping may be expected by the local people for services such as baggage handling, taxis or in restaurants. Our guides do not expect tips.

## Medical Matters

Any passenger undertaking this trip is required to provide us with a medical questionnaire filled out completely and accurately.

Please advise us of any side effects of any medication you take and of any dietary requirements related to the medication. Be sure to let your guide know of any drugs to which you are allergic as well as noting this on your medical form

### Hygiene

Be conscious of hygiene when camping and wash hands regularly.

### Vaccinations

For entry into Sweden there are no statutory vaccinations at the time of writing. However you should check with your doctor or medical centre for current information and whether you require any boosters.

### Dental

Due to the remoteness of the trip, it is advisable to have a checkup before departure.

### Medical Supplies

On our trips into more isolated areas we carry a comprehensive medical kit. However, it is your responsibility to bring sufficient quantities of any specific medications you require. In addition we suggest that each passenger bring:

- Sun screen (water resistant variety at least SP15)
- Lip protectant
- Band-aid strips
- Insect repellent
- A mild anti-nausea drug if you are concerned about sea sickness
- A mild antiseptic soap/liquid hand wash

## Equipment & Clothing: What You Need to Bring

Carefully check through all essential items. Excess luggage not needed while kayaking can be left at Lysekil and collected at our finish point.

### Essential Items:

The following checklist is a guideline for your trip. Contact us if you have any questions.

- Waterproof rain jacket and pants for camp.
- Kayaking spray jacket or cag (in addition to your camp rain jacket).
- 2-3 t-shirts.
- One pair of shorts and swimming gear.
- One pair of lightweight hiking boots or running shoes.
- Socks.
- One pair of sport sandals (eg Teva or similar) or paddle booties.
- One pair of light-weight, quick drying, full length trousers.
- Lightweight long sleeved shirt is recommended in camp.
- Wool jumper or fleece jacket.
- One or two long sleeved thermal or polyester tops are recommended while paddling for sun protection or warmth in rainy conditions. Cotton is not very suitable for paddling as it gets stiff with salt and can irritate the skin.
- One pair of thermal long johns.
- A wide brimmed hat for protection from the sun is essential. Visors are inadequate. A hat with a stiff brim that will hold rigid in a breeze, e.g. straw hat with a strap to put under your chin is good. A scarf made from a light material like silk to protect your neck can be useful too.
- Sun-glasses with a cord to prevent them from falling into the water.
- Sleeping sheet.
- Lightweight and compact sleeping bag (not available to hire).
- Small towel (a chamois towel is ideal or a large hand towel).
- Minimal toiletries (a bio-degradable soap that will lather in salt water is very useful).
- A headlamp or small torch and batteries.
- One or two 1-litre water bottles—the type used by cyclists is fine and inexpensive.
- A small dry bag is good for holding things like sun screen, glasses, water bottle, etc. (try and avoid day packs with metal zips as they will corrode).

- A small dry bag is also useful to store a camera, wallet and your triple plastic wrapped passport.
- Lightweight cycling gloves can ease blistering if you are not used to paddling.
- Pillow case or very small pillow (e.g. airline pillow). It must fit into your dry bag. A pillow case can give you the flexibility to make for a comfortable sleep.

**Optional items:**

- Wetsuit. A wetsuit, neoprene shoes and a spray jacket can be hired if you do not have your own. Please let our office know if you require. Drysuits are not available for hire.
- Camera and film, with waterproof container if the camera is not waterproof.
- Book/cards/games.
- Lightweight clothesline.
- Binoculars (the bird watching is quite good).
- Talcum powder to prevent salt water rash.
- Power points require a plug with two round pins.

## Delays or Problems

In case of last minute delays or problems, contact Southern Sea Ventures in Australia on +61 2 8901 3287. Your guide's phone number will be noted on your final itinerary.

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