



Rural

LIFESTYLE

PRODUCT MANUAL 2022



× Estonia × Finland × Sweden × Latvia
Åland and South Coast Hälsingland

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Partners from four neighbouring countries on the shores of the Baltic Sea in Northern Europe have come together to develop authentic Rural Lifestyle products, to create an attractive tourism destination in Sweden (Söderhamn), Finland (Åland Islands and Lohja), Estonia and Latvia and to promote these to Asian and European visitors.

countryholidays.info

facebook.com/RuralLifestyleproject



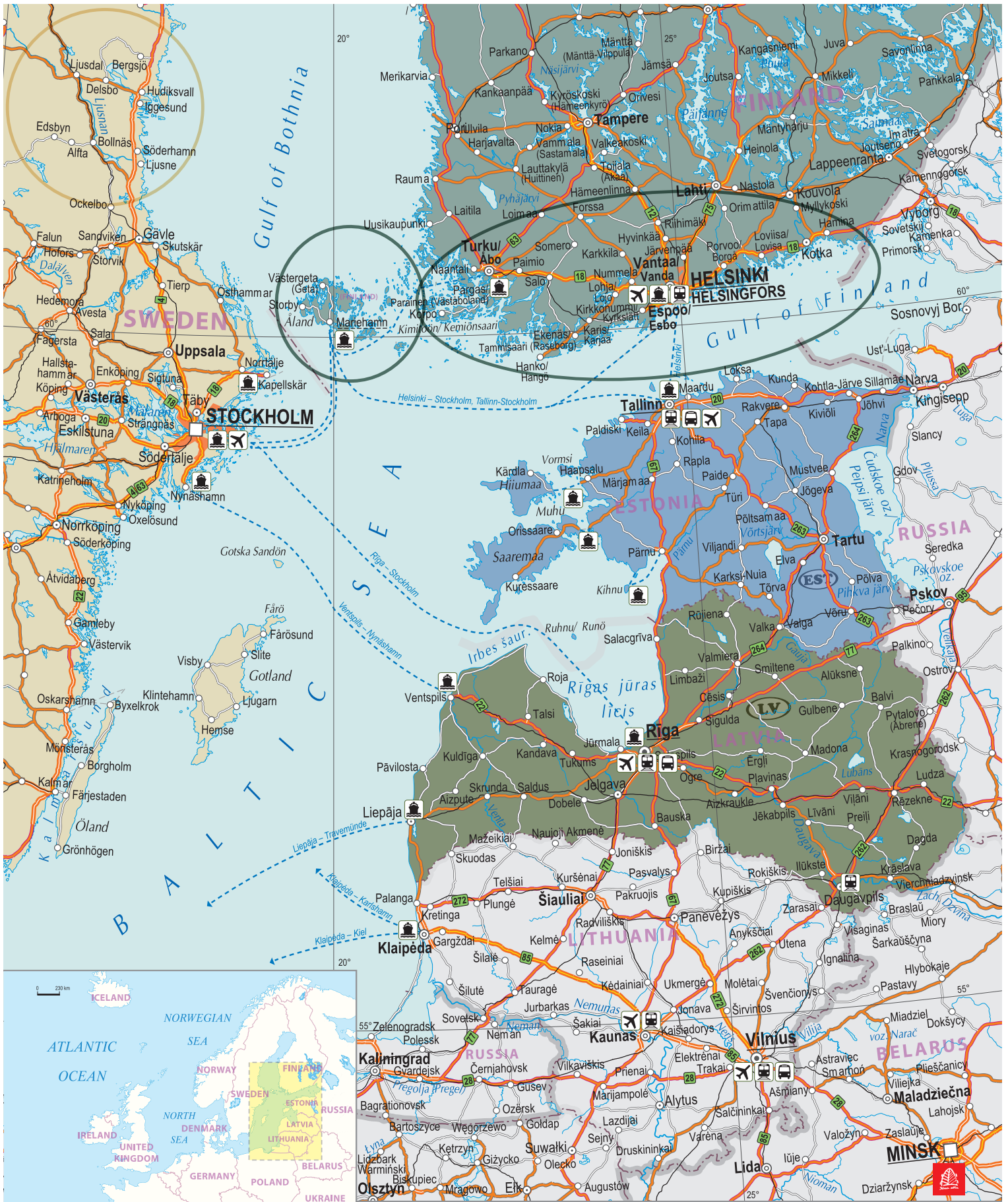
EUROPEAN UNION
European Regional Development Fund



Interreg
Central Baltic

The project "Creating attractive rural lifestyle destinations (Rural Lifestyle)" is partly funded by the European Union and the Central Baltic Programme 2014-2020 of the European Regional Development Fund.

This publication reflects the views of the author(s), and the leading institution of the Programme is not responsible for the possible use of the information contained herein.



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Introduction

**GO
RURAL**

This manual is aimed at helping travellers and tour operators discover rural destinations in **Finland, Sweden, Estonia** and **Latvia**.

These Rural Lifestyle tourism products give an insight into the lives of people living in the countryside through visits to destinations outside cities and with a strong and unique identity. In this manual, each destination has a brief description followed by the programmes that can be experienced in that destination.

Guests will experience life in country homesteads, farms, smallholdings and home-producers' businesses while meeting with the local people, watching or engaging in everyday life. The visiting programmes are very varied and include: set excursion programmes, visits with guest engagement in the daily routines of country life, or leisurely stays in an authentic environment in villages or islands.

Half day programmes offer brief rural experiences that can bring some diversity to existing tour operator itineraries for group and individual travel. Half day programmes can be adapted to the timings and geographical area covered by tour operators' existing tours and fitted in as additional elements without changing the basic tour itinerary.

Full day programmes and two-day programmes with overnight accommodation in country hotels or guest houses can be useful for groups and individual tourists interested in experiences outside cities. Each programme package consists of several services, usually programme visits, guide services, meals and accommodation.

All of these programmes can be linked with the traditional touristic routes and city experiences to bring more variety and attraction.

Programme descriptions are structured as follows:

1. The GENERAL INFORMATION presents the technical details regarding the programme's duration, distances, etc. to help readers understand whether and how the programme could be fitted into tour operators' itineraries.
2. The INTRODUCTION describes the highlights and unique experiences the programme offers and introduces the host family.
3. The PROGRAMME DESCRIBES all the activities in detail.

Travelling options between the countries are shown by air, ferry and bus. A list of rural tourism organisations that can help to arrange tours and services for group and individual customers is also provided.

countryholidays.info



DESTINATION AREA – FINLAND, SWEDEN, ESTONIA, LATVIA

Finland, Sweden, Estonia and Latvia are neighbouring countries in the North of Europe and Scandinavia, on the shores of the Baltic Sea. Visiting all four countries in one trip is very easy for the following reasons: relatively short travelling distances between and within the countries due to their small size, no border formalities between countries since Finland, Sweden, Estonia and Latvia are all in the EU, and they have a similar climate. Finland, Estonia and Latvia also use the same currency and are in the same time zone. The peoples of these countries feature many similarities in personality and way of life. However, each is proud of their unique identity which shows in language, arts and crafts, foods and traditions. Each of their capitals, features a UNESCO World Heritage site: the Suomenlinna fortress at the entrance to

Helsinki's harbour, the Drottningholm Royal Palace in Stockholm, Tallinn's well-preserved and charming medieval Old Town, and the Art Nouveau architecture in Riga. The countryside provides an equally varied ambience with numerous national parks, contrasting coastlines and historic sites and is characterised by low population density and varied landscapes, rich in wildlife. There are also charming small towns, steeped in history and with a delightfully peaceful milieu. While each country has its own national language, in cities many people speak English as well. In rural areas however foreign language skills are sometimes less common and interpreter services would be helpful.

PRACTICAL THINGS TO NOTE:

- ✕ driving is on the right side of the road
- ✕ European C-type socket (also F-type in Sweden)

	FINLAND	SWEDEN	ESTONIA	LATVIA
Capital	Helsinki	Stockholm	Tallinn	Riga
Territory km ²	338 424	407 311	45 227	64 573
Population	5 487 308	10 379 295	1 315 635	2 023 825
Population density: Inhabitants per km ²	17	25	28.4	31
Language	Finnish Inhabitants also speak Swedish, English	Swedish Inhabitants also speak English	Estonian Inhabitants also speak English, German or Russian	Latvian Inhabitants also speak English, German or Russian
Currency	EUR	SEK	EUR	EUR
Country code	+ 358	+ 46	+ 372	+ 371
Local time	GMT + 2 hours	GMT + 1 hour	GMT + 2 hours	GMT + 2 hours
Climate	Warm summers, relatively mild spring and autumn, cold winters. The warmest month is July with average temperature +17°C (+8°C in the mountain area in Sweden). The coldest month is January with average temperature 0-4°C and -18°C in the mountain area in Sweden.			



TRAVELLING WITHIN THE DESTINATION

Travellers can arrive in the destination area by sea, air and land. The main airports are located in the capitals: Stockholm, Helsinki, Tallinn and Riga and many flights also operate between them. It's also possible to take flights to Copenhagen, Denmark and take the train, bus, or car over the bridge to Malmö, Sweden and continue north from there. Several ferry routes connect the countries with other interesting destinations. The main ferry ports are Stockholm in Sweden, Helsinki in Finland, Tallinn in Estonia, Riga, Liepaja and Ventspils in Latvia, while local ferries connect the Estonian islands with the mainland. All ferries which travel on the routes Helsinki–Stockholm; Turku–Stockholm and Tallinn–Stockholm make a brief stop in the Åland Islands. There are good international bus services between Riga and Tallinn and regular ferry services between Tallinn and Helsinki.



AIRLINES

Finnair

Finland's flagship carrier.
www.finnair.com

airBaltic

The national Latvian airline
www.airbaltic.com

Nordica

The national Estonian airline.
www.nordica.ee

airleap

A Swedish airline
www.airleap.se

SAS

A Scandinavian airline
www.flysas.com

Norwegian Air Sweden

A Norwegian airline
www.norwegian.com/uk/



FERRIES

Tallink Silja Line

The leading provider of high-quality mini-cruise and passenger transport services in the northern Baltic Sea region.

Helsinki–Tallinn
Helsinki–Stockholm
Riga–Stockholm
Stockholm–Mariehamn
Kapellskär–Mariehamn
Turku–Mariehamn
Turku–Långnäs
Helsinki–Mariehamn
Tallinn–Stockholm
www.tallinksilja.com

Viking Line

Viking Line is a public limited company and a market-leading brand in passenger traffic in the northern Baltic Sea area.

Helsinki–Tallinn
Helsinki–Stockholm
Stockholm–Mariehamn
Kapellskär–Mariehamn
Turku–Mariehamn
Turku–Långnäs
Helsinki–Mariehamn
www.vikingline.com

Eckerö Line (Eckerö Group)

Estonian ferry line and a travel agency providing ferry services via Eckerölinjen and Eckeröline.

Tallinn–Helsinki
Eckerö–Grisslehamn
www.eckeroline.ee,
www.eckerolinjen.se/en

Archipelago Ferry Lines in Stockholm

It is easy to explore Stockholm's archipelago, during the summer ferry lines operate between 299 piers, ranging from the northern to the southern archipelago, as well as the inner intermediate archipelago. Information and timetables are available from Waxholmbolaget:

+46 8 600 10 00
<https://waxholmsbolaget.se/kundservice>
<https://waxholmsbolaget.se/>

Archipelago Ferry Lines in Åland

Archipelago ferries connect the mainland of Åland with the archipelago municipalities and further away to the Finnish mainland. While local ferries are free of charge for passengers who travel with-

out a vehicle; bikes, motor-bikes, cars and caravans are chargeable and the cost varies according to the route. It is highly recommended to pre-book archipelago ferry journeys well in advance during the summertime especially when travelling with a car, caravan, bike or motorbike.

The Northern line

Osnäs, Gustavs–Brändö–Kumlinge–Hummelvik, Vårdö

The Southern line

Galtby–Kökar–Sottunga–Överö, Föglö–Långnäs

The Transversal line

Snäckö, Kumlinge–Sottunga–Överö, Föglö–Långnäs

Föglö line

Svinö, Lumparland–Degerby, Föglö
Info, timetables and bookings at Ålandstrafiken:
+358 18 25 600
www.alandstrafiken.ax

Local ferries in Estonia

Local ferries operate between the islands and mainland Estonia: Kihnu and other small islands:
Vormsi–Rohuküla
Hiiumaa–Saaremaa
Kihnu–Munalaid
Manilaid–Munalaid
Ruhnu–Munalaid
Ruhnu–Pärnu
Ruhnu–Saaremaa
Laaksaare–Piiressaar
Tallinn–Aegna
www.veeteed.com

Hiiumaa, Saaremaa and Muhu islands:
Hiiumaa–Mainland
Saaremaa–Mainland
www.praamid.ee



COACHES

International coach services:

Lux Express

www.luxexpress.eu

Ecolines:

www.ecolines.eu

Eurolines:

www.eurolines.lt/en

Flixbus:

www.flixbus.co.uk

The coach trip from Tallinn to Riga takes ca 4.5 hours.

Y-Buss

Long-distance bus services in Sweden
www.ybuss.se

Härjedalingen

Long-distance bus services in Sweden
www.mohlinsexpressbuss.se

Stockholm–Söderhamn:

X-trafik – regional buses and trains
www.xtrafik.se



CHARTER BUS COMPANIES

Friman Travel

Modern bus services, licensed tour operator, charter tours.

+358 19 2481004
info@frimantravel.fi
www.frimantravel.fi

Go Bus Charters

Exceptional quality coaches and minibuses providing services in Baltic countries and Scandinavia.
+372 6404000
tellimine@gobus.ee
www.gobus.ee

Hansabuss

Serving customers throughout Estonia, the Baltic States and Scandinavia.

+372 6279080
booking@hansabuss.ee
www.hansabuss.ee

Williams Buss

Serving customers throughout the Nordic and Baltic countries.

+358 18 28 000
info@williamsbuss.ax
www.williamsbuss.ax

Viking Line Buss

Viking Line Buss, a subsidiary to the Viking Line Group, provides local services on Åland and chartered buses on and outside Åland.

+358 (0)18 26 311,
+358 (0)18 26 328
info@vikinglinebuss.ax
www.vikinglinebuss.ax/

Westin buss

Westin buss offer bus rides around Stockholm and in entire Sweden.

+46 8 545 424 20
info@westinbuss.se
www.westinbuss.se

Bergkvarabuss

Bus trips throughout Sweden.

+46 480 42 55 00
info@bergkvarabuss.se
www.bergkvarabuss.se



CAR RENTAL

Avis, Budget, Sixt, Hertz, Europcar and Alamo are international car rental companies with large worldwide networks and a standardised level of service. Driving

licences issued in Japan are valid for tourists to drive in Sweden, Finland, Estonia and Latvia. Driving is on the right side of the road.

Rundbergs Bil & Service, St1

A local car rental company in Åland.
+358 (0)18 - 525505
rbs@rundbergs.com
www.rundbergs.com



TRAINS

Trains throughout Sweden.

SJ

www.sj.se

A small rail service company in Sweden.

Snälltåget:

www.snalltaget.se/en



CYCLING ON ÅLAND

Åland is a cycling friendly destination – a network of cycle tracks has been built in the recent past and continues to grow. The short distances make it easy to experience Åland's landscapes by bicycle, the views are ever changing and the sea is close wherever you are.

There are cycles, tandem bicycles and bicycle trailers for rent. The largest rental service is Ro-No Rent with two locations in Mariehamn. Many accommodation companies rent bicycles for their guests as well.

Some of the guest harbours in Åland have bicycles for

their guests too. Biking is a convenient way to experience the surroundings and for example do grocery shopping in the local store.

RO-NO Rent

+358 18 12820,
+358 18 12821
rono@aland.net
www.rono.ax/en

BICYCLE FERRY

The Åland bicycle ferry between Hammarland and Geta in northern Åland is very convenient and connects the cycle track networks between the municipalities thus providing guests an alternative return route to their accommodation. The bicycle ferry schedule runs in June, July and August.





RURAL TOURISM ORGANISATIONS



Baltic Country Holidays

www.countryholidays.lv

ADDRESS

Kalneciema str. 40, Riga, Latvia
+371 67617600
lauku@celotajs.lv
www.countryholidays.lv

BALTIC COUNTRY HOLIDAYS

(Lauku ceļotājs) is a Country Tourism Association based in Latvia, established in 1993. The association unites small family-run accommodation and service providers in the Latvian countryside. Since then, the organisation has grown in size, and has varied and developed its products to include all three Baltic States. Through many years of operation, great relationships have been established with suppliers, and visitors benefit from this extensive local knowledge and personal service.



ADDRESS

Lielā iela 30, Ieriķi, Latvia
+371 28658900
info@entergauja.com
www.entergauja.com

ENTER GAUJA

Gauja National Park Tourism Cluster with the brand name "Enter Gauja" was created in 2012 to strengthen tourism destination and enhance its competitiveness in international markets. Today the Cluster combines a wide range of tourism entrepreneurs. Many small businesses have grown and developed and are now well known locally, regionally and internationally. Overnight stays have increased by 30% and Gauja National Park is now the second most visited tourist destination in Latvia after Riga, with more than 1,000,000 visitors a year.



ADDRESS

Laurinkatu 50, 08100 Lohja,
Finland
+358 44 369 1309
tourist@lohja.fi
www.visitlohja.fi

VISIT SOUTH COAST FINLAND

Visitlohja is a regional tourism office in southern Finland. Visitlohja is run by the city of Lohja and co-operating with local tourism entrepreneurs and associations. Their common target is to develop the best possible tourism experience for visitors. Products and services offered include good accommodation in a rural atmosphere. A unique part is to make your own food in the forest to high end cuisine in awarded restaurants and activities – from small hikes in pristine nature to glass blowing in the world-renowned Fiskars Village. The region is situated right next to Helsinki and can therefore provide an unrivalled combination of the Finnish lifestyle, culture and nature.



E · E · S · T · I
MAATURISM
ESTONIAN
RURAL TOURISM

ADDRESS

Vilmsi 53 G, 10115 Tallinn,
Estonia
+372 600 9999
eesti@maaturism.ee
www.maaturism.ee



**FÖRETAGSAM
SKÄRGÅRD**

ADDRESS

Jomalagårds vägen 16, 22150
Jomala, Finland
+358 407444877
info@skargarden.ax
www.skargarden.ax

Söderhamn°

ADDRESS

Södra hamngatan 50, 826 50
Söderhamn, Sweden
+46 270-753 53
info@visitsoderhamn.se
www.visitsoderhamn.se

ESTONIAN RURAL TOURISM ASSOCIATION

Established in January 2000, the non-profit organisation Estonian Rural Tourism (ERTO) represents the common interests of rural tourism providers in order to support the development of countryside tourism in Estonia. ERTO with its members forms a rural tourism cluster comprising rural tourism accommodation providers, active tourism providers, rural SMEs in agricultural and production sectors, travel associations, schools teaching tourism and others. The organisation works closely with a range of tourism umbrella organisations and stakeholders.

FÖRETAGSAM SKÄRGÅRD

Företagsam Skärgård (Enterprising Archipelago) is a non-profit organisation established in 2007 to support the development of the region of the Åland Islands archipelago and it's 6 archipelago municipalities in the around 40 inhabited islands in its area. Several development projects are being undertaken and Företagsam Skärgård maintains a good communication network to important actors in the archipelago, as well as to related archipelago areas in Europe.

VISIT SÖDERHAMN

Visit Söderhamn's mission is to make Söderhamn an attractive destination to visit and experience all year round. Their work takes place in close collaboration with the business community and associations, to develop, profile and market Söderhamn as a destination. Visit Söderhamn provides brochures, maps and digital information and helps with the booking of activities and accommodation in Söderhamn and Hälsingland. A tourist information office is located in central Söderhamn and is open during the summer. Visit Söderhamn also has 5 InfoPoints strategically located around Söderhamn, tourist service places where the visitor can get tourist information.

Estonia





Destination SETOMAA HISTORIC REGION



SETOMAA –
authentic traditions
in everyday life



Setomaa is one of the yet undiscovered regions of Estonia. Located on the borders of Estonia and Russia, the culture of the Setos, the people living in Setomaa, has been influenced by both cultures, yet they have maintained their own traditions and values. The Setos are especially well known for their traditional way of singing (*Seto leelo*), which is on the UNESCO list of Intangible Cultural Heritage. In addition to their own singing traditions, the Setos have their own language, remarkable and colourful national clothes and impressive silver jewellery, as well as cuisine. Being part of the Orthodox church makes their mindset different from that of Estonians.

FLAVOURS OF SETOMAA

www.setotours.com

GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: **fullday**
 Season: **January–December**
 For whom: **private tour (1–3 pers.) / small to medium group (max. 25 pers.)**

SERVICES INCLUDED:

Private tour: transport in a private car, professional guide/driver, entrances to museums, visits, sights and experiences, lunch, dinner, bottled water in the car

Group tour: transport in a minivan or a coach, professional guide/driver, entrances to museums, visits, sights and experiences, lunch, dinner, bottled water in the vehicle
 Lunch: Inara's Vanavalgõ Kohvitarõ (Mikitamäe)
 Dinner: Rikka Ivvani Farm (Küllätüvä)

DURATION OF THE PROGRAMME:

10 hours

TYPE OF TRANSPORT:

Private tour: the package includes the cost of a private car, and guests can be picked up from an agreed location in Tartu or in south-eastern Estonia.

Group tour: tour bus
 Public transportation: this package does not require the use of public transport.

START AND END POINT:

Tartu, if not agreed otherwise.

LOCATION



Setomaa historic region



Tallinn 280 km,
Riga 240 km



Mrs. Helen Külvik



+372 5294 033
helen.kylvik@gmail.com



INTRODUCTION

The tour is guided by Mrs. Helen Kõlvik, an experienced guide and passionate ambassador of Seto culture. She has been a member of the Seto community for over 20 years and works for the Seto Institute. The tour takes guests to meet the local people of Setomaa visiting a family-run café, a soap maker, an artisan's gallery, a caretaker of the local chapel and a young farmer family. All of them are eager to share the best of their lifestyle, culture, values and stories with visitors.



PROGRAMME

- ✕ **Tartu–Setomaa.** The bus ride from Tartu to Setomaa takes about 1 h 15 min. On the way, the guide will talk about Setomaa.
- ✕ **Inara's Vanavalge Kohvitarõ (a café).** Making traditional dumplings (*pelmeny*) together with the hostess Inara Luigas and listening to her stories about the Seto cuisine. For lunch, dumplings and other delicacies of the Seto kitchen will be served.
- ✕ **"Saatse boot".** Driving through the 800-meter "Saatse boot" – a Russian territory within Estonia. No visa required.
- ✕ **Old George's soap shop.** Driving to Kolossova village and visiting the Old George's soap shop. Silver Hüdsi, the shop owner, will tell stories about living "in the middle of nowhere".
- ✕ **Obinitsa museum.** In Obinitsa local museum one of the guests will be dressed up as a Seto. Visitors will admire the beauty and logic of the clothes and impressive silver jewellery and listen to the magical *Seto leelo*.
- ✕ **Seto gallery.** Visiting the Seto gallery to meet Ülle and Evar, great storytellers, and making one's own personal Seto-themed souvenir using the block-printing technique. Visiting the art, handicraft and souvenir store "Kunstizaal" (the Art's Hall).
- ✕ **Serga Orthodox chapel.** Eevi, the caretaker of the chapel, will show the chapel and talk about living by the border.
- ✕ **Rikka Ivvani Farm.** A drive to Küllätüvä village to visit a young family on their authentic Seto farm. There are sheep and other pets, plus music and real rural life. Having dinner together with the hosts and cooking some of the dinner with them.
- ✕ **Return to Tartu** (ca 1 h 30 min).





Destination

VANA-VÕROMAA HISTORIC REGION



*Vana-Võromaa -
ancient cultural
area with smoke
sauna traditions*



Amazingly diverse and untouched primeval nature, hiking trails, numerous farms, fairs, saunas, Võru language – these are the keywords characterising destination Vana-Võromaa.

The southernmost area of Estonia will surprise you with its natural statistics. One of the hilliest regions of the country – Haanja Uplands, the highest peak in Estonia – Suur Munamägi (318 m above sea level) and the deepest lake in Estonia – Rõuge Suurjärv (38 m) can all be found here. The Võhandu, Estonia's longest river, and the Piusa, the river with the greatest overall descent, both meander through here. Scenic sandstone outcrops fringe the banks of the River Piusa, of which the Härma Mäemine wall is the highest in Estonia.

The local community are especially proud of their smoke sauna tradition which is included in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (UNESCO). A smoke sauna is a great way to experience ancient traditions. There is a rich and unique custom associated with taking a sauna, which in addition to the customs of going to the sauna also includes a knowledge about sauna treatment and meat smoking and the skills of heating the sauna, making the body and facial care products that can be used in the sauna as well as building the sauna.

In the middle of the hills and lakes of Võromaa, there is plenty to discover all year-round.

ESTONIAN SMOKE SAUNA AT MOOSKA FARM

www.mooska.eu

GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: **half day**
Season: **January–December**
For whom: **individuals / groups**

- sauna session max. 10 pers.
- excursion max. 20 pers.

SERVICES INCLUDED:

excursion, guided sauna session, smoke sauna ham tasting. Optional upon request: accommodation in nearby tourist farms, meals.

DURATION OF THE PROGRAMME:

excursion 1.5 hours
+ sauna session 3 hours

TYPE OF TRANSPORT:

individual transfer / tour bus

LOCATION



Haanja küla, 65601
Haanja vald, Võrumaa



Tallinn 270 km,
Riga 243 km



Mrs. Eda Veeroja,
Mr. Priit Veeroja



+372 503 2341
eda@mooska.eu



INTRODUCTION

The Võromaa smoke sauna tradition, practiced in southern Estonia, is on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. At Mooska Farm, guests can experience this Estonian heritage.

Mooska farm is a typical lifestyle farm in Southern Estonia. The powerful location at the foot of Vällamäe is set amidst the beautiful south Estonian countryside and harmoniously connects the farm life with the wildlife and the heritage of ancestors.

The Veeroja family will share their lifestyle values and introduce the local heritage to their guests, the pride of which is their local food and the traditional smoke sauna. The workshop has an EHE (Genuine and Interesting Estonia) ecotourism quality label for maintaining authentic traditions, skills and atmosphere.

A smoke sauna is a building or room heated by a stove covered with stones and with an elevated platform for sitting or lying. It has no chimney, and the smoke from the burning wood circulates in the room. The room is then ventilated. People usually go into the sauna together and remain until they are sweating. Water is thrown on the heated stones to produce hot steam laden air and bathers beat their bodies with whisks to remove dead skin and stimulate blood circulation. After sweating, whisking, relaxing and possible healing procedures, people cool themselves outside and rinse their bodies with water. The procedure is then repeated.



PROGRAMME

✕ **Arrival, meeting the hosts.**

✕ **Excursion.** The excursion will introduce the heritage of the smoke sauna of Vana-Võromaa region. The hosts show the three smoke saunas of Mooska farm. Two of them are for bathing, while the third one is for smoking meat. Visitors get an overview of the construction, heating, sauna rituals and family traditions of the smoke sauna. The excursion ends with a tasting of smoked pork.

✕ **Sauna session with the host family.** The hosts lead the visitors through the sauna process. The rich aroma of burning wood is complemented by a whispered note of the meat smoked in the sauna, birch boughs, and sauna honey. The sauna is located near a pond for a cooling swim when the water is ice free or for an invigorating dip in winter. During the sauna experience the hosts tell their guests about Estonian smoke sauna traditions and beliefs and explain the process.





Destination

MULGIMAA HISTORIC REGION



*Mulgimaa –
a community with
entrepreneurial
spirit*



Mulgimaa is a historic region in southern Estonia. Mulgi farmers were known to be wealthy and the first in Estonia to start buying their own farms from landlords in the late 19th century to cultivate flax. Their growth in wealth was demonstrated by the building of stately houses, as well as being able to send their children to study at the best and most expensive schools. Today Mulgimaa fascinates the senses with its unique nature and heritage from the past, as well as with exciting ventures and active people.

Three Mulgi cultural icons: the dialect, the well-known men's long black jacket and the traditional Mulgi porridge have survived to this day.

FEEL LIKE A MULK IN MULGIMAA HISTORIC REGION

www.puhkaeestis.ee/et/kultuureis-mulgimaale

GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: **fullday**
Season: **January–December**
For whom: **groups**
(**max. 10 pers.**)

SERVICES INCLUDED:

visits as per programme,
hands-on activities: sewing,
soap making, baking Mulgi
curd cake with semolina filling.
Lunch.

Group tour: transport in a
minivan or a coach, profes-
sional guide/driver, entrances
to museums, visits, sights and
experiences, lunch, dinner,
bottled water in the vehicle

Lunch: Mäe-Koda café

INTRODUCTION

The Mulgimaa region in southern Estonia extends into Pärnu, Viljandi, and Valga counties.

The tour hostess is Jaanika Toome who knows the Mulgimaa communities very well.

The tour takes place in Tarvastu and Helme parishes, Viljandi County, ca 70 km from Tartu, the second largest Estonia's city. The communities of Mulgimaa and their enterprising people do what they love, earn their daily bread with it, and are looking forward to receiving guests.

DURATION OF THE PROGRAMME:

~ 7 hours

TYPE OF TRANSPORT:

tour bus

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION:

bus or train to Viljandi

START AND END POINT:

Viljandi town



PROGRAMME

✕ **Viljandi–Mulgimaa.** The trip starts from Viljandi and en-route information will be shared about the history of Mulgimaa, the name Mulgi, and the life of the people today.

✕ **Kärstna mõis (Kärstna manor).** Urve Kass, the hostess of the manor, will introduce the manor and her passion – crafts, which is how she makes her living in the countryside. Visitors will try sewing with different sewing machines and those who wish to, can make a textile potholder.

✕ **Mäe-Koda kohvik Riidajas (Mäe-Koda café in Riidaja).** The family's main business is running a café, but they also make candles, notebooks, cakes and gateaux, soaps, etc. Visitors will make soap together with the family in the traditional way, adding medicinal and scented plants. Everyone will get the self-made piece of the soap. When the job is done, guests will be treated to traditional Mulgi porridge and will find out how this delicious dish is made.



✕ **Lunch at Mäe-Koda café.**

✕ **The Soe village community.** In this village there is always something to do and guests are welcome to join in. Depending on the season and the weather this can include: cutting and stacking logs, digging and clearing snow or feeding birds in winter, digging the soil and planting potatoes in spring, feeding farm animals, or other daily chores of a rural homestead or farm.

✕ **Tarvastu Käsitöökoda (Tarvastu Handicraft Studio).** One of the region's most famous dishes is *Mulgi korp* - Mulgi curd cake with semolina filling. In the warm kitchen, aprons and flour bags are awaiting guest bakers and everyone can try their hand. While the cakes are baking, guests can try out weaving on looms.

✕ **Return to Viljandi** in the evening.

LOCATION



Mulgimaa historic region



Tallinn 160 km



Ms. Jaanika Toome



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jaanika.toome@gmail.com





Destination

ONION ROUTE - THE SHORES OF LAKE PEIPSI



*Onion route –
traditional onion
growing villages
along the coast of
Lake Peipsi*



The Onion Route (*Sibulatee* in Estonian) is a destination on the shores of Lake Peipsi, the largest lake in Estonia and a trans-border lake of the European Union. It is well known for its cultural diversity. Estonian and Russian communities with their different cultures live side by side here and these include Estonian traditional farming culture, Baltic-German manor culture and Russian Old Believers (orthodox Christian) culture. Russian Old Believers grew and continue to grow the Peipsi Onion. The Onion Route got its name from the local tradition of onion growing.

ONIONS, FISH AND CHICORY – THE LOCAL FOOD ROUTE

www.sibulatee.ee

GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: **full day**
Season: **January–December / seasonal**
For whom: **groups**
(min. 4–max. 40 pers.)

SERVICES INCLUDED:

local food tasting, handicrafts and visits to local people, local guide.

NB! The choice of venues depends on the wishes and size of the group. 7 options for visits are described below, out of which timing allows for 4–5 in one day. The particular programme shall be agreed in advance.

DURATION OF THE PROGRAMME:

6–8 hours

TYPE OF TRANSPORT:

individual transfer / tour bus

LOCATION



The Onion Route area, the southern coast of Lake Peipsi



Tallinn 219 km



Liis Lainemäe, MTÜ Sibulatee (NGO Onion Route)



+372 5648 0065
info@sibulatee.ee



INTRODUCTION

The guide Liis Lainemäe has been developing and marketing the area for almost 12 years, starting with the birth of the Onion Road. She knows the joys and sorrows of all the service providers and tells the stories about the area, about sights and folk-art objects along the way.

The programme includes visits to Russian Old Believers communities along the Kolkja–Kasepää–Varnja road, which runs through the villages by Lake Peipsi. The location is 40 km from Tartu, the second largest city in Estonia. Guests will visit local people, see local life, get to know the different cultures and, especially, the most important role played by local food. Every place visited will offer a taste of some local speciality.





✕ **Kostja Sibulatalu (Kostja Onion Farm)**. Open May–September. Kostja, the owner of an onion farm, shows and talks about how the Old Believers grow onions near Lake Peipsi. Guests will taste Kostja’s onion pies and drink tea. In spring, guests can try out making a bed for growing onions in the same traditional way as it was in the past.

✕ **Turgi Käsitöötalu (Turgi handicraft farm) – a traditional Estonian weaving farm**. The hostess Veinika introduces Estonian farming from between the two world wars and talks about how it is possible to make a living by producing handicrafts in the countryside. Guests can try their hand at weaving on the looms.

✕ **Peipsimaa Külustuskeskus (Peipsimaa Visitor Centre)**. The Peipsimaa Visitor Centre in Kolkja preserves and exhibits local handicraft traditions and offers handicraft workshops. Guests

PROGRAMME

✕ **Tea drinking ceremony in Samovarimaja (Samovar House)**. The morning begins with a tea drinking ceremony at the Samovar House located in a tidy old wooden building which exhibits an extensive collection of samovars. A samovar is a device traditionally used to heat and boil water for tea. The Samovar House hostess talks about the history of samovars and the tea culture of the area.

✕ **Meeting the owners of Voronja Galerii (Voronja Gallery)**. During summer, the Voronja Gallery is one of the most popular places in the region. Each year there is a new themed summer exhibition, often created by international artists and displayed in the house, in the sauna and in the large yard which is turned into a sculpture park. A real highlight of the visit is the Voronja cardamon wafers and rhubarb wine served to guests. Delicious home-made jams are available to buy.



will take part in a handicraft workshop and make, for example, a new shopping bag using traditional hand-printing techniques. The centre also houses a lubok yard (a lubok is a hand-painted print on a piece of wood) and a chicory museum. Chicory has, historically, been an important plant for the region, being extensively cultivated and exported. Guests can enjoy chicory coffee and cake, order traditional onion soup and/or fish steak for lunch.

✕ Alatskivi Loss (Alatskivi Castle).

The Baltic German manor culture is another important one in the region and is well represented by Alatskivi Castle. On a guided tour guests can get an overview of the history of Estonian manors, find out how they functioned economically, and enjoy tasting local manorial style snacks.



✕ Local winery Alatskivi Mõisamaitset (Alatskivi Manor Tastes).

Estonia has a long tradition of making artisan wines, and in Alatskivi Castle the baroness was a maker of bitter schnapps: it was necessary at the time to have more exciting tastes such as homemade schnapps to add to other manor dishes. Today, winemaker Külli, Alatskivi Mõisamaitset (Alatskivi Manor Tastes), makes a variety of wines from local ingredients (blackcurrant, cherry, rowan, etc.) and even honey wine such as Viking Blood is on Külli's wine shelf. Külli will share her experience of making wines from Estonian ingredients and offer some for tasting.

✕ **Kivi Kõrts (Kivi Tavern).** In Kivi Tavern, most of the food is locally sourced – from the lakes, the forests and the fields. The hostess Aigne is fond of gathering wild berries and mushrooms and the harvest often finds its way to guest's plates.



"SUBBOTNIK" – SATURDAY JOINT WORK ON THE ONION ROUTE

www.mesitare.ee

GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: **weekend**
Season: **January–December**
For whom: **groups**
(max. 10 pers.)

SERVICES INCLUDED:

accommodation, meals,
participation in local
seasonal work, sauna night,
entertainment performance

DURATION OF THE PROGRAMME:

2 days

TYPE OF TRANSPORT:

individual transfer / tour bus

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION:

bus Tartu-Varnja

LOCATION



Kesk 119, Varnja,
Peipsiääre vald, Tartumaa



Tallinn 220 km



Ms. Herling Mesi,
Mesi tare guesthouse



+372 518 1125
info@mesitare.ee



INTRODUCTION

The guest house is located on the Onion Route, a destination on the shores of Lake Peipsi, the largest lake in Estonia and a trans-border lake of the European Union. It is about 45 km from Tartu. The area by Lake Peipsi is well known for growing the Peipsi Onion. This area has been populated for 350 years by Russian Old Believers – orthodox Christians who fled from Russia due to persecution. Guests can experience a family stay in a traditional Old Believer house which is quite authentic from the furnishings up to spoons and forks. The hostess, Herling Mesi, moved from Estonia's capital Tallinn to this remote area of Lake Peipsi shore. She got fascinated by the local lifestyle, learned a lot about Russian Old Believers everyday life and now shares it enthusiastically with her guests.

"Sibulatee Subbotnik" is a mix of Estonian and Russian cultures, meaning joint work done on Saturdays. It is a long-standing custom in the community that families or friends come together to cope with some seasonal work such as harvesting. Guests will get a real experience of joining in seasonal joint work the way it is done in the Onion Route area. After a bit of work there is time to enjoy the local lifestyle – learn about samovars and tea drinking culture in the Russian Old Believers community, take a sauna and have a relaxing evening.



PROGRAMME

- ✕ **Arrival and welcome.** Arriving at Mesi tare guesthouse on Friday evening. Welcome house tour with the hostess. Dinner.
- ✕ **Saturday morning breakfast.**
- ✕ **Seasonal work / workshop.**
 - Options:
 - In spring: digging onion beds according to Russian Old Believers traditional method / preparing for onion planting / making onion pie together.
 - Fishing on Lake Peipsi with a fisherman. Subsequent fish cleaning, salting / drying / cooking of fish soup.
 - Cutting underwood / wood splitting / making a campfire.
 - In autumn: harvesting fruit, preparing them for wine production.
- ✕ **Lunch.** Making and enjoying lunch together with the hostess.
- ✕ **The collection of samovars.** The hostess will show her collection of 100 samovars – the traditional tea making devices and will talk about tea drinking traditions.
- ✕ **Visiting neighbours.** The Voronja artisan gallery is open in the summer.
- ✕ **Smoke sauna.** Heating the sauna together with the host and experiencing sauna rituals with the sauna master.
- ✕ **Dinner with entertainment.** Traditional music with local musicians, learning dances and singing along.
- ✕ **Overnight in Mesi tare guest house.**
- ✕ **Sunday morning breakfast.**

WORKSHOP OF TEA DRINKING CULTURE IN LAKE PEIPSI AREA

www.mesitare.ee

GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: **half day**
Season: **January–December**
For whom: **groups**
(min. 10 – max. 20 pers.)

SERVICES INCLUDED:

workshops

DURATION OF THE PROGRAMME:

3 hours

TYPE OF TRANSPORT:

tour bus

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION:

bus Tartu–Varnja

LOCATION



Samovarimaja (Samovar House), Keskk 21, Varnja, Peipsiääre vald, Tartumaa



Tallinn 220 km



Ms. Herling Mesi



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info@mesitare.ee



INTRODUCTION

This area has been populated for 350 years by Russian Old Believers – orthodox Christians who fled from Russia due to persecution. Today the area surprises with its authentic customs and traditions, one of the most important of which is tea drinking. Traditional samovar, a predecessor of the modern kettle, is used to brew and serve tea. Tea rituals take time, so people slow down, sit back, enjoy company, and have a chat. Making tea in samovar is a social event.

The hostess, Herling Mesi, moved from Estonia's capital Tallinn to this remote area of Lake Peipsi shore, 45km from Tartu, Estonia's second largest city. She got fascinated by the local lifestyle, learned a lot about Russian Old Believers everyday life and now shares it enthusiastically with her guests. She has collected more than 100 samovars that are exhibited in a special building – the Samovar House.

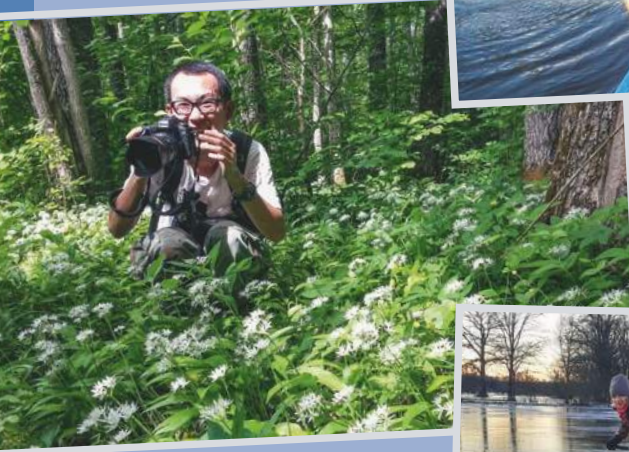
The Mesi family offers visitors an experience of the lifestyle of the local Russian Old Believers. In the workshop guests learn about local tea drinking history, how a samovar works, the sizes and the shapes of samovars, and they can enjoy the very special Ivan's tea made from Fireweed. Guests can also learn how to decorate the traditional gingerbread that goes with the tea. The workshop has an EHE (Genuine and Interesting Estonia) ecotourism quality label for maintaining authentic traditions, skills and atmosphere.



PROGRAMME

- ✕ **Arrival and welcome.** The hostess gives a guided Samovar House tour.
- ✕ **Samovar and Ivan Chai workshop.** In the workshop, the hostess guides her guests through the process – starting the samovar, finding out how fast the samovar starts boiling the water and how to actually make tea. While drinking tea with her guests, she will talk about the history of Ivan Chai – Ivan's tea, why it has that name and why not many people know about this tea anymore. Depending on the season (end of June to beginning of August), guests can learn outdoors about the tea plant Fireweed, pick the leaves and learn about how to prepare the leaves for Ivan's tea.
- ✕ **Gingerbread decorating workshop.** The second part of the day is dedicated to decorating the local specialty gingerbread that is traditionally on the tea table. The best Estonian gingerbread master from the neighbouring Kolkja village will come to the Samovar House to teach the technology and secrets of grandmothers. Guests will decorate the gingerbread and take it with them as a souvenir.

Estonia





Destination

SOOMAA NATIONAL PARK

*Soomaa -
wetland area with
ancient traditions*



Soomaa is a landscape region in South-West of Estonia. In Estonian, the word 'soomaa' literally means 'land of mires' while the area is best known for having five unique seasons with the fifth season being the flooding season, when the water from melted snow or heavy rains inundates all the lower forests, roads and even yards.

The history of human activity in Soomaa dates back to the Stone Age. The ancient and charming nature of this place is reflected in the tradition of making expanded dugout boats (Estonian *haabjäs*), a technique which is still being taught in Soomaa. Soomaa is probably the only place in Europe where the tradition of making such boats survived into the 21st centuries and in recent decades, a surge of interest in making dugouts has revitalized the ancient tradition, which since 2021 is on the UNESCO list of Intangible Cultural Heritage. Soomaa visitors can also take part in canoe trips, snowshoe hikes and animal viewing tours where beavers are the most popular focus, a key stopping point is the mysterious Tori Hell.



Throughout Estonia sauna bathing is a part of the people's identity and it is sacrosanct for them and so it is in Soomaa. Sauna has always been an important ritual with many functions, it is at the same time a very practical and a spiritual environment and provides good relaxation for example when returning from a trip outdoors. So, after the long traditional sauna session, the mind-set of local people will become understandable.

In 1993 in the core area of Soomaa landscape region was designated Soomaa National Park, which incorporates an extensive wilderness area, containing large peatbogs and thick forests interwoven by numerous rivers and the floodplains that border them.

COUNTRYWOMEN'S SPAAA AT KLAARA-MANNI HOLIDAY- AND SEMINAR CENTER

www.klaaramanni.ee

GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: **half day**
Season: **January–December**
For whom: **individuals / groups max. 15 pers.**

SERVICES INCLUDED:

guided sauna session, snacks.
Optional upon request:
accommodation, meals.

DURATION OF THE PROGRAMME:

2–3 hours

TYPE OF TRANSPORT:

individual transfer / tour bus

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION:

bus from Pärnu approx.
30 min. (direction Vändra or
Rapla), bus stop Randivälja

LOCATION



Klaara-Manni Puhke-
ja Seminarikeskus,
Randivälja küla, 86814
Tori vald, Pärnumaa



Tallinn 133 km,
Riga 194 km



Mrs. Katrin Ruumet,
Mrs. Kadi Ruumet



+372 580 32913
info@klaaramanni.ee



INTRODUCTION

The location is not far from Soomaa National Park and the historical small town of Tori. At Klaara-Manni the traditional Estonian sauna building stands in the courtyard of the spacious holiday complex surrounded by a large and beautiful organic garden.

The sauna culture can only be understood and enjoyed through genuine sauna experiences. The Countrywomen's SPAAA offers an exhilarating bathing in the sauna that perks up one's body. The Countrywomen's sauna pleasures with genuine Estonian sauna traditions that are meant for women, but also available for men.

Countrywoman's SPAAA is the name of a sauna session which includes getting to know nature, its consistency and the traditions of a sauna. The sauna session is conducted by the hostess or host who are in their everyday lives organic growers and value a lifestyle that is in harmony with nature. During a sauna session they pass on their knowledge related to the healing power of sauna culture and nature. As part of the session participants will learn how in the old days people took care of themselves and got food for the body and soul. Session activities take place in the forest, in the yard and in the wood-heated Estonian sauna.

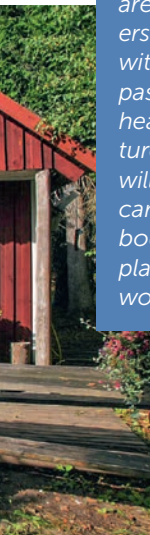
PROGRAMME

- ✕ **Arrival and introduction.** When guests arrive, a heated sauna awaits. Before the sauna session, the hosts will talk about sauna culture and sauna rituals, about human needs and inner energy, about the power of nature, plants and trees, and how it is used in sauna.
- ✕ **Preparations.** Depending on the season, guests can either choose



a ready-made herbal whisk or, guided by the hosts, make their own whisk from fresh twigs of linden, oak, rowan or birch. Before the sauna session, the sauna master will give instructions about the process outside the steam room. Every sauna guest receives a sauna towel. If the guest does not want to be naked in the sauna, it is possible to get a cotton sauna towel for an additional fee. Special bath hats are available to protect from the hot air.

- ✕ **Taking a sauna.** Each participant will use his/her own sauna whisk throughout the sauna session. The table in the sauna is covered with fresh plants and herbal water. What makes Klaara-Manni sauna special is the bucket shower next to the sauna and the possibility to wash in bowls inside the sauna room.
- ✕ **Beauty procedures.** When taking a break from the hot steam, guests can learn how to use domestic body care products such as honey, salt and others.
- ✕ **Light snacks.** Sauna towels and a nice sauna snack await the bathers in the lobby.



SAUNA RITUAL WITH SAUNA MASTER AT ENERGY FARM

www.energiatalu.ee

GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: **half day**
Season: **January–December**
For whom: **individuals / groups max. 10 pers.**

SERVICES INCLUDED:

guided sauna session.
Optional upon request:
accommodation, meals.

DURATION OF THE PROGRAMME:

for individuals 1.5 hours;
for groups 3 hours

TYPE OF TRANSPORT:

individual transfer / tour bus

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION:

by train or by bus to Viljandi,
host pickup service

LOCATION



Vihi küla, 71402 Põhja-Sakala vald, Viljandimaa



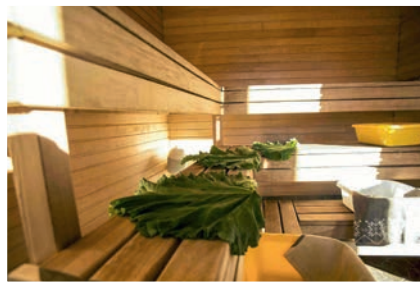
Tallinn 140 km



Mrs. Tiit Siim,
Mr. Aivar Siim



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+372 510 6193
info@energiatalu.ee



INTRODUCTION

Energia Talu (Energy Farm) is located in the southern part of Estonia and is a medicinal plant centre with its own tea house. All herbs on the farm are grown organically.

The ecological cultivation and conscious use of medicinal plants at Energia Talu started in 1991. The knowledge and skills to start came from the host's grandfather, who knew medicinal plants and they were part of his lifestyle.

The Energy Eco-Spa with sauna is available at the farm, situated on the shore of the Navesti River and has been offering sauna services since 2010. This is the perfect place for people who want to enjoy a natural lifestyle that draws on the traditional wisdom of past generations.

The host Aivar Siim is a trained and experienced sauna master, who has studied in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Russia. In 2020, in Moscow, Aivar graduated from Ivan Ivankin (Иван Иванкин), a renowned sauna master in Russia, class.

Today Aivar prepares a ritual with aromatherapy and a special practical sauna program, according to a person's mental and physical condition. He checks the person's condition before the sauna and selects the procedures individually on the basis of VedaPulse diagnostics. He guides and balances the movement of energies and recommends a personal Ayurvedic diet and lifestyle, according to the type of personal body.



PROGRAMME

✕ Arrival, meeting the hosts.

Welcome with herbal tea. The sauna master tells guests about the traditions and rituals of the sauna and their usefulness. Those who wish can take a soothing walk in the fields of medicinal plants and natural flower meadows by the Navesti River before the sauna ritual.

✕ **Sauna experience.** The following are offered during the sauna experience: foot bath with warm water, salt and medicinal herbs, herbal tea. The sauna experience contains the following elements:

- First, body warming and relaxation.
- Flower water is sprayed to the stones of the sauna stove for aromatherapy purposes. Flower waters are produced on the Energy Farm.
- Body cleansing with salt and medicinal herbs.
- Aromatherapy with medicinal herbs and mild steam.
- Body bathing with plenty of steam.
- Compress for joints with medicinal herbs.
- Whisking in suitable steam.
- Hot massage-bath.

✕ After the sauna ritual, delicious herbal tea can be drunk under the Energy Pyramid.





Destination

LAHEMAA NATIONAL PARK



*Deep peace
and quiet of the
oldest national park
of Estonia*

Lahemaa national park was formed to protect and present both the nature and the cultural heritage typical of the northern coast of Estonia. Lahemaa is the oldest national park of Estonia with over 70 villages and more than 3000 inhabitants. Characteristic features of the park are its four lovely peninsulas, outstanding manors, unspoiled nature and active community. It is known for its four excellent examples of manor culture. Three manor complexes have been well renovated with a network of parkland walks amid the old trees and host regular event programmes.

The seaboard has the most erratic boulders and fields of stones in Europe and since the soil is stony and infertile, communities had to rely on the sea for their living with fishing, timber transport, shipbuilding and sea trade. Moving around was easier by sea than on land, the connections between the coastal villages of Estonia and Finland were very close and the local dialect spoken by peninsula inhabitants was like Finnish. Village development was strongly influenced by the Baltic Klint, a limestone escarpment. Ancient settlements, old villages and manors are situated on the edge of the Klint and surrounded by alvars with junipers. Inland communities were largely agricultural with some small industries, watermills and a cardboard factory. The community was more stable than that by the sea and nowadays most people live in the villages the whole year round, even if they work in nearby towns.



TWO-DAY FISHING EXPERIENCE IN LAHEMAA

www.lahekala.ee

GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: **2 days**
 Season: **September - May**
 For whom: **groups**
 (min. 2–max. 8 pers.)

SERVICES INCLUDED:

fishing guide, fishing equipment, transportation, dinner, accommodation with breakfast, sauna

DURATION OF THE PROGRAMME:

The fishing tour is 8 hours long and can be divided between 2 days.

TYPE OF TRANSPORT:

Return transport from the accommodation to the fishing sites is included. If requested, also from Tallinn.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION:

bus Tallinn–Loksa



LOCATION



Kärka Holiday House,
Kuusalu vald, Harjumaa



Tallinn 70 km



Lahemaa Kalaturism MTÜ
 (Lahemaa Fishing tourism NGO):
 Timo Tintse (fishing guide),
 Rain Käärst (chef), Signe Blum
 (accommodation hostess).



+372 566 907 49
info@lahekala.ee

INTRODUCTION

Estonia is a maritime country where coastal fishing has a long tradition and is part of the history of the Estonian coastal people. Scenic fishing villages Kaberneeme Salmistu, Purekkari and Viinistu in Lahemaa region are located in the area that is the best for fishing sea trout and boasts the biggest fish.

The host of the programme is Lahemaa Kalaturism – the local fishing association and their main goal is the propagation of sustainable fishing and educating new fishing guides. Timo, the fishing guide, is well known in Estonia and probably one of the best sea trout catchers in the area. Rain Käärst, the chef, will cook the dinner together with guests, and Signe Blum will take care of the cosy atmosphere in the holiday house.

The fishing tour takes guests to fishing sites, the choice of which will be selected on the morning of the tour depending on the weather conditions, wind and currents. The fishing sites are 10-30 km from the guest house. Guests are picked up in the morning and guided in fishing until the end of the day. The package includes snacks and refreshments throughout the fishing day. The day ends with a delicious dinner of grilled fish and local specialities, cooked under the guidance of the chef, followed by a country sauna in the holiday house.

PROGRAMME

DAY 1.

- ✘ **Transfer** from Tallinn to Kärka Holiday House <https://visitkarka.com>.
- ✘ **Introduction of the tour.** Meeting with the fishing guide, instruction about fishing.
- ✘ **Guided fishing.** Fishing 3–4 hours, light lunch in the open air, fishing 3 hours. Return to the accommodation.
- ✘ **Dinner.** Guests will prepare dinner from the day's catch with the chef.
- ✘ **Evening sauna.**
- ✘ **Overnight** in Kärka Holiday House.

DAY 2.

- ✘ **Breakfast.**
- ✘ **Guided fishing.** Fishing 3–4 hours, light lunch prepared with the guidance of the chef.
- ✘ **Transfer** to Tallinn.



LAHEMAA RING – COMMUNITY LIFE OF THE JUMINDA PENINSULA

www.visitlahemaa.com

GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: **1 day + overnight accommodation**
Season: **January–December**
For whom: **min. 2–max. 20 pers.**

SERVICES INCLUDED:

meals, programme visits,
accommodation

DURATION OF THE PROGRAMME:

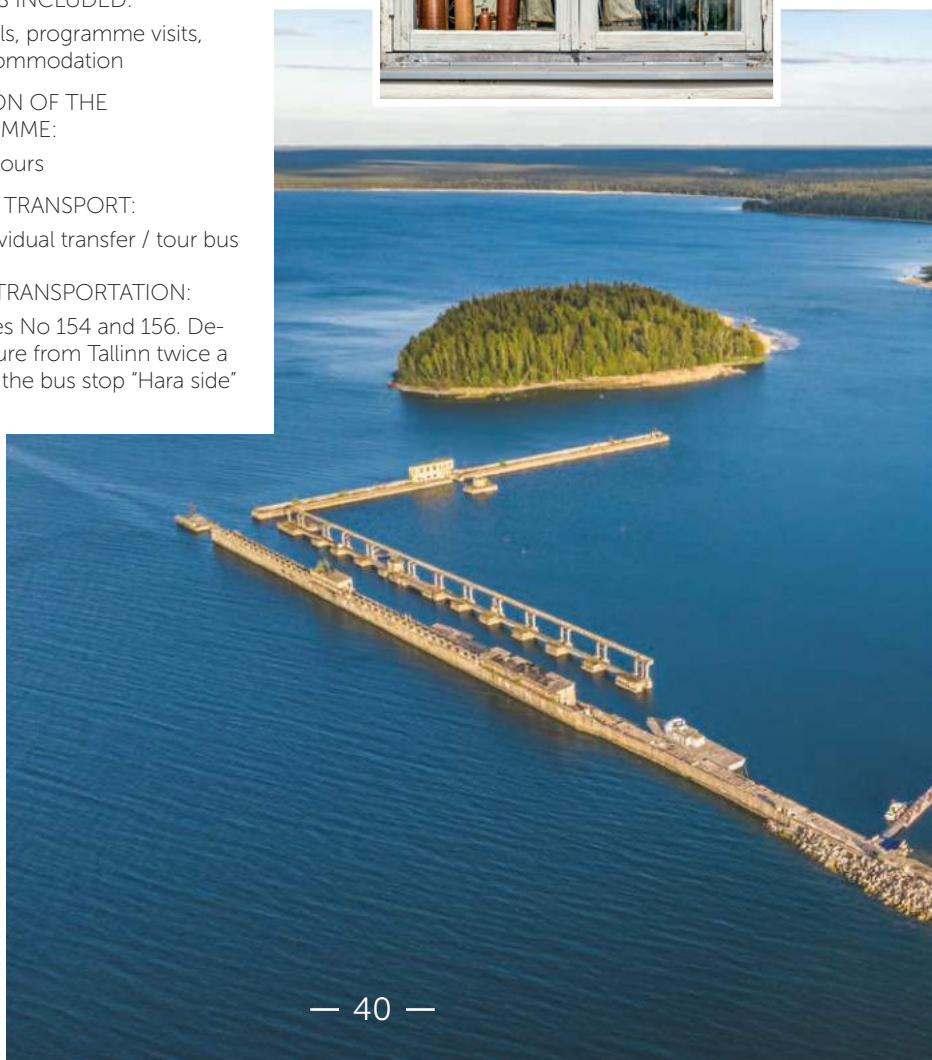
24 hours

TYPE OF TRANSPORT:

individual transfer / tour bus

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION:

buses No 154 and 156. Departure from Tallinn twice a day, the bus stop "Hara side"



LOCATION



Lahemaa National Park



Tallinn ~60km



Riina Laanetu, local guide



Contact: Kaisa Linno,
MTÜ Lahemaa Tourism
Association
+372 52 39239
kaisa@kolgakyla.ee



INTRODUCTION

Named after its oldest village, Juminda peninsula is connected with many legends. There are relics from different periods and fields to be seen. The local community is resourceful, and 10 villages are well known for their active co-operation. They have established a voluntary sea rescue unit, a community house and a shop.

Riina, the hosting guide, has lived in the area all her life. She knows everything about life and the people on the peninsula. Riina will show visitors the life of the local community, also talking about how the villages came to be, how they developed and survived during Soviet times. Riina speaks Estonian, English and Russian, she also knows the local dialect well. This programme is an example package, introducing the Juminda peninsula. A full Lahemaa Ring with a great variety of local visits in villages of the Lahemaa national park takes 7 days. The programme will be arranged by MTÜ Lahemaa Tourism Association.



PROGRAMME

DAY 1.

✕ **Arrival and evening meal.**

Leesikalda holiday home, hostess Meelike Pukk <https://www.visitestonia.com/en/leesikalda-holiday-home>

DAY 2

✕ **Breakfast at Leesikalda holiday home.**

✕ **Ex-Soviet military submarine base at Hara.** When Hara port was built in the 1950's, a large part of the local village was taken away, 5 old farms that had existed there, were destroyed and families had



to move away. For decades, this part of the village was a restricted area and local people were not allowed to go there. Now local people are building it up as a tourism attraction and marina and telling their stories of its past.

✕ **Majakivi-Pikanõmme nature trail.**

Guests can find out how the local community is connected to nature, and witness the natural beauty of the Estonian wildlife – the ancient ice age landscapes, alternating bog and forests. To get the feeling of Lahemaa, they can climb the Majakivi (House stone), the third largest boulder in Estonia.

www.loodusegakoos.ee/where-to-go/national-parks/lahemaa-national-park/majakivi-pikanomme-study-trail-7-km

✕ **Lunch.** Simple Estonian food from local ingredients at the home restaurants of "Johannes" or "MerMer".

www.visitestonia.com/en/home-restaurant-johannes

www.visitestonia.com/en/restaurant-mermer-a-place-where-you-can-be-with-your-loved-ones

✕ **Tammistu Lammas sheep farm.** The pastoral life of the coastal meadows and sheep farming. The hostess Kaie will talk about the maintenance and restoration of semi-natural communities and why they are necessary. Visitors will get to know the sheep and the cattle dogs.

<https://www.visitestonia.com/en/guided-hikes-in-lahemaa-on-tammistu-beach-meadow-with-sheep-and-cattle-dogs>

✕ **Veldi and daughter's brewery.**

Visitors will learn how local beer is made and taste five different beers.

<https://www.facebook.com/VELDI-jatC39CTRED-OC39C-856791301031710>

✕ **Community shop and post office at Leesi.** The shop and post office is run by a cooperative of 70 local families. Selling local delicacies.

www.facebook.com/LeesiKauplus



Finland





Destination

ÅLAND

Visitaland.com
<https://aland.travel/islands>
www.alandstrafiken.ax/en

DISCOVER
6700
ISLANDS!



Åland is an autonomous region of Finland. It is the smallest region of the country, constituting 0.51% of its land area and 0.54% of its population. The official language is Swedish. The capital city of Åland is Mariehamn.

Åland has 6,700 named islands and additionally 20,000 smaller islands and islets. It is a small community of some 32,000 inhabitants and has a lot of nature trails, beaches, forests and the four seasons to discover. The islands are connected by ferry lines, bridges, and causeways.

The ferry traffic in the Åland archipelago operates along four routes. The routes connect the archipelago municipalities with mainland Åland as well as mainland Finland.

Finland

The northern line (Norra linjen) operates between Hummelvik, Vårdö and Vuosnainen (Osnäs), in Kustavi (Gustavs) on mainland Finland. The ferries along the northern line stop at the islands Enklinge, Kumlinge, Lappo and Torsholma. From Torsholma it is necessary to travel overland to Åva where there is a ferry connection to Jurmo. From Åva there is also a ferry connection to Vuosnainen (Osnäs), in Kustavi (Gustavs). The ferries along the northern line stop at the islands Föglö (Överö), Sottunga, Husö, Kyrkogårdsö and Kökar.

The southern line (Södra linjen) operates between Långnäs, Lumparland and Galtby, Korpoo on mainland Finland.

The cross line (Tvärgående linjen) operates between Långnäs, Lumparland and Snäckö, Kumlinge. The cross line connects the northern and southern line without having to travel through mainland Åland.

The Föglö line (Föglölinjen) operates the short passage between Svinö, Lumparland and Degerby, Föglö. Pre-booking is normally only required on early morning or late evening departures.

Ferries connecting Åland from Finland and Sweden:

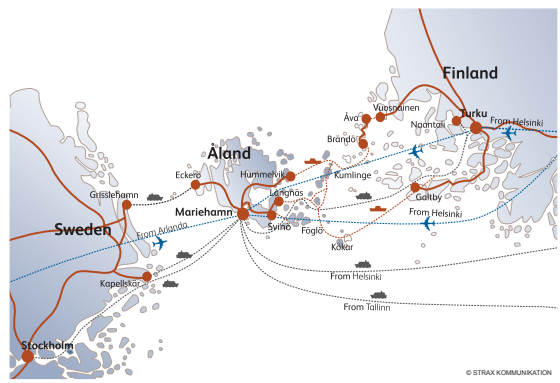
- Viking Line (Turku/Helsinki-Åland-Stockholm) (Åland-Kapellskär-Stockholm)
- Tallink Silja (Turku/Helsinki-Åland-Stockholm)
- Eckerö Linjen (Åland-Grisslehamn-Stockholm)

Tickets for cars, motorcycles, caravans and other motorised vehicles can be purchased onboard the ferries or in advance.

By taking the archipelago route to mainland Åland, visitors have the opportunity to take in all the lovely sites and local places that the 6 archipelago municipalities Brändö, Föglö, Sottunga, Kumlinge, Kökar, Vårdö have to offer. Visitors can take the northern line and stop at Brändö or the Southern line and stop at Kökar, when starting their journey from mainland Finland.

As in other rural destinations, Åland restaurants and businesses also use locally produced food and to top it off there are spring and harvest festivals. At these events farmers and producers sell directly to visitors. Åland is also Finland's apple kingdom and all through the archipelago to the mainland Åland apple farms can be seen.

There is a special atmosphere in Åland. It's all about safety and peace, and the constant presence of the sea. It's a rural place, for visitors that appreciate the good things in life.



HIKING AND NATURE TRAILS IN ÅLAND

<https://www2.visitaland.com/en/todo?filter=c%3D30881>



Nature is one of the reasons that the Åland Islands are a popular tourist destination and also why the natives love their home. Visitors who want to live like a local in Åland can do as the locals do and go on a nature walk and since the locals enjoy nature walks there are a lot of different routes in the Åland Islands.

The hiking trails in Åland are 10 to 60 kilometres long. For the most part they are easy, but the path is often uneven in parts and the bedrock can be slippery, but they are amazing. Locals use the trails for picnics and to spend time with family and friends. Visitors can walk along the trails for free but are reminded to leave the trail as they found it, and leave no garbage behind.

The Åland archipelago has trails for beginners and a pilgrim's route. St Olav Waterway is the first pilgrim's route in the world that runs through an archipelago. Find out more about St. Olavsleden here <https://stolavwaterway.com/en/>.

Nature trails in Föglö, Vårdö, Kumlinge, Kökar, Sottunga and Brändö islands:

The nature trails listed here are between 1 and 8 km long and vary from easy to medium difficulty. No special equipment is required, but sometimes the ground can be wet, so boots or good outdoor shoes are recommended. Many of the nature trails are in nature reserves <https://stolavwaterway.com/en/>

✕ **Kumlinge Åttan**
12,5 km – Medieval church and archipelago nature

✕ **Seglinge STANGNÄS–SANDVIK**
8 km – giant's kettle and rocky seashores

✕ **Lappo, Brändö**
5 km – archipelago nature and a midsummer pole

✕ **Brändö JÅSHOLM**
3 km – deciduous trees and bird life

✕ **Jurmo, Brändö JURMO 3 km** – archipelago spirit and swimming in the sea

✕ **Föglö JYDDÖ 5 km** – sea fowl and butterflies

✕ **Föglö HASTERSBODA 4 km** – seashores and magical coniferous forests

✕ **Vårdö LÖVÖ 5 km** – peace congress and russian stone ovens

✕ **Sottunga SKOGSRUNDAN 4 km** – sea views and marshland

✕ **Sottunga: BYRUNDAN 2 km** – village trail in finland's smallest municipality

✕ **Kökar KALEN 7 km** – bronze age and war ruins

APPLE SAFARI ON ÖFVERGÅRDS APPLE FARM

www.ofvergards.ax

GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: half day

Season: May–August

For whom: individuals /
groups (min. 2–max. 9 pers.)

SERVICES INCLUDED:

a guided walk in the garden,
tasting farm produce

DURATION OF THE PROGRAMME:

1.5 hours

+ optional picnic lunch

THE FARM SHOP IS OPEN:

June–August, Thursday–

Sunday 12:00–16:00

July, Tuesday–Sunday

12:00–16:00

TYPE OF TRANSPORT:

individual transfer / tour bus



LOCATION



Vesterbacken 76,
22330 Tjudö, Åland



Mariehamn 35 km



Anna and Jan Alm



info@ofvergards.ax



INTRODUCTION

Öfvergårds is a family-run apple farm in Tjudö, in the area called Åland's apple kingdom. Tjudö is located on the mainland of Åland, in a 30min drive by car from Mariehamn.

Anna and Jan grow and process their own apples. They took over the farm from Anna's parents who planted the orchard in the 1980ies. Through hard work, continuous learning and innovations they have developed the farm from a traditional apple orchard into an innovative food craft company. The farm produces apple juice, squeezing apples of each variety separately, as they are at their best, to highlight the colour, taste and character of each apple variety.

On the Apple Safari programme, visitors will follow Anna and Jan on an exciting taste journey to see, experience and learn more about apples and to learn a little about the farm's history. An optional extra is a picnic with packed lunch amidst apple trees, especially beautiful when in blossom. It is called "AX-picking in the apple orchard". AX is the postal code for the Åland Islands and it has now become a signature that products are made and are from the Åland Islands. Guests can pick up their meals and picnic tables on wheels from the farm and choose a place in the apple orchard to roll out the cart and enjoy their picnic meal in a peaceful and quiet atmosphere.

PROGRAMME

- ✘ **Meeting the hosts.** Introduction of the family business and lifestyle.
- ✘ **Apple orchard.** A guided walk through the apple orchard, stories about apple varieties and apple farming.
- ✘ **Apple juice tasting.** Visitors can taste a selection of apple juices produced from the farm's apples with special Åland flavours.
- ✘ **Optional – picnic lunch in the orchard.**



Destination

ARCHIPELAGO OF KÖKAR IN ÅLAND

www.aland.travel/kokar-en



In the outermost southern part of Åland lies the archipelago of Kökar, consisting of one larger island surrounded by thousands of smaller ones. What most attracts visitors to Kökar today is the stunning nature, composed of barren rocks with pockets of lush forests, wild fields and protected bays for swimming. At Kökar guests can visit the local history museum (*hembygd museum*), take a boat trip to Källskär, bike around and take a picnic in Hamnö near the church. Kökar is also known for the Franciscan monastery that stood here during the medieval times and "Franciscan days" are held every July to celebrate the Saint. Peders Aplagård is also an excellent place to visit by bike, where they bottle spring water "oppsjöbrus" and sell apple products. Visitors can also take a guided tour in their apple tree garden.

Stay at Hotel Brudhäll, Skinnars cottages or Antons B&B where they have sheep that guests can see and pet. Visitors are welcome at Kökar to experience a long walk along the nature trails, watch birds from bird-watching platforms and take a picnic in the sunset.

How to get there: From Finland Pargas (2.5h), or Långnäs mainland Åland (2.5h).

PEDERS APLAGÅRD

www.aplagarden.ax



Finland

GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: half day
Season: March–November
For whom: individuals or groups up to 20 people

SERVICES INCLUDED:

guided tour in the apple orchard

DURATION OF THE PROGRAMME:

3 hours

TYPE OF TRANSPORT:

own car or hire a bike from hotel Brudhäll

LOCATION



Österbygge, 22730 Kökar, Åland, Finland



Mariehamn 83 km, Helsinki 281 km



Ferry from Finland Pargas (2.5h) or Långnäs mainland Åland (2.5h).



Siv and Peder Blomsterlund



+358 407 362 498 (Siv)
aplaboden@gmail.com



PROGRAMME

- ✗ The host will guide visitors around the apple orchard.
- ✗ After the orchard tour:
 - guests can enjoy products from local farms in the café,
 - guests can also play disc golf at the apple farm <https://www.discgolf.ax/>.



INTRODUCTION

Finland's southernmost apple orchard with about 1200 trees is at Kökar in the Åland archipelago. The farm is located in Österbygge, about 2 km from the main road.

Peders Aplagård is today a two-family company, started in 2006, but Peder has grown apples on the farm since 1985. The many hours of sunshine on the beautiful island produce sweet and tasty apples.

A farm shop with a café, Aplaboden sells the farm's apple-based products, locally produced honey, handicrafts and other small and good things from various food craftsmen. The café recommends the Åland pancake à la Aplaboden

and other good homemade cakes with coffee. The visit can be combined with an overnight stay at Brudhäll hotel in Karlby village www.brudhall.com

ANTONS B&B

<https://antons.ax/our-rooms>

GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: 2 days
 Season: May–September
 For whom: individuals /
 groups (min. 1–max. 11 pers.)

SERVICES INCLUDED:

participation in sheep farm
 work, overnight with breakfast

TYPE OF TRANSPORT:

individual transfer / own car,
 bike, ferry


LOCATION

 Munkvervan 22730,
 Kökar Åland

 Mariehamn 83 km,
 Helsinki 281 km

 Ferry from Finland Pargas (2.5h) or
 Långnäs mainland Åland (2.5h).

 Joel Sundström and
 Daniela Hellström

 +358 40 7352858
antons.gasthem@gmail.com

PROGRAMME

The hosts Daniela Hellström and Joel Sundström welcome guests with open arms to show around their sheep farm and let them try out some simple farm tasks. Guests can spend two days with an overnight at the farm's guest house enjoying the rural lifestyle by choosing activities they like including (when available):

✘ **Visit Åland sheep, cats and dogs** on the farm, help out with some farm work.

✘ **Visit grandmother Sylvia's herb garden.**

✘ **Go bird watching,** guests can even start their bird watching from the steps of the guest house since the most valuable places to observe the bird migration are actually close by.

✘ **Sail to the hard-to-reach skerries in Kökar's** outermost archipelago in a rough-sailing rigged boat called "Tjutt-tjutt". The captain is an experienced sailor with good knowledge of the archipelago, its history and nature.



INTRODUCTION

"Antons" is a sheep farm and a B&B on Kökar island. The name "Antons" comes from the farm's founder Anton Fagerström who was a fisherman and built a home for his family back in 1920. Now the third generation, Anton's grandchildren, live here. The little guest house with cosy rooms is situated in an old village not far from the sea.

Joel Sundström took over the family business, running the B&B and now he is also a sheep farmer. The family has two holiday apartments for rent, a total of 5 rooms with 11 beds that they rent out all year round. All rooms have access to the kitchen, WC, shower and sauna and are non-smoking. Visitors are attracted by the changes of nature, the starry sky and the silence. From the balcony, guests can watch the sheep and listen to the birds during the summer months.

BOAT TRIP TO KÄLLSKÄR ISLAND

www.brudhall.com/attractions-on-kokar-aland

www.kokar.ax/grevens-oe-kaellskaer?lang=en

GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: 3h

Season: May to September

For whom: 1–48 pers.

SERVICES INCLUDED:

boat ride to Källskär from outside the Brudhäll Hotell in Kökar

TYPE OF TRANSPORT:

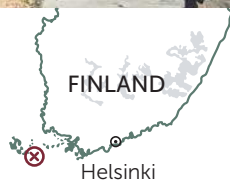
boat



INTRODUCTION

Located in the Kökar archipelago Källskär – called the baron's paradise in English, is a small, almost mythical island, far out at sea, off mainland Kökar. The island is one of the most popular destinations for excursions from Kökar and what has attracted visitors for a long time is the so-called "Källskärskannan", a unique rock formation created during the ice age. The formation stretching about 3 m up from the surrounding rock is smooth and round. There are also other amazing natural phenomena created throughout history.

What has recently contributed to the legends of Källskär is the oasis created by the Swedish baron Göran Åkerhielm. Despite the rough ground and the exposed situation of the island, a harbour, several houses and a magnificent garden have been constructed here.



LOCATION



Island of Källskär in Kökar archipelago
GPS: 59.87396, 20.90327



Mariehamn 83 km,
Helsinki 281 km



To Kökar island by ferry from Finland Pargas (2.5h) or Långnäs mainland Åland (2.5h). The trip to Källskär starts from outside the Brudhäll Hotel in Kökar.



Brudhäll Hotel
+358 01855955
info@brudhall.com

PROGRAMME

The boat trip usually starts from Brudhäll at 1pm. (13:00). Visitors will be back at the hotel in 3–4 hours. A guide will show visitors around the island.



Destination BRÄNDÖ ISLAND IN ÅLAND

www.brando.ax/en



Brändö is the northernmost of the Åland archipelago municipalities and closest to the mainland of Finland. Brändö consists of over one thousand islands, ten of them are inhabited, among them Lappö and Jurmo. The islands are connected to each other by bridges, causeways and small ferries. There are many islets and skerries, small archipelago villages, sights and other places which can be explored by e.g., kayaking amidst the islands or cycling along the roads. The varied landscape offers everything from deciduous forests to barren cliffs and the ever-present sea. There are great public bathing beaches, e.g. Korsklöbsrevet south of Brändöby village has a diving board and a beach volleyball court.

How to get there:

Brändö is situated 2.5 hours from mainland Åland, 2 hours from Turku, Finland. If travelling from the Turku archipelago it is easy to catch the ferry from Houtskär in Pargas to Torsholma in Brändö, or from Osnäs to Åva.

GULLVIVA BRÄNDÖ

www.hotellgullvivan.com

www.facebook.com/gullvivan.brandof/



Finland

GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: 2 day trip
Season: January–December
For whom: individuals

SERVICES INCLUDED:

hotel accommodation and breakfast. Other services – optional.

TYPE OF TRANSPORT:

individual transport
+ public ferry

LOCATION



Hotell Gullvivan, Björnholma, Brändö 22920, Åland



2,5 hours from mainland Åland, 2 hours from Turku, Finland. Tickets for cars, motorcycles, caravans and other motorized vehicles can be purchased onboard the ferries.



Eva Nordlund



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gullvivan@aland.net

INTRODUCTION

The hotel is located in Björnholm, one of the islands in Brändö municipality. The hotel and restaurant Gullvivan is located on its own small grounds, yet close to the road network in the Åland Northeast Archipelago municipality Brändö. The hotel has 31 rooms, is open all year round and has a beautiful lake view from every room. For guests arriving by their own boats, Gullvivan's guest harbour has room for 25 boats, and has all the services of the main hotel. Gullvivan's customers can use their electric car charger for free.



PROGRAMME

There is no scheduled activity programme. Guests can enjoy the rural lifestyle by creating their own programme from the many options available:

- ✘ **Miniature golf at the sea.** Gullviva's 12-hole mini golf course is just 50 meters from the main building.
- ✘ **The hotel rents out boats with or without a motor.** On the lake the visitors can enjoy the archipelago's outstanding nature. The hotel chef will prepare a takeaway lunch for the outing upon request.
- ✘ **Guided fishing trip.** The fish guide knows the perfect spots – the visitors will be guided to get a good catch.
- ✘ Sport fishing cards can be bought for 3 days or for one week. The area is Brändö, Torsholma and Åva. Visitors can also buy a fishing card around Gullviva hotell, Björnholma.
- ✘ **A relaxing sauna bath** is available in the hotel sauna or at the beach.
- ✘ Guests can enjoy the fresh air and look at the stars at night, while barbecuing in the hotel's BBQ-hut.



Destination LAPPO ISLAND IN ÅLAND



Lappo island is situated between Torsholm and Kumlinge. Lappo covers an area of 8 km², measuring 4.3 km from north to south. The island has around 30 permanent inhabitants and many more in the summer. Lappo has a store with a post office, library, guest harbour, museum, summer restaurant, pension, frisbeegolf course and hiking trail.

How to get there:

There is a ferry connection from the Finnish harbour of Osnäs or the ferry from Hummelvik. From the village harbour Finvik there is a connection with M/S Frida II to neighbouring island Asterholma and Asterholma holiday village.



PELLAS GUEST HOUSE ON LAPPO ISLAND

www.pellas.ax/en, www.facebook.com/pellas.lappo

GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: 2 day trip
Season: January–December
For whom: individuals / groups
max. 18 pers.

SERVICES INCLUDED:

B&B

TYPE OF TRANSPORT:

individual transport
+ public ferry

LOCATION



Pellas Gästhem, Lappoby, 22840
Lappoby, Åland Islands



Mariehamn 92 km (4h),
Helsinki 280 km (6h). There is a
ferry connection on the route.



Tiina Thörnroos



+358 40 8324 333
info@pellas.ax

INTRODUCTION

Lappo is a holiday option for visitors looking forward to spending time in peace and quiet.

The place is never crowded. Tiina Thörnroos and her family run a cosy guesthouse in a converted former village school which is inland from the sea, and also offer self-catering cottages Pellas Marina No. 1 or No. 3 near the island's harbour.



PROGRAMME

There is no scheduled activity programme. The island stay offers a relaxed holiday in a peaceful environment admiring the local landscapes and life. Guests can spend a peaceful weekend walking, fishing, rowing, going on a picnic, and playing Frisbee golf. One can pick a rock on the shore to sit upon and just gaze at the horizon feeling one's heart and mind coming down. In summer a day can be finished with an al fresco dinner in the garden. Tiina and her family will help in finding the way around the island.



Destination

JURMO ISLAND IN ÅLAND

www.jurmo.ax

www.facebook.com/jurmoaland



The small island of Jurmo in Åland's north-eastern archipelago is a place for any visitor who wants to take it easy. The length of the island is about 3.5 km and it boasts a marina, hostel, shop, café and restaurant. This is a rural destination where the visitors can relax and enjoy the maritime lifestyle.

How to get there:

Jurmo in Brändö municipality is only a short step from the mainland. From Osnäs in Gustavs on the mainland, it is just over half an hour's journey by car ferry Vigen to Åva. From Åva, the small ferry Doppingen often travels to Jurmo and it takes only ten minutes. From Mariehamn, the journey to Jurmo is about four hours and the easiest way is by car and archipelago ferry from Hummelvik on Vårdö.



JURMO – THE ISLAND OF COWS AND SEA BIRDS

GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: 2 days
Season: June–September
For whom: individuals

SERVICES INCLUDED:

B&B

TYPE OF TRANSPORT:

individual transport
+ public ferry

LOCATION



sea chart 779 / 60° 31,5' 21° 4,5'



Mariehamn 123km (5h 30min),
Helsinki 255km (6h). There are ferry
connections on the route.



Marieanne Karlström, Leif Lundberg



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djurmo@jurmo.ax

INTRODUCTION

The small island Jurmo in Åland's north-eastern archipelago has 44 inhabitants and is a place for relaxed holidays. Jurmo's speciality is the long-haired and handsome horned Highland cattle from Scotland, which by grazing on the island, help in keeping the landscape open and beautiful. The animals are kept outdoors all year round and the beef meat can be bought at the Butik Kvarnen summer store and can also be ordered in advance.

Marieanne Karlström and Leif Lundberg will host visitors arriving in Jurmo and will talk about living and working on the island, while local nature guide Jukka will talk about the sea.

PROGRAMME

There is no scheduled programme for activities on the island. The island stay offers a relaxed 2-day holiday in a peaceful environment admiring the local landscapes and life. Guests can enjoy the pure archipelago food, stay in a quiet hostel, walk in the open air and enjoy the surroundings, watch seabirds with local nature guide Jukka, take a boat out on the sea and watch the sunset or fish, go on a picnic, relax, take in the sounds from the sea and enjoy the maritime lifestyle.



Finland





Destination LOHJA



*Lohja – a cosy
lake town in South
Coast Finland*



Lohja is a beautiful region in the midst of unspoiled, true Finnish nature, only a one-hour drive west from Helsinki. Enjoy the peacefulness of Lake Lohjanjärvi, the largest lake in Southern Finland. Be amazed by the same landscape, lakes, and forests that inspired the creator of the Finnish national epic, The Kalevala. Explore the myths and mythology of the Kalevala and learn healing methods from the old Finnish way of life.

Lohja is a traditional region with well-established roots. At the heart of the cosy town is the 500-year old church site where people gathered and traded long before the church was built. Later fine manors and industrial plants were erected, helping Lohja grow even bigger and more prosperous. Municipal mergers have enriched the Lohja area with new and charming villages, fertile countryside, and beautiful cultural landscapes. The area's unique specialty are apples and the many sweet delicacies made from them. In Lohja region there are more than 200 000 apple trees which ripen during August–September and, of course, charming hanami – flowers in May.

What is the enchantment of the lake and forests? It is a moment spent with loved ones in the peace of your own cottage, hiking in the lush groves of the shores of Lake Lohjanjärvi or skating on the ice of a frozen lake in winter. The enchantment of the lake is relaxing by the water, sunny summer events and local delicacies on the terrace of the summer café.

Finland

TRADITIONAL FINNISH TEXTILE ART WORKSHOP



www.iltamaa.fi, www.youtube.com/iltamaa

GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: half day
Season: January–December
For whom: groups
(min. 5–max. 10 pers.)

SERVICES INCLUDED:

materials and guidance

DURATION OF THE PROGRAMME:

2 hours

TYPE OF TRANSPORT:

private transport / taxi / public transport

LOCATION



Iltamaa, Lohja region



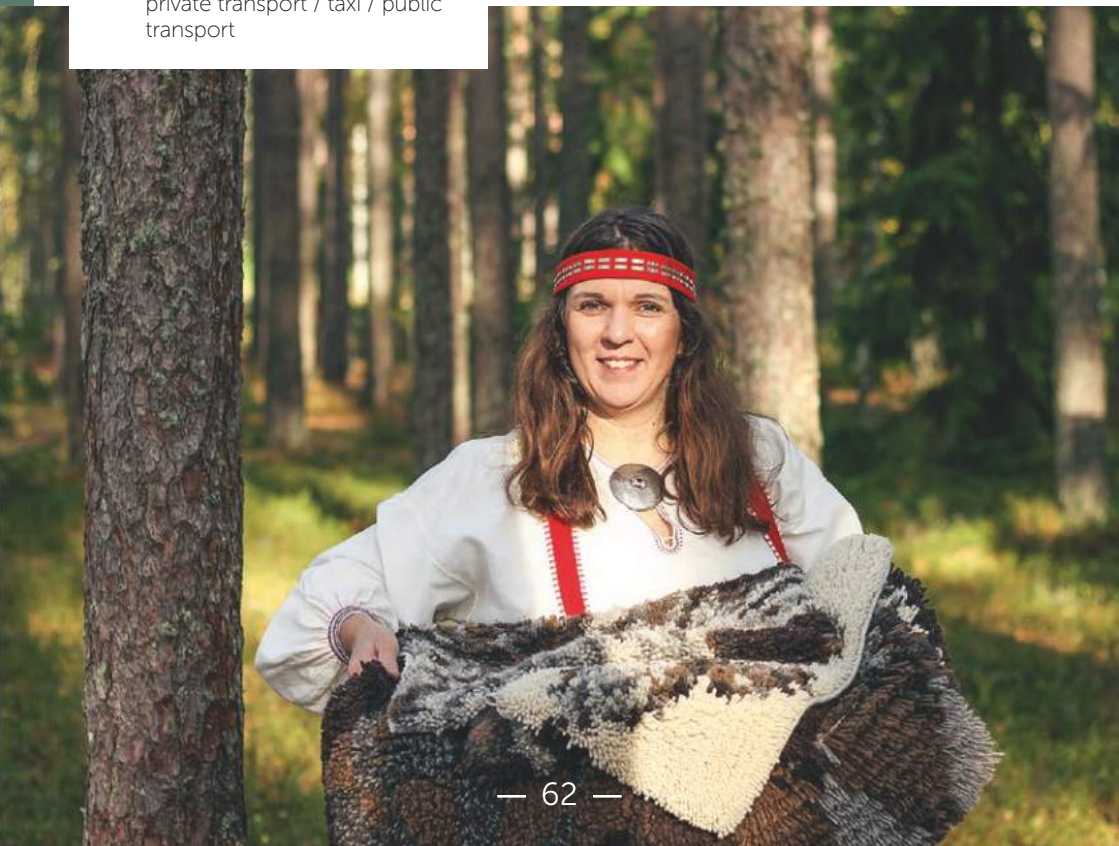
Helsinki 60 km



Jenni Vanhanen



+358 45 783 44445
jenni@iltamaa.fi



INTRODUCTION

This workshop will take place at the Kettukallio Experience farm situated in the Finnish countryside, some 20 minutes' drive from the city of Lohja and surrounded by a beautiful Finnish forest. An alternative option is to have this Textile Art workshop at a local Yarn Shop Vaudevilla in the heart of Lohja. The shop is full of colourful textile materials to see and buy.

Traditional Finnish textile art, called Ryjy, is on the intangible cultural heritage list of Finland. Traditionally, ryijys, which are knotted-pile textiles, have been used as large blankets, wall hangings or seat covers. Ryijys were normally woven on a loom or sewn on a base fabric. Nowadays ryijys are made in a range of sizes to suit their intended purpose and a wide variety of materials can be used. The ryjy tradition is being passed on through teaching as well as by thousands of enthusiasts and techniques for making ryijys can also be learned through social media.

Finnish wool and handcraft is Jenni's enthusiasm. She became a textile artisan when, after working as an IT engineer for over 20 years, she wanted to change her life and became inspired by Finnish nature and traditions. She was nominated as Artisan of The Year in Finland for keeping up the traditional handicraft art. Jenni speaks Finnish, English, Swedish, Italian and German. The main language during the workshop is Finnish or English.

Workshop participants will learn about real Finnish traditions and will learn how to make Finnish textile rugs.

PROGRAMME

- ✕ The story of ryjy.
- ✕ Introduction to equipment and materials.
- ✕ Selecting your design from a range of readymade designs.
- ✕ Learning how to sew a ryjy knot.
- ✕ Working on one's own piece of material.
- ✕ Learning how to use, clean and maintain the ryjy traditional textile.





TO THE ROOTS OF FINNISH WELLBEING – NATURE CONNECTEDNESS IN A FOREST PARK

www.arboretummagnolia.fi

GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: half day
Season: May–October
For whom: individuals / groups
(min. 5–max. 20 pers.)

SERVICES INCLUDED:

guided wellness trail

DURATION OF THE PROGRAMME:

2.5 hours

TYPE OF TRANSPORT:

individual transfer / tour bus

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION:

bus Helsinki–Lohja



LOCATION



Kokkolahdentie 60, 08100
Lohja



Helsinki 80 km



Suvi Pohjola-Stenroos
(MSc Landscape Architecture)
& Esa Stenroos
(MSc Technology),
Arboretum Magnolia



+358 400 202 099
suvi@axina.fi

INTRODUCTION

The park - collection of trees in the area of 3 ha, is located on Lohjanjärvi lakefront, in rural Skraatila village. The collection includes more than 100 taxons and 300 varieties of trees and shrubs from three continents. There is a guided wellness trail, and the hosts offer different garden themes. Facilities on site: cafeteria, several terraces, parking lot accommodates also busses, two eco toilets with running water.

The host family Stenroos has been building this Arboretum for 18 years. The activities are guided by biophilia, respect and love for all creatures in nature. The Arboretum is home to both the Stenroos family and numerous plants and wildlife in the middle of nature. The host wishes that the visitor would find ways to connect with Finnish nature in this forest park by Lohja lake.

A 1 km long guided wellness trail is meant for improving nature connectedness, restoration and wellbeing by introducing several garden themes. The guided themes will vary according to the seasonal interest of the park. This guided tour will briefly present the theories of biophilia and biodiversity and how they influence human wellbeing and health. It is an outdoor excursion; therefore, suitable clothing and footwear for walking on the forest and lawn paths are recommended.



PROGRAMME

- ✕ **Arrival and short walk** to the Cafeteria Terrace (10 min).
- ✕ **Introduction.** Welcome drinks, program presentation, guidance application of GLOPAS for phones (20 min). You may load this Glopas App into your phone and get more detailed information during the program if you want to.
- ✕ **Butterfly garden.** Short presentation of the biophilia and biodiversity theories and how they matter to our health (15 min).
- ✕ **Stream path.** Option for barefoot walking on the lawn (10 min).
- ✕ **Stumpery.** Mystery, fairies, the significance of wood for the ecosystems (15 min).
- ✕ **Valley.** Rain gardens on a slope, sustainable urban drainage systems for saving water are important globally (10 min).
- ✕ **Japanese garden.** Symbolism, simplicity, old traditions, respect (10min).
- ✕ **Beach Terrace.** Connecting with nature, restoration on the beach terrace (15 min).
- ✕ **Silver Birch Forest and Forest path** Connecting with nature on rocks with lichen and moss, berry tasting in July and August (15 min).
- ✕ **Café terrace.** Café, tea, soft drinks, a variety of bakery products on the buffet. Opportunity to buy small gift items (30 min).
- ✕ **Departure.** A small gift for improving personal nature, connectedness and restoration.

Finland

DESIGN AND MYTHOLOGY IN THE FINNISH COUNTRYSIDE



<https://www.fiskarsvillage.fi/en/>

GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: full day
Season: May–September
For whom: groups
(min. 5–max. 10 pers.)

SERVICES INCLUDED:

guiding services Helsinki-Siuntio-Fiskars Village-Helsinki, visits as per programme, coffee/tea berry pie, eat-like-a-local lunch, a small design-gift

DURATION OF THE PROGRAMME:

9 hours

TYPE OF TRANSPORT:

individual transfer / tour bus

LOCATION



Fiskarsintie, 10470 Fiskars Village



Helsinki 87 km



Guide Virve Haahti, Folk musician Ulla Hillebrandt & Sculptor Jenni Tieaho, Ceramist Karin Widnäs



+358 (0) 20 439 2099
fiskarsvillage@fiskars.com



INTRODUCTION

Finns are well-known for their design, and this tour visits places for art and design enthusiasts, food enthusiasts and anyone who enjoys cute historic villages with a unique, local atmosphere. The sculptor and environmental artist studio in Siuntio village is located in a beautiful rural area, surrounded by farms and local rural life. Fiskars Village is in the historical surroundings of an old village area outside the town of Raasepori.

The tour is hosted by Ms. Virve Haahti, an official and professional tourist guide approved by the Finnish Association for Guides. She has lengthy experience in travel and tourism business in both her home country Finland and several European countries.

The tour presents a modern rural lifestyle visiting local people who live in the countryside practicing arts and music, based on nature and Finnish traditional values.



PROGRAMME

- ✕ **09:00 Departure from Helsinki.** Start from Helsinki with Virve Haahti. www.virvehaahti.com
- ✕ **~10:00 Rural lifestyle visit.** Meet sculptor and environmental artist Jenni Tieaho and musician Ulla Hillebrandt. Coffee/tea with local berry pie.
- ✕ **Jenni Tieaho's art** consists of sculptures, installations and environmental art. The core of her work is in utilising natural resources such as willow, birch bark and other plant parts with steel to compliment them. Inspiration comes from Finnish mythology and forest fables. Jenni feels most comfortable in the wilderness and nature is like a second nationality and a second language to her. <https://jennitieaho.fi>.
- ✕ **Folk musician Ulla** is a singer, archaic instrument player, fiddler and folk dancer. Ulla's parents and grandparents guided her into the Finnish folk traditions and her traditional roots are from northern Finland where both forest and rural traditions are still strongly alive. She found her natural roots during her growth into Finnish nature and forest therapy, while in her performances she also uses local southern Finnish folk traditions. During her artistic years she has delved deeply into the mystical world of Finnish forest. One of her specialty areas is the Finnish epic story of Kalevala. Its myths and fairy tales can be found in her various performances where she uses traditional poems, melodies and rhythms. www.ulla.fi
- ✕ **11:15 Departure to Fiskars Village.**
- ✕ **12:15 – 13:15 Eat-like-a-local lunch at Fiskars Wårdshus restaurant:** handicraft, seasonal delicacies and the wonderful ambiance of the oldest Inn in Finland. www.wardshus.fi
- ✕ **13:30 – 14:30 Rural lifestyle visit.** KWUM, Ceramic Museum and Gallery, meet ceramist Karin Widnäs. The architecture of the museum combines timber and ceramics elements and besides the permanent collection, which largely comprises Karin Widnäs' own collections, the museum features changing exhibitions of both domestic and foreign ceramic pieces. www.kwum.fi
- ✕ **14:30-16:30 Free time** for design-shopping and getting to know the village. www.fiskarsvillage.fi
- ✕ **16:30 Departure to Helsinki.** Optional: accommodation in Hotel Tegel, Fiskars Village. Hotel Tegel is located at the heart of the beautiful Fiskars Village next to the water stream. <https://www.tegel.fi/hotel-tegel-fiskars-home.html>
- ✕ **18:00 Back in Helsinki.**

KALEVALA EXPERIENCE

www.visitlohja.fi



GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: 2 days
Season: May–September
For whom: groups
(min. 5–max. 20 pers.)

SERVICES INCLUDED:

transportation from Helsinki and back, guiding in destinations, accommodation, meals, programme visits. Optional – hosting guide and extra programmes as described below.

DURATION OF THE PROGRAMME:

2 days

TYPE OF TRANSPORT:

taxi / tour bus


TYPE OF TRANSPORT:


outdoor clothing and footwear for walking on the forest and lawn paths recommended

LOCATION

 Lohja region

 Helsinki 80 km

 on sites as per programme and optional – a hosting guide during the whole trip

 +358 44 369 1309
Visitlohja, tourist@lohja.fi



INTRODUCTION

The tour visits the sites of the Finnish national epic Kalevala which has shaped the nation's identity. The epic is a collection of thousands of poems by writer Elias Lönnrot who was born in the Lohja region in the 19th century. The Kalevala relates stories of love and loyalty, hatred and jealousy, it tells about the prehistoric past when people lived closer to nature. The Kalevala epic has inspired generations of artists, cloth and jewellery designers, musicians, and film producers.

The hosts on this tour are enthusiastically specialised in Finnish traditions, forest and wild animal mythology. Their lifestyle is practicing and integrating the art and handicraft skills and methods from the old times, as well as creative activities based in the Kalevala mythology, into today's life. This unique tour presents a manifestation in the material world of the mythological epic Kalevala. The 2-day programme can be prolonged by adding extra optional visits as described below.



PROGRAMME

Day 1

09:00 Departure from Helsinki. Drive to Wäinölä next to Nuuksio National Park.

10:00 – 13:00

Programme "The Magic of the Kalevala".

The programme takes place in Wäinölä, among the woods that are dedicated to Finnish folklore and traditions. The hosts are the Nuuksion Taika family company, with a strong connection to nature. www.nuuksiontaika.fi/

- ✕ Welcome with herbal drink and traditional Finnish salty pastry by the campfire.
- ✕ Visiting the Bear-hut, hearing and learning about bear-mythologies, listening to stories and songs from the Kalevala epic.
- ✕ Folk musicians will sing traditional Finnish songs and play traditional Finnish instruments such as kantele.
- ✕ Lunch: a wild mushroom pie with wild herbs and green salad, and a dessert made from forest berries and honey.
- ✕ Gift shop: Finnish handicrafts and wild foods.

13:00 – 14:00

Drive from Wäinölä to Siuntio.

Finland

14:00

Meet sculptor and environmental artist Jenni Tieaho and musician Ulla Hillebrandt.

✕ Jenni will talk about her art – the core of her work is in utilising natural resources such as willow, birch bark and other plant parts with steel to compliment them. Inspiration comes from Finnish mythology and forestry fables. <https://jennitieaho.fi>

✕ Folk musician and nature therapy guide, Ulla Hillebrandt, will bring the mythic stories of Kalevala alive by singing, playing and interacting with guests. www.ulla.fi

✕ Coffee and tea served with snacks. A small gift will be given as a memento of this visit.

✕ There will also be an opportunity to take photos wearing clothes made from natural ingredients from nature.

16:00 – 17:00

Drive from Siuntio to Mustio Manor.

18:00

Mustio Manor – dinner and overnight.

Dinner in the manor restaurant with meals and drinks from local ingredients. Accommodation and free time to enjoy the beautiful garden and historical surroundings of Mustio Manor. www.mustiolinna.fi



Day 2

08:00 – 10:00

Breakfast in Mustio Manor.

10:00 – 10:30

Pickup and drive to Sammatti village, the birthplace of Kalevala writer Elias Lönnrot.

10:30 – 13:30

Programme "A visit to the roots of Kalevala and Elias Lönnrot's Sammatti."

✕ **Drama guidance excursion hosted by Ms. Virko Kolulahti**, a drama character Miina Lönnrot who was Elias' niece and housekeeper. She will introduce the rural setting and life in the early 19th century that inspired the creator of the Finnish national epic. www.virko.fi/

✕ **Visiting an arts workshop with the hostess Ms. Virko Kolulahti.** The blacksmith Mika Munter creates his blacksmith art based on Kalevala. He will show guests around the forge and talk about his arts projects related to the Kalevala epic finishing with coffee and a snack and an opportunity to buy Mika's forging work.

13:30 – 14:00

Drive from Sammatti to Kettukallio Experience Farm. www.kettukallio.net





14.0 – 18:00

Programme "Fox Trail".

- ✘ Guests are greeted with Kalevala welcoming rituals including a local traditional drink and seasonal snack.
- ✘ A Fox Trail walk with a nature therapy guide in the forest of Kettukallio to enjoy forest views and relax in nature. Participants will hear the myth of a sly Finnish fox, sing along with traditional songs coloured with old folk music instruments.
- ✘ Lunch: Kalevala beef stew with bread and fresh salad, for dessert – the traditional Finnish blueberry pastry, called *rattan*, with coffee or tea.
- ✘ Gift shop.

18:00 – 19:00

Transfer back to Helsinki.

19:00

Arriving at the Hotel in Helsinki and free time in the city.

EXTRA OPTIONAL VISIT

The programme can be prolonged with the following extra optional visit in Helsinki:

MEET THE KALEVALA DESIGNER AT THE KALEVALA EXPERIENCE SHOP IN HELSINKI

www.mainiemi.com

Duration: 1 hour

The Kalevala Experience shop is located in the heart of historical Old Helsinki by Senate square in its oldest building, built in 1763. The shop is the only Kalevala shop in Finland exhibiting designs and fashion stories inspired by the Finnish national epic and Finnish nature and lifestyle.

Mai Niemi, the designer and shop owner, describes herself: *".....I pay tribute to the Kalevala wisdom and Finland's prehistoric past as one of the most original Finnish fashion designers. My recognizable etno-futuristic style and Scandinavian mythology combines the magic touch of fairy tales and legends with modern minimalism, brightness and novelty."*

The programme includes:

- ✘ Welcome drink on arrival.
- ✘ Mai Niemi tells a Kalevala fashion story, opening the magical and timeless Kalevala world and how she herself became a Kalevala fashion artist.
- ✘ Shop introduction and optional shopping with 15% group discount on shop products.
- ✘ Farewell gifting personal Kalevala connect- edness.



HEALTH HIKING IN KARNAINEN NATURE SPA

www.kisakallio.fi

GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: half day
Season: January–December
For whom: groups
(min. 5–max. 40 pers.)

SERVICES INCLUDED:

campfire and coffee & snack
break by open fire and nature
guide services

OPTIONAL EXTRA SERVICES:

- ✗ Lunch or dinner in Kisakallio Boat House by Lake Lohja.
- ✗ Accommodation in Kisakallio Hotel or Luxus Villas.

DURATION OF THE PROGRAMME:

3 hours hiking + 1 hour lunch

TYPE OF TRANSPORT:

individual transfer / tour bus

NOTICE:


outdoor clothing and good
hiking shoes recommended, as
well as a swimming suit and a
towel in the swimming season
May – December.

LOCATION

 Kaarina Karintie 4,
08360 Lohja

 Helsinki 50 km

 Kisakallio Sports Institute

 +358 19 31 511
sales@kisakallio.fi



INTRODUCTION

Karnaistenkorpi is the largest integrated recreation area in the Lohja region, covering approximately 200 ha. There are valleys, patches of marshland, quietly flowing forest streams and two beautiful forest ponds. Spending time in nature to keep fit is part of Finnish lifestyle today and the Kisakallio Sports Institute offers a wide variety of sports, activities, educational opportunities as well as excellent facilities for professional and amateur sports enthusiasts. Spending time in the Karnainen Nature Spa by hiking helps people to reduce blood pressure, reduce cortisol levels, boost the immune system by increasing the levels of natural killer cells, reduce stress level and improve creativity.

Visitors will be hosted by one the nature professionals from the Kisakallio Sports institute. Their passion is to live healthily, enjoy activities in the Finnish outdoors and teach guests how to experience the Finnish way of everyday life close to nature and hiking trails.

Karnainen Spa trail is less than 3 km but takes about 3 hours with breaks. The aim is not to rush, but to spend time listening to sounds,

sitting or lying down, watching birds and butterflies, and walking silently. Calming down opens the senses and enables deeper perception. The guide will make a number of stops during the hike to let the group focus on particular aspects of nature experience.



PROGRAMME

09:00

Departure from Helsinki City or from Helsinki Airport.

09:45

Arrival at Kisakallio Sports Institute. Welcome drink and traditional Finnish blueberry pie made from Karnainen blueberries.

10:15

Forest walking experience with a guide

- ✘ Introduction to the forest walk, the benefits of walking in the nature spa, turning off phones.
- ✘ Start the slow-down phase, relax, enjoy the Karnaistenkorpi landscape.
- ✘ Feel the nature – nature sounds, the smell of spindles, birds sounds or softness of the moss.
- ✘ Walk as silently as possible. In the best case, one can see a glimpse of the fox or even a lynx.
- ✘ Continue towards the sun and focus on motion, shadows, darkness and colours of the forest.
- ✘ Focus on hearing the wind and also the sounds of birds. Enjoy the symphony of nature.
- ✘ Feeling the water and open fire. Take a dip in the forest pond to experience the softness of the water. The atmosphere is crowned by warming by the campfire (swimming only for guests who are brave enough).
- ✘ Enjoy the open fire and vistas and taste the tea made from local Karnainen leaves.
- ✘ Continue hiking focusing on touching the senses. Feel the bark of the trees, the cones, the needles and the lichen.
- ✘ Focus on olfactory sensing. Smell the forest, the ground, the plants, crush some leaves or cones of pine.
- ✘ Karnainen rocks and boulders provide protection for animals, plants and if necessary, also for people. Touch the rock and feel the power and warmth of it.
- ✘ Finns have been picking forest products for thousands of years. Before the adventure is finished, it is time to pick some berries or mushrooms (in season: May – October).



TASTE OF LOHJA ISLAND

www.visitlohja.fi

GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: full day
Season: June 12–August 28,
on Saturdays
For whom: groups (min. 10–
max. 25 pers.)

SERVICES INCLUDED:

guide services, meals in the
program and program visits

DURATION OF THE PROGRAMME:

10 hours from and to accom-
modation

TYPE OF TRANSPORT:


tour bus or individual transfer

LOCATION

 Pietiläntie 2, 08800
Lohja

 Helsinki 80 km

 Ms. Virve Hahti

 +358 44 369 1309
Visitlohja, tourist@lohja.fi



INTRODUCTION

The story of apple farming in Lohja began in the 16th century when lord of the manor Erik Fleming brought apple tree seedlings from Tallinn. Many envied Fleming's apples, which he could pick directly from his own trees and so apple trees began to appear in home gardens ranging from manor houses to working-class homes. The tradition of apple farming is still strongly visible all around Lohja and especially on Lohjansaari island situated in the middle of Lake Lohjanjärvi, the largest lake in Southern Finland. The island is famous for its apple farms and thousands of apple trees which are filled with the delicious fresh apples in the autumn. The Ciderberg Apple Vineyard is one of the largest apple producers in Lohja and they also welcome visitors to explore the apple farm and to taste vineyards products. Other local treasures can be found at the island's farmers market that is held every Saturday in the summertime. The tour is hosted by Virve Haahti, an experienced travel and tourism professional and official tourist guide. The programme visits present rural lifestyle and occupations on Lohja island.



PROGRAMME

Lohjansaari island's farmers market where you will have chance to buy local food and handicrafts.

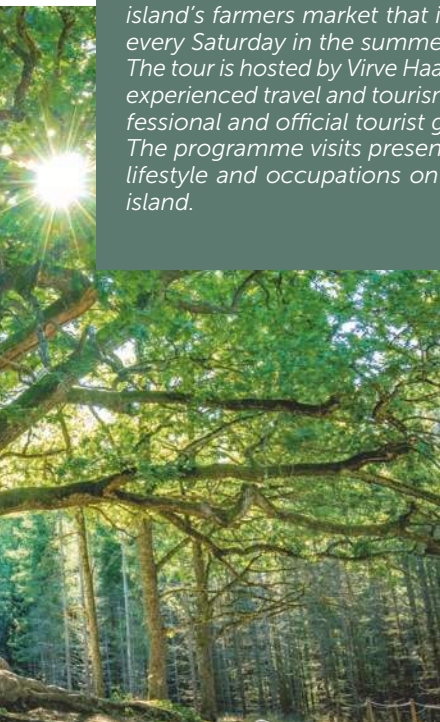
Ciderberg vineyard. The owners will tell about apple farming and farm's products. After the tour there will be a lunch and a wine tasting at the vineyard. Before leaving the Ciderberg vineyard, there will be time to buy Ciderberg wines and other products.

The Paavolan Oak. Walking through beautiful Paavola forest to one of the most famous trees in Finland. The Paavolan Oak Tree tree is almost 400 year's old and also among TOP10 most Instagramable places to visit in Finland.

Coffee break at local café. After coffee and a cinnamon bun break, there will be local beer and coffee for sale.

Fruticetum. Visitors will learn about fruit and berry farming in Finland and see almost 500 different apple- berry- and fruit trees that grow in Finland. Fruits and berries can also be handpicked in late July and August.

Huhtasaari horse estate. A horse-drawn carriage ride, an opportunity to pet and take photos of the farm animals.



LOHJA APPLE CARNIVAL

www.kettukallio.net



GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: 2 days
 Season: September
 (the annual Apple Carnival is a one day event only, towards the end of September)
 For whom: small groups
 (min. 8 max 16)

SERVICES INCLUDED:

guided transportations, guided visit to Tytyri mine experience, light lunch at Tytyri, coffee break and handicrafts at Kettukallio Experience farm, dinner by the campfire at Kettukallio Experience farm, smoke sauna & hot tub at Kettukallio Experience farm, accommodation and breakfast in Gasthaus Lohja, guided visit at Lohja Apple Carnival, lunch, home visit at Laine family, departure transportation

DURATION OF THE PROGRAMME:

2 days, 1 night

TYPE OF TRANSPORT:

individual transfer / tour bus

INTRODUCTION

The annual Apple Carnival is a one-day event held in the second half of September during the best apple season in South Finland. The carnival offers a variety of seasonal fruit and vegetables, handicrafts, local food, music, dance and many other cultural programmes. The Apple Carnival takes place close to Lohja City centre in the garden and field of the Lohja Museum. It is a very typical Finnish event, where local people and visitors meet each other and visitors catch many local delicacies and have a chance to taste traditional food. Lohja is called the city of apples with over 200 000 apple trees, so this event suits the region very well.

The host Ms. Terhi Korpijaakko with her family – her husband and three children are young and active entrepreneurs in Kettukallio Experience Farm.



LOCATION



City of Lohja surroundings



Helsinki 60 km or 1 hour



Kettukallio Experience farm, Ms. Terhi Korpijaakko



+358 44 988 5760

PROGRAMME

Day 1

✘ **Departure.** Transportation from Helsinki to Lohja in the morning, 9:30 am. The bus ride will take 1 hour.

✘ **Tytyri Mine Experience.** The tour goes 100 m below ground where the history of miners is strongly present. Guided tour 1.5 hours. Limestone mining history and mining are still a very important part of rural living as limestone is still regularly used to maintain soil fertility. The highlight of the tour will be the light and music artwork show based on Finlandia by Jean Sibelius in a massive underground cavern.

✘ **Lunch.** Light lunch at Tytyri –hall, a 110 meters deep restaurant.

✘ **Kettukallio Experience farm.** Transportation from Tytyri to Kettukallio Experience farm. There is a traditional Finnish smoke sauna, where guests can take time enjoying the refreshing atmosphere. Smoke sauna is the origin of the Finnish everyday sauna. Right beside the smoke sauna there is a hot tub where bathers can sit and relax listening to nature. The hot tub has room for 8 persons.

✘ **Dinner.** The dinner is cooked on an open fire and served in an idyllic Lapp hut. The dinner includes starter salad based on Finnish vegetables and main course: glazed salmon, baked potatoes, grilled vegetables and sauce. After dinner there is coffee or tea cooked by fire.

✘ **Overnight accommodation.** Gasthaus Lohja is a cosy family owned small hotel close to the Lohja city centre.

Day 2

✘ **Breakfast.** Local and tasty breakfast in the morning.

✘ **Guided visit at Lohja Apple Carnival.** The carnival area hosts more than a hundred harvest-inspired stalls where one can find baked goods, handicrafts and of course, all kinds of apples.

✘ **Lunch at the Apple Carnival.**

✘ **Free time to enjoy the programme.** In addition to the stalls there is also a huge and varied programme to enjoy at the festival, including theatre, music and performances

by "The happy blacksmith". Displayed in the field are scarecrows participating in the Finnish scarecrow championships. The museum offers free admission during the carnival day and there are Islandic horses for the children to ride on. In the street by the museum, you can admire alpacas, classic cars and motor-bikes.

✘ **The contest "Miss Apple".** The programme culminates with the vote for this year's "Miss Apple".

✘ **Home visit to Laine family.** The Laine family home is located by the lake Lohja. It's time to relax and enjoy the view and the atmosphere:

- **Lakeside walk.** Guests can hear stories about the beautiful Finnish nature during a short walk alongside lake Lohja where there are a lot of hazelnut trees and wild-flowers by the path. Local apple juice will be offered in the forest or by the lake.
- **Garden.** In the Laine family garden, there are many useful plants such as apple trees, berry bushes, salads, tomatoes, strawberries as well as plants that attract butterflies.
- **Preparing food together.** The hostess and guests will prepare mushroom soup and blueberry pie together in her kitchen. Picking mushrooms and berries has been an important way of spending time in the forest for generations.
- **Writing postcards.** Guests can enjoy and sit by the fireplace and write postcards back home to their loved ones. The hosts will take them to the local post office to be sent.
- **Sauna.** During the day there is an option to have a sauna in the Laine family's home and swim in Lake Lohja. Almost every Finnish home has a sauna and Finnish sauna is also on the Unesco "Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity".
- **Meal at Laine family.** In the evening it is time to enjoy a traditional Finnish meal and taste the food that was prepared together earlier. Dinner includes salad, different sorts of fish, potatoes, and sauce. For dessert blueberry pie with whipped cream and coffee or tea.
- ✘ **Return to Helsinki.** Transportation back to Helsinki leaves at 19pm.





LOHJA HOMEVISIT AT LAINE FAMILY WITH CHRISTMAS THEME

www.kettukallio.net

GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: 2 days
Season: December
For whom: small groups
(min. 8–max. 15 pers.)

SERVICES INCLUDED:

guided transportations, guided visit to Tytyri Mine Experience and light lunch at Tytyri, coffee break and handicrafts at Kettukallio Experience farm, dinner by the campfire at Kettukallio, smoke sauna & hot tub at Kettukallio, accommodation and breakfast in Gasthaus Lohja, guided visit at Lohja Christmas fair, traditional Christmas porridge for lunch, Christmas themed home visit at Laine family

DURATION OF THE PROGRAMME:

2 days, 1 night

TYPE OF TRANSPORT:

tour bus / individual transfer /
public bus

LOCATION



Kohtolankatu 8C,
FIN-08100 Lohja



Helsinki 60 km or
1 hour by bus



Laine family,
Ms. Riitta Laine



+358 44 977 8855
riitta.maria.laine@gmail.com



INTRODUCTION

This package introduces the most traditional ways to experience spending two days like a Finn. Sauna, smoke sauna, food, old traditional Christmas fair event and a visit to a Finnish home to spend a Christmas evening with the Laine family. Warm hearted local people to meet and taste rural delicacies by the campfire. Finns love to travel to rural sites during midsummer and during Christmas time. If we don't have the opportunity to travel to rural sites, we try to create the best traditional Christmas at our home. On Christmas Eve it is usual to spend time with family and with the closest people. Winter wonderland, traditional food and traditional Christmas programmes make Finns relax during the Christmas season. The Laine family comprises the lady of the house Ms Riitta, her husband Jerri and two teenage sons. The hostess Riitta Laine is a professional gardener and a lifestyle person and she also works as a nature guide. The Laine family's home, located by the lake Lohjanjärvi, is a place to relax and spend some time enjoying the view and the atmosphere

PROGRAMME

Day 1

✕ **Departure.** Transportation from Helsinki to Lohja in the morning, 09:30 am. The bus ride will take 1 hour.

✕ **Tytyri Mine Experience.** The tour goes 100 metres below ground where the history of miners is strongly present. Guided tour 1.5 hours. Limestone mining history and mining are still a very important part of rural living as limestone is still regularly used to maintain soil fertility. The highlight of the tour will be the light and music artwork show based on Finlandia by Jean Sibelius in a massive underground cavern.

✕ **Lunch.** Light lunch at Tytyri-hall, a 110 m deep restaurant.

✕ **Kettukallio Experience farm.** Transportation from Tytyri to Kettukallio Experience farm. There is a traditional Finnish smoke sauna, where guests can take time enjoying the refreshing atmosphere. Smoke sauna is the origin of the Finnish everyday sauna. Right beside the smoke sauna there is a hot tub where bathers can sit and relax listening to nature. The hot tub has room for 8 persons.

✕ **Dinner.** The dinner is cooked on an open fire and served in an idyllic Lapp hut. The dinner includes starter salad based on Finnish vegetables and main course: glazed salmon, baked potatoes, grilled vegetables and sauce. After dinner there is coffee or tea cooked by the fire.

✕ **Overnight accommodation.** Gasthaus Lohja is a cosy family owned small hotel close to the city centre of Lohja. Local and tasty breakfast in the morning.

Day 2

✕ **Breakfast.** Local and tasty breakfast in the morning.

✕ **09:00–14:00 Lohja Christmas Fair event.** Free time to do shopping and explore the event during

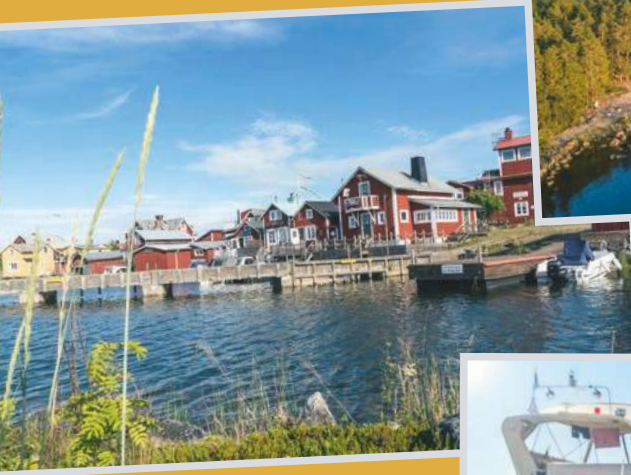
✕ **15:00–19:00 Visit to the Laine family and Christmas eve programme:**

- **Meal preparation.** Guests will prepare mushroom soup together with the hostess in the family's kitchen.



- **Lakeside walk.** A walk by the lake Lohjanjärvi with the hostess listening to her stories about Finnish Christmas tree and traditions.
- **Decorating the Christmas tree and writing postcards.** After the walk, it is time to decorate the Christmas tree and write Christmas cards by the fireplace back home to your loved ones. The hosts will take them to the local post office to be sent.
- **Sauna.** There is an option to have a sauna in the Laine family's home. Almost every Finnish home has a sauna and Finnish sauna is also on the Unesco "Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity" ..
- **Christmas meal.** In the evening it is time to enjoy a traditional Finnish Christmas meal. Dinner includes salad, different sorts of fish, potatoes, ham, and sauce. For dessert, Christmas pies and coffee or tea.
- **Christmas presents.** At the end of the evening guests will get homemade Christmas presents from the Laine family.
- ✕ **Return to Helsinki.** Transportation back to Helsinki leaves at 19:00.

Sweden





Destination SÖDERHAMN

SÖDERHAMN –
an active
archipelago
municipality



Söderhamn is an archipelago municipality with both a long and proud history. The city of Söderhamn located, just 2 hours north of the capital Stockholm, is in an excellent location where the forests of Hälsingland and the blue mountains meet.

Söderhamn is characterized by the beautiful archipelago with its many idyllic islands, bays and islets. It offers opportunities for swimming, boating and fishing. Söderhamn's vicinity close to the countryside is a striking feature of the entire municipality with its huge expanses of untouched forest and magnificent natural scenery.

The town's many parks which are a riot of colour during the summer are well known and a tour of these beautiful parks is a real experience. Söderhamn which was already an important market place during the early mediaeval period is situated at the far end of Söderhamnsfjärden (the Söderhamn inlet). At the beginning of the 17th century a rifle factory was built in Söderhamn. This supplied the Swedish military with weapons and as a result Söderhamn was granted a town charter. Söderhamn is geographically centrally located in Sweden and is near to everything. The municipality measures 60 km from north to south and stretches 30 km inland from the beautiful coast.

Sweden

THROUGH THE FOREST ON AN ICELANDIC HORSE

www.halsingeridupplevelser.se



GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: **half day**
Season: **January–December**
For whom: **individuals / groups (max. 5 pers.)**

SERVICES INCLUDED:

lunch picnic with locally produced foods

DURATION OF THE PROGRAMME:

4.5 hours

TYPE OF TRANSPORT:

individual transfer

LOCATION



Ulva 445 821 98 Rengsjö



Stockholm 265 km,
Söderhamn 25 km



Karolina Svensk



+46 73 558 85 58
info@halsingeridupplevelser.se



INTRODUCTION

Choosing rural life is what allows people today to experience the link with wild nature and animals. No other horse can match the Icelandic horse when exploring this type of heavy terrain. Their size and carrying capability together with their incredible mentality make it easy to understand why they were the choice of Nordic ancestors – the Vikings, who brought the horse to Iceland over 1.000 years ago.

Karolina is the owner of the farm and also one of the guides. She lives for the horses. Her passion is to give what she gets from the Icelandic horses and nature.

Experienced guides will take the visitors into the wild, silent and mystical forest of Sweden on horseback. No previous riding experience is necessary because the Icelandic horses are small, very calm, steady and famous for their smooth and even gait called tölt. The path takes riders through beautiful wild nature on forest roads, allowing them to enjoy the forest landscapes. The area is rich in wildlife so there is a chance to see wild animals and birds such as lynx, the rare and mythical wolverine, roe deer, squirrels, capercaillie, hares, foxes and martens.



PROGRAMME

✕ Meet the hosting guides.

Introduction of the farm and the Icelandic Horse.

✕ Preparations for riding:

- The guides will match the right horse for each rider.
- Basic introduction to horseback riding.
- Introduction to Sweden's wildlife as well as practical guidelines on how to behave to increase chances to encounter wild animals.

✕ Riding trip through the forest.

✕ A break with a "Swedish wildlife fika" together with a breathtaking view or at a cosy forest creek watching trout fish breaking the water surface. Fika is a Swedish social tradition of having a coffee with snacks in a friendly, relaxed atmosphere.

✕ Return. Tack off the horses and release them together to their pasture.

Sweden

CYCLING AND HIKING WITH A STAY IN A WORLD HERITAGE ENVIRONMENT



www.erik-anders.se

GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: **3 days**
Season: **May–September**
For whom: **min. 2 pers. /
max 10 pers.**

SERVICES INCLUDED:

two nights in shared double room, breakfast, coffee with home-made cake on arrival, dinner on day 1, guided tour of the World Heritage farm Erik-Anders

DURATION OF THE PROGRAMME:

3 days

TYPE OF TRANSPORT:

individual transfer

LOCATION



Asta 728, 826 61 Söderala



Stockholm 243 km,
Söderhamn 7 km



one of the hosting guides



+46 72 728 79 41
info@erik-anders.se



INTRODUCTION

A 2.5 hour drive north of Stockholm takes guests to Asta, a small, picturesque country village of Söderala parish near Ålsjön Nature Reserve in Hälsingland historical province. The Hälsingland Farmhouses were inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List under the name "Decorated Farmhouses of Hälsingland" in 2012. The nomination focuses on what is truly unique about the farmhouses. Not only did the people of Hälsingland build more and larger festivity rooms than farmers did elsewhere. There are also proudly decorated domestic interiors preserved in Hälsingland.

Erik-Anders farm estate was named after Erik Andersson, who had the farm built in the 1820s. The farm is now privately owned.

The World Heritage farm Erik-Anders offers a touch of the rural lifestyle of wealthy farmers in the middle of the 19th century for guests to enjoy. Guests will spend three leisurely days staying in the world heritage house and enjoying the surrounding environment – the Ålsjön nature reserve, one of Sweden's finest bird watching areas.



Day 2

✕ **Breakfast.** Between 08:00 – 10:00 breakfast is served with a local touch at Erik-Anders' farm.

✕ **A tour of the farm.** At 10:00 am there is a guided tour of the Erik-Anders' World Heritage farm (ca 50 min., in English). In the period-style environment, the guide will take visitors back to the years between 1825 and the 1950's talking about the farm's history and the ornamental decorations.

✕ **Guided nature hike with lunch.**

The route along winding paths takes about 5 hours and includes a stop for lunch. The lunch has a local touch with the best seasonal ingredients and will be cooked together with the guide over an open fire at a small woodland mere.

✕ **Return to the farm at 16:00.**

✕ **Evening meal.** Guests can take dinner at one of the few authentic, high-quality restaurants nearby. Examples of restaurants: Albertina www.albertina.se, Växbo krog www.vaxbokrog.se and Axmarbrygga www.axmarbrygga.se, Trollharens Fisk www.trollharensfisk.se.

Day 3

✕ **Breakfast.** Between 08:00 – 10:00 breakfast is served with a local touch at Erik-Anders' farm.

Check-out by 12 noon.

PROGRAMME

Day 1

✕ **Check-in in the afternoon.** Organic coffee with home-made cake is served in the farmhouse café.

Options for afternoon activities:

- A hike to Ålsjön Nature Reserve (in 15 min walking distance). Watching nature –birds, plants. The hike can also be combined with a longer trip to the adjacent forest with breath-taking scenery. This hike will take approximately 30 minutes.
- A cycle ride through the charming countryside and picturesque villages in the surroundings.

✕ **Evening meal** consisting mainly of locally sourced ingredients is served in the courtyard.

BERGESBACKEN FARM



GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: **half day**
Season: **January–December**
For whom: **individuals / groups**
(max. 20 pers.)

SERVICES INCLUDED:

light meals, coffee

DURATION OF THE PROGRAMME:

45 minutes–2 hours
(horse carriage rides)


TYPE OF TRANSPORT:


individual transfer / tour bus

LOCATION

 Trönö-Berge 562,
826 95 Trönödal

 Stockholm 260 km,
Söderhamn 22 km

 Lisa Olsson

 +46 706901081
lisaalexandraolsson@gmail.com



INTRODUCTION

The farm is located in Trönö, ca 20 km from Söderhamn. Trönö is a small village with nice scenery for horse carriage rides. The family runs a small homestead with sheep and horses. The horses are Irish Cobs, and they are good "all-purpose" horses for riding, pulling carriages, sleds, etc. The family offers carriage rides in the surroundings and also attends events in other sites and locations. The farm produces chorizo from sheep meat.

Guests can enjoy a horse carriage ride through the village Trönö together with the hosts. Coffee, tea, soft drinks, chorizo produced on the farm and light meals will be served.

PROGRAMME

- ✕ ride in horse carriage
- ✕ coffee/tea



Catria





Destination ABAVA RIVER VALLEY



*The Ancient
Abava River
Valley – vineyards
and small towns*



The Ancient Abava River Valley is up to 2 km wide and 30–40 meters deep. Melting glacier waters created it, and the location is full of gorgeous landscapes. The Abava River winds its way through forests and past ancient towns and rural villages delighting visitors with natural flower meadows that are particularly beautiful during the summer, refreshing small waterfalls, secretive caves and several castle hills. Livestock adapted to life in the wild can be found here too.

The valley is host to the only vineyards in Latvia and in the town of Sabile which nestles deep in the river valley, ciders and wines produced nearby can be sampled and purchased. A little upriver the small town of Kandava has a stone bridge river crossing as its symbol while further still, in Püre, there is a chocolate factory offering tours and tastings.

SABILE CIDER

www.sabilessidrs.lv
www.gardeners.lv

GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: **half day**
 Season: **January–December**
 For whom: **groups**

SERVICES INCLUDED:

tours of the factory and tast-
 ing of products with snacks

DURATION OF THE PROGRAMME:


~1–3 h

TYPE OF TRANSPORT:

individual transport, tourist
 buses




LOCATION

 Rīgas iela 22, Sabīle,
 Talsu nov., Latvija

 Rīga 109 km

 Baiba Circene

 + 371 61 301 707
visit@sabilessidrs.lv





INTRODUCTION

The “Sabile Cider” company’s factory is located near the heart of Sabile, where each autumn the region’s farmers deliver apples from their orchards for processing and fermentation to make the cider. The factory also provides a public meeting place where, during the summer, the company and Sabile local government organise concerts and cultural events. Baiba and Aldis Circenis from Rīga began their story in Sabile more than 20 years ago, when they purchased a nearby “oasis of calm” between linden and oak trees. They celebrate Latvian holidays, offer lessons about farm work, and after thinking about what to do with their enormous harvest of apples and much experimentation, created the first Sabile cider. Their cider concept involves a neat garden with tall old apple trees.. The couple also studied the enjoyment and manufacturing traditions of cider in the ancient superpowers of cider, England and France. Visitors can take a tour of the factory and learn about how cider is produced. The lady of the house will talk about how she changed her career and became a cider master. At the Sabile Cider House adjacent to the factory, visitors can taste the cider and purchase some to take with them.

PROGRAMME

- ✘ **Arrival at the “Sabile Cider” company** and a meeting with one of its representatives.
- ✘ **Information about the history of the world of cider**, facts, stories and the history of the plant, also focusing on cider production technologies in Latvia and elsewhere in the world.
- ✘ **A tour of the factory** to see the equipment and learn about the production of cider from the apple to the cork of a cider bottle.
- ✘ **A visit to the “Sabile Cider House,”** which is approximately 300 metres from the factory, to learn about the output of the plant and to enjoy tastings in a cosy and liberated atmosphere. There will be conversations about cider and its diversity, Sabile, the culture of drinking cider, and foods which go well with it.
- ✘ **Opportunity** to purchase Sabile cider.

INDĀNI TRADITIONAL FARMSTEAD

www.celotajs.lv/en/e/lauku_set_a_indani

GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: **half day**
Season: **May–September**
For whom: **groups**

SERVICES INCLUDED:

Farm tour, refreshment break
with home-made delicacies

OPTIONAL EXTRA SERVICES:

overnight stay and sauna

DURATION OF THE PROGRAMME:

2 hours

TYPE OF TRANSPORT:

public bus 'Rīga–Kuldīga' to
the bus stop 'Kandava'
(~1 h 30 min). Pick-up and
transfer to Indāni Traditional
Farmstead (~15 min).



INTRODUCTION

The farmstead is located in the Abava Ancient river valley. Visitors can experience true Latvian farm life in a farm where there are goats, sheep, horses, geese, chickens, rabbits and other animals. The restoration of the farmstead began in 1991 and at that time there were collapsed barn walls and an overgrown apple orchard. The Ezeriņa family started the work in order to fulfil their eldest daughter Signe's dream of living in the countryside and owning her own horse.

Now the hostess Signe Ezeriņa runs her traditional smallholding farm supplying her family with fresh products – eggs, milk, cheese, vegetables and fruit. Signe now shares the fulfilment of her dream with guests, allowing them to get to know and live a real country life.

On a 2-hour farm tour guests will learn about the farmstead, see the animals, and can taste the products the hostess makes on the farm. Upon separate arrangement, an overnight stay is possible to enjoy more of a country life, take a sauna with birch and juniper switches and swim in the local pond.

PROGRAMME

- ✕ A tour of the farm, introducing the way of life in the countryside.
- ✕ A refreshment break drinking herbal tea with honey and trying carrot buns and other traditional pastries.



LOCATION



Indāni, Kandavas pag.,
Tukuma nov.



Rīga 95 km



Signe Ezeriņa



+371 29 259 272
indani91@inbox.lv



Latvia





Destination SĒLIJA

Undiscovered
islands of
Sēlija



Sēlija is one of Latvia's historical regions. Located on the left bank of the River Daugava, it borders Lithuania and Belarus.

Characteristic features of the region are scenic small farmsteads, churches of various confessions, hills and wetlands, small towns and villages, local dialect and traditional foods such as potato dumplings stuffed with meat, cottage cheese pancakes and beaver gland infusion – a renowned natural medicine. There are strong traditions of social life in Sēlija region, neighbours, families and friends all come together on important occasions and events such as open air dancing parties, beer tasting as part of the brewing process, "pig funeral" – slaughtering of a farm pig where neighbours are invited to feast on meat and sauerkraut. In Sēlija, historic tradition lives along well with modernity.

In earlier times, people lived in settlements surrounded by forests, marshes and meadows. These settlements were called *islands* and each had a name, for example, Island of Birds, Island of Swans. Each *island* had its own laws and traditions. In Dviete parish, during the spring flood which is called the 5th season of a year, *islands* can be distinguished as elevated land plots with farmsteads on them. Today, one can visit 17 *islands* and experience the special identity of the Sēlija region.

THE TRADITIONS OF SĒLIJA REGION AT THE RURAL HOMESTEAD **GULBJI**

www.celotajs.lv/en/e/selu_seta_gulbji

GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: **half day**
Season: **April–October**
For whom: **groups**
(min. 10–max. 50 pers.)

SERVICES INCLUDED:

a tour of the homestead,
lunch, a themed master class
(according to prior choice
from a range offered)

DURATION OF THE PROGRAMME:

3–5 h

TYPE OF TRANSPORT:

individual transport / tour bus

LOCATION



"Gulbji", Rubenes pag.,
Jēkabpils nov.



Rīga 170 km



Rita and Juris Skrējāns



+371 26416231
gulbjumajas@inbox.lv



INTRODUCTION

The "Gulbji" Selonian homestead is one of the very few places in Latvia where one can see a farm characteristic of the historical region of Selonian with its typical buildings. "Gulbji" homestead is comparatively far from major roads and populated areas and located in a landscape with forests, natural meadows and hills, the property also has a lake, a spring and ponds. The farm grows vegetables, fruit, berries, and produces milk products. The hostess takes care of her collection of perennials and decorative garden. The family also keeps bees for honey, produces herb teas, makes sauna products such as scrubs, oils, and sauna whisks.

The hosts are the 6th generation of the family living here. Rita is a gardener by profession, Juris is a master in crafts and they returned to the family home over 15 years ago. Rita and Juris believe that the special unique value of the house is in its Selonian spirit that is present in everything here – the household things made by ancestors, the inherited food recipes, traditions and customs passed down through generations.

During the visit, the hosts will show guests around the farmstead and explain about the Selonian lifestyle – the traditional yard with its buildings, the garden and farming. After lunch, there is a choice of master classes in traditional Selonian crafts, foods or celebration of traditional festivities.



PROGRAMME

✕ **Meeting the hosts.** Introduction of the yard and buildings, a collection of tools and household items from the past.

✕ **Visiting the flower garden,** the plant nursery and the herb garden. The hostess talks about developing and maintaining a garden in a rural environment, and the use of medicinal herbs.

✕ **Lunch – Selonian traditional dishes.** The hostess talks about Selonian food traditions, the most popular recipes and methods of cooking.

✕ **A themed master class** according to prior choice: making cheese, making butter, making ropes from flax tow, building a fence from wood sticks, making *puzuri* – Christmas decorations from straw, celebration of seasonal festivities.



SAILING DOWN THE RIVER WITH THE "SĒLIJA BOATS" ORGANISATION

www.facebook.com/selijaslaivas,
www.selija.com

GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: **half day**
Season: **April–October**
For whom: **individuals / groups (min. 1–max. 50 pers.)**

SERVICES INCLUDED:

A visit to the farm to learn about the history of boating, be trained at rowing, and be transported after the activities in the river. There are services offered by environmental guides who will sail down the river so that visitors can learn about the ecosystem, flora and fauna thereof.

DURATION OF THE PROGRAMME:

up to 4 h

TYPE OF TRANSPORT:

individual transfers/tourist
bus/public transportation

LOCATION



"Skārdupītes",
Aknīstes nov.



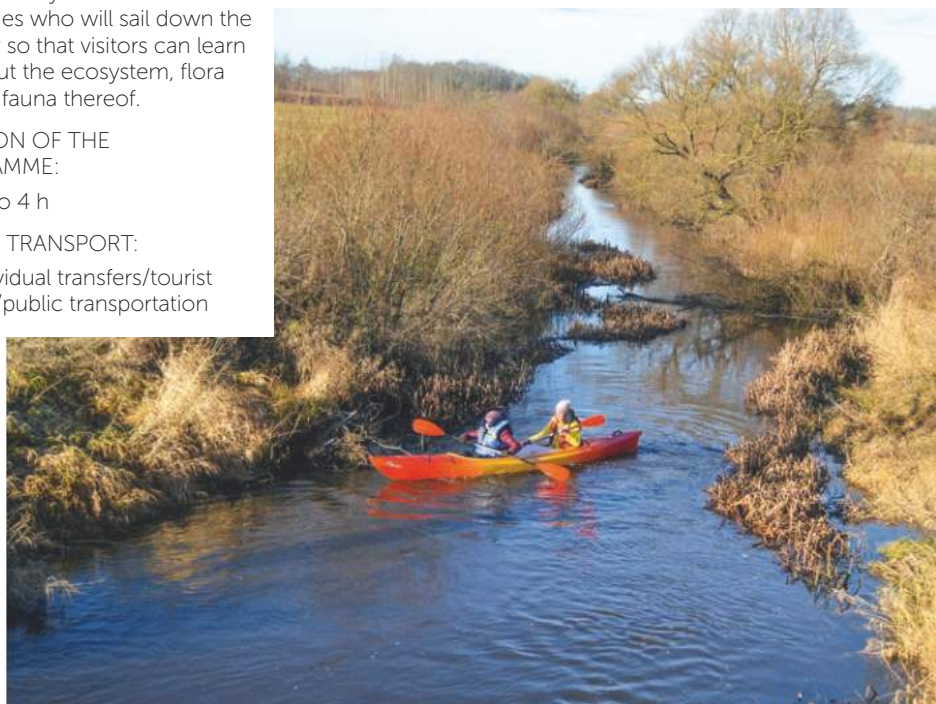
Rīga 145 km



Santa and Ričards Šmits



+371 20 034 392,
selijaslaivas@gmail.com



INTRODUCTION

The “Sēlija Boats” organisation is located at the “Skārdupītes” homestead, which is some 5 km from Aknīste and on the side of the P73 Vecumnieki–Nereta–Subate road. The area is being developed for active tourism, hoping that visitors will be able to stroll around the nearby forests and wetland meadows, learn all about the history of boating, rent boats and bicycles, stay at well-appointed tent locations, and cook a tasty meal on a campfire after an intensive hike.

In 2018, Santa and Ričards Šmits moved from the capital city to Aknīste, where Santa was born and raised. The couple are local enthusiasts and fans of active leisure who want to have an active lifestyle in the countryside and to enthuse others. They use the “Sēlija Boats” organisation to ensure this step by step. The local community has organised events to clean up the environment, to set up an appropriate infrastructure for boating, to organise widely attended educational hikes, and to attract financing to facilitate local volunteering in Sēlija.

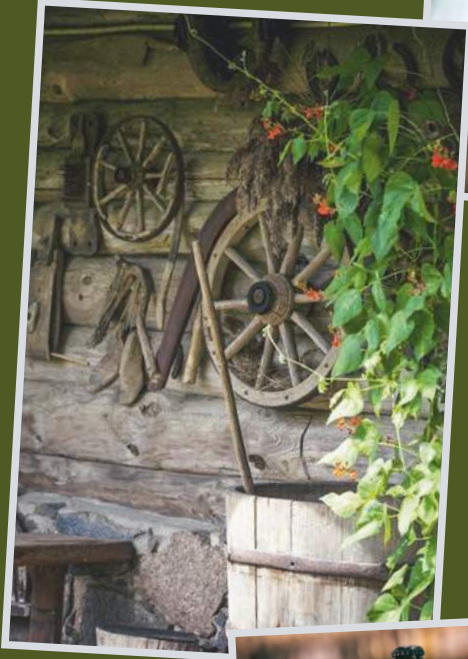


PROGRAMME

- ✘ **Arrival at “Skārdupītes”.**
- ✘ **A tour of the farm** with tales of how the culture of boating developed, a presentation of types of boats, and a discussion of how they differ and what their origins are; there are also stories about the cultural history of the location and its environment (up to 1 hour).
- ✘ **Instructions** on boating and safety (up to 20 minutes).
- ✘ **Boating down the Dienvidusēja River** between Skārdupīte and Kazukrogs (~ 1 h), the trip can be extended to Elkšņi (~3 h, with an opportunity to taste the famous Alīda coffee) if visitors have registered in advance.
- ✘ **Gathering of herbs for tea** in wetland meadows or the river (aromatic and tasty river mint), with instructions from the owners about which herbs are appropriate (up to 30 minutes).
- ✘ **Transportation** to the embarkation point from Kazukrogs or Elkšņi.



Latvia





Destination NORTH VIDZEME



*Northern
Vidzeme – a
balance between
urban and natural
environments*



The northern part of the cultural and historical region of Vidzeme borders Estonia. Northern Vidzeme towns have a unique charm and a Latvian mentality. The city of Valmiera boasts the Vidzeme University College, and is a town focused on development, as well as a place for knowledge, talents and regional entrepreneurship. The town of Smiltene has a peaceful environment with low residential buildings and a unique terrain with hillocks, valleys, forests, parks and several lakes. Limbaži is one of the oldest towns in Latvia. Wall paintings in the old city hall and the Live Silver Museum are just a few of the places to visit in Limbaži. The Northern Vidzeme Biosphere Reserve has been declared a protected environmental territory of international importance by the UNESCO Man and Biosphere programme. The reserve is Latvia's largest specially protected environmental territory, and it covers approximately 6% of Latvia's territory.

THE STORY OF BEER AT VALMIERMUIŽA

www.valmiermuiza.lv

GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: **half day**

Season: **January–December**

For whom: **individuals /
groups max. 20 pers.**

SERVICES INCLUDED:

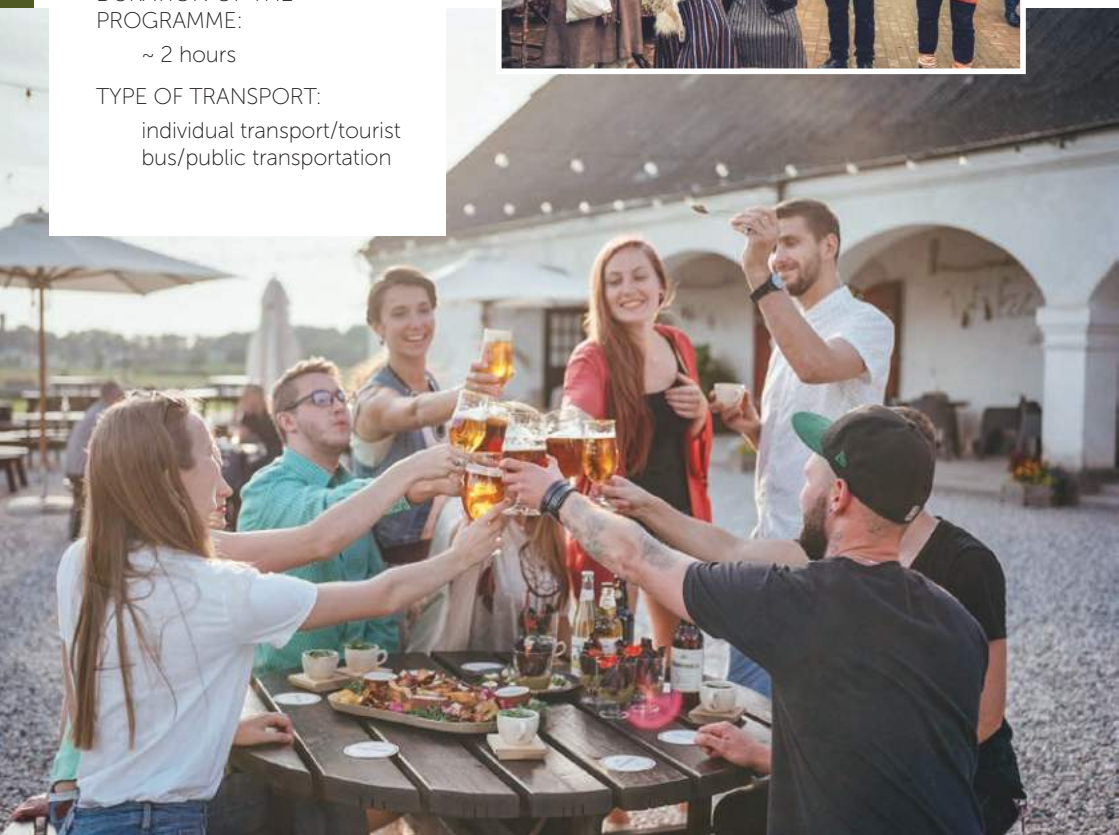
tours to learn about the
brewing of beer from ancient
times to the present day, and
a tasting of beer with snacks

DURATION OF THE PROGRAMME:

~ 2 hours

TYPE OF TRANSPORT:

individual transport/tourist
bus/public transportation



INTRODUCTION

Valmiermuiža is on the northern border of the city of Valmiera. Aristocratic estates were established there during the 15th and 16th centuries, and all of them had breweries and saloons. Valmiermuiža had a Castle Saloon where beer was brewed and sold. Latvians were allowed to brew beer for home consumption, and that kept traditional brewing techniques alive in Latvia.

Valmiermuiža continues to brew live and natural beer to continue the old traditions of the estate and to honour the ancient history of beer brewing in Latvia. Visitors can examine a series of brewery tools which illustrate the stories, allowing people to compare brewing techniques from the past and the present. The visit would be unimaginable without a fancy and informational tasting of beer.

Owner Aigars Ruņģis was born and raised in Valmiera, and he has deep roots in the region. That was one reason why he decided to open up a brewery at Valmiermuiža, which has a powerful and ancient history and a successful spirit of entrepreneurship. Since 2009, staff numbers at the brewery have grown substantially and while producing beer and other refreshments in their daily work, they also greet every guest who turns up at the Valmiermuiža beer kitchen or retail facility with true sincerity and hospitality. The staff are also happy to talk about beer and to offer tastings.

LOCATION



Dzirnavu iela 2,
Valmiermuiža,
Valmieras nov.



Rīga 111 km



Aigars Ruņģis



+371 20264269
info@valmiermuiža.lv



PROGRAMME

- ✘ Arrival to meet one of the hospitable story tellers at Valmiermuiža.
- ✘ A story of the history and rebirth of the estate.
- ✘ Information about the components of beer in an ancient granary, discovering similarities and differences in preparing and using them today and in the past.
- ✘ The first tastes of beer and information about how to enjoy it.
- ✘ An examination of ancient brewing tools and of their use so as to learn more about modern brewing processes; a chance to use a hand-operated mill to crumble malt grains.
- ✘ Further tastings with stories about the world of beer and the discovery of new flavours.



DRUMMING AT THE "DZIRNUPES" HOMESTEAD

www.dzirnupes.lv, www.facebook.com/dzirnupes

GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: **half day**
Season: **May– October**
For whom: **individuals / groups (min. 2–max. 10 pers.)**

SERVICES INCLUDED:

tours of the farm, meals with herbal tea, tales of preparing root drums, music with drums and other percussion instruments made by the owner.

DURATION OF THE PROGRAMME:

4 hours

TYPE OF TRANSPORT:

individual transport/tourist bus/public transportation



INTRODUCTION

"Dzirnupes" is a traditional farm in rural Vidzeme, located 15 km from Limbaži. During the summer, the owners welcome guests, wishing to spend a night in the romantic granary. Built in 1924 as a grain storage facility, the granary is now a cosy little place for guests, designed in an ethnographic style with antique furnishings, interior design objects and tool as well as a sauna. The farm features a pond and little river for fishing or boating, a pergola and a place for picnics outdoor, a volleyball court, a small garden with local country goodies, and blossoming meadows. Visitors can also meet some pets – a goat, some geese, some chickens and a cat. The "Dzirnupes" farm is managed by the Paleionis family – Juris and Sandra. Juris is a percussion master whose speciality is carving drums from the stumps of fir, linden and willow trees and covering these with sonorous goat or beaver skin. Juris also makes other musical instruments and souvenirs, including horns, percussion instruments, pipes and whisks. Guests will learn about the farm, dine on country goodies, drink herbal tea, listen to a story about how stump drums are created and, at the end of the process, play music together with their hosts.

PROGRAMME

- ✕ Meeting owners Sandra and Juris for a stroll around the farm.
- ✕ Herbal tea and snacks prepared by Sandra, served in the pergola or granary.
- ✕ In parallel, a story about how stump drums are made.
- ✕ After that, music with drums and other percussion instruments created by the owner.



LOCATION



"Dzirnupes", Šķirstiņi,
Viļķenes pag.,
Limbažu nov.



Riga 100 km



Sandra and
Juris Paleionis



+371 22 495 916
dzirnupes@gmail.com



BIRCH SAP ADVENTURE AT "BIRZĪ"

www.birzi.lv

GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: **half day**
Season: **May– October**
For whom: **individuals / groups (min. 10–max. 50 pers.)**

SERVICES INCLUDED:

the host's story about birch saps, tasting, planting a tree in the birch sap park, making sauna whisks from birch twigs

DURATION OF THE PROGRAMME:

1–1.5 h

TYPE OF TRANSPORT:

individual transport /
tour bus

LOCATION



"Kainaiži", Brantu pag.,
Smiltenes nov.



Rīga 125 km



Līvija, Ervins and
Nora Labanovski



+371 29199982
birzi@birzi.lv



INTRODUCTION

The "Kainaži" homestead is nearly 150 years old, and located between Smiltene and Rauna. The farm is encircled by hundred-year-old oak trees, and it is in a quiet place far from major roads. The farm has a park of more than 300 different types of maples, birches and walnut trees. For many years, the Labanovskis family has been producing and popularising various types of birch and maple juice. The owners studied the Canadian experience in the production of syrups, and they have done so successfully for several years. Products at "Birzī" are biologically certified.

Līvija and Ervins traded life in Rīga for life in the countryside to pursue their ideas about creating a business that sells juices. Ervins inherited the knowledge of his parents about the circulation of sap in trees and the valuable properties of the resulting juices. He also studied Canadian technologies in the processing of juices. His sister Nora combines her work in Rīga with helping out at "Birzī" and enjoying the country life there. The owners offer visitors a chance to tour the processing line and the juice park. They can plant a tree and taste birch juice and its various variants, from fresh to sparkling juice with various tastes. There is also birch juice syrup. In June, when the leaves of birch trees are fresh and full of energy, guests are encouraged to help in producing birch switches. Feel the powerful aroma of birch leaves and then take your switch home with you. A special offer is lunch for groups of visitors outdoors.



PROGRAMME

- ✘ Introduction to the owners.
- ✘ The BIRZĪ production line, offering information about the company, the extraction of juices, the processing rooms, the juice cellar and the sugar house.
- ✘ The park of trees, with each visitor digging a hole and then planting a birch or maple tree. Visitors are asked to name their tree and then tie a label with that name around its trunk.
- ✘ Products at BIRZĪ can be tasted and purchased.





Destination

GAUJA NATIONAL PARK



Gauja National Park is the largest and oldest of the national parks in Latvia. It protects the rich nature of the ancient Gauja River valley and its surrounding areas as well as the vast diversity of plant, bird and insect species found here.

The origins of the ancient Gauja River valley go back more than 350 million years, but its current ravine-ridden terrain was moulded by the glacier meltwater at the end of the Ice Age. The Gauja, which is the longest river in Latvia (452 km), winds through the national park. The river once served as a trading route, and the Livonians built their settlements on its banks. Strong stone castles, which were enclosed by steep slopes and deep valleys, were built in the 13th century. The cities and the social and cultural life grew around these castles.

Today, the park is a place where legends of the past live alongside modern and cosy guest houses, country houses, farms, restaurants and leisure spots. Here you can enjoy the aura of antiquity in old castles, receive a burst of energy at one of the ancient sacred places or experience the healing properties of the springs. You can also touch trees planted by kings, hear your voice echoing off sandstone rocks, or let the nature trails carry you off into rich forests. All of this should be enjoyed slowly, letting the taste, smell and colours introduce you to the rhythm of local life. This is best done by hiking, riding a bicycle or a horse, or even taking a boat down the gentle stream of the Gauja River.

Visitors can enjoy Gauja National Park by:

- ✘ Walking along the nature trails (more than 30 in the park)
- ✘ Experiencing real Latvian countryside living and food, by participating in workshops or helping the farmers
- ✘ Getting to know Latvian craftsmanship and making one's own Latvian souvenirs
- ✘ Tasting local beers, herb teas, sweets, bread and wines
- ✘ Enjoying picturesque boat trips along the Gauja river – seeing sandstone cliffs and rocks
- ✘ Feeling the breath of ancient castles and manors
- ✘ Experiencing active holidays by cycling, bow shooting, skiing, running or walking with huskies, horseback riding
- ✘ Fishing, mushroom picking, berry picking, herb tea picking.



EXPERIENCE THE FEELING OF LIVING WITH AND WITHIN NATURE

www.wildnesscollective.com

GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: **2 days**
 Season: **May–end of September**
 For whom: **groups**
 (min. 4–max. 14 pers.)

SERVICES INCLUDED:

local wine and beer tasting +
 breakfast + accommodation

DURATION OF THE PROGRAMME:

2 days

TYPE OF TRANSPORT:

individual transfer / tour bus

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION:

bus Rīga–Valmiera to Straupe
 bus stop (~1 h 25 min),
 walk 7 km

LOCATION



Līčupes, Straupes pag.,
 Cēsu nov.
 Wild'ness Retreat and
 Studio



Rīga 81 km



Yvonne & Eli



+371 27269995



INTRODUCTION

Wild'nness Retreat and Studio offers a truly authentic experience of Latvia reconnecting with the wilderness in the middle of the Gauja National Park on 13.5 ha of private forest. The Gauja National Park is listed as one of the top 10 places to visit in Latvia. Latvians are famous for using nearly everything found in meadows or forests for preparing the meal, so sometimes the Latvian countryside is called nature's restaurant.

The hosts Yvonne and Eli fell in love with Latvian nature and culture and in 2017 moved from Canada to live their dream – be close to nature. Living and working with, and within, nature is their passion and they also created the space for others to come to enjoy and retreat. In their studio they handcraft a wide range of artisan and craft products – soaps, jewellery, furniture, home decor and much more. Everything is made with natural products often found in the forest, by the roadside, discarded from farmers and hunters and up-cycled in the studio.

The programme represents a relaxing holiday with the main focus on staying close to nature and enjoying the beautiful natural environment. Through leisurely socialising with Yvonne & Eli, guests will become a part of their rural lifestyle.

PROGRAMME

Day 1

✕ **Arrive at Wild'nness Retreat and Studio.** The hosts (English speaking) will introduce the place and show around their studio and accommodation.

✕ **Food and drink tasting.** Socializing with the hosts – tasting local beer and wine, cheese and local products.

✕ **Accommodation** in a cabin or a glamping tent.

Day 2

✕ **Latvian breakfast** preparation from products grown on local farms (eggs, bacon, bread etc).

✕ **Free time enjoying** the peace and environment around: gathering plants from the meadow (lemon mint, mint, camomile, hawthorn berries, lilac, strawberry leaves, blueberry leaves, nettle leaves, etc.) and making herbal tea.



MUSHROOMING AND COOKING WORKSHOP IN GAUJA NATIONAL PARK

www.karlamuiza.lv

GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: **full day**
Season: **August–end of September**

For whom: **groups**
(min. 8 –max. 20 pers.)

SERVICES INCLUDED:

guided mushrooming + dinner
cooking workshop

TYPE OF TRANSPORT:

tour bus

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION:

bus Rīga–Cēsis to Cēsis bus station (~1 h 50 min), change for bus Cēsu AO–Cēsu AO to the bus stop Kārļi (~20 min). Walk to Kārļamuiza Country Hotel (~ 450 m / 5 min).

MUSHROOMING:

specially selected sites in Gauja National Park

MUSHROOMING WORKSHOP AND DINNER:

Kārļamuiza Country Hotel

LOCATION



Kārļamuiza, Kārļi,
Drabešu pag., Cēsu nov.



Rīga 75 km



Mrs Baiba Stepiņa



+371 26165298
info@karlamuiza.lv



INTRODUCTION

Karlamuiža is a cozy hotel located near Cēsis town in the Amata River valley. The hotel is located near a landscape park and a nature trail by the Amata River.

Mushrooming is a national passion in Latvia. Trying out a mushrooming experience is part of getting to know the local way of life and doing things the way locals do them. The forest terrain in the selected mushrooming spots is easy to walk, covered with moss, fallen leaves and small plants. Occasionally there are bushes, some fallen trees or wet spots. Gauja National Park, established in 1973, was Latvia's first national park, and it has great traditions in environmental tourism.

The most popular edible mushrooms are the various Boletus and Chanterelles, these comprise the selected species for foraging and include chanterelles, russulas and various boletus: Chestnut Bolete (Gyroporus castaneus), Lurid Bolete (Boletus luridus), Sheep Polypore edible tree-fungus (popular in Scandinavian cooking) (Albatrellus ovinus), Golden Coral (Ramaria aurea), Coral Tooth (Hericium coralloides), Parasol Mushroom (Macrolepiota procera), Ceramic Parchment (Xylobolus frustulatus) and WoodRotting Fungus (Phellinus nigrolimitatus). N.B. For comfort and safety it is recommended that participants wear outdoor clothing and footwear.



PROGRAMME

- ✘ The ride from Riga to Kārļamuiža country hotel in Gauja National Park takes approx. 1 hour 30 min.
- ✘ Arrive at Kārļamuiža Country Hotel. Meet the fungi guide (English speaking, professional nature guide, owner of two dogs that are trained for fungi hunting), briefing and preparation for mushroom picking. Lunch boxes and mushrooming equipment – baskets, knives and raincoats will be provided for each person.
- ✘ Drive to the mushroom picking site (approx. 15 min.).
- ✘ Picnic lunch in an open-air picnic spot in the forest by the River Gauja (approx. 30 min.).
- ✘ Guided mushroom picking (approx. 1 hour) in the forest.
- ✘ Return to the hotel (approx. 30 min.).
- ✘ Sorting the mushrooms together with the fungi guide to identify the species found.
- ✘ Cooking dinner with the chef at Kārļamuiža Country Hotel (approx. 2 hours). Cooking is done in front of the group as a demonstration with an explanation of the recipe, other dishes are also available for dinner in addition to the mushrooms.



MANDALA TEA WORKSHOP ON THE FARM "OZOLIŅI"

www.ozolini.lv

GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: **half day**
Season: **June–August**
For whom: **individuals / groups (min. 2–max. 20)**

SERVICES INCLUDED:

tour in the farm and plant harvesting, making your own tea blend

DURATION OF THE PROGRAMME:

1–1.5 hours

TYPE OF TRANSPORT:

individual transport / tourist bus

LOCATION



"Annas Ozoliņi",
Zaubes pag.,
Cēsu nov.



Rīga 97 km



Brigita Lūkina,
Evita Lūkina



+371 26428082
laukuteja@ozolini.lv



INTRODUCTION

The farm is surrounded by biologically valuable grassland meadows and forest and has its own forest lake. The nearest neighbours are 2 km away. This is one of the first businesses in Latvia where, after the restoration of independence, tea production began using Latvian wild and garden plants. For more than 20 years now, the brand "Lauku tējas" (country teas) has been available on store shelves.

The Lukini family moved from Riga to "Annas Ozoliņi" in the late 1970s. As a child, Brigita spent summers in the countryside, her grandmother's knowledge of herbs and plants around the homestead gave Brigita the idea for making herbal tea blends. Today, the farm produces ecological teas continuing the usage of ancestral knowledge, collecting teas and preparing them according to ancient methods, using fermentation – suturing.

Guests will get acquainted with plants and tea making by participating in the Mandala tea workshop and creating their own blend of tea to take away. Participation in herbal meditation will enable each person to choose the most suitable and necessary herbs for them to be used for making their tea. By prior arrangement a rural life experience can be arranged with guest participation in some seasonal tea production work such as planting, harvesting, sorting, preparing for drying, fermentation, packing.



PROGRAMME

✕ Arrival at the farm, meeting with hostesses Brigita and Evita.

✕ Walking around the farm, becoming acquainted with the plants and gathering them to make the tea. The unique opportunity of summer is to make fresh tea from picked plants during the walk.

✕ Tea workshop:

- Meditation, during which participants stand or sit with eyes closed breathing deeply and calmly, allowing all the attention to descend into the body to allow the intention to come - what is needed from the tea for now: peace, energy, specific health problem?
- Choice of plants from the 12 plants offered: seeing, smelling and feeling with the whole body and its essence, choosing 3-5 plants that support this intention.
- Making a tea mandala - forming a circle from the selected plants, thus obtaining the proportions for the tea mixture. The mandala is an ancient form of healing, the circle is a symbol of the universe.
- Preparation of the ready tea mixture to take away – put the tea mixture into a bag and write the name and composition of the mixture.





Events





Visiting local events is a good opportunity to really meet local people and immerse in the rural lifestyle.



Farmers' markets, local fairs and harvest festivals are a strong tradition and take place in all rural destinations. Farmers and local food producers sell their own produce and offer tastings, while craft masters are also present with their masterpieces. The true spirit of the countryside shows in song and dance performances by local groups.

Local farmers' markets usually take place at weekends, every other weekend or in other regular times. There are markets dedicated to seasonal festivities such as Christmas markets.

Festivals are usually linked with the season, for example, spring festivals are a parade of garden plants and local foods and

crafts, while in autumn harvest festivals offer the widest range of local specialties and home-produced foods.

Home café days are a comparatively new tradition. This unique pop-up event allows visitors to taste the best local dishes people usually serve on their own festive tables.

Midsummer is festive time in all our countries when people celebrate with special traditions, songs, dances and festive foods. Visiting a local event can be added to excursion programmes in destinations to get an authentic experience of today's social life in the countryside.



HOMÉ CAFÉ DAYS

For 1–2 days within a particular destination, farmyards and other places that are not always related to business and catering services on a daily basis, turn into cafés. Within Open Café days each farmstead prepares its own special treat – a soup, a casserole, a cake, a bread, or a whole meal – and offers it to visitors together with coffee/tea. Each farm presents its home-café name and the product offered is also presented with its cultural characteristics and story. In order to attract a wider community and families with children, various cultural activities are organized: handicrafts, games, playing musical instruments, etc.

Local cuisine in our countries is based on natural products from a clean environment. Spring and summer seasons are characterised by lighter dishes like greens, dairy products and seasonal fish, grilled meat, forest berries and mushrooms. Meat dishes with vegetable and grain side dishes, fermented and pickled vegetables dominate cold season meals.



Latvia

Latvia has a wealth of culinary traditions, because the country is at the crossroads of Europe, and so influences from other nations have come from the East and the West over the course of centuries. Latvian cuisine is distinctly seasonal, because there are four seasons, and each of them offers specific products and tasty treats. Latvian menu features many dishes from the forests, waters, meadows or home gardens.

In Latvia, Home Café days take place in summer and the early autumn months when the young harvest arrives – from strawberries and raspberries in July to early potatoes at the end of August, mushrooms in September and the great variety of traditional pickles in October. This event unites the community members in destinations as everybody is willing to present their offers in the best possible way to share with others. The best recipes add to a destination's recognition and image.

www.majaskafejnicas.lv



Estonia

In Estonia, during the summer and early autumn months, Home Café Days happen throughout the country on different dates but usually at weekends. On Home Café Days, Estonians invite visitors to farmyards, to home restaurants open only for that day and sometimes even to barns or to unique and cosy places where there are usually no cafés, in order to taste local handmade dishes made from locally sourced ingredients. In each area where pop-up café days are held, visitors can discover a variety of unique cafés that are specific to that area and where food is often served based on family recipes.

www.maainfo.ee/cafedaysestonia



Finland - Lohja

Lohja Café Day is traditionally celebrated on the first Thursday in June. Lohja Café Day celebrates the beginning of the café's summer season and the unique Lohja café culture. Café culture in Lohja is diverse and travellers are sure to find their own favourite from the 30 different cafés around Lohja. We recommend a visit to the lovely old-time café Liisa, with a local souvenir shop next door, Café St. Honoré with mouth-watering cakes and pastries and to Café Lauri, where customers are pampered in the style of a European café. An experience to remember is the floating café Kaljaasi in the middle of the Lohja Lake. In addition to all the cafés, Lohja also has two local coffee roasters, so there is good reason to call Lohja a real café town and celebrate the Lohja Café Day.



Events

MIDSUMMER

Midsummer is celebrated in our countries between June 18 and 25, each country on slightly different dates. It is the most important traditional festivity of the summer in Finland, Sweden, Estonia and Latvia. Each country has its own authentic traditions related to sun and fertility while what is common to all is special festive foods, picking wildflowers and making wreaths, and gathering to celebrate around a fire – a bonfire or maypole.



Sweden



In Sweden, Midsummer is one of the most celebrated holidays and Midsummer Eve is always on a Friday between 19 and 25 June and it is usually celebrated in the countryside where



Swedes gather with friends and family. They will pick flowers for making wreaths for the maypole which is raised in an open spot where children and adults perform traditional ring dances. A flower crown in the hair and singing songs while drinking schnapps is another traditional activity. Typical food for Midsummer is pickled herring served with new potatoes, chives, and sour cream. Legend says that if you place seven types of flowers under your pillow in midsummer, you will dream about your future beloved one.

Finland

Midsummer in Finland is celebrated on a different date depending on the year, around 18th to 25th of June. Finns usually go to their summer cottages to celebrate the Midsummer which can include bonfires, summer concerts and other activities.



Estonia

Midsummer or St. John's Day, Jaanipäev as it is known in Estonia, is one of the oldest local celebrations. Late June is the perfect time for a holiday in the blooming nature where days extend into nights, with barely any darkness in sight.

SUMMER SOLSTICE

Due to its northern location, Estonia experiences the summertime 'White Nights' phenomena, when the sun sets late and the night is dusk at most. Midsummer coincides closely with the longest day of the year in the northern hemisphere – the summer solstice. Every year the solstice occurs on June 20nd or 21st, Midsummer festivities beginning on the eve of June 23rd conclude on June 24th, while Estonians barely sleep during this bright period, sitting outside by the glow of bonfires and twilight. Originating in ancient folk traditions, St. John's Day marks the beginning of the season

for haymaking. The day was celebrated long before the arrival of Christianity in Estonia and although the celebration received a Christian name, the pagan tradition is still alive and well today. Since 1919, Midsummer celebrations have coincided with those of Victory Day, when Estonian forces defeated German troops on June 23rd in the War of Independence.

SUPERSTITIOUS LEGENDS

Midsummer's Eve is intertwined with many folk beliefs. Children stay up until dawn, while young lovers wander through the forest looking for a lucky fern flower said to bloom only on this night. If you are lucky enough to spot a glowworm, you may expect great fortune. Young women looking to take a sneak peek into the future are advised to collect nine different types of flowers and place them under a pillow for the night, resulting in a predictive dream revealing a future spouse. The more adventurous boys and girls are known to take a jump over the bonfire in hopes of achieving prosperity or to swing as high as possible on the village's wooden swing. More moderate traditions include singing, dancing and telling old folk tales.

Today, Midsummer is a national holiday giving city folks an opportunity to take a break in the countryside. People tend to spend the day with friends barbecuing in the garden or having a picnic in the wilderness. However, the tradition of village parties featuring bands playing around massive bonfires hasn't gone anywhere, proving to be the highlight event in many rural towns and villages.



Latvia



The Summer Solstice is the one celebration in Latvia that has the most traditions and is held when the sun has reached its apex in the sky, with the longest day being followed by the shortest night of the year. Nature is flourishing. Because the Solstice does not take place on the same day each year, the ancient Latvians celebrated the festival in accordance with the movement of the sun, and thus began on June 21. Today, Summer Solstice Eve in Latvia is celebrated on June 23, with the Summer Solstice Day, known as Jāņi in Latvia, is an official holiday, however, those who practice authentic traditions, follow the Sun calendar. Midsummer celebration is a strong part of rural lifestyle and there are communities and rural farms that welcome visitors with pleasure, explain the authentic traditions, encourage guests to become part of the celebration and enjoy a true midsummer experience with songs, dances and ancient rituals.



ÅLAND SPRING FAIR IN MAY

www.alandgronskar.ax

GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: 2 days
Season: spring
For whom: individuals / groups

DURATION OF THE PROGRAMME:

Sat 11:00–20:00,
Sun 11:00–17:00

TYPE OF TRANSPORT:

individual transfer / tour bus

LOCATION



Åland island, Finland
www.alandgronskar.ax/en/



The Åland spring fair takes place each year during the last weekend of May, in the time of the apple blossoms and spring asparagus. Open farms, restaurants and cafés welcome visitors all over Åland. With the help of the event website and programme map, visitors can explore the hidden gems of the Åland countryside and celebrate spring with locally produced foods and crafts.

Guests can visit local breweries, witness the crowning of the Åland's best hamburger chef, taste handcrafted cheeses at a local dairy, explore bee farming, pet little lambs, go on a pig safari, enjoy freshly harvested asparagus with a good drink or go on a hiking tour to learn about the edible spring plants of the wild.

Everything for sale at the Åland Spring fair is produced on Åland. All Åland Spring fair restaurants follow Åland's cooking manifesto. It means that they cook and serve foods from seasonal and locally produced ingredients.

All activities and farms are marked with their own number on the map so that visitors can easily find their way. The most convenient way of getting around is by car, but the main event sponsor Eckerö Linjen will also arrange a bus tour of the fair on Saturday while many tour operators from Finland also make trips to the spring festival. The tour will start at the main bus station in Mariehamn and stop at a few carefully chosen fair destinations during the day.

ÅLAND HARVEST FESTIVAL IN SEPTEMBER

www.skordefest.ax

GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: **3 days**
(Friday–Sunday)
Season: **autumn**
For whom: **individuals / groups**

SERVICES INCLUDED:

local guides / tours can be organized

TYPE OF TRANSPORT:

individual transfer / tour bus

LOCATION



Åland island, Finland
<https://skordefest.ax/en/travel/>



The annual harvest festival has been organised since 2003 and offers a great opportunity to go around the Åland countryside, visit different farms, learn about rural life and shop locally. Everything for sale at the Åland Harvest Festival is produced on Åland. The Åland Harvest Festival is arranged by the association Skördefestens Vänner r.f. ("Friends of the Harvest Festival").

The farmers who invite visitors are a mix of growers, food producers and local artisans. For three days they offer freshly harvested vegetables, fresh lamb and beef, food carefully prepared from local delights and lots of beautiful crafts. All Åland Harvest Festival restaurants follow Ålands cooking manifesto, meaning that they cook and serve foods from seasonal and locally produced ingredients.

Guests who will not be using local guide services, can find their way easily:

✘ Download the app "Åland Harvest festival" Skördefestens Vänner r.f. from App Store or Google Play, browse the festival's participants, mark those of interest and map out their own route. The app costs 10 EUR and is the equivalent to the printed programme leaflet.

✘ There is a map link at each farm/restaurant/pop-up (Plåpp-Äpp).

✘ On approach to the festival area, there are signs and lanterns to guide visitors in the right direction.



KÖKARVECKAN FESTIVAL WEEK

GENERAL INFORMATION

Season: **end of July–beginning of August**
For whom: **individuals / groups**

HOW TO GET THERE:

ferry from Finland Pargas (2.5h) or Långnäs mainland Åland (2.5h)

DISTANCE FROM CAPITAL:

Mariehamn 83 km,
Helsinki 281km

WEBSITES:

Kökar (kokar.ax)
Brudhäll (brudhall.com)
Peders Aplagård (aplagarden.ax)
The monastery ruins and Hamnö
www.kokar.ax/klosterruiner-na-och-hamnoe?lang=en
www.skinnars.fi/en/
balticwings.org
www.havspaviljongen.ax/en/

PROGRAMME

Visitors can experience the following activities at the Kökar Festival Week:

- ✘ Folklore sailing with the boat "Tjutt-tjutt"
- ✘ Hiking on Kalen with an experienced guide
- ✘ Visit beautiful art exhibitions
- ✘ Visit the tractor exhibition
- ✘ Try the test shooting simulator
- ✘ Listen to live concerts in the archipelago environment
- ✘ Dance to the tunes of folk music
- ✘ Meet well-known local authors
- ✘ Participate in outdoor Christian ceremonies

LOCATION



Kökar island, Åland,
Finland

In the outermost southern part of Åland lies the archipelago of Kökar, consisting of one larger island surrounded by thousands of smaller ones. The main island has about 250 inhabitants and has been populated for about 3000 years.

The Kökarveckan Festival Week includes committed islanders – individuals, associations and entrepreneurs who together welcome visitors to several different experiences and activities by the sea. Activities and events of various kinds take place during the week. Visitors can join for a village walk, participate in workshops filled with creative joy, have fun with others and set the tone during the singing evening. Traditional summer dancing while the sun goes down on the horizon is a matter of course.



- ✘ Play disc golf in the well arranged disc golf-park located on Kökar
- ✘ Test-drive an excavator
- ✘ Ride along with a fire truck
- ✘ Participate in the flea market rally
- ✘ Join the bird watching walk
- ✘ Go to Källskär by boat
- ✘ Participate in village tour
- ✘ Eat the local delicacies
- ✘ Look at the tractor cruising

LOHJA

APPLE CARNIVAL

GENERAL INFORMATION

Package type: half day
 Season: September (Apple Carnival is only a one-day event only, held towards the end of every September)
 For whom: small groups (min. 8–max. 16)

SERVICES INCLUDED:

guided visit at Lohja Apple Carnival

TYPE OF TRANSPORT:

individual transfer / tour bus

LOCATION



City of Lohja surroundings, Finland



Helsinki 60 km (1 h)

Lohja is called the city of apples with over 200 000 apple trees. The annual Apple Carnival is a one-day event held in the second half of September during the best apple season in South Finland. The carnival offers a variety of seasonal fruit and vegetables, handicrafts, local food, music, dance and many other cultural programmes. The Apple Carnival tour takes place close to the Lohja city centre in the garden and field of the Lohja Museum. It is a very typical Finnish event, where local people and visitors meet each other and visitors catch many local delicacies and have a chance to taste traditional food.. In addition to the stalls there is also a huge and varied programme to enjoy at the festival, including theatre, music and performances by "The happy blacksmith". Displayed in the field are scarecrows participating in the Finnish scarecrow championships. The museum offers free admission during the carnival day and there are Icelandic horses for the children to ride on. In the street by the museum, visitors can admire alpacas, classic cars and motorbikes. The programme culminates with the vote for this year's "Miss Apple".



CIDER FESTIVALS

Apple Harvest Festival at Ārlavciems

www.abavas.lv

Apple Harvest Festival at Ārlavciems takes place in September and is organised by the Abavas Winery. The ABAVA family winery was established by the Mārtiņš and Liene Barkāns family. It is a highly developed company which produces high-quality beverages from Latvian-grown fruits and berries. The winery's vineyard covers 3.5 hectares, and it is expanded year by year. The owners are proud of a broad range of types of grapes, and each year they harvest some of them and produce a limited amount of grape wine in Latvia. The winery was established in 2010, and comparatively quickly it has become one of Latvia's leading wineries. The Apple Harvest festival is for everyone who appreciates the countryside with its typical fresh air and peace, and enjoys working in the garden together with friends, relatives and family. During the event visitors can pick the special Ārlavciems apples, celebrate, enjoy open-air concerts, participate in various workshops and physical activities, relax in the apple orchard cinema, and take part in many other activities.



Sabile Wine Festival

For many years now, the Sabile Wine Festival has been based on the historical traditions of the Sabile Wine Hill. Every year, almost all the Latvian wine producers gather here in the last week of July. With increasing numbers of cider makers, this festival has gradually become a fair for cider too, adding to the enjoyment of tourists in Kurzeme region.

STRAUPE FARMERS' MARKET

www.straupestirdzins.lv

This market sells produce from local farmers and home manufacturers who offer traditional and seasonal food which they grow and prepare themselves. Visitors can purchase vegetables, fruit, fresh and smoked meat, cheese, bread, country tortes, homemade wine and various household and gardening objects.

Straupe's farmers' market is part of the international Earth Markets alliance. This means that products sold at the market are manufactured in accordance with the Slow Food philosophy which includes growing food honestly, thinking about environmental sustainability and biological diversity. For consumers, this is a paradise of taste, involving traditional and high-quality products and great imagination in terms of what to do with them.



TRADITIONAL APPLIED FOLK ART FAIR IN RIGA

www.brivdabasmuzejs.lv/en/

The Traditional Applied Folk Art Fair taking place every June is the most well-known and unforgettable event at the Ethnographic Open-Air Museum of Latvia in Riga. The museum has been hosting it for over 50 years. For the fair, the most talented artisans, singers, and dancers come together from all over Latvia.





USEFUL LINKS

Information on rural Finland-Sweden-Estonia-Latvia travel destinations can be found on

countryholidays.info

The following links offer more information about
FINLAND, ÅLAND, SWEDEN, ESTONIA, LATVIA:

www.visitfinland.com - official tourism website of Finland

www.visitaland.com - official tourism website of Åland

www.visitsweden.com - official tourism website of Sweden

www.visitestonia.com - official tourism website of Estonia

www.latvia.travel - official tourism website of Latvia

PHOTOS USED: the partners of the "Rural Lifestyle" project, Kaisa Äärmaa, Sven Zacek, Martin Mark, Toomas Tuul, Helen Külvik, Irina Tammiss, TaaVID Meedia, Küllike Pihlap, Ülo Soomets, Marnek Tugevus, Kadi Ruumet, Kristi Ilves, Ahto Sooaru, soomaa.com, Malle Kolnes, Timo Tintse, Taavi Bergmann, Kristi Ilves, Silver Tõnisson, Tarmo Haud, Tuija Hyttinen, Tommi Huusko, Hannu Lehtinen, Peep Reismann, Valgejõe Veinivilla, Wanderlust, Hara sadam, Viimikud, Andris Jermuts, Visit Åland, photographer Rebecka Eriksson, Visit Åland / Pinja Papinsaari, Ester Laurell at Källskär, Peter Sjöberg, Flyfoto Åland, Therese Andersson, Blick, Nina Lindfors, Karlby, Kökar, Terhi Korpijaakko, Markku Levula, Milja Viljamaa, Jussi Taipale, Markku Oksanen, Jan Turunen, Jakob Dahlström, Emma Stjernstedts, Ginta Živerte.



countryholidays.info

ISBN 978-9934-606-22-9



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