

Example Itinerary Stockholm Archipelago and the Baltic Sea



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Itinerary

The perfect route, scheduled by the weather and the wind

Sailing in the archipelago is often described as a sailing paradise, there are uncountable opportunities. Whatever weather, wind force or wind direction you can always find the kind of sailing you are looking for. Regarding harbors there are several small harbors in the archipelago area and there are thousands of natural ones so finding a place for the night is easy. It is just a question in what kind of surroundings you want to spend your evening and next morning.

This is an example of an itinerary for one-week sailing in the archipelago built on a few highlights, natural harbors, villages, islands etcetera. Our best sailing trips are the ones when we together with our guests agree on a route for the trip the first evening onboard. We then take in consideration weather conditions, what type of sailing our guests are expecting and what kind of overnight places they prefer.

The character of the landscape in the archipelago is very different close to mainland compared to the outer archipelago. The trees near mainland and on the bigger islands are of normal size. Further out there are less trees, they are smaller and they incline away from the winter storms. The islands close to mainland are covered with earth and further out you find bare rocks shaped by the ice 10,000 years ago.

There are plenty of small villages to visit on the islands, some of them former mining villages, some being central places for sailing and some established because of their harbors. Visiting the islands is a nice way to find out about Swedish culture and to learn about how people lived in the archipelago hundreds of years ago.

The Baltic Sea offers a wide spectrum of destinations outside the Stockholm Archipelago. Gotland for example with its very spectacular landscape is one day sailing away. The big island offers amazing beaches and a lot of historic places. Finland is reached in half a day on open water. The Finnish archipelago contains about 60,000 islands. In this archipelago there are less houses and yachts than on the Swedish side. Passing Gotland and extending the sailing on open water to 24 hours we will reach the Baltic states, Estonia and Latvia. These countries are developing very rapidly but you can still see remains from when they belonged to Russia.

Highlights in Stockholm Archipelago

For sailors the archipelago is a paradise. You are not effected by waves, there are always good sailing wind and you can find new routes to pick the best wind direction. It is said that you can sail in the archipelago for a lifetime without staying in the same natural harbor twice.

The archipelago consists of 33,000 islands and the total area covers around 3,500 square km which makes it one of the biggest archipelagos in the world. Together with the Finnish archipelago, just about 30 nm across open water, the total amount of island is 100,000.

The Stockholm Archipelago was inhabited already 1000 years ago and by the 17th century all places hidden from the bad weather was populated. Today 70 % of the archipelago belongs to the nonprofit organization "Skärgårdsstiftelsen", which assignation is to keep it free from building projects and other environmental harming projects.

The inhabitants in the 17th century made their living out of fishing and hunting. Later in the 19th century the farming grow and today tourism is the main occupation. The government supports companies that establish business in the archipelago. For example, the largest taxi company has its switch board placed on one of the islands.

Stockholm Archipelago

33,000 islands
3,500 km²



Arholma

Arholma is mentioned already in 1247 as the most northern entrance to Stockholm Archipelago. As the first safe harbor when coming across from Finland it was an important place, which also offered pilots.

The landscape on the island enabled the inhabitants to start farming and for a period there were up to seven farms. Later the farmers became wealthy as ship owners.

Today the island has converted into a recreating area with small inns and hotels. Skärgårdsstiftelsen runs a traditional farm on the island and there are a lot of tourists visiting all year around.





Söderarm Archipelago

Söderarm Archipelago is eight miles long and four miles wide and faces the open water towards Åland and Finland.

The lighthouse was built in 1839 and was one of the light houses used by the commercial ships arriving from Finland and the Baltic to approach Stockholm. It was manned in 1839 - 1997 and in 1999 it was replaced by an automatic light.

The landscape is typical for the outer archipelago, few trees and fantastic smooth rocks.

Here you will find a sauna built in a foxhole from the Second World War.



Stora Nassa

Stora Nassa includes 365 islands. It is the biggest of 20 archipelagos in the area called Nassa and is known to be the hilliest one.

Stora Nassa is known for its wild life, most of all for the variety of birds, one of them the eider duck. The trees are mostly birch trees, low growth and shaped by the wind.

Today there are a few small houses on one of the islands where the watchmen live during the season. This archipelago is so far out and surrounded by so many small skerries that it takes skilled yachtsmen to go there.



Sandhamn

In the center of Stockholm Archipelago there is a group of sandy islands creating very sheltered harbors. The most known is Sandhamn.

This is the center of sailing activities on the east coast of Sweden. The most famous race in Sweden is named "Around Gotland" or recently renamed to "ÅF Offshore Race". There are more than 250 yachts taking part in the race and the start and finish line is just outside Sandhamn.

Sandhamn has a great history well connected with the Royal Swedish Yacht Club KSSS. The hotel in the center of the harbor gives a fantastic atmosphere when entering the harbor. This is where you find the parties, the very big yachts and the jet sets during the summer.





Skärvassa, Nämö

Nämö was mentioned in King Valdemar of Sweden's sailing guide written in the 13th century. It is one of the largest islands in Stockholm Archipelago and was for a period populated with almost 400.

In the north end of Nämö you find the much protected bay called Skärvassa. Here you can anchor in any kind of wind, it is just to choose a protected corner of the bay.

In the bay there is a wooden fired sauna built and run by Skärgårdstiftelsen. You book it, chop your firewood, fire it up, get hot and dive into the cooling sea. This is an amazing experience.



Saltsjöbaden

In 1889 the contract was signed to create a complete new suburb to Stockholm, just in the middle of the wilderness. The idea included private houses, shops, railway from Stockholm and a hotel with a recreation area for people from Stockholm.

Today Saltsjöbaden is where the upper class in Stockholm lives. It is also the center point for the Royal Yacht Club, KSSS; which have a marina, sailing school and much more.

Saltsjöbaden is the homeport of S/Y Ichiban. Most of our trips starts or end just outside the very beautiful hotel.





Byttafladen

The entrance is very difficult and should be done carefully and with experienced crew on board. Well inside you find yourself in a lagoon protected all around. Hiking on the island is nice and from the top of it the view is endless and fantastic.

The nature on the island is like walking in a garden with narrow paths between flowerbeds created by nature itself. Next minute you are walking in a small valley that extends through the island.

Stockholm

The capital of Stockholm is built on 14 islands all connected to each other by bridges, some call Stockholm the Nordic Venice.

The city is known for its clear water, you can fish right in the middle of the town. Stockholm was the first city to receive the award European Green Capital by the EU Commission in 2010.

The town is a very popular tourist destination and there are 350 cruising ships visiting each year. We often sail all the way into the center of Stockholm either when we start or end the trip. The entrance approaching Stockholm is fantastic either you come from north passing the fortress Waxholm or from south passing the very narrow canal “Stäket” with all luxury villas around.





Utö

Utö is one of the largest islands in the Stockholm Archipelago. With its strategic position at the gate to the most important entrance it has long been used by the military, the pilot and the toll.

On the island you can see the entrance to the first iron mine in Sweden established on the 12th century. The mining continued until 1878 and the pit is 215 meter deep.

Today Utö is a recreation area for people wanting to spend their holidays in small cottages or in tents. Renting bikes is a popular activity on the island, as is canoeing.

Huvudskär

Huvudskär is in the most south-east corner of the Stockholm archipelago, comprising 150-200 small islands and skerries.

This group of island has been very popular due to its protected natural harbor. Already in 1450 a law regulating the fishing in the area was established. Through the years there have been a post office, a chapel and a school in the small village.

The most amazing area is on the south-east part of the main island where the rocks are stretching out many hundreds of meters, smoothen by the ice 10,000 years ago.



Highlights in the Baltic Sea

There are eight countries which have coastline to the Baltic sea, Sweden have the longest one and Finland is the second longest. The Baltic Sea has been and still are a very important part of the transportation industry in this area, there are a number of ships and cruise ships that passes the small entrance between Denmark and Sweden.

The water in the Baltic Sea is brackish and therefore the fauna is very different from the other side of Sweden, the North Sea and the Atlantic where the water is very salty.

Scandinavia is known to have a mild climate despite the longitude it appears on, with temperatures up to 30 C in the air and 25 in the water. The reason is both the Atlantic current that brings warm water along the Atlantic coast and the southwesterly winds sweeping up from southern Europe this also affects The Baltic Sea.



Gotland and Gotska Sandön

The Vikings several tracks on the islands from year 700-900, small houses, harbors and graves.

Gotland has a very strategic position in the Baltic and therefore it has been several battles on the island. During the years 1200 - 1400 Visby was a well-protected part of the Hansa union. Now the city wall was built.

The nature in this part of the Baltic is quite different, sandy beaches and no rocks.

Today Visby is a fantastic summer town with lots of restaurants, clubs and bars. In the north of Gotland there is an amazing island called Gotska Sandön, whose landscape often is compared to the Mediterranean.



Estonia and Latvia

Estonia and Latvia have a very nice coastline with large islands, like Ösel and Dagö, which makes it possible to sail in protected water inside the bay of Riga.

Having been part of Sweden 200 years until the beginning of the 18th century some villages on the islands still speak Swedish, in an old fashion way.

The coastline of these countries was, when belonging to Russia, very well guarded with watch towers all along the waterfront. They are still there, possible to visit.



Finish Archipelago

Just five hours of sailing from the Swedish coast you find yourself in the Finnish Archipelago.

After having spent several days in the Finnish archipelago with its 60,000 islands without seeing any sails passing by or hearing any sound of motor yachts you get the sensation that natural beauty is forever lasting.

Visit the island “Källskär” where the Swedish “count” Göran Åkerhielm settled small “Mediterranean” gardens. When strolling along the long footbridge over the beach consisting of small oval stones polished by the sea you get the feeling it is all just a coulisse, unreal. But it is all there, waiting for you.

