

# HABO CHURCH

**H**abo Church is known as the “Wooden Cathedral near Vättern”. With its size, shingle-clad exterior and wooden interior decor it really lives up to the name. It is located in the church village Habo, approx. 4 kilometres from Habo, the new village that grew up further east during the latter part of the 19th century, when the railway was constructed. Here you find today St. Johannes Church from 1993.

It is believed that the first church was built in the 12th century. The preserved stone sacristy could originate from this church. In 1643, the current church was rebuilt with a Greek-cross plan. It received its current look in 1723, with the exception of a few later changes. The bell tower, with three bells, is from 1760 and stands on the north side of the church.

Several major renovations have been carried out over the years, for example in 1872, 1908 and in the 1950s, but without changing the character of the church.

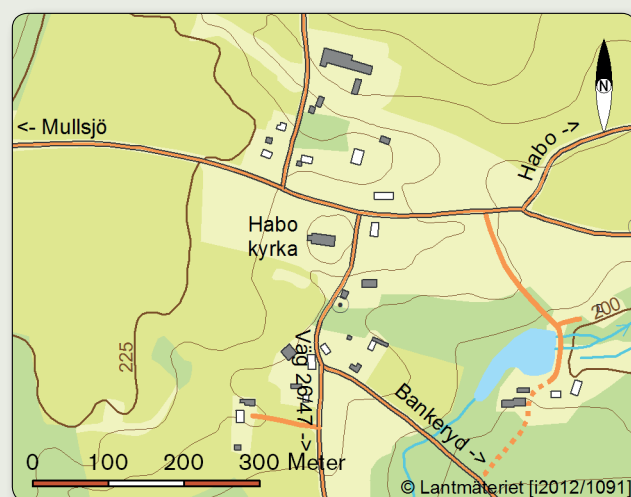
When you walk into the church, you are struck by the richly decorated interior. Every visible surface, both walls and ceilings, are painted. The theme is Catechism, and the motifs illustrate the Ten Commandments, Apostles' Creed and Lord's Prayer. The paintings were made in 1741 by Johan Christian Peterson and Johan Kinnerus, both master painters from Jönköping. They each brought an apprentice whose names are written in the ceiling: Joachim Conrad Schwartz and Peter Edberg.

One of the oldest fixtures in the church is found in the chancel: a mid-13th century baptismal font made from sandstone. The stone sacristy contains a medieval sculpture of John the Baptist and parts of a winged altarpiece from the Middle Ages by way of sculptures and carved tracery.

The altarpiece and pulpit are from 1723 and made by the sculptor Jonas Ulberg. This was probably his last work, since records show that his widow received the final payment. The altar piece was completed in 1740 with a clock that has a “clock boy” which strikes once every hour on the hour. The front of the organ on the western balcony was built by Johan Niclas Cahman in 1736.



*Habo Church with its rich interior paintings. Photo: Jönköping County Museum.*



## HIDDEN GEM 14



### HOW TO GET HERE

Follow the sign for “Habo kyrka” from Habo village, alternatively from Road 26/47, between Jönköping and Mullsjö.

Coordinates:  
N 6416373 / E 441940  
(SWEREF 99 TM) // N 57°  
53' 7.47", E 14° 1' 15.05"  
(WGS84)



*The church village Habo is surrounded by a rolling cultivated landscape. Photo: Leif Gustavsson/L.G.foto.*

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## HIDDEN GEMS

There are so many things to discover in the countryside! Here, Jönköping County Museum presents some of the cultural environment and heritage attractions in the county.

They include well-known cultural monuments such as Habo Church and the Smålandsstenar Stone Circles, but also lesser known gems such as log-driving remains in the river Valån and Stengårdshult Church. Around the county you can find evidence of how people lived and worked in the past, everything from castles and manors to abandoned embankments and clearance cairns in forest areas.

The idea with Hidden Gems is to tempt you to make excursions in the cultural landscape – here you find our history, revealed in different ways in the physical environment. This heritage is worth experiencing and protecting. Bit by bit, we will be adding more sights under the heading Hidden Gems, both for people living in the county and visitors from further away. The more people who discover these gems, the better chance that they will be preserved for the future.

### FACTS

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In Jönköping County there are more than 4 000 registered ancient remains, 87 cultural environments of national interest, close to 130 listed buildings, around 150 churches, some 100 rural community centres with old settlements, a large number of industrial heritage sites, and two cultural reserves. There are also a large number of cultural environments with buildings worthy of conservation. More information about the sites can be found on the websites of the County Administrative Board, the municipalities and the local heritage societies.

### GOOD TO KNOW

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Access to the Hidden Gems varies. Some sites are well signposted, with easy access and proper parking facilities, etc. Others are more challenging to reach. Visitors may have to walk some distance, sometimes through scrubby forest, only to be met by a broken sign (if there ever was one) when they reach the site. All the sites, however, have an exciting and interesting history.

Please note that many of the cultural heritage buildings are privately owned and can only be viewed from the outside. Also, please respect private land. Many churches are open in the summer. During other times of the year, the churchwarden may be able to open the church for you.

