

# LULEÅ

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SWEDISH  
LAPLAND  
YOUR ARCTIC DESTINATION

## *Kayaking in Luleå*



# THE LULEÅ ARCHIPELAGO

## A PART OF THE BOTHNIAN ARCHIPELAGO

*This guide describes paddling routes around Luleå and Råneå. The routes are varied in difficulty but they all lead to beautiful, exciting islands.*

Luleå archipelago is part of the Bothnian archipelago, which stretches from Skellefteå in the south to Haparanda at the Finnish border in the northeast. The Bothnian archipelago is the northernmost brackish water archipelago in the world. The water is neither salt nor sweet, which affects both plants and animals. Its northern location with bright summer nights means there is no hurry to your night harbor – you can enjoy kayaking around the clock.

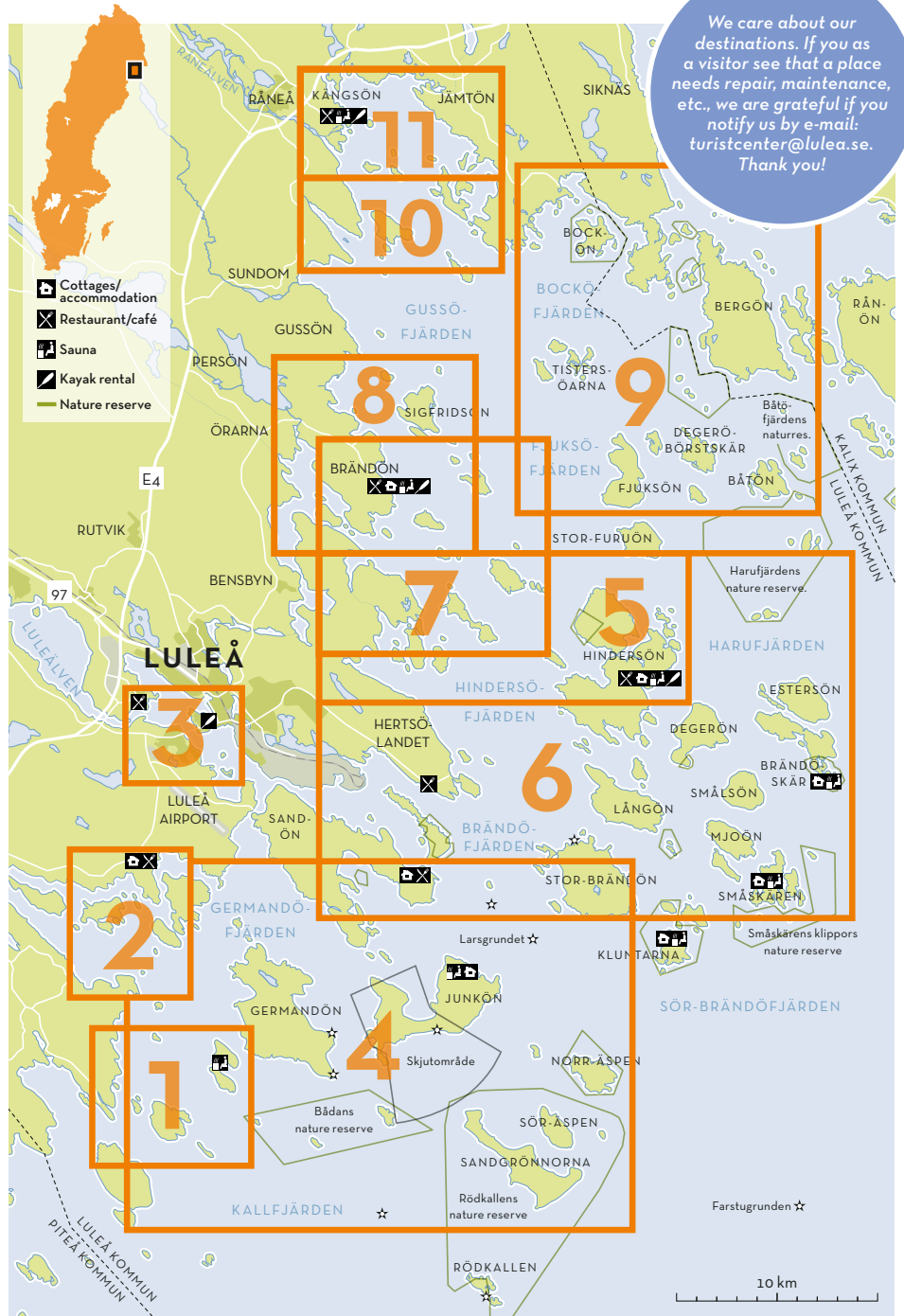
In the Luleå archipelago there are 1312 various islands, characterized by weather and wind, midwinter cold and summer's magical mid-night sun. Service is also great, on some islands there are saunas, restaurants and cottages. If you would rather experience solitude, there are many islands and beaches without piers, cottages or other facilities.

There is much to discover amongst all the islands. Man has lived in the archipelago for centuries and the traces are still there. Artefacts of cultural history, labyrinths, fishnet drying racks, boat landings and foundation remains show the existence of hunting and fishing since the 14th century. The fishing villages were once used by the locals for summer fishing, today they are populated by summer guests.

Those interested in plants and geology have a lot to see. You can find unique specimens such as Haparanda monzonite rock at Brändöskär or the small, *Euphrasia bottnica* at Hindersön, not found anywhere else in the world.

In late summer you can find berries, mushrooms and maybe a grayling to eat. The grayling is easiest to catch by the rocky shallows in the outer archipelago. As you can see, there is a lot to do and discover in the Luleå archipelago.

**Welcome!**



We care about our destinations. If you as a visitor see that a place needs repair, maintenance, etc., we are grateful if you notify us by e-mail: [turistcenter@lulea.se](mailto:turistcenter@lulea.se). Thank you!

### IMPORTANT TO KNOW

- The archipelago is relatively shallow with an average of only 10 m. This means short, steep waves when the wind blows. It also means that shallows and rocks can be found in the middle of a large inlet.
- The water level is heavily affected by winds and air pressure. Low and high water can differ as much as 2 metres
- Southern and south-western winds are the most common in summer and all crossings in the archipelago are more or less affected by these winds. The nights are light and usually calm, on a windy day you can go paddling at night instead.

### DIFFICULTY LEVELS

We have given the routes three different difficulty levels: **EASY**, **MEDIUM** and **DIFFICULT**. View these as recommendations. The estimated times assume good weather and an experienced kayaker. A route that is simple one day can be really difficult the next if the wind starts blowing. Check the sea weather reports and use your best judgement.

**EASY:** The route is close to the shore, no crossings longer than 2 kilometers, day-stages no longer than 20 kilometers.

**MEDIUM:** Paddling on wider inlets. Crossings no longer than 4 kilometers, day-stages no longer than 30km.

**DIFFICULT:** Contains paddling outside the archipelago, crossings longer than 4 kilometers and day-stages longer than 30 kilometers.

### MAPS/NAUTICAL CHARTS

Use a topographic map, scale 1:50,000 or a nautical chart with more extensive information about shallows, markings, waterways etcetera. 'Båtsportkortet för Bottenviken' is a nautical chart of a very manageable size, also available laminated and waterproof. The website [lulea.se/skargard](http://lulea.se/skargard) has paddling information and tips on nice spots to visit or stay overnight. The book "Din egen lots till Luleå skärgård" is available for purchase at Luleå Tourist Information Centre in Kulturens Hus.



Photo: Gunvor Elström

*Paddling together is an easy way to increase safety - and it's more fun too!*

# 1. ALHAMN-ANTNÄS-BÖRSTSKÄR • 1 day, approx. 20 km



A route to the gem of the southern archipelago  
 Difficulty: **MEDIUM**

Launch at Alhamn, Luleå's southernmost coastal village and one of the oldest. The village lies on a long, narrow cape by an equally long and narrow bay. South of the pier is a small beach where the route begins.

Follow the cape to the southeast and aim for Kunoö. After about 2 kilometers, you will be crossing a waterway, so stay alert. Keep going southeast along the southern beach of Kunoö and then make the short crossing of about a kilometre, to Kunoöhällan. Birds such as the black guillemot, velvet scoter, skua and ruddy turnstone like the cliffs. Next head due north towards Antnäs-Börstskär, about 4 kilometers. The island consists of Norrskäret, Sörskäret and the ridge that binds these two together. On the

western side of the ridge there is a guest harbour, a campfire site and a sauna that is free to use. Sauna and swimming in the evening sun is quite an experience.

The island is nice to walk, and there are several trails. Sörskäret has a hilly moraine ridge and in the south there are beautiful cliffs with a view. There is also an old quarry where feldspar was mined 1907-1909. Norrskäret has a nice beach with moss covered sand and sparse pine forest to the northeast. If you wish to stay overnight, there are great tent pitches both here and on the ridge.

Leaving Antnäs-Börstskär, paddle south again towards the bay on the northern side of Kunoö, facing northwest. It's slightly hidden behind Rödhillan. Now you're within reach of the mountain, Storberget, 43.7 m above sea level - this is high for Luleå! There is a nice beach on the western side of the island but it's a bit shallow even for kayaks. The last stage follows Kunoö to the northwest. Go around Stora and Lilla Kunoögrunden on the northern side - again crossing the waterway - head for Nördskatan and paddle back to the pier in Alhamn.

**TIPS:** Faced with fresh southern and southeastern winds it's best to stay north of Kunoö both ways, there and back.

**REST STOPS:** Antnäs-Börstskär has a pier, sauna, rest cabin, campfire sites. Kunoö has a sheltered bay to the north and a nice but shallow sandy beach to the west.

**BIRD PROTECTION AREA:** Kunoöhällan. Disembarking is prohibited between May 1 and July 31.



Photo: Gunvor Ekström

# 2. KALLAX-ERSNÄSFJÄRDEN • 1 day, approx. 22 km

A route inside the archipelago, amongst summer houses.  
 Difficulty: **MEDIUM**

Launch in Kallax - the village known for its fermented herring. There is a fishing harbour and a leisure boat harbour. South of the leisure boats is a rather overgrown beach that makes a good launching spot. The trailer ramp is also an option.

Paddle south between the mainland cape and Kallaxön. Round the cape near the twigs (it's very shallow behind them) and go north past Björnhällan, Furuholmarna and Jaktviken. There are plenty of summer houses here and some enjoy the view and southern location all year round.

Turn west, past Björkoren and follow the northern beach of Halsön. Then go south in the strait between Halsön and Granön. The strait is shallow and rocky, especially on the Granö side. You will soon reach Stor-Hundskäret, a lovely, unpopulated excursion destination. The southern beach has a pleasant rest stop.

Go south past Lill-Hundskäret and then southeast towards Vibbonäset. Paddle across the bay towards Renholmen. To your north is a big, sandy beach, well suited for a lunch break.

Now the journey back to Kallax begins. About 2 kilometers northwest is Stor-Bergörundet and after about another kilometre, the southern tip of Bergön. Paddle into the strait between Bergön and Kallaxön. At Bergön, where the strait begins widening, there is another beach with tables and benches.

If you then paddle north towards Kallaxön, you will arrive after about a kilometre, at a larger pier by Strömmingsvarpberget. We recommend disembarking here (watch out for sharp rocks) and walking up to the old quarry where feldspar was mined 1905-1938. The quarry is now a water filled ravine with steep walls. Information signs tell an interesting story.



With the right kind clothing you can start the season before the ice has melted.



Photo: Niilo Althavaara

**TIPS:** The southern wind picks up speed over Börstskärsfjärden, meaning that the Renholmen-Bergön route can be exposed. Jaktviken and Kallviken are famous summer house areas. There are vantage points on Renholmsberget and Bergön.

**REST STOPS:** Stor-Hundskäret has a nice little beach with a campfire site. There are sandy beaches on Renholmen and Bergön. There is also a small rest stop on the southern beach of Halsön.



The beach at Renholmen in the evening sun.

Photo: Gunvor Ekström

### 3. NEAR CENTRAL LULEÅ • 3 hours incl. breaks, approx. 13 km



See the city from the water and experience Luleå's history  
Difficulty: **EASY**

The route begins at Gamla färjeläget, a small harbour on the edge of the city peninsula. Just north of the harbour is a sandy beach. First, paddle north past Gültzaudden, named after Christian Gültzau who founded a shipyard here in 1830.

Turn northwest towards Stenarmen in Karlsvik. This was the site of Luleå's first ironworks between 1906 and 1925. There are information signs and remains of old buildings and docks. Paddle past the campsite and out into the Lule River. Niporna is a very popular bathing beach. In the summer, you will find Kolarens café with a beautiful view above Niporna. There are rapids by the island of Gråden, strong ones at high water, don't go too close if you're inexperienced. These are popular salmon and trout fishing waters.

Directly opposite Niporna is Gäddvik. Paddle over there and follow the beach towards Bergnåset. When the Bergnåset Bridge was built in 1954 it was Sweden's long-

est at 896 metres. Keep going south along the beach to Granudden. 500 metres due east is the cultural conservation area at Stensborg. The island provides a great excursion with piers and campfire sites. In the past there was a sawmill here that received logs driven down the river. The sawmill was closed in the 1920's but there are remains and information signs.

A kilometre north of Stensborg is Gråsjälören. There was a steamboat pier and a restaurant here up until 1940. After being abandoned and left to dilapidate, the building was demolished in the sixties. Now there is a lovely bathing beach, a pier and campfire sites with a view of Luleå's South Harbour and the Bergnåset Bridge.

Paddle via Oskarsvarv and the Bergnåset Bridge and back to Gamla färjeläget again.

**TIPS:** In Södra Hamm, kayaks are rented out on a drop-in basis during the day. You can start this tour from the rental site.

**REST STOPS:** Beaches at Stenarmen and the Karlsvik banks. Piers, campfire sites, dry toilets and information signs at Stensborg. Sandy beach, dry toilet and rest cabin at Gråsjälören.



View of central Luleå from the Gråsjälören beach.

### 4. SANDGRÖNNORNA • 3 days, approx. 65 km



When you would like a kilometre-long beach all to yourself.  
Difficulty: **DIFFICULT**

This tour offers challenges and archipelago culture in an amazing natural environment. You must be an experienced kayaker and use your best judgement. The second day stage is long and exposed. You can of course add another day, for instance by staying overnight at Norr-Åспен.

**DAY 1.** Start at the Kallax harbour, either from the ramp or the small, rather overgrown beach south of the stone pier. Course: southeast towards Klyvgrunden about 3 kilometers away. Here you will find a narrow gravel ridge to the mainland and if you need to sort out any onboard equipment, this is a good place to do it as you will be paddling nearly 10 kilometers before your next landing. Continue to the southeast, past Fjärdgrundet and the next island, carrying almost the same name: Fjärdgrundet. Then you will pass the northern beach of the island, Germandön. Germandön has played an important role in both farming and shipping. There are two lighthouses on the southern side of the island. The Lilejudden lighthouse has been restored, with a new harbour cottage with sauna, shower and toilet. There is a large area of old growth forest and several areas where orchids naturally occur on

Germandön - despite extensive logging. After Bastaholmen comes a 3 kilometers to crossing over to Junkön. When you reach the northwestern cape, it will be a good time for lunch. A large part of Junkön is a designated firing range and regardless of how inviting the beach may look, access is prohibited. Maps and nautical charts show the boundaries of the firing range. Örnudden at the other end of the island, however, is accessible and suitable as an overnight camp. A trail goes from here to the village and the harbour. This is the home port of many commercial fishers. Vendace is fished and vendace roe is prepared here. There is also a museum of the archipelago, a gallery, a café, a sauna and drinking water. An old windmill - a truly uncommon sight on the Swedish Lapland coast - is also found here.

**DAY 2.** Go around Örnudden and paddle past the fishing harbour, after Orrskärsudden, go southeast towards Norr-Åспен. The northwestern harbour is suitable for a break. Then go southwest, via Sör-Åспен to Sandgrönnorna. You can disembark anywhere at Bäckgrönnan or Mittisandgrönnan (on the east side too) and then it's time to go discovering! The southern part is called Skvalpen and has now merged with Sandgrönnorna. The island is so young that no proper forest has grown here. Bushes, small holts of rowan and solitary pines are found to the north and at Skvalpen there is mostly just sand. The rest of this day's paddling is highly exposed. From Bäckgrönnan you go west, towards the northern cape of Gråsjälgrundet. Here, it's very rocky and shallow, quite some way out, so keep going west for about 4 kilometers and you will reach the smooth cliffs of Germandöhällan. The last stage of this day is approximately 6 kilometers and goes to Antnäs-Börstskär. Set up camp on the ridge, enjoy a sauna and sleep well!

**DAY 3.** Go around Norrskäret and paddle north towards Germandön. At Brännstrandsviken is a beach suitable for a stop, other than that, there are plenty of block stone beaches. At Högstengrundet you turn northeast, into the strait between Kallaxön and Bergön. From here, you will enjoy 4 kilometers of idyllic archipelago on your way back to Kallax harbour.



**TIPS:** Seabirds love the aquatic environment at Skvalpen, many species breed here and others stop here during migration - bring binoculars. After visiting Sandgrönnorna you can of course turn around and go back the same, more protected route. Read about Kallaxön and Bergön in route 2 and about Antnäs-Börstskär in route 2 and about Antnäs-Börstskär in route 1. At forsvarsmakten.se you will find information on events related to the firing range.

**REST STOPS:** Klyvgrunden, the northwestern cape of Junkön, Örnudden, Norr-Åспен, Sör-Åспен, Sandgrönnorna, Germandöhällan, Antnäs-Börstskär, Brännstrandsviken, Bergön.

**BIRD PROTECTION AREA:** Fjärdgrundet, Klippgrundet and south of Mittisandgrönnan. Disembarking is prohibited between May 1 and July 31.

## 5. THE CENTRAL ARCHIPELAGO • 2 days, approx. 40 km



A two-day route with a taste of the outer archipelago  
Difficulty: **MEDIUM**

**DAY 1.** Hagaviken lies on the north part of Hertsölandet. There are many summer houses and a small boat harbour. A little sandy beach at the southern end of the harbour is a good launching spot.

Begin by paddling across the bay towards Hagaviksskatan and then towards the next cape to the northeast, Tallholmsskatan. Turn east and paddle in between Stor-Risöholmen and Lill-Risöholmen and head north along Risön. The strait between Björkön and Risön has rocky shallows in the middle. Go north of this and follow the buoys between Kätaholmen and Gloholmarna. The buoys mark a dredged channel in the strait that otherwise wouldn't have been passable.

Here is the first crossing. Paddle in a north-eastern direction towards the northern part of Sandåkaret, about 2 kilometers. There are beautiful cliffs on the north cape and there are both cliffs and a beach on the north-eastern side.

The next crossing is directly eastward, about 2 kilometers to Hamnön. Keep going east along by the three little islands east of Hamnön. A three kilometre crossing to Lappön begins at Enagrundet. Lappön got its name from being grazing land for reindeer in the winter. There is an old forest nature reserve here. In the middle of the island are meadows and haymaking shacks used in the past by the residents of Hinderönsön.

Paddle on along the northern beach of Lappön. A large, shallow bay to the northeast has both a sandy beach and cliffs. From here you can see Bätöharun, Hinderöharun and Estersön, all on the outer rim of the archipelago.

Now go south and paddle into the strait between Björkön (the northern part of Hinderönsön) and Lappön. In the bay behind Gemgrundet is a sandy beach, Gemgrundssanden, suitable for overnight camping.

**DAY 2.** The paddling continues in the strait between Lappön and Hinderönsön. Hinderönsön has been inhabited since the 16th century and people still live here. Do paddle into the Norrisundet strait. There is a small seal boat exhibit with stories about seal hunting in the old days. Hinderönsön village, located between Norrisund and Ostisund has neat old farm houses. In Björkögårdsviken there is a tour boat pier and a nice, big sauna. However the shore here is quite muddy. The route continues along Hinderönsön. The next rest stop is Carlsgruvan, 3 kilometers from Norrisundet. This was the site of an unsuccessful iron ore mine in the 19th century. There are mining pits and information signs. At nearby Kortspelargrundet there is an old powder magazine used by the mine.

Head west towards Knivören and follow the beach to the northern cape. Here follows a three kilometre exposed crossing westwards towards Skogsskåret. To the south is a beautiful sandy beach and a pine heath where you can rest.

The final crossing is 2 kilometers, directly westward from Skogsskåret. There are rocks here and there right under the surface, keep a look out.

Go in between Lövren and Ytterstön and turn south. On the western beach of Ytterstön is another nice bay for a rest. Go around Risön and up towards Stor-Risöholmen again, on the south side this time.

*Maybe you will find your very own chanterelle spot on one of the islands.*



Photo: Göran Wällin

**TIPS:** As is often the case, you have to have respect for the southern winds. The Hinderösfjärden crossings are exposed. The teacher's home in Hinderönsön's old school can be rented. See [visitlulea.se](http://visitlulea.se).

**WORTH A VISIT:** The Lappön nature reserve, Renmålaberget Mountain, shingle fields and old forest. The archipelagic environment at Norrisund, Carlsgruvan at Hinderönsön.

**REST STOPS:** Sandåkaret's beaches to the north and east. Lappön's beach to the northeast and the Gemgrundssanden nature reserve. Norrisund, Carlsgruvan, Skogsskåret's southern beach. Ytterstön's north-western bay.

**BIRD PROTECTION AREA:** Risögrundet. Disembarking is prohibited between May 1 and July 31.

## 6. THE OUTER ARCHIPELAGO • 4 days, approx. 83 km



A challenging route spread over several days to the outer archipelago.  
Difficulty: **DIFFICULT**

If you're an experienced kayaker, we recommend a route to Brändöskär and Småskären amongst other places in Luleå's outer archipelago. The route is an extension of route no. 4, meaning that the first and last day-stages are identical to those of that route. The day stages are only about 20 kilometers to give you ample time to look around.

**DAY 1.** The same as day 1 of route no. 4.

**DAY 2.** After the first overnight stay at Gemgrundet you go around the cape and paddle towards the three small islands, Trutören, Lägören and Strömmingsören. From there on you will have a crossing of nearly 5 kilometers. However, it is relatively well protected from the usual southern, south-westerly winds. Set a course for Bullerskåret, go south of the small band of islands and into the strait between Saxskåret and Estersön. It is shallow and rocky to begin with but it gets better when you close in on Uddskäret, go around Uddskäret and paddle south. You are now on the edge of the Luleå archipelago, exposed to strong currents from the Gulf of Bothnia. Paddle into the bay between Persgrundet and Brändöskäret. Here is a picturesque old fishing village - a myriad of small cottages that are now summer houses. Go ashore at the inner end of the bathing bay. Here, the local council has

built two saunas that are open to everyone. There is also a guest harbour, fresh water and dry toilets, as well as boat tours during high season. Take a look around cabins, shacks and cliffs and visit the old chapel from 1774, which is still in use. The next stage goes south via Hällgrundet. The statue of Christ on the island was erected by artist Erik Marklund in 1957. Hällgrundet and Brändöskär are part of a nature reserve. The crossing to Finnskär is 5 kilometers, highly exposed and very beautiful. Finnskär's northern bays are popular bathing spots but in the evening you may well be left alone to put up your tent and enjoy the evening sun from the cliffs.

**DAY 3.** Paddle south in the strait between Finnskär and Småskär. At Kyrkviken, you will find the Småskär Chapel, the oldest in the archipelago, built in the 1720's. The fishing village has probably been around since the 16th century and the cottages are now, because of the land uplift, way up on dry land.

When you have passed the strait, turn west and head for Längöhallorna via Smulterskåret. Längöhallorna is a nature reserve and a bird habitat consisting of four rocky little islets. Birds, such as black guillemots also breed on the other islets. It is nice to stop and rest at Bredhällan, but please be careful and disturb as little as possible. Go north alongside Långön. On the northern side is Storsanden, a kilometre long sandy beach and a suitable lunching stop. Sikören lies just north of Storsanden. Go north on the western side, up to Klemensskäret and Orrskäret. The last night's camp on the route is found at Strömmingsören or Lägören. Both are real gems with nice beaches, rocks, shingle fields and old forest. Or paddle to Ostisund/Björkögårdsviken and enjoy a sauna, dinner and a comfortable bed at Jopikgården.

**DAY 4.** See day 2 of route no. 4.

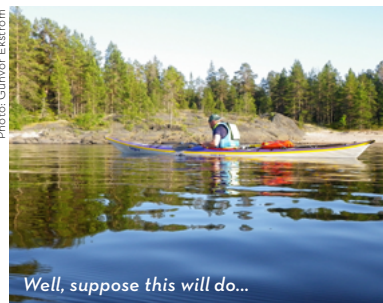


Photo: Gunvor Ekström

*Well, suppose this will do...*

**TIPS:** Part of the route goes outside the archipelago and this can mean high seas. There are 4-bed cottages at Brändöskär that can be rented via the Tourist office. Sometimes there is an art show in one of the boat houses.

**REST STOPS:** The bathing bay at Brändöskär has fresh water, campfire sites and outhouse. Bullerviken at Småskär has cottages to rent, refuse facilities and dry toilets. The sandy beach at Långön. At Hinderönsön there is a sauna next to the pier in Björkögårdsviken (muddy beach) and a little shack in Ostisund. The beaches of Strömmingsören and Lägören.

**BIRD PROTECTION AREA:** Hällgrundet and höghällan. Disembarking is prohibited between May 1 and July 31.

## 7. THE NORTHERN ARCHIPELAGO

1 day, approx. 18 km, extension possible



This day tour can be extended if you continue from Sandskäret according to route 5. Route 5 can be extended with route 6.

A day route to what may well be the most beautiful island of the inner archipelago. If you would like a longer route you can easily connect to routes 5 and 6.

Difficulty of the day route: **EASY**

Brändön is a village with medieval history. The earliest settlement was located in what is now the northwestern part of Brändön, near the water. Fishing and seal hunting were important trades. Herring and vendace fishing still are. The harbour is a genuine fishing harbour with boat sheds and "shaking piers" - getting their name from the fact that fishermen would stand on them and shake herring out of nets.

At Brändön Lodge, about 27 kilometers north of Luleå, you will find kayaks for hire (see also route 8). If you are bringing your own equipment, you can just drive out, unload and then park at the visitors' parking above the facility.

Launch from the bathing beach below the main building and paddle south. The first island you will pass is Biskopsholmen. It probably got its name from one of the bishops, Benzelius, who came from Bensbyn on the mainland side. Continue south towards Björkön, now separated from the mainland only by a narrow stream. You can paddle through this stream if you would like a challenge and if the water is reasonably high. The route however, goes on the eastern side of Björkön and about 4 kilome-



Degerberg granite, Haparanda granite and gneiss are common types of rock found in the archipelago.

Photos: Gunvor Ekström

ters from Biskopsholmen is a small beach, should you wish to stretch your legs. If not, turn east towards the beautiful Sandskäret and take a proper break on the northern or eastern lake. Here is bare rock, sandy beaches and pine heaths. The land uplift has merged Sandskäret and Skogsskäret into one island and the narrow ridge between them is called a **reft** in Swedish. Terns, gulls, ducks, greylag geese and Canada geese breed here. Sandskäret consists mainly of sparse pine forest and is easy to walk on. From Sandskäret the route can be extended to last two or more days. If that's what you want, continue according to route 5 and maybe route 6 too. The day route continues north towards Svartön. The island has mostly block stone beaches but to the south is a neat little place to rest, with a sandy beach and a simple campfire site, framed by a large rock to the east.

Now, only 3 kilometers left back to Brändön. Hopefully, you'll have a light sea breeze behind you, helping you on the last leg of the journey.

**TIPS:** The above describes a day route, but the route can be continued from Sandskäret according to route 5 or 6 to make it two days or longer. Book the sauna at Brändön and round your day off there.

**REST STOPS:** The bay at southern Svartön has a sandy beach and a campfire site by a tall rock. Sandskäret has inviting cliffs and beaches on its northern and northeastern sides. A small beach at Gloholmarna offers the possibility for an additional break. Biskopsholmen has nice beaches too, but these are close to people's summer homes, so be sure to show respect.

**BIRD PROTECTION AREA:** Between Sandskäret and Skogsskäret. Disembarking is prohibited between May 1 and July 31.

## 8. AROUND BRÄNDÖN • 1 day, approx 25 km



Day route with cosy channels, idyllic cottages, boatsheds and bathing.

Difficulty: **EASY - MEDIUM**

At Brändön Lodge you can hire kayaks and canoes, there is a nice bathing beach, a cottage village and a restaurant. Kayak hire is found on the beach, from where you can also launch.

Start by paddling south past Kvarnhällorna where the bird life is rich - there are colonies of black-headed gulls and little gulls - but please keep your distance so as not to alarm them. Then follow Brändölandet south along the shore and pass the Lillvarpet small boat harbour. Turn right towards Biskopsholmen. On the inner side of Biskopsholmen and in the Furufjärden inlet there are plenty of pike if you would like to fish. After Biskopsholmen, keep right again through the Strapösundet strait. Look for the osprey in the sky. It has its hunting waters in Bergnäs-fjärden and lavish nests at Bergnäsudden.

Below Flakaberget you can stop by the cliffs to take a break and stretch your legs. Here you will find nice walking trails and clearly visible remnants from the ice age such as moraine and sheepbacks, rocks rounded by passing inland ice.

Then follow the beach northwest, aiming for Örnabben and continue through the Kråknäsundet strait. As June turns into July you can see water lilies blossoming here. Paddle on underneath the Kråknäsbron bridge, a popular fishing spot and Brändön's

connection to the mainland since the 1950's. You will now pass the Örnarna sawmill, where many of the Brändö residents work.

As you come into Furufjärden you will have paddled almost half the route. At the passage towards Storviken is a place suitable to stop and rest, with a campfire site and benches. Here, you can enjoy your well-earned lunch.

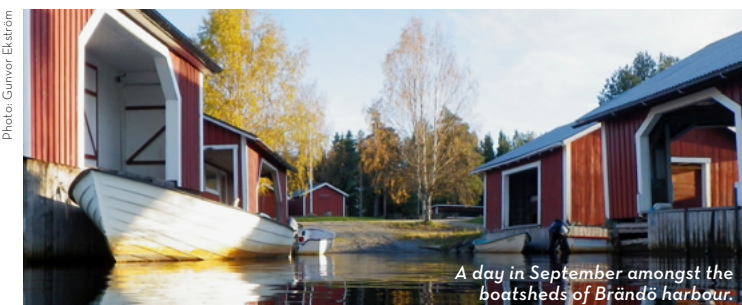
Continue through the channel to Storviken. Here you will paddle through a tunnel of metre-high reeds and water lilies out into Storviken. At its northwestern end you will find the channel out to Brändöfjärden. Now you will come out into more open water again, be prepared for stronger winds. Keep right again, going south along Brändölandet to the Brändö harbour.

At the harbour you will find beautiful, traditional, old and new boatsheds that are still in frequent use. At Solvik, where local company, Ferruform has recreational facilities for their staff, there is a nice bathing beach if you would like to stop for a dip.

If you were not ready to go bathing at Solvik you will get another chance in the next bay, known as Sundet. It is shallow and in certain wind conditions, when water levels are low, long sandy banks stretch out into the bay - you will feel like a child again, walking along the dunes.

Now, only a short distance remains before you are back at Brändö Lodge. If you book in advance you can round the day off with a relaxing sauna and enjoy the feeling of solid ground beneath your feet with a cold drink in your hand.

Text: Sofia Johansson



Photos: Gunvor Ekström

A day in September amongst the boatsheds of Brändö harbour.

## 9. THE RÅNEÅ ARCHIPELAGO • 2 days, approx. 45 km



Sunset in late august at Stora Båtöklippan.

Photo: Gunvor Ekström

**DAY 2.** Head west, past the northern side of Båtön. Then follows a crossing of about 3 kilometers to Degerö-Börstskär. Go south of the island and follow the beach northeast. At Hamngrundet is a pier, a rest cabin, a campfire site and dry toilets. Using a kayak it is normally possible to enter through a narrow, shallow passage south of Hamngrundet. The regular route goes north of there.

Northwest of Degerö-Börstskär lies Rövarn with a nice, sheltered bathing bay to the west, popular with boating people. To the north, an impressive granite rock arches out into the sea. West of Rövarn is Fjuksön with several hospitable bays. Both Storstrandsviken on the western side and Fjuksöklubben to the northwest are inviting.

The 4 kilometers crossing over to Tistersöarna begins at Fjuksön's northern cape. 'Tister' means 'redcurrant'. Seals can often be seen in these waters, especially in late summer and autumn. The water is shallow between Sörön, Husören and Lövören - the kayak is perfect for exploring the shallow lagoons. Keep going towards Norrtistersön, the starting point for the next crossing: 5 kilometers north to the western side of Bockön. At Husören or Brändören you can stop and rest before the last leg back to Rörbäck.



Sea-buckthorn, full of vitamin C, grows on the outer islands and is easiest to pick after the first frost.

Photo: Gunvor Ekström

**TIPS:** An option is to go north of Bergön after Siksundsön. The stretch between Siksundsön and Bergön offers nice paddling between many small islets. If you pick this route, don't miss Kohamn and Näverön. Do remember to check the wind forecast and keep an alternative plan handy.

**REST STOPS:** Siksundsön and Stora Båtöklippan have campfire sites and dry toilets. Degerö-Börstskär offers a pier, a rest cabin, a campfire site and dry toilets, as well as nice bays to the northwest. The sheltered western bay at Rövarn. Storstrandsviken and Fjuksöklubben at Fjuksön. The beaches of Strömmingsören and Lågören.

Beaches, seals and boating life at the top of the Gulf of Bothnia.

Difficulty: **DIFFICULT**

**DAY 1.** The launch site is Rörbäck, a small village 50 kilometers outside of Luleå. There is a campsite and a sea bath. The beach where you will launch lies next to the guest pier. Begin by paddling southwest to Bockön. The island has beautiful pine heaths and a popular beach. Continue to Siksundsön, a peninsula without roads or trails. Pass the small islets Mittgrundet and Yttre Västantillgrundet. By a little bay down to the southwest, Klippan, is a large, open sandy heath with campfire sites, dry toilets and lots of tent pitches. The environment is extraordinary and deserves a visit.

Maintaining your southeastern course, head to Bergön. At Brändöavan, there is a deep bay providing good protection if you would like a break. The south side of Bergön (The Mountain Island) lives up to its name with 30 metre cliffs at Rödbergsudden. Hällhamnsgrynnan in the Båtöfjärden nature reserve is a bird islet, home to black guillemots and herring gulls, amongst others. Paddle past to reach your goal for the day: Lilla and Stora Båtöklippan. Barren beauty and beautiful views are offered along with a campfire site, dry toilets and a couple of nice tent pitches at the northern bay of Stora Båtöklippan.

## 10. AROUND RÅNEFJÄRDEN • 1 day, approx. 28 km



From the forest river outlet to the old shipping harbour.

Difficulty: **MEDIUM**

Kängsön is reached by a 35 kilometers drive north along route E4. Kängsö harbour is a combined fishing and small boat harbour that was finished in 1939. It has since been rebuilt in stages and during the 1990's a number of boathouses were built, a nice, eye-catching feature. The Råne River, northern Sweden's longest forest river (210 kilometers), has not been used for hydropower

and has its outlet in the Gulf of Bothnia just south of Kängsön. The harbour also has kayaks and canoes available to hire or purchase, as well as an outdoor equipment shop. A landing-stage and a trailer ramp is available for launching kayaks. The Råneå Boating Association clubhouse has a summer café in July and near the clubhouse there is a lovely bathing beach. There used to be a sawmill at Nordanborg. Remains of wastewood docks can be seen on the beach.

Begin by paddling east towards Flakaskäret, then turn north towards Rödbergsgrundet and Rödborget on the mainland. Here is a nice little beach, suitable for a first break. Then follow the beach to the east towards Sandviksreven and turn southeast towards Jämtögrundet and Luckudden. Keep heading southeast for about 4.5 kilometers to Alskär. The narrow, northern part has a nice sandy beach perfect for swimming and a lunch break, partly shallow, partly precipitous. Now paddle south to Avasladan. It's shallow here, only about 1.5 m and partly rocky - especially by the beaches of Köpmanholmen and Långholmen. As a reward, there are many seabirds to spot, sometimes even sea eagles. Turn west in the strait between Långholmen and Sandöskatan. The crossing to Flottgrundet is about 3 kilometers long and exposed to southern winds.

Go in between Laxön and Grangrundet and keep going west to Mjölfjärden. In the middle of the inlet lies Jonkgrundet. Its northwestern cape has a perfect rest stop with sandy beaches and cliffs, a shelter, a campfire site and dry toilets. In the early 1900's, feldspar was shipped to Jonkgrundet from mainland mines. In the summer, the rock was collected by cargo sailboats that shipped it on to porcelain factories in Germany, the UK and Russia.

Nördnäsudden also offers a nice, sheltered rest stop. Just south of its southern tip is a small bay with a landing-stage. A trail leads to the rest cabin on the other side of the cape. The cabin is open to anyone and has a fireplace, tables, benches and a campfire site. Paddle north from Nördnäsudden. From the northern cape of Laxön, aim northeast towards Piltreven. The crossing is about 3 kilometers. The cottages here are now summer houses but they were built for a fishing village. The three little islets north of Piltreven with their steep beaches are rather rare in the archipelago and it's nice to paddle in the small straits between them.

Now, only about 4 kilometers remains of the route around Rånefjärden. Paddle north to the beautiful Furuholmen, try rounding it from the east to get a nice finish between Furuholmen and Flakaskäret on your way back to Kängsön.

**TIPS:** If you want to be out for several days you can combine this route with the previous one, no. 6. After Avasladan, round Skataudden and paddle north to Bockön. The northeastern cape of the island, Dalören, has beautiful pine heaths and is very nice for tent pitching. Another option is to paddle straight towards Siksundsön but that crossing is 7 kilometers long and exposed to southern winds. To extend the route by a few hours, paddle up to the Råne River outlet. By the small Ågrundet delta, you can spot fishing ospreys.

**REST STOPS:** Rödbergsstranden, Alskär, Jonkgrundet, Nördnäsudden.

# 11. BATHING AT ALSKÄR • 1 day, approx. 16 km



There are two species of seal in the Gulf of Bothnia: the grey seal and the ringed seal. Grey seals are larger with narrower heads. Grey seals migrate south in winter while ringed seals stay and make breathing holes in the ice.



Photo: Göran Wallin

**TIPS:** Bring binoculars and paddle quietly towards Lögsten and you may have the chance to spot seals sunbathing on the rocks.

**REST STOPS:**  
Rödbergsstranden, Alskär.

Difficulty: **EASY**

If you prefer a shorter outing, we recommend paddling to the lovely bathing beach at Alskär. It's a good idea to get started early before the southern winds get going. Follow route no. 10 "Around Rånefjärden" to Alskär.

Facing Alskär (east) is Jämtöavans småbåtshamn. Jämtöåvan is a small village that used to have no less than four boatbuilder's yards.

The beaches of Alskär invite you to a swim on a warm day. The northeast point is tvärdjup, around it's more or less shallow.

On your way back, if you feel comfortable with a 2-3 kilometers crossing, you can aim for Hällholmen and Lönngrundet. Then paddle due north towards Lögsten and you may have the chance to spot seals sunbathing on the rocks (bring binoculars). Then turn west towards Furuholmen and Kängsö harbour.



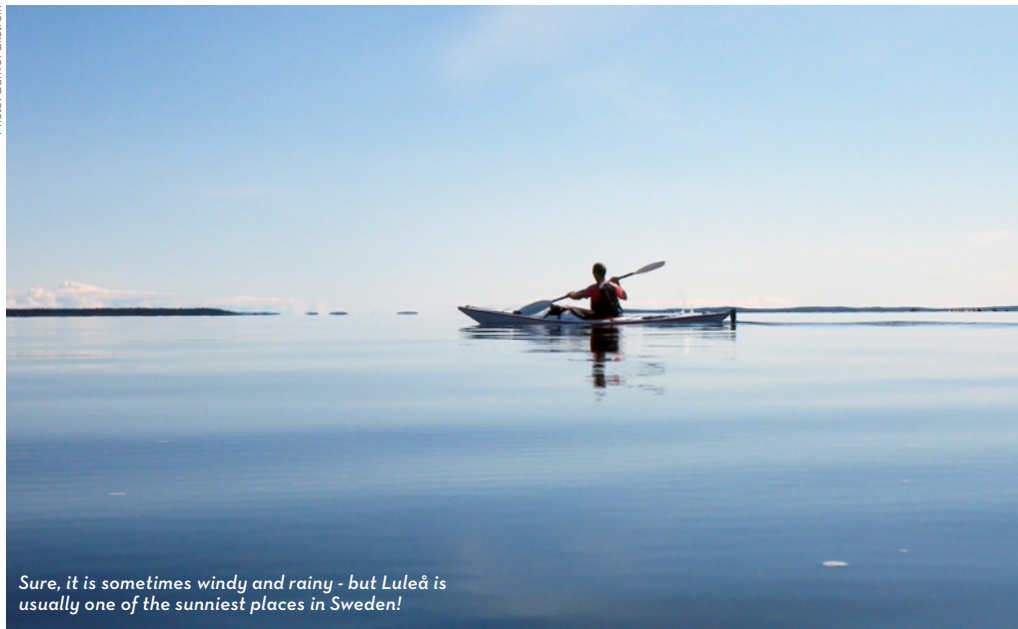
Photo: Fredrik Bloman



Bright colours at Alskär.

Photo: Oscar Hedendyrd

Photo: Gunvor Ekström



Sure, it is sometimes windy and rainy - but Luleå is usually one of the sunniest places in Sweden!

## NAMES OF ISLANDS IN THE BOTHNIAN ARCHIPELAGO

Island names often originate from old dialects and their meanings are not so obvious today. Plant and animal life, names of people and specific characteristics have given the islands their respective names. Because of the land uplift, there are places called islands on the mainland and some of the larger islands have multiple names. Here are some common elements in the names of places in the Bothnian archipelago.

- AVA** - Bulging stretch of water
- BASTA** - Simple fishing cabin
- BRÄNNA, BRÄND** - Forest was burned to create arable land, this was known as a 'bränna'
- BÅDAN** - warn of shallows
- BÖRST** - Birch
- ESP, ÄSP** - Aspen tree
- GRÅSJÄL, SJÄL** - Grey seal
- GRÖNNA** - Shallows
- HARE, HARUN** - Shallows on the water's edge, rocky islet
- HUVUD** - High, hilly terrain
- KALLE** - Bare rock sticking out of the water
- KLUBB, KLOBB** - Small, high islet
- KUNO** - Woman
- MJO, MJU** - Narrow
- NÖRD** - North
- REFT** - Long gravel ridge
- REV, REVEL** - Rock and gravel ridge by the waterline
- SKATA** - Cape
- SLADA** - Very shallow water
- VARP** - A place for dragnet fishing. A large net is dragged through the water and hauled onto the beach or onto a boat
- ÖR** - Sand, gravel, gravel ridge

Sources: 'Från Abborstenen till Östreklacken' Else-Britt Lindblom, 'Gårdar och namn i Nederluleå socken' Else-Britt Lindblom, 'Ortnamnen i Norrbottens län' del 9, Gunnar Pellijeff

Photo: Per Pettersson



Sandön lives up to its name. In addition to the Klubbviken Sea Bath with a guest harbour, restaurant and cottages, there are several lovely sandy beaches here.



## OTHER LAUNCHING SPOTS...

Most small harbours can be used, there is often a beach stretch or launching ramp where you can launch your kayak. The route descriptions contain good launching spots but there are other options:

**BRÄNDÖ HARBOUR:** A fishing harbour, boathouses and a fairground with an outdoor dance floor. Swedish Midsummer celebrations are big here. The harbour was renovated in 2011. A boat ramp is available, as well as beach stretches between the boathouses.

**LÖVSKÄR:** One of the largest small boat harbours in Luleå. It is also the main harbour for professional fishermen, with a café and restaurant in the summer. The best launching spot for kayakers is a little beach on the eastern end of the parking lot.

**TJUVHOLMSSUNDET:** Sandy beach and small boat harbour for cottage and home owners on Sandön. A fairway passes through the strait so look out when you head out. Limited number of parking spaces but fine for smaller groups.

## ...AND MORE BEAUTIFUL ISLANDS

There are lots of nice beaches for rests and overnight camping but there are also plenty of alder shrubbery and rocky beaches which are unattractive to kayakers. Here are other nice spots not in the route descriptions.

**KLUNTARNA:** Beautiful, popular island with rental cottages, 2 saunas and boat tours. Scenic hiking trails, labyrinths, nature information and a small fishing village.

**LIKSKÄR:** Nice beaches around the southern part. The Luleå Sailing Society is based here and on the northern part, Altappen, there is a small museum of the island's history.

**SANDÖN:** So much more than just Klubbviken: the shingle field in the Stenäkern nature reserve, old growth forest, beaches, pine heath, thick carpets of reindeer lichen and shifting sand dunes.

**SMÅLSÖN:** Beautiful pine heath and more than 2 kilometers of sandy beach to the west and northwest.

**STORA & LILLA HINDERSÖHARUN:** Two relatively high, very windy, rocky islands. You will need calm weather to disembark here. If you do, try the northwestern cape at Stora Hindersöharun.

**STORFURUÖN:** Nice beaches on the north and south sides.



The morning sun breaks through late summer fog.

Photo: Gunvor Ekström

## FOOD AND LODGING IN THE ARCHIPELAGO

**BRÄNDÖN LODGE:** Well-equipped cottages. Choose between hotel standard and self-catering. Sauna for hire. Café, kiosk and restaurant. [brandonlodge.se](http://brandonlodge.se).

**GÜLTZAUDDENS SOMMARCAFÉ:** A lush park with a bathing beach, on the edge of the city peninsula. A café is hosted inside a replica of Luleå's old City Hall.

**HAMNKÖKET:** Summer restaurant, bar and café at the Lövsjär harbour.

**JOPIKGÅRDEN:** A gem on Hindersön with restaurant and hotel rooms in the main building and 4-bed rooms in Dränglängan. [luleaarchipelago.com](http://luleaarchipelago.com)

**KALLAX GÅRDSBUTIK:** Apartment for hire in one of the houses at the farm. Farm café and store featuring local delicacies and handicraft. [kallaxgardsbutik.se](http://kallaxgardsbutik.se)

**KLUBBVIKEN:** Luleå's sea bath is found at Sandön, near the city. Here are well-equipped cottages, as well as small, simple cabins by the fairway. Restaurant by the guest harbour with two large patios. [klubbviken.se](http://klubbviken.se)

**KOLARENS CAFÉ:** Summer café in the old manor at Niporna. Beautiful view of the river.

**KÄNGSÖN:** Summer café in Råneå Båtklubbs (Boating Association's) cottage at Nordanskär. Plain but scenic campsite next to the beach at Nordanskär.

## RENT A CABIN

**BRÄNDÖSKÄR:** The cabins have propane stoves, wood-burning stoves and outhouses. There is a well on the island. There is also two wood-burning saunas.

**JUNKÖN:** Wood-burning stove, electrical stove, refrigerator and lighting. The cabins have running water and a small bathroom with a toilet and shower.

**KLUNTARNA:** The cabins have propane stoves, wood-burning stoves and outhouses. Here you will also find three saunas and a nature centre. During high season, the cabins are maintained by hosts. During the summer, there is also drinking water in a well above the nature centre.

**SMÅSKÄREN:** In Bullerhamnen there are cottages with gas stove, stove and outdoor toilet. There is also a host's cottage and a sauna with relaxation room.

Book at: [lulea.se/skargard](http://lulea.se/skargard)

## RENT A SAUNA RAFT

Enjoy sauna bathing on a raft and dive directly into the sea! Floating sauna facilities are available for rent and some of them also serve food. Current info: [visitlulea.se](http://visitlulea.se)



Photo: Fredrik Broman

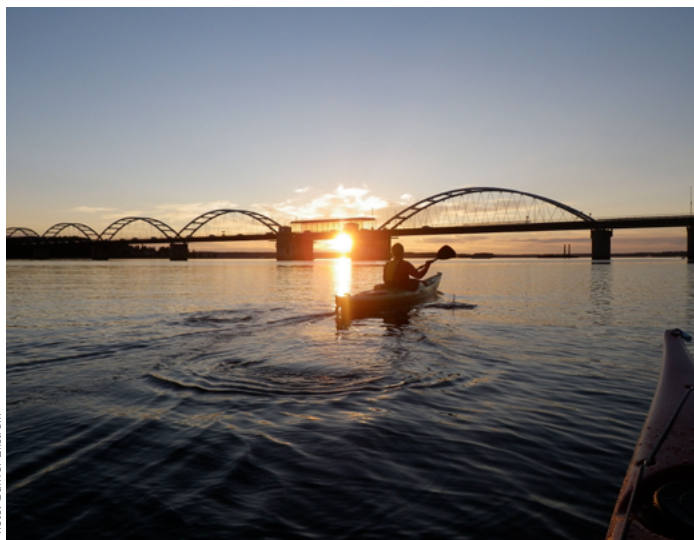


Photo: Gunvor Ekström

Tips on more experiences and sights in Luleå can be found in our guides and on our website.

You can pick up the guides at our tourist information offices and infopoints. Pdfs for download at [visitlulea.se](http://visitlulea.se).



Foto: Jacob Nilsson

## GUIDED TOURS & RENTALS

Information on companies that offer guided tours and equipment rental can be found at [visitlulea.se](http://visitlulea.se)

## TOURIST INFORMATION

### LULEÅ TOURIST CENTER

Kulturens Hus  
+46(0)920-45 70 00  
[turistcenter@lulea.se](mailto:turistcenter@lulea.se)

### GAMMELSTADS VISITOR CENTER

Kyrktoget 1  
+46(0)920-45 70 10  
[gammelstad@lulea.se](mailto:gammelstad@lulea.se)

### RÅNEÅ LIBRARY/INFOPOINT

Västerlångvägen 2, Råneå  
+46(0)920-45 30 00

**INFOPOINTS** are available at a number of places in Luleå and the surrounding area. For more information, see [visitlulea.se](http://visitlulea.se)

We strive to inspire and give you as current tips as possible about things to see and do during your stay, but since our world is constantly changing, we reserve the right to make information in this guide obsolete. The guide is a complement to [visitlulea.se](http://visitlulea.se).

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