



Nature Travels

outdoor experiences in Sweden



Photo: Joakim Hermanson

SEA KAYAKING IN KOSTER ARCHIPELAGO - 3 DAYS

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Sea Kayaking in Koster Archipelago: 3 days

Experience Code: UB3KS2

The Koster Archipelago has the most hours of sunshine of any location in Sweden - but that's by no means the only reason to go paddling here! The islands, rocks and skerries that make up the Koster Archipelago offer some of the best sea kayaking in Sweden.

The great attraction is the labyrinth of gneiss islands which seem almost to have been created for kayakers. The Koster Islands and the surrounding archipelago are Sweden's most westerly outpost into the western ocean. Here the islands, rocks and skerries are made from gneiss rather than granite, sometimes lying so tightly together that even a sea kayak can sometimes barely squeeze between them - which means that you will have many of these very special places to yourselves, as larger boats cannot travel here!

In relative solitude you will be able to glide amongst the islands, watching common seals as they sun themselves on the rocks, backed by the silhouette of the mighty lighthouse at Ursholmen in the distance.

At the end of each day's paddling adventure, you will choose a suitable spot and camp wild each night, very possibly on your very own island! Fall asleep to the lap of waves against the rocks, the call of the seabirds, and the fading rays of the sun as it dips reluctantly below the horizon at the end of another long summer's day...

Days 1-3:

The experience begins at 09.00 in Uddevalla, where you will be transferred to the start point at the island of Tjärnö. The area offers wonderful paddling right from the start. You will first cross the Koster Fjord (weather permitting), which after just a couple of kilometres brings you out to one of Sweden's finest sea kayaking areas. Over the next three days, your route will be dictated by the wind, weather, and your own heart, as you discover the myriad attractions of this lovely region, from dramatic rock formations to a diverse flora and fauna. The tour will end around 17.00 at Uddevalla on the final day.

Dates for 2010 summer season:

13th-15th August 2010. Groups of minimum 8 persons can book tours on other dates by arrangement.

Price:

£362/person

What The Price Includes:

Equipment:

- All necessary kayaking equipment: kayak, paddle, splash guard and life vest
- Camping stove and cooking equipment
- Shared tented accommodation in Vaude 2-person tents.
- Sleeping mattress/camping seat.

Meals:

All meals during the tour: lunch and dinner day 1, breakfast lunch and dinner day 2, breakfast and lunch day 3. If you have particular dietary requirements, please let us know in advance. Lunch will generally be a picnic lunch of sandwiches and fruit.

Instructor:

Services of experienced and knowledgeable guide during the tour.

What The Price Does Not Include:

Alcoholic drinks and additional snacks during the tour – you may wish to have some chocolate or other high-energy foods with you to maintain energy levels when paddling.

Transfer:

If you are travelling to this experience by public transport, the guides will arrange a vehicle and transport you to/from Uddevalla and the start/end point for the tour. Cost 400Skr per person return (about £36), to be paid direct to the guides on arrival. Please let us know in advance if transfer is required.

Optional extras:

Sleeping bag: £24/person/tour

Accommodation in 2-person tents is included in the price. If you would particularly like a private tent, this can be hired as an optional extra at a cost of £68/tent/tour, or alternatively you are welcome to bring your own.

Airport transfer:

Transfer to/from Gothenburg Landvetter or Gothenburg City airports can be arranged for £47/person/way.

Equipment/clothes needed:

NB: We advise you not to buy equipment or clothes for your trip or to incur other non-refundable expenses such as flights until you have received confirmation of your booking from us in writing.

To make sure your trip is as comfortable as possible, pack your belongings in waterproof bags.

Packing list (recommended):**Toiletries:**

Soap, toothpaste, plasters, moisturiser, sun-cream, painkillers, blister tape, mosquito repellent (see the "About Sweden" page on our website for further information about mosquitoes), toilet paper.

Clothes:

Take hard-wearing clothes you are not afraid to damage, including a change of dry clothes. Quick-drying materials are best. Bear in mind that jeans and sweatshirts are difficult to dry. Rain and windproof jacket and trousers – it may be cold out on the water. Sandals (good for paddling) and trainers, hat and gloves, a pair of warm socks, a warm sweater, T-shirt, trousers, long underpants, a pair of shorts, beachwear, underwear and something to sleep in.

Equipment:

Sleeping bag (if not hired as optional extra), torch or headtorch, towel.

Additional:

Sunglasses, camera, binoculars.

Health requirements/experience:

The emphasis is on enjoying the kayaking experience. Distances covered and speed can to a certain extent be adjusted to fit the needs and wishes of the group. However, you should be in general good health and be used to outdoor life. Participants must be able to swim at least 200m. A life vest must be used at all times (included in the price). Minimum age 15 if accompanied by adult, otherwise 18.

Some previous experience of kayaking may be helpful, but is not essential.

Groups:

It is possible for groups to book a private tour on custom dates by arrangement. Minimum charge is cost for 8 persons. Groups of up to 15 persons can be catered for. For groups larger than 8 persons, the tour will use a combination of single and double kayaks.

Group size:

Minimum total number of participants for tour to run: 4.

Maximum group size: 8 participants.

Information about the area:

The Koster Islands lie off the west coast of Sweden near the attractive coastal town Strömstad. Noted for their beauty, these are Sweden's most westerly populated islands. North Koster, the smallest of the two islands with an area of just 4 km², has secluded beaches and a rocky moorland landscape. The lighthouses on the island, until recently out of use for more than 100 years, today once again cast their beacons of light across the sea.

Around 300 inhabitants live on the islands year-round, the majority on South Koster. The islands and surrounding area have recently been designated as Sweden's first Marine National Park. Until very recently, there were some inhabitants who had never visited their neighbours on the other island, and even today a friendly rivalry exists between the islanders!

Common Sense and the Right of Public Access

Do not disturb, do not destroy – that is the basic principle of Sweden's right of public access. It is not an unrestricted right. Here, you can read about the rules that apply.

The Swedish right of public access is not a law, nor is it an absolute right. It may rather be regarded as an opportunity, one that makes it possible for everyone to enjoy the countryside. But it is an opportunity that requires responsibility, consideration and good judgement. Rules describing the kinds of consideration that must be shown are incorporated into Sweden's environmental law, and apply to everyone who exercises the right of public access.

Respect others' privacy

You may travel through the countryside on foot, bicycle, horse or skis, and temporarily remain in one place, as long as there is no risk that your presence or activities will damage crops, tree plantations or other sensitive areas. But you must respect the privacy of others, and you may not cross or intrude upon private property.

Camping

It is permitted to set up a tent for a day or so on ground that is not used for agriculture and is far from the nearest dwelling. The closer to a residence and the greater the risk of disturbing others, the more important it is to ask the landowner for permission.

Do not litter

All sorts of littering are forbidden in the countryside. A cigarette butt in a dry summer forest can destroy resources worth millions. Glass, tins and bottle caps harm both humans and wildlife, and plastic bags cause great suffering to animals that ingest them. For this reason, bags full of litter should never be left beside rubbish bin if it happens to be full.

Blossoms and berries

You may not take such items as twigs, branches or bark from living trees, including birches. Obviously, you may not take entire shrubs or trees, either. But you are allowed to pick wild berries, flowers and mushrooms, as well twigs and branches that have fallen to the ground. Certain flower species are so rare that they risk becoming endangered. These species are protected and may not be picked. Information about them is available from county administrative boards. Orchids are protected throughout Sweden.

Protected natural areas

Protected natural areas, including nature reserves and national parks, usually have special rules that restrict the right of public access.

More information on the right of public access can be found on our website under About Sweden or on www.allemanstratten.se

Getting there:

NB: We advise you not to buy equipment or clothes for your trip or to incur other non-refundable expenses such as flights until you have received confirmation of your booking from us in writing.

By Air:

You can choose to fly to:

- Gothenburg Landvetter or City
- Oslo Rygge (Norway)

For details of flight connections see www.naturetravels.co.uk/holidays-in-sweden.htm. Click on the airport icons to see connections to/from each airport.

Flight buses from Swedish airports into the city can be booked online through us – see www.naturetravels.co.uk/add-ons-flygbussarna.htm

Many airlines offer discounts on rental cars in connection with their flights.

Without flying

- **London-Uddevalla by train:** Lunchtime Eurostar to Brussels, train to Cologne, overnight sleeper to Copenhagen and connecting trains to Uddevalla.
- **Harwich-Uddevalla by ferry and train:** DFDS ferry Harwich to Esbjerg (Denmark), then onward train to Uddevalla via Copenhagen.

Travel within Sweden:

From Gothenburg Landvetter or Gothenburg City: Flight bus to Gothenburg Central (20 mins). Direct train to Uddevalla (travel time approx. 1 hour).

From Oslo Rygge: Bus to Strömstad (around 1.5 hours) then direct train to Uddevalla (around 1.5 hours). Buses between Rygge airport and Strömstad are operated by TimEkspressen. Please contact us for timetable information.

Trains in Sweden are run by national train operator SJ. For train connections and to book your tickets, see www.sj.se. Click "In English" in the top right corner. Please note that the most affordable tickets are released 90 days before departure.

The tour begins from the kayak centre about 3km from Uddevalla. You can travel between Uddevalla and the kayak centre by local bus, boat, taxi or foot. Full details on local transport options will be provided with your booking documentation.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

What to do next:

If you are interested in this experience, please make sure that you understand exactly what the experience entails and are confident that you will be able to take part fully in all activities included in the trip. If you have any doubts or questions, please discuss the matter with us and we will be happy to advise. Similarly, if you have any particular health or dietary requirements that we need to be aware of, please mention these at the time of booking.

If you feel confident that you will be able to take part, then download and read our TERMS AND CONDITIONS. Then, please contact us to make sure that your chosen dates are available, and feel free to ask us anything else you like: we are keen to ensure that your trip is an enjoyable and memorable experience for you – we love Sweden and we want you to too!

For more information on how to book this trip please visit our website www.naturetravels.co.uk/booking.htm or call us on 01929 463774

Additional Notes

This provider has received a prestigious Swedish Ecotourism award for its commitment to high standards of cultural and environmental sensitivity.