



Nature Travels

outdoor experiences in Sweden



Photo: Staffan Widstrand

CANOE TOURS ON SVARTALVEN - 4, 7 OR 14 DAYS

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Canoe Tours on Svartälven: 4, 7 or 14-day tour

Experience Code: 4-day VV714CS2-4, 7-day VV714CS2-7, 14-day VV714CS2-14

Starting on the border of the county of Dalarna in eastern Värmland, the Svartälven ("Black River") is one of Sweden's best canoeing waters. From its source, the river runs south through a landscape of outstanding natural beauty. This canoe tour passes through a network of winding rivers, narrow passageways and small lakes and requires a number of land crossings, the longest being about 2 km. A canoe wagon is included as part of standard equipment to help with the portages.

The Svartälven region is a wonderful area for canoeing. The rhythmic "swoosh-slop" as your paddle breaks the surface and cuts through the water, your canoe gliding smoothly forward as you slip in silence through the surrounding forest landscape – a canoe tour on the river Svartälven provides an ideal mix of tranquility and adventure.

Canoeing on Svartälven is a self-guided wilderness expedition, a voyage of discovery taken at your own pace. The waters may be calm and slow-flowing, but the area offers a real canoe adventure. The tour runs in a remote area and you will be leaving "civilisation" behind you as you strike out into a world of water, trees and sky. There is no timetable on this trip - you will be deciding yourself what distance you wish to cover each day, and selecting your own camping spot each night. You will choose when to rest and when to push on, when to take a day out to explore the many tributaries flowing into the Svartälven, or perhaps leave your canoe for a while and explore the beautiful surrounding area on foot before returning to the water. The rhythm of your days will be dictated only by your own inclinations.

The canoes you will use on the tour are two-person Canadian canoes - stable, easy to handle canoes with space for luggage and camping/kitchen equipment. No previous experience of canoeing is necessary.

Canoeing in this area of Sweden gives you excellent opportunities for intimate and personal encounters with some of the area's rich, and normally shy, wildlife. Canoeing is a quiet and unobtrusive activity, and you may find that the animals are much less wary of you than they would be if you approached on foot. If you are lucky, and quiet, you may spot a beaver curving gracefully towards you through the water, just its head visible above the smooth glassy surface. As you round a bend in the river you may come across an elk, the mighty King of the Forest, stooping to drink by the water's edge or perhaps striking out skillfully for the opposite bank - elk are excellent swimmers! In the skies above, eagles and buzzards accompany you on your journey, wheeling high in the air, their lonesome keening cries echoing for miles across the treetops.

Each evening you will sit around the campfire, recounting your impressions of the day as the sun dips below the horizon and planning for the day ahead, or perhaps you will retire early to conserve your energy for the morning's paddling - the choice is yours! When finally it is time to crawl into your sleeping bag and close your eyes, let the scents and sounds of the deep forest lull to you sleep until day breaks and it is time to take to the water once more...

Day 1:

(detailed information you will need for your experience, including a description of the route, is sent out once full payment has been received)

Your tour starts in Gunnerud, which you reach either by bus or car. Once you've arrived in Gunnerud you check in at the reception. You will now receive your equipment and information on paddling technique and your route. You can also now buy a fishing license

for the tour if you wish. Together with the canoe centre staff, you take some time to mark the places on the map where you have to launch and take the canoe out of the water and note some suitable camping spots. Together you load the bus and head for the starting point.

The Rest of the Tour:

4-day tour:

Starting at the north end of Älvsjön, you paddle south through a particularly scenic area, up the winding Tvarälven and north-west to finish just below Lesjöfors. There is nowhere to shop along the route – for the 4-day tour you must take all provisions with you from the beginning.

Total distance around 30km. If you wish, the standard route can be extended by planning detours into side lake and river systems.

When you start your tour on a Wednesday you will be picked up by bus on Saturday at 14.00.

7-day and 14-day tours:

Your tour starts at the borderline between the two counties of Värmland and Dalarna. Where Svartälven has its outlet in Kattsundet you launch and load the canoe, then head south. At the beginning you paddle through Kattsundet, Norra Laggen and Södra Laggen until you reach the village of Gustavsström. At the dam in Gustavström you take the canoe out of the water and make your first land transport.

The route continues down through Älvsjön and through the Tvarälven before swinging north-west to pass through Lesjöfors. The tour ends at the lake of Västra Sundsjön, the shores offering you a good choice of camping spots to spend your last night.

There are some small stores along the route (but please note that you should not rely on these stores for essential provisions) and one larger store around two-thirds of the way through the tour. There are also cafes and a campsite along the route and at one point you have the choice to take detours if you follow some streams upstream, where you may see beaver.

Total distance around 7km. If you wish, the standard route can be extended by planning detours into side lake and river systems.

When you start your tour on a Saturday you will be picked up by bus on Friday at 14.00. On this route you have the option to do the tour in 7 or 14 days. If you choose to do the tour in 14 days, you will have time to build in rest days and days for detours and explorations on land.

For the 14-day route, it is also possible to combine our Canoe in Bergslagen and Canoe on Svartälven experiences into one extended tour (around 200km, prices as for 14-day Canoe on Svartälven tour). Please contact us for details.

Dates for 2010 summer season:

Start:

- Standard season 23.06-14.08.10: Start days Wednesdays for 4-day tour, Saturdays for 7-day and 14-day tours, check-in between 13.00 and 14.00.

- Out-of-season tours June, end of August and September: Start any day except Sundays, times by arrangement. Minimum 4 adults. Smaller groups are possible, charged at the full rate for 4 adults (for safety reasons, must contain min. 2 adults).

Meeting point: Canoe centre in Gunnerud, 95 km north of Karlstad along road 62.

Price for 4-day tour:

Price £/person	Adult	Child 6-15yrs
Basic canoe package inc. kitchen equipment	113	57

Price for 7-day tour:

Price £/person	Adult	Child 6-15yrs
Basic canoe package inc. kitchen equipment	148	74

Price for 14-day tour:

Price £/person	Adult	Child 6-15yrs
Basic canoe package inc. kitchen equipment	221	111

What The Price Includes:

NB! There is no topographical map including in this package. Maps can be ordered at the time of booking. A canoe trolley is included in the price.

Equipment

The following equipment is included in the tour:

Canoe equipment: 2-person Canadian canoe, paddles, buoyancy aids, pack cylinder, water can, canoe rope, canoe trolley, toilet spade, cleaning sponge and rubbish bags.

Kitchen equipment contents: Hurricane stove* with methylated spirit, cups, plates, cutlery, carving-knife, cutting board, spatula, cheese slicer, whip, butter knife, can/bottle opener, potato peeler, bowl, dish brush, washing-up liquid, kitchen roll, matches and storage box.

Please be careful with the canoe and the rest of your equipment! If some part of the equipment should break as a result of misuse or carelessness, you may be charged for the damage caused.

**Sample contents (stove supplied may differ from that pictured):*



Instructor:

Services of experienced and knowledgeable instructor before your tour starts.

Transport:

Transport by bus for participants and equipment from the meeting point to/from the start/end points of the tour.

What The Price Does Not Include:

Food, tent, sleeping bag.

Maps are not included, but may be ordered when booking (see Optional Extras). Please see "Optional extras" below for a list of the maps required. It is not possible to do the tour without maps!

Please note that this is not a guided tour. This is a discovery of your own, taken at your own pace and you will choose your own camping spot each night. You will be given detailed guidance and advice before the start of the tour by the local provider.

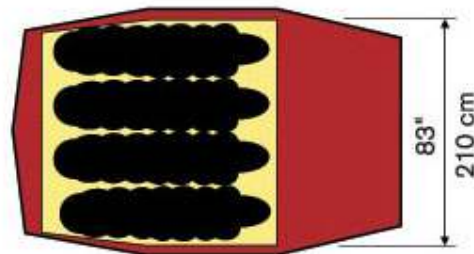
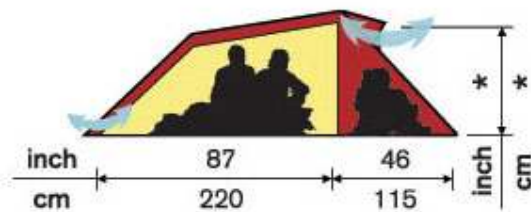
Optional extras:

There are sleeping bags and tents available for hire. See descriptions and price list below.

Accommodation

High quality 3/4-person Hilleberg tents are available to hire. Please note that, like all tents rated 4 persons, the tents are most comfortable for 3 adults. The tents have inner tent and mosquito netting. Please see specifications below:

HILLEBERG NALLO 4



Meals

There is no food included. For the 7-day and 14-day tours, there are some small stores along the way (though we do not recommend you rely on these for essential provisions) and one larger store with regular opening hours in Lesjöfors, about two thirds of the way along the route. For the 4-day tour, you must bring all provisions with you from the beginning.

Provisions package

You can choose to add a food package for up to 7 days. The food provided is that eaten by a typical Swedish family. At the start of the tour you will be given a provisions box with the food for the trip (if you have specific dietary requirements, please let us know so that arrangements can be made).

The exact contents of the package may change depending on the season and availability. The food is purchased from small, local countryside shops.

Typical ingredients include: bread, butter, cheese, juice, milk, yoghurt, muesli, coffee, tea, salami, jam, meatballs, fishballs, Swedish beef stew, ham, sausages, pork loin, mashed potatoes, onions, carrots, vegetables, beetroot, apples, biscuits, tomatoes, cucumber, rice, macaroni, asparagus soup, cauliflower soup, salt and pepper.

Sleeping bag package

Sleeping bag, sleeping bag liner and sleeping mat.

Maps

You will require a set of maps for this experience. The maps required are:

- 626 Hagfors, 627 Fredriksberg

Maps can be purchased online through The Map Shop (www.themapshop.co.uk). Alternatively, you can order maps through us and collect them along with the rest of your equipment in Sweden.

4-day tour:

Additional	Adults	Children 6-15yrs
Sleeping bag package	£13	£13
3/4-person tent*	£48	
Set of maps*	£25	
Provisions**	£76	£69

*Price given is per tent or set of maps

** If choosing this option, please note that for organisational reasons all persons travelling together must choose food packages (i.e. it is not possible to split packages). You are also welcome to purchase provisions independently for your tour if you wish.

7-day tour:

Additional	Adults	Children 6-15yrs
Sleeping bag package	£15	£15
3/4-person tent*	£67	
Set of maps*	£25	
Provisions**	£95	£87

* Price given is per tent or per set of maps

** If choosing this option, please note that for organisational reasons all persons travelling together must choose food packages (i.e. it is not possible to split packages). You are also welcome to purchase provisions independently for your tour if you wish.

14-day tour:

Additional	Adults	Children 6-15yrs
Sleeping bag package	£23	£23
3/4-person tent*	£100	
Set of maps*	£25	
Provisions** (7 days only)	£95	£87

* Price given is per tent or per set of maps

** If choosing this option, please note that for organisational reasons all persons travelling together must choose food packages (i.e. it is not possible to split packages). You are also welcome to purchase provisions independently for your tour if you wish.

If you wish to buy a fishing licence, this can be purchased in Gunnerud on the day of arrival.

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 containers. Because of the land transports included in this route, it is necessary for you to pack your belongings in a rucksack, since the canoe trolley cannot be heavily loaded.

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). Please ensure that items such as soap and toothpaste are fully biodegradable. A hat with mosquito netting or similar face covering can also be useful in the evenings at times when mosquito numbers are highest.

Clothes:

Take clothes you are not afraid to damage. Quick-drying materials are best. Bear in mind that jeans and sweatshirts are difficult to dry. Pack rainwear (jacket and trousers), boots, shoes, a pair of warm socks, something to cover your head in case of heat or rain, a pair of gloves/mittens, a warm sweater, sweatshirt, T-shirt, shirt, trousers, long underpants, a pair of shorts, beachwear, underwear, anorak (or similar) and something to sleep in. Footwear for use in water.

Equipment:

Sleeping bag, sleeping mat, towel, maps (if not purchased as optional extra), tent (if not hired as optional extra).

Additional:

Compass, sunglasses, matches, knife, camera, binoculars, sufficient food and a good book.

Health requirements/experience:

Swimming ability required by adults. All participation at own risk. Minimum 2 persons. Children under 16 years must be accompanied by an adult. You should be in good health and have a reasonable level of fitness and strength. The tour takes place on calm running waters or on small to medium-sized lakes.

Around 10 land crossings are necessary during the 7-day and 14-day tours (fewer for the 4-day route), the longest of which is around 2km. During the land transports the canoe can be transported on the canoe trolley but you will need to carry all other equipment. Though not as demanding as the Bergslagen tour, children much younger than 10 may find Canoe on Svartälven demanding. Please check with us if you have any questions. If you would prefer a less demanding experience suitable for younger children, you may wish to consider, for example, Canoe on Klarälven.

Groups:

Every 14th participant free. We reserve the right to assign groups to certain camp sites. For groups of min. 14 other departures outside the above-mentioned season are available.

It is possible to book the tour for larger groups. Please contact us for a quotation.

Information about the area:

Värmland is often described as the province of nature and culture. It is also a province of wilderness with unspoiled forests, distant blue mountains and shimmering wild waters for fishing and canoeing.

The people of Värmland are known for being friendly and helpful. Hospitality and obliging manners are also typical characteristics for a person from Värmland. Värmland is an excellent recreation area. There are a lot of lakes, streams, high mountains and deep forests.

Keep a lookout for wild animals. The forests of Värmland are home to elk, roe deer and foxes. At the border towards Norway there are wolves, bear and lynx, but it is very difficult to catch a glimpse of any of them.

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 at www.allemansratten.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:

- Stockholm (Arlanda, Skavsta or Västerås)
- Gothenburg Landvetter or City
- Oslo (Norway)
- Copenhagen (Denmark) with onward flight to Karlstad

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

Travel within Sweden:

Travel to this experience via Karlstad and then on with bus or rental car.

From Stockholm: Train to Karlstad. Travel time 2.5-3.5 hours direct.

From Stockholm Arlanda (ARN): Flight bus to Stockholm (40 mins). Train to Karlstad, travel time 3-4 hours with one change.

From Stockholm Skavsta (NYO): Train to Karlstad. Travel time 4-5 hours with changes.

From Stockholm Västerås (VST): Local taxi bus to Västerås. Train to Karlstad. Travel time 3.5-4.5 hours with changes.

From Gothenburg Landvetter or City: Flight bus to Gothenburg Central. Train from Gothenburg Central station, travel time approx. 2.5 hours. Direct or with changes.

From Oslo: Train or bus from central Oslo to Karlstad, usually direct. Travel time 3-3.5 hours.

From Copenhagen: Fly direct to Karlstad with SAS.

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.

After arriving in Karlstad, you have the option to travel by bus (travelling time 2 hours), or rent a car (travelling time 1 hours 10 min). More details and advice on local transport will be provided after booking. If you would like to drive, full driving instructions can be provided after booking.

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 to cultural and environmental sensitivity.