



For Immediate Release

THE NEW BUCKETLIST NORDIC ROUTE

For UK travellers looking for a truly authentic off-the-beaten-track break, the **Bothnian Coastal route** offers an iconic and unforgettable slow travel experience along the Arctic coasts of Sweden and Finland. This thrilling new route stretches along more than 800km of serene coastal roads, through an area of preserved nature, charming Nordic villages and stunning seascapes.

With the growing demand for sustainable and nature-conscious travel, the Bothnian Coastal Route is fast becoming a *bucket-list* destination. Offering environmentally friendly holidays, sustainable accommodation, and authentic local experiences, it is the ideal getaway for those who prefer to explore at their own pace.

Combining the charm of coastal towns with breathtaking scenery, a wealth of culture and history and the delicious flavours of Nordic cuisine, the Bothnian Coastal Route promises an unforgettable journey, which deserves a place in every traveller's diary.



This two-country road journey takes you through two rather vastly different, yet connected, Nordic countries with their own uniquely individual charms. At the Finnish end, visitors explore coastal towns along the way via **Vaasa**, **Kalajoki** and **Oulu**, passing into Sweden at **HaparandaTornio** and continuing south to **Luleå**, **Skellefteå** and **Umeå**. Operating all year round, the Wasaline ecological ferry is the northernmost daily passenger ferry. A highlight of the trip, offering a comfortable and scenic sea connection across the Bay of Bothnia between the countries' borders.

Along the coast, this region is also home to some of Europe's lesser-known archipelagos, made up of thousands of islands with fascinating nature, such as the Kvarken area, a UNESCO World Natural Heritage Site, and two national parks of the Archipelago south of HaparandaTornio. The islands are perfect places to unwind and indulge in the laid-back Nordic lifestyle.

For those who are committed to sustainable travel, the Bothnian Coastal Route is a perfect choice. All destinations on the route work together to offer visitors the opportunity to experience the region in the most environmentally friendly and low-impact way possible.



The coastal region boasts some of Europe's most remote archipelagos, with thousands of islands offering unspoilt nature and a relaxed Nordic Island lifestyle. Among the finest are:

- Holmön Island (Sweden) - Cycle out and tour the island's open fields and ancient forests, visit cosy lighthouses, and tour a historic boat museum.
- Pite Rönnskär (Sweden) - A charming old pilot station and lighthouse with typical red cottages and a lovely walk through the forest to the other end of the island.
- Hailuoto Island (Finland) - The largest of the islands in the Bothnian Bay and famous for its pristine landscape, fishing culture and an area of national heritage status.
- Maakalla Island (Finland) - A picturesque but barren fishing island with wooden huts, an old church and an old-fashioned fishing museum. There it is possible to buy freshly smoked white fish from local fishermen.

The islands are connected by standard ferries, boat taxis, cruise ships or even car ferries, with some connected by bridges.



A trip along the Bothnian Coastal Route is a historical journey through the Nordic past, to some of Scandinavia's best preserved wooden towns and church villages:

- Neristan (Kokkola, Finland) - A 17th century wooden village with colourful timber houses and cobblestone paths. A guided tour offers an interesting history about life in the past.
- Pietarsaari Skata (Finland) - One of the largest unspoilt areas in Scandinavia with historic wooden cottages, exquisitely preserved 19th century architecture.
- Gammelstad (outside of Luleå, Sweden) - UNESCO World Heritage Site, medieval church town with 405 red cottages originally built as temporary accommodation for church visitors from afar.
- Bonnstan (Skellefteå, Sweden) - 17th century church village where visitors can see the old cottages during the summer, usually hosted by the local owners.



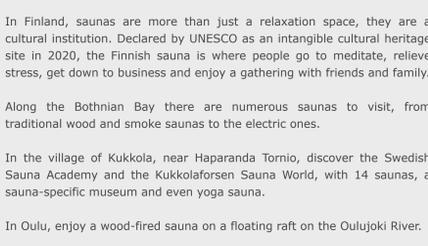
While the Midnight Sun is visible north of the Arctic Circle, the Bothnian Coastal Route offers long, golden summer nights, where the sun barely dips below the horizon:

- Sunset on Kalajoki's Sand Dunes (Finland) – You can unwind on the beach or take a horseback ride along the golden dunes, enjoying the spectacular Nordic sunset.
- Evening Hiking in the Kvarken Archipelago (Finland) – Hike across newly emerging islands created during the last Ice Age, seeing the region's unique land uplift phenomenon.
- Sunset Cruises in Luleå (Sweden) – Sail between the Luleå archipelago, enjoying a seafood buffet on board historic m/s Lapponia.
- Overnight Stay on Lighthouse Island Tankar (Finland) – Take a boat from Kokkola and overnight on this remote island, where there is an historic lighthouse.
- Late-Night Sauna & Swim (Finland & Sweden) – Experience a classic wooden-heated sauna, followed by a refreshing midnight dip in the Bothnian Bay.



Beyond the wooden towns, culture seekers will find much to explore on a road trip along the Bothnian Coastal Route, from art exhibitions and open-air museums to local crafts, as well as a variety of festivals and events.

- Bildmuseet (Umeå, Sweden) – A striking modern art museum, ranked among the world's most beautiful university museums.
- Guitars – The Museum (Umeå, Sweden) – An extensive private collection of electric guitars, with compelling musical memorabilia.
- Haparanda – Tornio – Explore the world's only cross-border museum, dedicated to life in the Torne River Valley and along the Finnish Swedish border.
- Oulu Festivals (Finland) – Six major festivals in the city each August, including world-famous Air Guitar World Championships.
- Kokkola & Kalajoki Venetian Night Festival (Finland) – A summer festival of water, fire, and light, illuminating the seaside towns in magnificent style.



Up until August, daylight never ends in the Bay of Bothnia, so you have plenty of time to experience new things.

Hiking: Explore the stunning landscape of the Martimoaapa Mire Reserve, north of Kemi, where huge, protected wetlands and centuries-old forests lurk. Alternatively, follow the trails at Bjuröklubb Nature Reserve, south of Skellefteå, and enjoy sweeping sea views from the heights.

Fatbiking: Cycle through the Kalajoki dunes or join a guided fat bike tour around the island of Sandön outside Luleå, cycling along the beach and forest trails.

Kayaking: Paddle the vast delta of the Oulu River, around the islands of its estuary, or explore the pristine waters of the Kalix River, one of Europe's few remaining great wild rivers.

Husky rides: Immerse yourself in nature on a guided husky tour. In summer opt for a leisurely hike at Luleå Adventure in a nature reserve nestled deep in the inland hills or take a shorter trail through the magical Kemiforest at Old Pine Husky Lodge.



In Finland, saunas are more than just a relaxation space, they are a cultural institution. Declared by UNESCO as an intangible cultural heritage site in 2020, the Finnish sauna is where people go to meditate, relieve stress, get down to business and enjoy a gathering with friends and family.

Along the Bothnian Bay there are numerous saunas to visit, from traditional wood and smoke saunas to the electric ones.

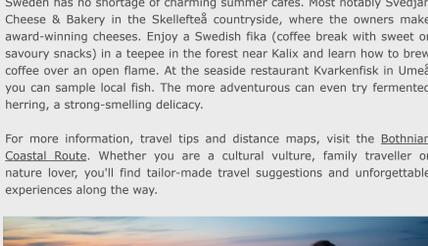
In the village of Kukkola, near Haparanda Tornio, discover the Swedish Sauna Academy and the Kukkolaforseen Sauna World, with 14 saunas, a sauna-specific museum and even yoga sauna.

In Oulu, enjoy a wood-fired sauna on a floating raft on the Oulujoki River.

For the ultimate traditional experience, go to a village smoke sauna in Kalajoki. Heated in a wood-burning cooker with lava stones, and the sauna is filled with smoke before a final cooler when in use, creating the ideal old-school atmosphere.

In the region of Haparanda you will find the Cape East sauna, which is the largest in the world. It can hold up to 150 people at a time.

Whether you are looking for adventure or relaxation, Bothnian Bay has an unforgettable experience amid nature and culture.



There is a wide range of accommodation along the route, many of which are situated by the sea and sustainably built.

- Kalles Inn Resort (Vaasa Archipelago, Finland) –Seaside cabins with glass fronts, overlooking beautiful water views.
- Malören Lodge (Kalix, Sweden) – Remote lighthouse retreat, on a small atoll-shaped island
- Floating Igloos (Oulujoki River, Finland) –Glass Igloos driven by solar power, bobbing on the river, a green eco-retreat.
- The Wood Hotel (Skellefteå, Sweden) – One of the tallest timber skyscrapers in the world, a landmark for eco-tourism.
- Lövånger Church Town (Sweden) – Unique overnight stay in an 18th-century church town with picturesque red cottages.



The Bothnia region takes sustainability seriously, and so does its gastronomy. Freshly caught fish as well as game meat, berries and mushrooms from the forest, craft beer and gin: the local produce is at its freshest. The most exclusive delicacy? Kalix vendaceroe (lõjrom), Sweden's first food with a designation of origin. This precious ingredient is harvested by just 35 fishermen over a four- to five-week period in September and October. You can try it at the world-famous Hemmagastromi restaurant in Luleå harbour. For a culinary experience across the border, visit the Kukkolaforseen rapids, where Swedish and Finnish gastronomic cultures meet. The speciality here is grilled white fish, freshly caught by bag net fishing, a historical fishing method still used today in the area.

Gastronomic highlights of the route

An absolute must be to eat at one of Finland's coolest summer yacht food restaurants. Mustakari in Kakkola, which focuses on natural and local food, is worth a visit. In Vaasa, the beachside restaurant Hejm serves local ingredients with a modern twist in a relaxed atmosphere. In Oulu's old town, Pikisaari, the Sokeri-Jussi tavern occupies an old wooden warehouse. As part of the Arctic Food Lab project, it highlights Arctic ingredients and the region's gastronomic heritage.

Sweden has no shortage of charming summer cafés. Most notably Svedjan Cheese & Bakery in the Skellefteå countryside, where the owners make award-winning cheeses. Enjoy a Swedish fika (coffee break with sweet or savoury snacks) in a teepee in the forest near Kalix and learn how to brew coffee over an open flame. At the seaside restaurant Kvarkenfisk in Umeå you can sample local fish. The more adventurous can even try fermented herring, a strong-smelling delicacy.

For more information, travel tips and distance maps, visit the [Bothnian Coastal Route](#). Whether you are a cultural vulture, family traveller or nature lover, you'll find tailor-made travel suggestions and unforgettable experiences along the way.

The Bothnian Coastal Route is easy to access from the UK:

- Flights to Helsinki or Stockholm – Domestic flights to Oulu, Vaasa, Luleå, Skellefteå, and Umeå. Including from Kokkola and Kemi to Helsinki.
- Green Wasaline Ferry – 3.5-hour sea crossing between Vaasa (Finland) and Umeå (Sweden).

To book your Bothnian Coastal Route experience please visit [Discover the World](#) or [Regent Holidays](#)

The Bothnian Coastal Route project, including northern Finnish and Swedish destinations, aims to increase awareness of the coastal area around the Bothnian Bay and over the Kvarkenstrait, as a new Nordic bucket list round-trip. Through the project cooperation, the partners intend to increase the reasons for visiting the destinations along the coasts, discover their rich product range, and create better conditions for sustainable growth. Contact any of our project leaders to know more about the project, the destinations, or our offerings.

<https://bothniancoastalroute.com>

Media Contacts:

Erja Back, Visit Umeå
Destination: Umeå region
+46 (0)70 64762 78
erja.back@visitumea.se

Jaana Sirkiä, City of Kalajoki
Destination: Kalajoki
+358 (0)40 35914 57
jaana.sirkia@kalajoki.fi

Images of the Bothnian Coastal Route can be downloaded [here](#).

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