

Oland

Sweden

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Öland is a long, flat limestone island in the Baltic Sea, joined to the mainland at Kalmar by a 6 km bridge. It is Sweden's second-largest island and a classic Swedish summer holiday spot. The land is open and windswept, with old wooden windmills, stone walls and wide skies.

The island suits a slow trip by car or bike. You can visit Iron Age forts, a royal summer palace, lighthouses at both tips and long sandy beaches in the north. The south is a UNESCO World Heritage landscape shaped by thousands of years of farming. Summer is busy and lively, while spring and autumn are quiet and good for birdwatching.

When to visit

Summer is the main season, with long, mild days and the warmest sea in July and August. Many sights, cafés and boat trips open only from late spring to early autumn. May, June and September are quieter, and spring and autumn bring huge numbers of migrating birds to the southern tip. Winter is grey, windy and very quiet.

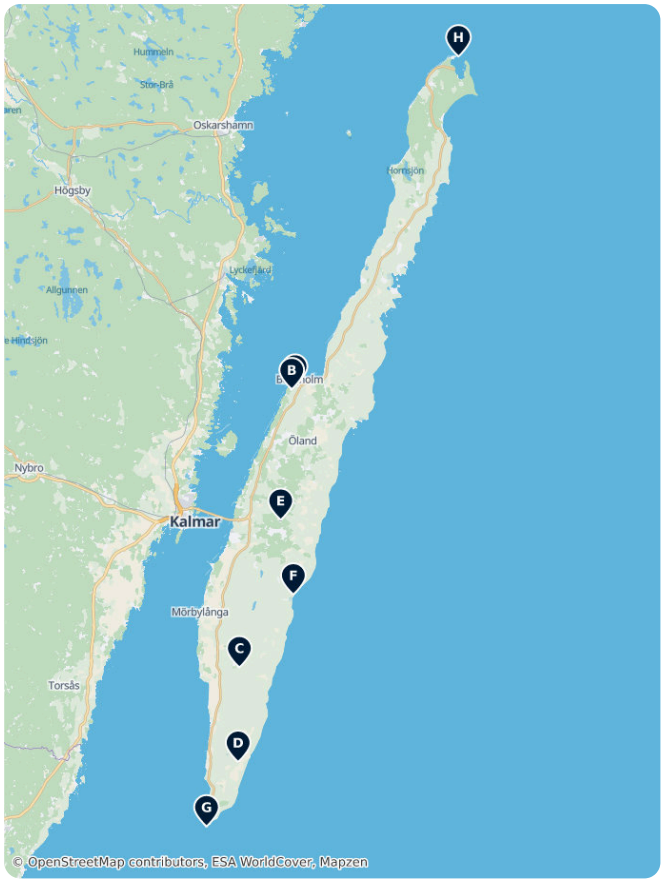
The biggest event is the **Öland Harvest Festival** (Skördefest) on the last weekend of September. Farms, markets and artists open their doors across the whole island, and it draws thousands of visitors, so book accommodation early.

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Poor Poor for sightseeing	2° / 7° Feels like -5°	0° / -7°	14 rainy days · Dry air
February	Poor Poor for sightseeing	3° / 8° Feels like -4°	-1° / -7°	12 rainy days · Dry air
March	Poor Poor for sightseeing	4° / 10° Feels like -2°	1° / -5°	Dry air
April	Fair Fair for wildlife watching	8° / 13° Feels like 3°	3° / 0°	Dry air
May	Good Good for cycling	12° / 18° Feels like 8°	8° / 4°	Dry air
June	Great Great for cycling	17° / 22° Feels like 14°	13° / 9°	Dry air
July	Great Great for sightseeing	20° / 24°	16° / 12°	
August	Great Great for sightseeing	20° / 24°	16° / 13°	
September	Great Great for cycling	16° / 20° Feels like 13°	13° / 9°	Dry air
October	Fair Fair for wildlife watching	11° / 15° Feels like 6°	8° / 4°	13 rainy days · Dry air
November	Poor Poor for wildlife watching	7° / 11° Feels like 1°	5° / -1°	15 rainy days · Dry air
December	Poor Poor for sightseeing	4° / 8° Feels like -3°	1° / -5°	15 rainy days · Dry air

Best months: July, August

Climate data: NASA POWER + Copernicus ERA5-Land and ERA5 · 1996–2025

Top sights



- A Borgholm slott is the huge stone ruin above the island's only town. It burned in 1806 and now hosts a museum, concerts and summer events in its courtyard.
- B Sollidens slott is the Italian-style summer home of the Swedish royal family, a short walk from the castle ruin. Its park is open to visitors from May to late September.
- C Agricultural Landscape of Southern Öland is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It includes Stora Alvaret, a vast open limestone plain with rare plants, plus old farming villages and stone walls.
- D Eketorp Fortress is a rebuilt Iron Age ringfort in the south. In summer, staff in costume show crafts and daily life, and a small museum displays finds from the excavation.
- E Gråborg is the largest ancient ringfort on Öland. Its massive stone wall still stands, with the ruin of a medieval chapel close by.
- F Sandby fornborg is a smaller ringfort where archaeologists found evidence of a massacre in the late 5th century. It gives a striking picture of violence in the Iron Age.
- G Ölands Södra Udde is the southern tip, with the Långe Jan lighthouse from 1785, the tallest in Sweden. You can climb it in the warmer months, and Ottenby bird observatory is right beside it.
- H Ölands Norra Udde is the northern tip, with the white Långe Erik lighthouse from 1845 on a small island linked by a bridge.
- **Trollskogen**, a nature reserve near the northern tip, has a short trail through wind-twisted pines and oaks.

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What to experience

Some of the best moments on Öland are seasonal and outdoors:

- **Join the Harvest Festival** — on the last weekend of September, farms, artists and markets open across the island, with pumpkin displays and evening art walks by torchlight.
- **Watch the bird migration** — spring and autumn bring huge flocks past the southern tip. Ottenby bird observatory rings birds there, and the nature centre explains the migration.
- **Walk on Stora Alvaret** — the open limestone plain feels unlike anywhere else in Sweden. Go in late spring, when rare orchids and other wildflowers bloom.
- **See the royal family on Victoria Day** — each year on 14 July, the Crown Princess's birthday is celebrated at Solliden and in Borgholm, and the royal family greets the public.

Day trips

Most visitors spend all their time on the island, but a few trips across the water are worth it:

- A Kalmar Municipality — 15–30 minutes by car or bus over the bridge from the southern half of the island. See Kalmar Castle, the cathedral and the old town.
- **Blå Jungfrun National Park** — a granite island in Kalmar Sound, about 1.5 hours by tour boat from Byxelkrok in the north. Boats run daily from late June to mid-August.
- **The Kingdom of Crystal (Glasriket)** — glassworks in the forests of B Province of Småland, about 40–70 minutes by car from Kalmar. Watch glassblowers at work and buy glass at the factory shops.
- C Karlskrona — the UNESCO-listed naval port, about 1.5–2 hours by train or car from Kalmar.



Where to explore

Borgholms distrikt is the island's main town, with the castle ruin, the royal palace, shops and the busiest harbour.

Across the bridge, Kalmar Municipality is the gateway city and the place to catch trains and flights. The wider Province of Småland region offers forests, lakes and glassworks.

Further away, Stockholm is a good start or end point for a trip, and Gotland is Sweden's other big Baltic island.

Getting there

- **By car**: Drive over Öland Bridge from Kalmar Municipality. The bridge lands you at Färjestaden, about 30 minutes by car from Borgholm. **Cycling and walking are not allowed on the bridge.**
- **By air**: Öland has no airport. Kalmar Öland Airport is about 5 km from Kalmar, with several daily flights to Stockholm. Take a taxi or a local bus into Kalmar, then a bus to the island.
- **By train**: Trains run to Kalmar from Stockholm (about 5 hours with a change), Gothenburg and Malmö/Copenhagen. From Kalmar station, regional buses cross the bridge to the island.
- **By bus**: Long-distance coaches run from Stockholm to Kalmar, where you change to a regional bus to Öland.

Getting around

- **Car**: The easiest way to explore. The island is about 137 km long, and many sights, beaches and nature reserves lie away from the bus routes.
- **Bus**: Kalmar Länstrafik runs regional buses along the island, including line 101 from Kalmar station to Borgholm. Pay by bank card on board or with a travel pass; cash is not accepted on board. Bikes can go on regional buses for an extra fee when there is space.
- **Cycling**: Öland is flat and good for cycling, with quiet back roads. Expect strong wind on open ground. Rent a bike on the island, since you cannot cycle over the bridge.
- **On foot**: Borgholm's centre is small and walkable, but the island as a whole is too spread out to explore on foot.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

Low

Borgholm's centre is small and walkable, but the sights are spread along a 137 km island, so you need a car, bus or bike.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

High

The island is flat with quiet back roads, but it is often windy, and bikes are not allowed on the Öland Bridge.

Driving

- **Is a car worth it?**: Yes. A car is the most practical way to see the island, because buses are infrequent away from the main road and many sights are rural.
- **Bridge**: The Öland Bridge is the only road link to the island. Expect slow traffic on busy summer weekends.
- **Parking**: Most sights, beaches and nature reserves have free or low-cost car parks. In Borgholm's centre in summer, check the signs for time limits.
- **On the road**: Roads are narrow, and you share them with cyclists, tractors and grazing animals. Take care at dawn and dusk.

Food & drink

Öland's signature dish is **Ölands kroppkakor**: large potato dumplings filled with pork, served with melted butter and lingonberries. The island is also known for its brown beans, which have EU protected status as "Bruna bönor från Öland". Look out for local lamb, smoked fish from small harbours, and fresh produce from farm shops in late summer and autumn.

The best eating clusters around Borgholm's harbour and centre, and in the small fishing harbours along the coast. Many cafés and restaurants open only in the summer season, so plan ahead outside June to August.

What to eat & drink

LUNCH

Open Sandwich · Smörgås
Single-slice bread topped with a range of ingredients — cheese, egg, shrimp, or cured meat — a common Swedish lunch.

Daily Lunch Special · Dagens lunch
A set weekday lunch including a hot main dish, salad bar, bread, and coffee for around 120–160 SEK — the best value hot meal.

DINNER

Meatballs · Köttbullar
Small pork-and-beef meatballs served with cream sauce, mashed potato, and lingonberry jam — Sweden's most iconic dish.

Cured Salmon · Gravlax
Salmon cured with salt, sugar, and dill, sliced thin and served with mustard sauce on rye bread or as a starter.

Pickled Herring · Sill
Marinated herring in preparations ranging from mustard to matjes, a staple of Swedish festive tables and smörgåsbord.

Potato Gratin with Sprats · Janssons frestelse
A baked gratin of potato, onion, cream, and pickled sprats — a classic Swedish comfort dish, especially at Christmas.

SWEETS & DESSERTS

Cinnamon Bun · Kanelbulle
Soft, spiced bun flavoured with cinnamon and cardamom, the centrepiece of Swedish fika culture.

DRINKS

Aquavit · Akvavit
Scandinavian spirit distilled from grain or potato and flavoured with caraway or dill, traditionally drunk at celebrations.

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Safety & health

Öland is very safe, and crime against visitors is rare. Use normal care with valuables in busy places such as Borgholm in high summer.

The main health risk is ticks in long grass and woods, so check yourself after walks. Bring sun protection, because the open landscape gives little shade, and windproof layers for the coast.

History

People have farmed Öland for thousands of years, and you can still read that history in the land. Prehistoric burial sites, stone walls and long rows of village farms survive across the south. This is why the Agricultural Landscape of Southern Öland is on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

In the Iron Age, islanders built more than a dozen stone ringforts as refuges. Gråborg is the largest, Eketorp Fortress has been rebuilt as it may have looked, and Sandby fornborg preserves the scene of a massacre in the late 5th century.

For centuries, the Swedish crown kept Öland as a royal hunting ground. A medieval fortress at Borgholm grew into a Baroque palace, Borgholm slott, until a fire left it a ruin in 1806. In the early 1900s, Crown Princess *Victoria* built Sollidens slott next to the ruin, and the royal family still spends its summers there.

For centuries Öland had no fixed link to the mainland. That changed in 1972, when the Öland Bridge opened and made the island an easy summer escape.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for Sweden at a glance:

CURRENCY
SEK kr

EMERGENCY
112

ELECTRICITY



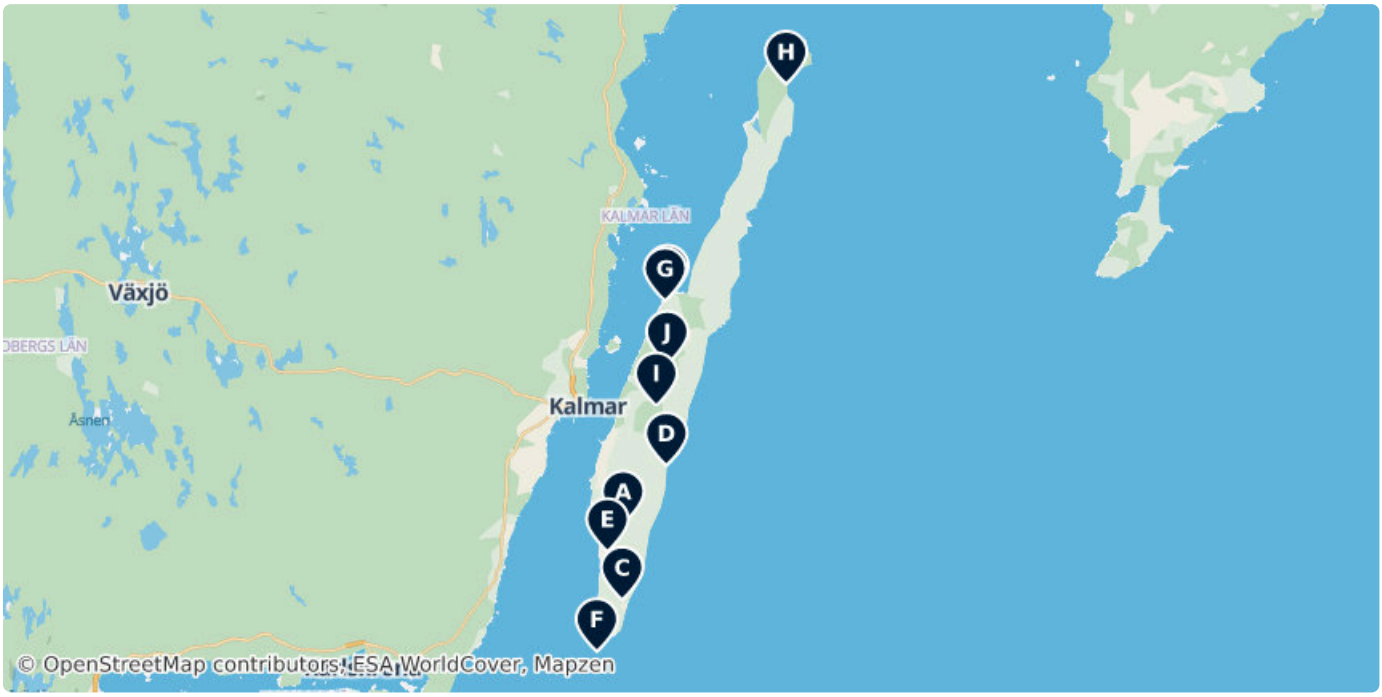
Type C / Type F
230 V · 50 Hz

LANGUAGES
Swedish

TAP WATER
Safe to drink

Öland's Essential Treasures

Öland's landscape is defined by the UNESCO-listed agricultural plains of the south and a series of Iron Age ringforts, including Eketorp, Ismantorp, and Gråborg. The island's history is preserved in the 13th-century ruins of Borgholm Castle, the royal gardens of Solliden Palace, and the expansive Gettlinge burial site. Natural landmarks include the 18th-century Långe Jan lighthouse at the southern cape and the white sands of Böda Beach to the north.





A Agricultural landscape of southern Öland

The agricultural landscape of southern Öland is an area of more than 56,000 hectares located on the island of Öland, Sweden.

Kastlösa Alvargata, 386 61 Mörbylånga kommun, Sweden (56.44095, 16.48957)



B Borgholm Castle

Borgholm Castle in Borgholm, Sweden, is today only a ruin of the fortress that was first built in the second half of the 13th century and...

Sweden (56.87072, 16.64390)

Mo	10:00–18:00
Tu	10:00–17:00
We–Fr	10:00–18:00
Sa–Su	Closed

borgholmsslott.se, +46 48512333



C Eketorp Castle

Eketorp is an Iron Age fort, located in southeastern Öland, Sweden, and extensively reconstructed and enlarged in the Middle Ages.

Eketorps Fornborg, 380 65 Degerhamn, Sweden (56.29552, 16.48616)

eketorp.se, +46 480 45 13 00



D Sandby borg

Sandby borg is an Iron Age ringfort, one of at least 15 on the island of Öland, Sweden.

Sweden (56.55257, 16.63929)



E Gettlinge Burial Site

One of Öland's largest burial fields, stretching nearly two kilometers. It contains stone ships, standing stones, and graves dating from the Bronze Age to the late Iron Age.

120 Klinta, 38663, Sweden (56.38835, 16.43495)



F Långe Jan

Home to Långe Jan, Sweden's tallest lighthouse at 41.6 meters. Built in 1785, the tower stands at the island's southern tip within the Ottenby Nature Reserve, a significant site for birdwatching.

401 (56.19606, 16.39853)



G Solliden Palace Gardens

Solliden Palace -- commonly known as just Solliden -- is the summer residence of the Swedish Royal Family and the personal private property...

(Unnamed Road), Sweden (56.86542, 16.63463)

sollidensslott.se, 070-56 153 56



H Böda Beach

Popular beach with camping amenities and rich sport opportunities. Its fine sand and tranquil waters make this place special.

Bödasandsallén, 38773, Sweden (57.27338, 17.05405)



I Gråborg

The largest ancient ringfort on Öland, featuring a circular stone wall with a diameter of 210 meters. The site was active from the Iron Age through the Middle Ages and includes the ruins of Saint Knut's Chapel.

Sweden (56.66657, 16.60406)



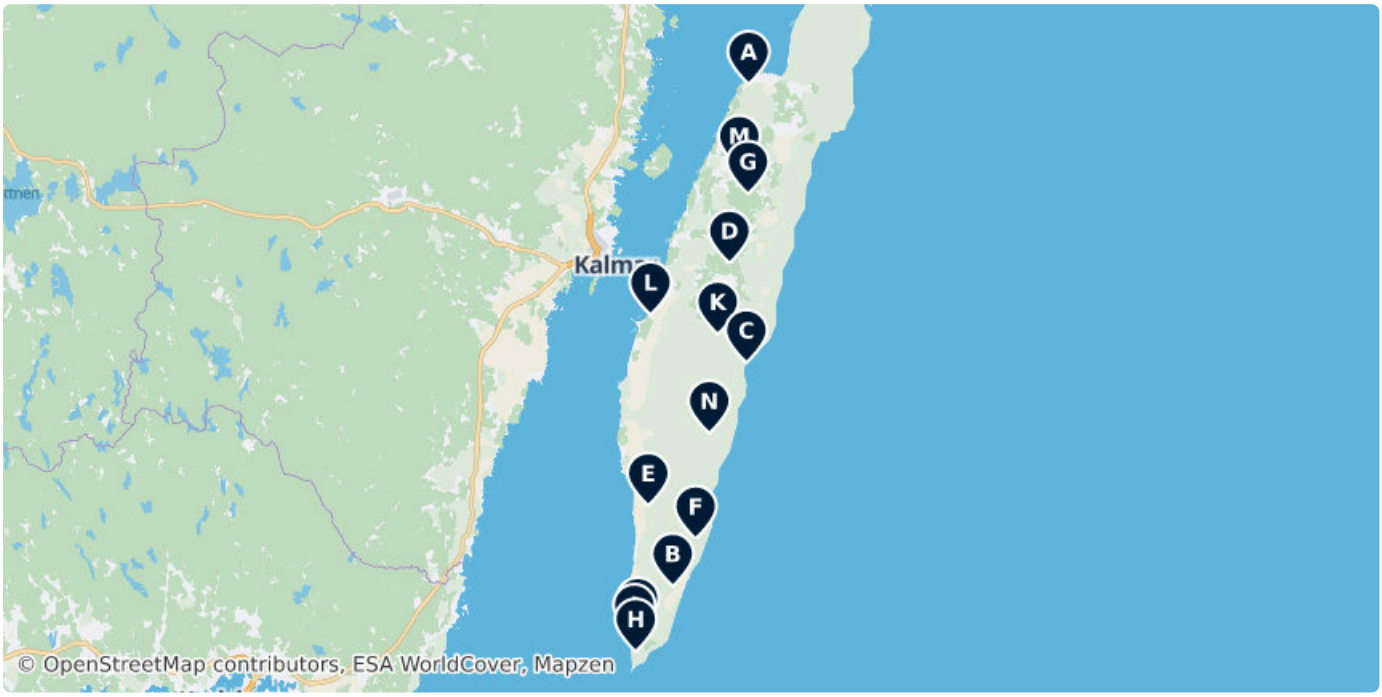
J Ismantorp Fortress

Ismantorp Fortress is the ruins of a ringfort located on Öland Island in Sweden.

Sweden (56.74545, 16.64264)

Swedish Archaeological Sites

Explore the ancient landscape of Öland, Sweden, a region defined by its dense concentration of Iron Age ringforts and megalithic burial grounds. This list features significant archaeological sites ranging from the massive ruins of Borgholm Castle to the reconstructed Eketorp fort, which demonstrates life across three distinct historical periods. Visitors can discover unique limestone ship settings at Noaks ark, major prehistoric cemeteries like Gettlinge, and the Karlevistenen, one of Sweden's most important runestones featuring rare skaldic poetry.





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borgholmsslott.se, +46 48512333



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eketorp.se, +46 480 45 13 00



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Sweden (56.55257, 16.63929)



D Gråborg

Öland's largest ancient fortification, featuring a massive circular wall 210 meters in diameter. Used from the Iron Age through the Middle Ages, the site also includes the ruins of the 12th-century Saint Knut's Chapel.

Sweden (56.66657, 16.60406)



E Gettlinge Burial Site

Stretching nearly two kilometers, this is one of Öland's largest burial grounds. It features over 200 graves, including a prominent 30-meter-long stone ship setting and numerous standing limestone slabs from the Bronze and Iron Ages.

120 Klinta, 38663, Sweden (56.38835, 16.43495)

F Seby gravfält

An Iron Age cemetery containing approximately 280 graves. The site is notable for its diverse stone settings and a four-meter-high standing limestone slab known as the Seby stone.

Segerstad Vårdkastäkten, 38664, Sweden (56.35024, 16.53363)



G Ismantorp Fortress

Ismantorp Fortress is the ruins of a ringfort located on Öland Island in Sweden.

Sweden (56.74545, 16.64264)

H Kungsstenarna

Two large, upright limestone slabs situated near Ottenby. These megalithic markers date back to the Bronze or Iron Age and stand as prominent prehistoric features on the southern Öland landscape.

Sweden (56.21993, 16.40893)

I Ottenby gravfält

A vast prehistoric cemetery featuring hundreds of Iron Age graves, including stone circles and mounds, situated within the Ottenby nature reserve.

(56.23680, 16.40624)

J Ottenby gravfält

Part of the extensive burial complex at the southern tip of Öland, containing stone settings and burial mounds dating from the Iron Age and Viking period.

(56.24443, 16.41365)

K Tornrör

One of Öland's largest Bronze Age burial cairns, located on the Great Alvar limestone plain and measuring approximately 25 meters in diameter.

(56.58534, 16.57978)

L Karlevistenen

A significant late 10th-century runestone featuring a rare complete stanza of skaldic poetry. It was erected in memory of a Danish chieftain and remains in its original location.

(56.60755, 16.43986)

M Noaks ark

A distinct Iron Age stone ship setting located on the Karums alvar. The limestone slabs are arranged in the precise shape of a ship's hull.

(56.77468, 16.62482)

N Ancient Stronghold of Triberga

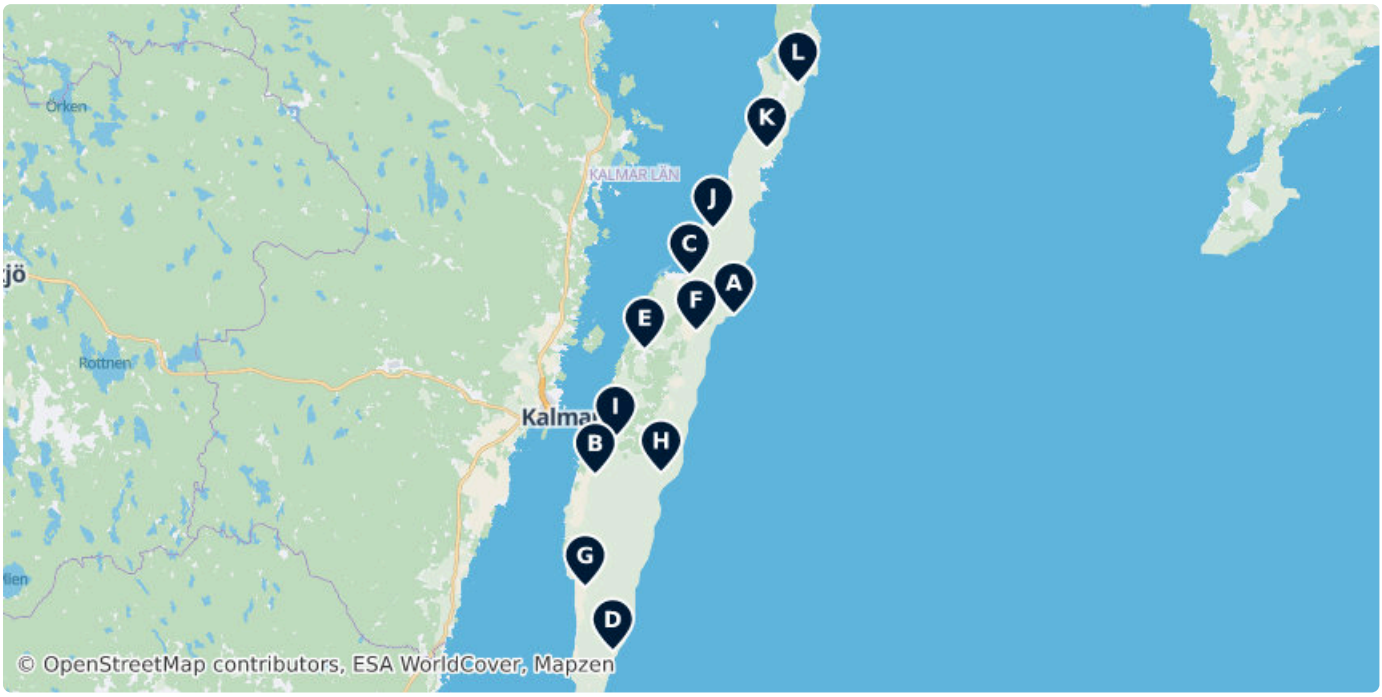
A well-preserved Iron Age ringfort on the edge of the Great Alvar, featuring a circular stone rampart and visible foundations of ancient dwellings.

(Unnamed Road), Sweden (56.47154, 16.56217)

lansstyrelsen.se/kalmar/sv/om-lansstyrelsen/om-lanet/be...

Öland's Historic Churches

Öland’s ecclesiastical landscape is defined by its medieval heritage and 19th-century neoclassical "Tegnér churches." This collection features sites ranging from the exceptionally preserved 12th-century Romanesque Gärdslösa kyrka to structures with fortified defensive towers like Persnäs and Högby. Many of these buildings incorporate ancient runestones and historical artifacts, reflecting the island's transition from early Christian missions to the established Lutheran tradition.





A Saint Birgitta's chapel

Saint Birgitta's chapel is located on the east coast of the island of Öland, Sweden, some four kilometers from the village of Bredsättra in...

Sweden (56.81912, 16.84089)



B Vickleby kyrka

Features a 12th-century medieval tower. The church is located on the edge of the UNESCO-listed Stora Alvaret limestone plain.

2 Vickleby, Vickleby 38693, Sweden (56.57717, 16.46008)



C Köpings kyrka

One of the island's largest churches, featuring a medieval tower and significant 19th-century expansions to accommodate the local population.

1 Kolstad Kyrkgata, Köpingsvik 38750, Sweden (56.87809, 16.71873)



D Gräsgårds kyrka

Located in southern Öland, this church retains its original medieval tower while the nave reflects 19th-century neoclassical design.

(Unnamed Road), Sweden (56.30957, 16.50805)



E Högsrums kyrka

A 19th-century neoclassical church built in 1822, incorporating structural elements from a medieval predecessor.

Högsrums Bygata, 38792, Sweden (56.76616, 16.59608)

F Gärdslösa kyrka

One of Öland's best-preserved medieval churches, featuring 12th-century Romanesque architecture and 13th-century Gothic additions.

Norra Gärdslösa, Gärdslösa 38793, Sweden (56.79358, 16.73780)

G Smedby kyrka

A mid-19th-century structure in southern Öland that replaced a medieval building, though it retains some historical liturgical items.

(Unnamed Road), Sweden (56.40706, 16.43242)

H Sandby kyrka

A neoclassical church completed in 1863, replacing a medieval building near the historic Sandby borg ringfort area.

(Unnamed Road), Sweden (56.58078, 16.64105)

I Torslunda kyrka

Features a medieval tower and an 18th-century nave. The surrounding area is famous for the discovery of the Viking Age Torslunda bronze plates.

2 Kyrkgatan, 38692, Sweden (56.63329, 16.51533)

J Alböke kyrka

A neoclassical church built in 1862 on a historic site that has served the northern Öland community since the Middle Ages.

5 Alböke Kyrkgata, 38796, Sweden (56.94783, 16.78403)

K Persnäs kyrka

Notable for its 12th-century defensive tower, a remnant of the island's medieval fortification history, paired with a 19th-century nave.

10 Persnäs Bygata, 38770, Sweden (57.06732, 16.93112)

L Högby kyrka

Features a massive 12th-century defensive tower. The site is historically significant as the finding place of the 11th-century Högby Runestone.

3 Högby Sjögata, Löttorp 38773, Sweden (57.16443, 17.01651)

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