

# LULEÅ

*the destinations of*  
SWEDISH  
LAPLAND  
YOUR ARCTIC DESTINATION

*Hiking in Luleå*



# HIKING ROUTES IN LULEÅ

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!

This is a guide to hiking routes in Luleå. From easier routes, suitable for all ages, to more challenging ones, taking you further out into our beautiful surroundings.

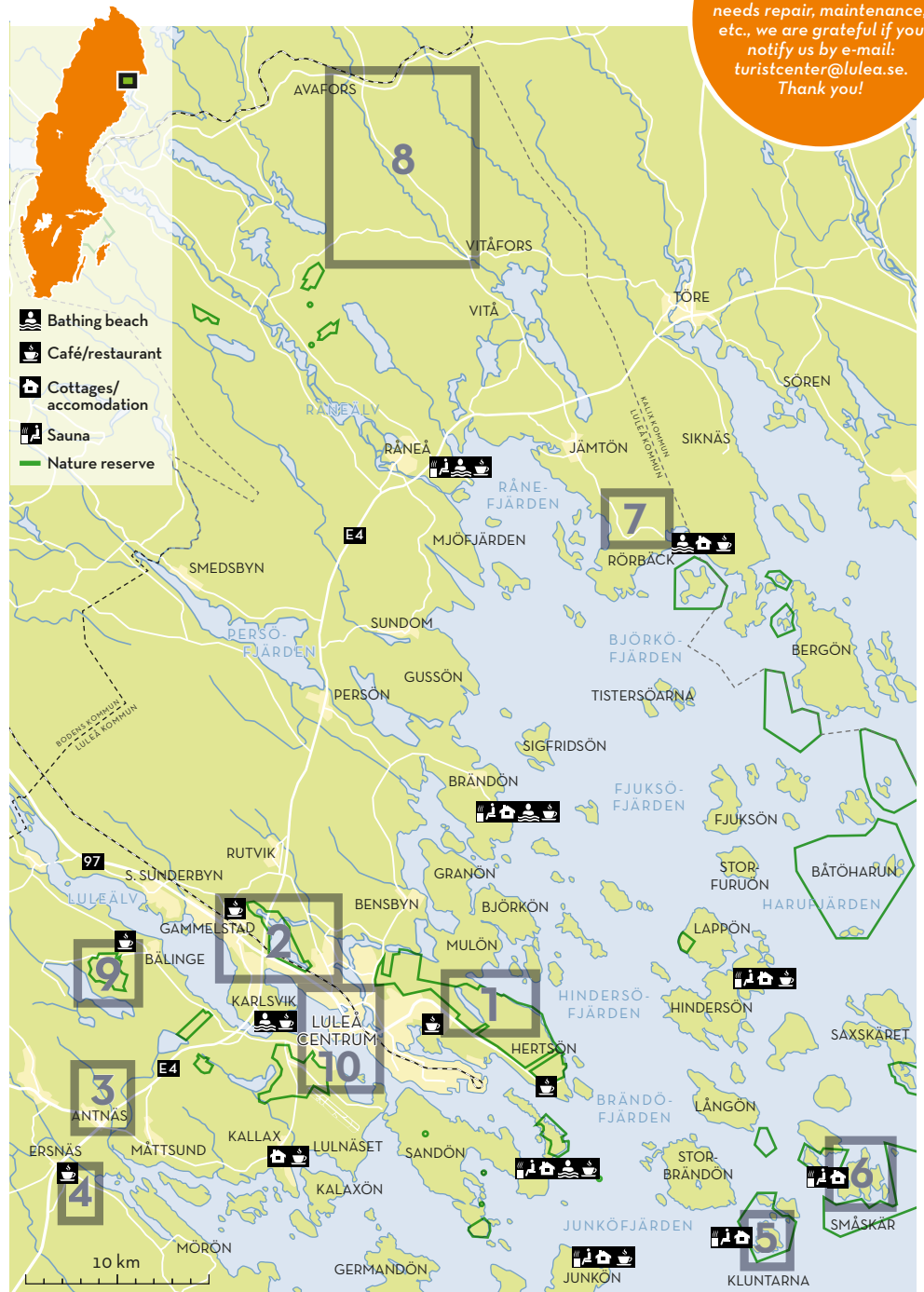
Hiking in Luleå is almost like strolling through the history of this unique city. For instance, you can begin by hiking across the large shingle fields on Bälungeberget the first spot to rise from the sea, following land uplift after the recession of the inland ice sheet. At the time, Bälungeberget was just an islet in the middle of the sea and the waves shaped the rocks that now make hiking on the mountain a fascinating experience.

Continue through the history of Luleå by visiting the place we now call Gammelstad Church Town, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and once the centre of Luleå, before the city was moved in the 17th century. Today, it is a popular tourist destination and there are also many rare birds in the area. Here, you can hike on what was once the seabed, now a beautiful forest with pleasant walking paths.

When you have made your way to the modern city of Luleå, on the peninsula by the coast, you will find many other amazing areas to explore on foot. When people moved here in the 1600's, they also began exploring the surroundings. This helped create several excellent hiking trails near the city centre, such as one of the locals' favourites, the trail around Hertsöträsk.

Luleå has a lot to offer hikers. We have collected our favourite destinations and we hope you will enjoy them just as much as we do.

**Welcome!**



## TRANSPORTATION

LULEÅ LOKALTRAFIK, LLT, will take you around the city. An LLT info-point can be found on Smedjegatan 13, in the city centre. Download their app and you can easily plan your journey. [llt.lulea.se](http://llt.lulea.se)

LÄNSTRAFIKEN operate bus lines all over Norrbotten County. Buses are available to Alvik, Ersnäs and Bälunge. Info: [ltnbd.se](http://ltnbd.se)

### ARCHIPELAGO TOUR BOATS

In summer and autumn, tour boats will take you to the largest and most popular islands in the Luleå archipelago: Sandön, Hindersön, Junkön, Kluntarna, Småskär and Brändöskär. This way you will also reach the Luleå Council cottages, Jopikgården on Hindersön and Klubbviken on Sandön. The tour boats depart from Luleå's South Harbour. Schedule and more information available online: [lulea.se](http://lulea.se)



Photo: Fredrik Broman

## DIFFICULTY LEVELS

None of the trails in this guide are particularly difficult to hike. We have divided them into three levels, to give you an idea about their character. It is however, important for everyone to make their own assessment based on experience and physical fitness.

**EASY:** Maximum 6 kilometers. Clearly visible trail, no steep inclines.

**INTERMEDIATE:** 6–10 kilometers. In some places, you may need to look for trail markings, rugged terrain may occur.

**DIFFICULT:** Longer than 10 kilometers. You may need to look for trail markings, rugged terrain may occur.

## READING TIPS

DEN STORA NATURGUIDEN by Thomas Öberg.

DIN EGEN LOTS TILL LULEÅ SKÄRGÅRD produced by Luleå kommun, available at the Luleå Tourist Center.



# 1. HERTSÖLEDEN, OLD GROWTH FOREST NEAR THE CITY • 8 km



If you would like to experience old-growth forest near the city, Hertsölandet is a good choice. The forest lake, Hertsöträsk is a popular destination, there are plenty of campfire sites, wind shelters and trails. A ramp, accessible for the disabled, is available from the car park to the first rest cabin. The Hertsön peninsula stretches 10 kilometers out to the sea and offers old-growth forest, mires and a rich flora. Difficulty: **EASY/INTERMEDIATE**

From Hertsövågen, follow the signs for Hertsöträsk. After about 2 kilometers along a forest road you will reach the car park. Here you will find a rest cabin, a campfire site, an outhouse and a jetty. The trail has orange markings and there are information signs. Follow the footbridge along the northeastern side of the lake. After a while, the footbridge ends and you follow a trail along the water's edge (it may be wet). When you have hiked just under 2 kilometers from your starting point, the trail diverges

north, leaving the lake. Now comes a light incline up into rocky terrain ①. After about 1 kilometer, the trail turns south. At the next intersection you can take a detour to Lillträsket. This small lake is an old sandpit filled with water. In May, frogs and toads gather here to breed. The frogs and toads tend to make a lot of noise, the Common Frog coos and the Moor Frog barks like a small dog. Back at the trail intersection you turn right (northeast) and after about 2 kilometers you will reach the seashore. After hiking a few kilometers you will reach a wind shelter with a campfire site. Some distance further, the trail makes a sharp right turn, back up into the forest. The last kilometre of the hike follows the forest road back to the car park. Just south of the forest road lies Stor-Skrattmyran ②, one of Hertsölandet's mires where orchids and waterlilies grow. There are also owls, Great Grouse and Hazel Grouse in the area.

Photo: Thomas Öberg



Onward to new adventures in Hertsölandet!

**TIPS:** Try your luck at fishing! Hertsöträsk has had arctic char and rainbow trout introduced. Perch and pike are natural inhabitants. Fishing licences can be purchased via [fiskekort.se](http://fiskekort.se).

**INFO:** The Ormberget-Hertsölandet nature reserve was established in 2009 and consists of forest and marshlands. Spruces grow in the lowland terrain and higher up you will find rocky terrain with sparse pine forests. There is old-growth forest with snags (standing, dead trees) and traces of forest fires. Wood mushrooms, including some endangered species, grow on fallen trees. The marshlands are rich in lime, making the environment conducive to orchids such as Fairy-slippers, Early Marsh-orchids and Heath-spotted orchids. All orchids in Sweden are protected. Common birds are the Jay, the Great Spotted Woodpecker, the Robin, the Willow Tit and the Coal Tit. Wetland birds such as the Red-throated Diver and the Greenshank breed on the mires.

# 2. BIRDS AND HISTORY AT GAMMELSTADSVIKEN • 8 km



Gammelstads Viken is one of the best bird locales in the region. Here you will find hiking trails, bird watching towers, information signs and campfire sites. One of the trails to the bird watching tower is accessible for the disabled. Bring your binoculars and discover another of Luleå's gems. Difficulty: **EASY/INTERMEDIATE**

Gammelstads Viken lies to the northwest of Luleå and used to be a bay but was cut off from the sea by land uplift. It is both a nature reserve and a Natura 2000 site. Its northern location has made the lake an outpost for several southern species and it is biologically similar to a southern Swedish lowland lake. The lake has wide rows of broadleaf cattail, reeds and least water-lilies. Springtime, in the middle of May, presents the best chances for spotting many species of birds. Really early in the morning, both birds and animals are at their most active. In this trail description we choose to hike from the Gammelstad Church Town World Heritage Site to Porsödalen, along the old fairway into the city. Take local bus no. 9 to Kyrktoget. Walk down Gamla

hamngatan to the car park of the Open-air museum Hägnan. This was the location of the harbour until the 17th century. The silhouette of a cog (a medieval trade ship) reminds us that this was an important site for seafaring and trade. The trail begins here. Follow it straight ahead until you reach Gammelstads Viken. The trail follows the northern boundary of the reserve for about 1 kilometers until it turns sharply to the north and goes through a tunnel under the E4. Signs tell the story of the fairway into Luleå that ran here until 1649 when the city was moved to its current location. After about 4 kilometers you will reach the bird spotting tower and one of the campfire sites along the trail ①. Climb up and you will have a great view of the lake, the wetlands and the birds. After the tower you will have several options to choose from. Entrances from both Haparandavägen and Vänortsvägen create crossroads where you have to choose the right path to reach Porsödalen. Just keep following the trail you are on and it shouldn't be a problem. If you would like another pause we recommend the vantage point where you can see towards Grönnan ②, offering a campfire site and a magnificent view. The trail continues through a wetter area but there are footbridges. Follow it until you reach Porsön, an asphalt walking path and a couple of busy roads will indicate that you have reached the end of the trail. From here, you can take bus no. 5 back to the city centre.

Large ships sailed here in the 17th century.

Photo: Thomas Öberg



**TIPS:** Gammelstad Church Town is a World Heritage Site and there is much to see and discover here. Find out more at [visitlulea.se](http://visitlulea.se) och [visitgammelstad.se](http://visitgammelstad.se).

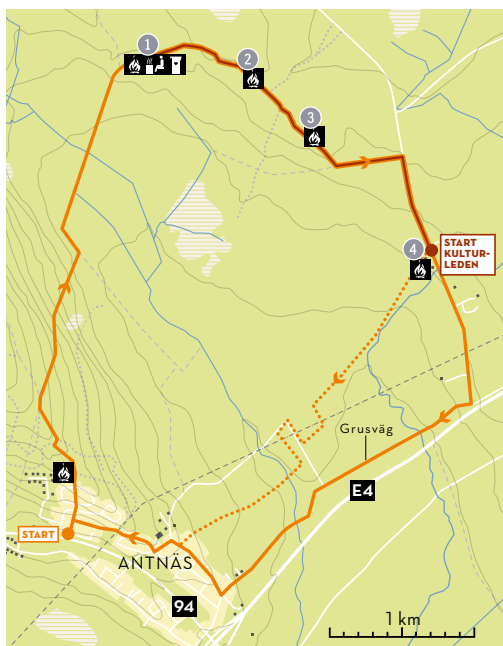
**INFO:** The number of species breeding at Gammelstads Viken varies but there are usually about 80 species. Many species of birds stop here to rest during migration to and from their breeding sites up north. Those breeding here are, amongst many others: great crested grebes, gadwalls, and Northern shovelers. This is also one of the few breeding sites for the Eurasian Coot in the region. Examples of waders breeding here: Common Snipe, Wood Sandpiper and Common Greenshank. Birds of prey such as the white-tailed eagle, the osprey and the common marsh harrier can be seen hunting here. In the surrounding forest you will find woodpeckers, owls, landfowl and Old World warblers.

### 3. CULTURAL HISTORY ALONG FÄBODALEDEN • 10 km

The village of Antnäs lies less than 20 kilometers south of Luleå. Along the Fäbodaleden trail you will find four hill pastures, small oases in the midst of the forest. You will also see sculptures by Antnäs artist, Gunnar Hansson along the trail.

Difficulty: **INTERMEDIATE**

By the grocery store in Antnäs you will find the first information sign and inside the store you can pick up a brochure with a map. The trail begins at the belltower of the Sörby kyrkan Church. Go north through the village. As the forest begins you will find a campfire site. Keep going straight ahead, keep right of the campfire site and you will soon see the next sign. Similar signs will guide you along the way. The SKÅRETS FÄBOD pasture ① is thought to have been established in the early 1700's and used for approximately 250 years. Its reconstruction began in the early 2000's and it now has three cottages, a sauna, a well and wooden sculptures. The cottages are open and there are binders with information about the restoration and what life was like here. ORRTJÄRNVÄLLEN ② consists of four cottages and a well. It was the smallest of the pastures with five cottages and barns. Here, you can also read more about each cottage, their owners and the places where they were once located. Only one cottage remains at MITTIVÄLLEN ③ but there used to be eleven, as well as at least 13 barns and two wells. Foundations and ruins remain. KVARNVÄLLEN ④ is the largest



pasture and lies by a gravel road. It probably dates back to the 16th century and used to have fifteen cottages and at least as many barns. Today there are three (locked) cottages, a playhouse for children, barns and equipment. Kvarnbäcken (the Mill Brook) runs nearby, in the 18th century it powered three small mills. One mill stone has been preserved and lies on the lawn. From here there are two routes back to Antnäs: along the gravel road or along a 100 year old lumberjack trail through the forest. There is boggy ground in the forest and the trail also passes marshland and farmland. There are plenty of footbridges but occasionally wet sections in between. Regardless of route, the last leg goes through the village of Antnäs, back to the church.

Photos: Gunnar Ekström



Beautiful wooden sculptures along the trail, at Skårets fäbod you are greeted by a Swedish Mountain Cow.

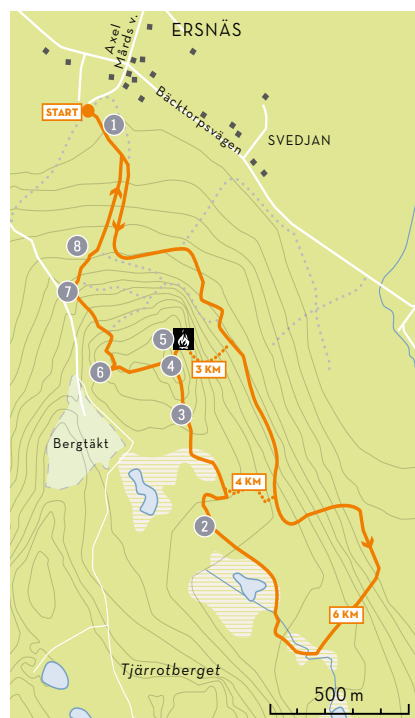


Cottages at Kvarnvallen.

**TIPS:** The Norrskogen culture trail is a shorter version of the Fäbodaleden trail, at 6 km. Start at Kvarnvallen, follow Fäbodaleden to Skårets fäbod and take the same way back. Read more about artist Gunnar Hansson: [naturgalleriet.se](http://naturgalleriet.se)

**INFO:** All established farms had their own pasture barn and most also their own cottage. In early June, when the winter feed had run out, the cows were herded up to the hill pastures, which were run by women. They herded the cows, milked them and made filmjolk (a fermented milk product), butter and cheese. On Saturday evenings, local youth gathered at the hill pastures.

### 4. HEMBERGET, WITH A VIEW OF ERSNÄSFJÄRDEN • 6 km



A great place to grill!

Hemberget, in the south-eastern part of the village of Ersnäs, offers lovely views of the farmland and the Ersnäsfjärden inlet. Hembergsleden is well marked. Pick up a brochure from the box at the start of the trail and learn more about the place, its history and geology. Difficulty: **EASY/ INTERMEDIATE**

The trail starts at Elljusspåret, signs will lead you there from Ralph Lundstengården in the centre of the village. Choose between a 3, 4, or 6 kilometre hike. SOLDAT-TORPET (the Soldier's Farmstead) ①. Up until the late 19th century, farmers were required to provide soldiers for the nation's defense. Four to five farms formed a group, providing the soldier and his family with a small farmstead. In Ersnäs, these farmsteads were located on the meagre, sandy soil south of the village. The Soldier's Farmstead has now been moved to the village square. STENBROTT ②. In this region, there are still stone barns remaining. The name comes from the fact that the lower half of the building is made using blocks of stone. The blocks were quarried with great

Photos: Gunnar Ekström

effort. Look at the cut side of the stones and you can spot marks left by the simple tools. This type of quarrying continued into the 20th century. TRACES OF FOREST FIRE ③. In 2008, the Hemberget peak was ravaged by a forest fire, someone had been careless with fire. Fortunately, nature heals itself and here you will see a great example of that. HEMBERGET AND THE LAND UPLIFT ④. 10,000 years ago, the inland ice sheet began melting. The land that is now the location of Ersnäs, was then 190 metres beneath the sea. 5,000 years ago an islet, a rock, broke the surface. This was the summit of Hemberget. REST STOP ⑤. Follow the arrow. After about 100 metres you will reach a rest stop with a campfire site and a lookout tower. Nearby, you can see open farmland and a bit further away lies the mouth of the stream, Aleån and the Ersnäsfjärden inlet. The 3 kilometre trail leads right up here. THE MINE ⑥. In the early 1840's, something of a mining rush happened here. The mining claims covered gold, platinum, silver, copper and iron. The first claim was made at Hemberget in December, 1840. The claimant was thought to have found silver ore and mining began. However, returns were meagre and operations ceased. SNOWMOBILE CABIN ⑦. For about three months per year, the snow cover is extensive enough to allow snowmobiling. The local snowmobile association owns and runs this cabin. ANCIENT REMAINS ⑧. Some distance into the leafy forest, archaeologists examined a possible Stone Age dwelling - They found quartz chippings and treated stone shards. 3,000 years ago this was an island and possibly used as a temporary dwelling by fishermen.

Photos: Gunnar Ekström



A well-marked trail on Hemberget.

**TIPS:** Composer Ralph Lundsten grew up in Ersnäs. His former home farmstead now houses the restaurant, Ralph Lundstengården.

**INFO:** The village of Ersnäs is an old farming community 20 kilometers south of Luleå. In the past, Ersnäs had better maritime connections. Steam sloops Ekoln and Iris connected Ersnäs and Luleå. Due to land uplift, the centre of the village now lies a few kilometers away from the sea. The Ersnäs Amateur Theatre Association keeps revue traditions alive, with a new, sold out play every year, in both Ersnäs and Luleå.

## 5. KLUNTARNA, THE ARCHIPELAGO ON ONE ISLAND • 2 km/6 km



Photo: Helena Holm

A gem in the Luleå archipelago. Difficulty: **EASY/INTERMEDIATE**

The nature trail on the island is divided into two routes. The short route takes about an hour, going around Kråkskäret. The longer route takes at least two hours. Including stops for swimming and rest, it's suitable

as a half-day hike too. At the Tourist Centre you can pick up a guide describing the nature trails.

**THE SHORT ROUTE** The trail starts at the Kluntarna nature exhibition by the guest harbour. Follow the footbridge in front of the rental cottages into a small section of forest ①. Go past a small shingle field ②. On the western shore, the trail crosses basalt corridors and granite rocks polished by the inland ice sheet. Walk freely across the rocks around the cape or take a shortcut across the mountain to the next bay ③. Here lies Kråkskärsviken, with a nice bathing beach ④. Further on, the trail climbs to a vantage point with tables and benches. From here, a trail, not very clearly visible will take you south, back to the guest harbour.

**THE LONG ROUTE** Start at the nature exhibition by the guest harbour and follow the footbridge to the east, to Storviken ⑤. At the inner point of Storviken you will find tables and benches, a beach with pleasantly shallow water and great spots for camping and bird watching. The trail turns left into the forest, follow the sign, reading "500 m Labyrinth". The forest becomes drier and changes from a spruce forest into a pine heath. Only a couple of hundred years ago, the bay reached all the way up here ⑥. 200 metres up from the beach you will reach a shingle field. You can see several former shorelines, moved away from the coast by land uplift, in the terrain. The trail follows one of them. At the shingle field, the trail turns right but we recommend a detour along the footbridge to the left, that ends up on the hill, where there's a spectacular view of the sea to the east. For example, you can see Bastaskär, where the

wreck of the wooden boat, Alma lies on the cape. She sunk in the 1930's, in a heavy storm ⑦. As you continue along the trail you will pass three labyrinths, likely dating back to the 14th century. Immediately after those, you will pass foundation remains and here the footbridge ends. Where the trail splits you keep straight ahead and the next time it splits, you keep left ⑧. Go past a cottage (property of the Swedish Armed Forces), where you will find a campfire site and benches. Take the opportunity to take a detour to the viewing tower ⑨. Soon you will pass building foundations and a well in the middle of the forest. This was once the site of a home. Per Johan Backman, his wife and four children lived here around the turn of the 19th century. They lived here for about eight years but then moved, with their house, to Hindersön. Turn left at the intersection towards Gammelhamnen. Now, the trail goes through beautiful old-growth forest ⑩. A couple of hundred metres ahead lies Kluntgubben, the Kluntarna Man, whose face in the granite rock is an obvious photo opportunity ⑪. As you continue, you will pass a mere on your right side. The mere is actually the site of the island's old fishing harbour, Gammelhamnen. Here's where the boats docked after returning from the sea and you can still see the remains of net drying racks along the trail ⑫. We recommend going up on the cliff to the left, where you will find a rest stop with tables and benches. From the cliff you have a view over Strömmingsvarpsviken and in the northeast you can catch a glimpse of Småskären. Further ahead, a foot-bridge will take you across a narrow swamp. That is the old inlet to Gammelhamnen. Cross the dry heath. Follow the markings of the former shoreline straight ahead. The trail is somewhat difficult to see but runs to the left of the private sauna and to the right of the fishing camp. We recommend the following detours: ⑬ The beautiful sandy beach. ⑭ Out on the cliffs on the cape with black lava corridors. From the cliffs you can see the islet, Lillbjörnen to the south, with its colony of Black guillemots, European herring gulls and lesser black-backed gulls. ⑮ To the picturesque fishing camp. The camp has primarily been used by farmers from Hindersön. They moved here as the ice broke in spring and left as it settled again. ⑯ Here you will find an information sign for the nature reserve and a sign reading "Storviken 1.3 km". Follow the trail north back to the guest harbour. The forest that lines the trail is an absolute delight for anyone who likes old trees and the flora of old-growth forest. Here you can find rare wood mushrooms such as Phellinidium ferrugineofuscum and Fomitopsis rosea, as well as beautiful fields of peat moss on pine heaths. Some distance into the forest you will pass an enchanting forest mere. The Red-throated Diver breeds here, so pass quietly without disturbing. As you can see the water of Storviken between the alders and rowans, you just have a short way left back to the guest harbour.

**TIPS:** To avoid going around all of Kråkskäret (which is somewhat more difficult than the long route), follow the "Kråkskärslingan" sign behind the nature exhibition and turn left, straight to Kråkskärsviken. The trail has orange markings.

**INFO:** Kluntarna is a nature reserve consisting of nine islands. Tour boats go here in the summer/autumn and cottages are available to rent all year round.

## 6. SMÅSKÄR - RICH HISTORY, UNTOUCHED ENVIRONMENT • 6 km

Småskär has the highest number of holiday homes in the outer Luleå archipelago, about 120. Even so, the environment has remained largely untouched, with a rich bird life in the forests and lakes. The island is a popular destination amongst boaters. Difficulty: **EASY**

This was a lively place in the late 19th century. In the 1860's, a bathing hotel was built on Småskären and the place was marketed as a health resort. However, it was no success and in 1887 the building was moved to Luleå. Now, only its foundations remain.

**THE SMÅSKÄR NATURE TRAIL** Start at the large noticeboard above the right-hand campfire site. The trail goes north between the rental cottages and the forest. It's well walked but has no signage. After 100 metres the trail leads out over open, rocky ground. ① At the top of the hill lies a rest stop with tables and benches. 9,000 years ago, the inland ice receded away from here and left polished rock formations behind. Striations show the direction of the ice. The trail continues behind the rest stops, passing a number of holiday cottages to your left. ② By a shingle field, there's a detour to the left, out towards the sea. Here you will also find a nice rest stop with tables and an extensive view. The islands on the other side of the water, Mjoön and Smulterskäret together with a number of small islands and shallows, form both a bird protection area and a nature reserve. The trail continues along the edge of the shingle field. Soon you will pass a couple more cottages, before the trail continues over a footbridge, through lush, boggy spruce forest ③. Continue up to the lake, Idvikstjärnen on your right side. This is a breeding site for the red-throated diver, Eurasian teal and common goldeneye. The trail splits at the end of the lake. The right route leads through the most beautiful surroundings and meets another trail by a really large pine. ④ The left route leads to Badviken, one of Småskär's best bathing spots. Continue south towards the chapel. The trail cuts through an old pine forest, with century-old pines. ⑤ To your left you can see holiday cottages along Skatamarks-



viken and soon a mere to your right - Rudtjärnen (named after the Crucian carp, ruda in Swedish). The mere lies higher than the trail and is barely noticeable. It's a favourite spot for the Black-throated loon, cranes sometimes breed in the beach forest and there are white water-lilies out on the water ⑥. Here you will meet the wide trail going from Bullerhamnen to the chapel. Follow it to the left (eastward) to Kyrkviken ⑦. This is the island's fishing camp, where the residents of Luleå used to fish for herring in summer. On the heath around the chapel, amongst the charming cottages and boathouses, there are plenty of ancient remains, stone circles, foundation remains and remains of net drying racks. Now follow the trail you came along back to the intersection. Here, you go straight ahead. Soon, you will see holiday cottages to your left, along Bolinsviken ⑧. As you near the harbour you can, if you look hard enough, spot the overgrown foundations of the old bathing resort.

**TIPS:** The chapel on Småskär is the oldest in the Luleå archipelago, built 1710-1730. In summer, church services are normally held in July. Småskär has nice bathing beaches, both at Klubbjärden to the north and Avaviken to the south.

**INFO:** Småskär, originally known as Rammelholmen, was given to the city's burghers by Queen Christina in 1652. The island served as an important fishing camp well into the 20th century. Its name, meaning little islets, comes from the fact that the island consisted of many smaller islands that have merged due to land uplift. The Kyrkviken fishing camp is thought to have been established in the 16th century.



Photo: Karin Åberg

Amongst boathouses in Kyrkviken.

## 7. ORCHIDS AND A VIEW OF THE SEA • 4 km



Jämtön is no longer an island, land uplift has made it part of the mainland, however, the archipelago is still nearby. Jämtön continues from the E4 about 10 kilometers south towards the sea. At Yttre Kvarnträsket you can see the Lady's Slipper orchid blossoming around midsummer.

Difficulty: **EASY**

9 kilometers from the E4 you turn left onto a forest road, Krankilvägen. An information sign will show that you're in the right place. After about 200 m you will see a sign reading "naturstig" ("nature trail") to your left. You can park here. Follow the trail up to a mast, to the left above the mast you will see trail markings: poles with white-painted tips. There are plenty of information signs that will tell you more about the environment surrounding the trail. You will soon see a shingle field, Bläsberget, to your left ①. If you go up there, there's a superb view of the sea. To the south you can see Tirstersöarna and to the west, Avasladan and Rånefjärden. There is no trail on this shingle field so be careful. Go back to the trail and follow it for about another kilometre and you will reach Yttre Kvarnträsket and the orchid locale ②. Here, no fewer than eleven species of orchid grow, flowering at different times from May to August. The trail markings are now red and lead up to Kvarnträskkojan, a proper rest cabin with tables, benches, a firewood storage shed and a wood-burning stove. There

is a campfire site outside. On your way back you can choose to make a left by the sign for "Kronkilvägen". This trail goes up across a ridge and back to the forest road. The trail markings are sparser here but the trail is clearly visible. After 1.5 kilometers along the forest road you will be back at the beginning of the nature trail.



From here we can see the sea to the south and Rånefjärden to the west.



The Lady's Slipper orchid blossoms around midsummer.

**TIPS:** If you continue south on Rörbäcksvägen you will reach the Rörbäck campsite and sea bath. Here you will find a lovely beach, mini golf, a café, kiosk, a caravan site and cottages.

[facebook.com/rorbackshavsbadcamping](https://www.facebook.com/rorbackshavsbadcamping). Metträsket, a small fishing lake where rainbow trout has been introduced, lies 3 kilometers northeast of Jämtön. Fishing licence is needed. You will also find a wind shelter and campfire sites.

**INFO:** Orchids are perennial flowers in a family of monocot plants, related to asparagus. The Orchidaceae family is one of the largest plant families on Earth with almost 800 genera and approximately 30,000 species. 44 species have been found in Sweden. All Swedish orchids are protected, throughout the whole country.

## 8. ANCIENT REMAINS AND BEAVERS AT VITÅN • 12 km

A hike along the small, overflowing forest river with beaver lodges and ancient remains. Prepare to make a bit of an effort and in return you will get to experience a beautiful, varied, natural and cultural environment. You can also choose to hike shorter sections of the trail.

Difficulty: **INTERMEDIATE/DIFFICULT**

The river Vitån is the longest river in the municipality, about half of the 100 kilometers forest river runs within the boundaries of the municipality. In some places it winds its way quietly and in others it thunders ahead towards Vitåfjärden and the sea. In order to get here you drive to Vitå and continue towards Avafors. At the sign for "Masugnsruin", turn left onto the forest road. After 1 kilometer you will reach a car park by the Avafors bruk (Avafors Mill) site of ancient remains. In the area you will find building foundations, slag heaps and the ruins of an old blast furnace. In early summer, the ground is covered in meadow flowers. The trail markings are red-painted blocks, nailed to the trees. The first kilometers pass through birch and aspen forest. There are plenty of beavers here and the trees they have cut down can be seen everywhere. Sometimes they fall across the trail, creating obstacles for hikers. Look out over the beach to spot beaver lodges. You will also pass a couple of small areas where Cortorta pines have been planted, a fast-growing, American species that hasn't fared very well here. They have snapped off and lie littered like pick-up sticks in the forest. At Storliden, about halfway along the trail, you will find a wind shelter and a campfire site on a small height above the river. Here, a little forest road will take you back up to the main road, if you wish to have a shorter hike. From this point, spruce and pine forest takes over and you leave beaver country. The trail will pass a couple of steep brook ravines but from then on the hike will become easier.



After about 5 km there is another wind shelter, in a clearing some distance away from the river. You will then pass the rippling little brook, Persöbäcken. When you arrive at a flat, sparse, pine forest you can make small detours down to the river: in some places, the river has dug deep into the alluvial deposits and shaped steep, sandy banks. Near Vitåfors you will find another wind shelter, beautifully located a few metres from the water's edge. Here, you are just 1 km away from the Vitåfors car park.



Wood cranesbills by Vitån.



The industrious beavers leave traces.

**TIPS:** It's a good idea to bring two cars. Park one in Vitåfors and you won't have to walk all the way back. There are more hiking trails in the Vitådalen valley. The Bäverstigen trail is 2 kilometers and starts by the bathing beach next to Storåbron in Vitåfors. Vitå Community House is the starting point for a 4 kilometers walking trail to Lake Sladan.

**INFO:** The blast furnace at Avafors bruk was completed in 1828. There, iron was produced using ore from Gällivare. The pig iron was transported to the smelting works at Vitåfors bruk where it was processed into bar iron and iron blanks. During the early iron mill period in Norrbotten County, smelting works and furnaces were built in the river valleys. Several building remains can be found at Selets bruk, Melderstein, Strömsund, Karlsvik and Altappen. Beavers live near waters where they build their lodges with branches, twigs and silt. They are nocturnal and can gnaw off a tree with a 50 cm diameter overnight. When the beaver fells large trees it is after the thin branches at the top. If the tree is large, the beaver will gnaw through about 2/3 of the trunk and then wait for it to fall. The beaver eats leaves, bark, herbs and aquatic plants.

## 9. MAGNIFICENT BÄLINGEBERGET • 4 km/8 km

Bälingeberget rises 139 m above sea level, which is relatively high on the flat Swedish Lapland coast. This means a nice view of the river, the forest and the lake. The mountain is a popular destination and it is easy to see why. Difficulty: **MEDIUM**

There are several trails and they are marked with orange/red rings on tree trunks and rocks. We will give you two suggestions but you can of course find your own favourite spot. The rocky environment is inviting and easy to hike. From the car park you follow the wide trail going uphill. It will continue uphill for about one kilometre but it's not steep. When the trail splits for the first time, keep going straight ahead.

**THE WESTERN ROUTE** When the trail splits again, turn right. Follow the trail westward, after about one kilometre it turns to the southeast and offers a light hike across rocky terrain with a view of the lake, Bälingeträsket and the southern villages, Måttisund, Alvik and Antnäs. When you reach the campfire site ① you can continue down towards the rock shelves (the markings here have become bleached), some distance to the right you will see an overhanging rock, forming a roof over small cave ②. Just southeast of there lies an open cave - vertical rocks on three sides provide shelter from the wind - a perfect place to stop and rest. Go back up to the trail above the cave and follow it north, across the shingle field ③, now with a view of the river, back to the car park.

**THE EASTERN ROUTE** Soon, the trail splits again and the first large shingle field spreads out in front of you ③. A pavement of rocks forms a trail across the field - follow it. Once you are across, the next section is a rocky path to the next shingle field. There, the trail turns right and goes around the shingle field. You can of course cross this field too but it's a bit trickier. If you do, keep right on the other side and you will find the trail again. Keep going down towards the rock shelves, to the caves described in the section on the western route. Then go back up to the trail and follow it to the southeast.

After about a kilometre you will reach a campfire site. Now you can choose between turning left (north) and you will soon be back on the first, wider trail, via another rest stop - or if you would like a longer hike, continue to the Vikberget rest cabin. This additional leg offers even more smooth rock faces and a beautiful view. In the dip between Bälingeberget and Vikberget you will be walking through a short stretch of leafy forest before you reach more rocky terrain.



View of the Lule River, Gammelstad, Sunderbyn and Avan.

Photo: Gunvor Ekström



**TIPS:** At [lansstyrelsen.se](http://lansstyrelsen.se) you can read more about the nature reserve. Bring some firewood if you want to ensure being able to make a fire. The most popular campfire sites may be out of firewood and gathering wood inside the nature reserve is prohibited. A shorter hike on Bälingeberget is also highly rewarding. Even the nearest rest stop offers some views.

**INFO:** The nature reserve measures 2.8 m<sup>2</sup> and was established in 1967. When the inland ice sheet melted, 10,000 years ago, the sea was 230 metres higher than it is today. Over time, Bälingeberget's peak became a small island. Over millennia, the island grew into a mountain, whilst waves crashed against the beaches. The higher parts of the mountain have vast fields of shingle and water-sorted gravel, formed during that time. Sparse pine forests grow on the rocky terrain, shaped by the sea - some of the oldest trees are up to 400 years old. Only lichens grow in the shingle fields, all soil has been washed further down the slopes. In the summer of 2014 a fire raged on Bälingeberget. Traces of the fire are still apparent.

## 10. WALKS IN LULEÅ

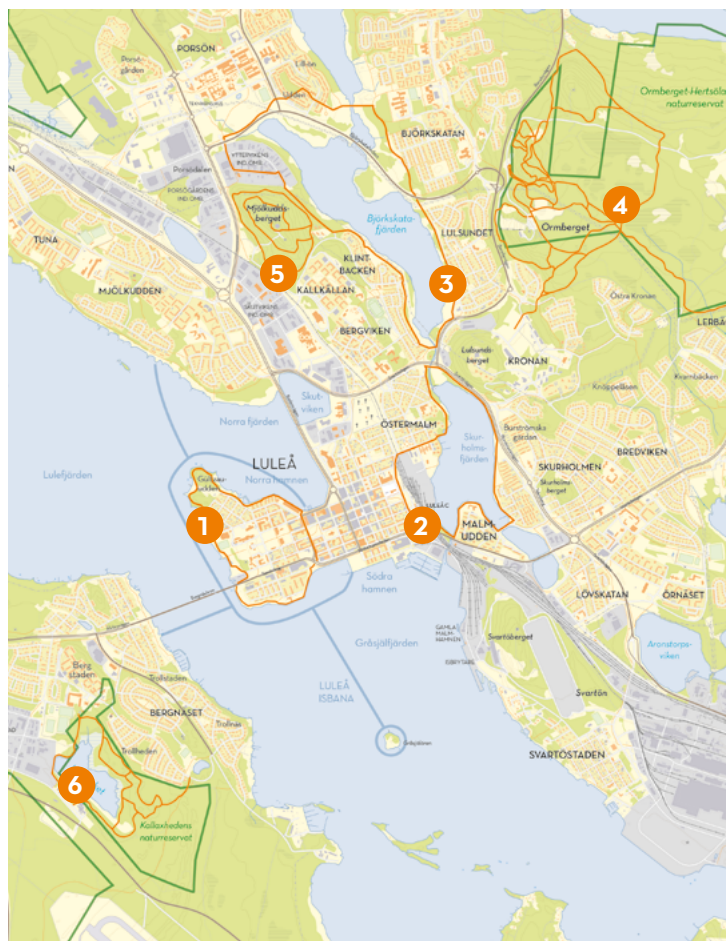
If you would like to go for a walk or jog near the city, there are nice walking paths in and around central Luleå. Here are a few suggestions:

- 1. GÜLTZAUDDEN** The trail around "Udden" and across the city peninsula is 4 km. Nice trails just by the water's edge, past the bathing beach, the harbour, the Governor's Residence and green areas.
- 2. SKURHOLMSFJÄRDEN** Going past the pleasant Lulsundskanalen channel, the mini golf course and the park on the eastern side of the water. 5 kilometers.
- 3. BJÖRKS KATAFJÄRDEN** Here you will pass Lulsundsbadet, Björkskatan, Porsön and Klintbacken, 7 kilometers.
- 4. ORMBERGETS FRILUFTSOMRÅDE** Here you will find running trails, ranging from 1.7 to 10 kilometers. There are also trails for elite runners with steep slopes, ranging between 1-4 kilometers. Wind shelters, campfire sites and a lunch restaurant can be found in the area. Trail maps available online: [lulea.se](http://lulea.se)
- 5. MJÖLKUDDSBERGET** Two different routes around the mountain as well as a trail leading to the summit. The running trail is 2.5 kilometers. Several wind shelters are available.
- 6. HÖTRÄSKET** The Kallaxheden nature reserve has both walking and running trails across a beautiful pine heath around Lake Höträsket. The distance around the lake is 3 kilometers.



The bathing beach on Gültzaudden in central Luleå.

Photo: Fredrik Broman



# THE RIGHT OF PUBLIC ACCESS

**DO NOT DISTURB, DO NOT DAMAGE** In Sweden, we are allowed to move freely in our natural environments. We are allowed to pick flowers, berries, and mushrooms. We are allowed to bathe, pitch tents, hike, cycle, travel by boat, set up campfires and do all other things that are part of outdoor living. The right of public access (Allemansrätten) is a privilege and a freedom that relies upon us being careful and treating our natural surroundings with respect. Causing harm to animals, plants or the environment is prohibited and we must treat landowners and other people who are enjoying our great outdoors with respect.

**SPECIAL RESTRICTIONS** Naturally, you may not pick protected plant species. Nature reserves and national parks often have special restrictions which limit the right of public access. There may also be regulations governing, for instance speed limits, water skiing and leashing of dogs. Motorised vehicles may not be used on bare ground, off-road.

**BIRD PROTECTION AREAS** In the archipelago there are bird protection areas where disembarkation is prohibited during part of the year, normally between May 1 and August 1.

**FISHING** The sea is open to fishing but there are rules on how, when and what you are allowed to fish. Lakes and rivers require fishing licenses.

**THE ELK HUNTING SEASON** in Luleå municipality is September 1 - January 31. The right of public access applies - everyone is allowed to visit the forest. Sometimes the hunting teams put up signs to inform that hunting is going on - elks may come rushing, shots are fired and dogs bark. As always, it is important to show consideration, do not disturb dogs or game.



Feel free to pick wild strawberries and other berries.

## READ MORE:

Nature reserves: [lansstyrelsen.se](http://lansstyrelsen.se)  
The right of public access: [naturvardsverket.se](http://naturvardsverket.se)  
Fishing rules: [fiskekort.se](http://fiskekort.se)



A Red-throated Diver and its chick.

# TRACES IN THE ENVIRONMENT

**REMAINS OF NET DRYING RACKS** Net drying racks, poles where fishing nets used to be hung to dry. Old nets were made of linen and had to dry daily to prevent rotting. Remains of net drying racks are considered listed monuments and must not be damaged.

**SHINGLE FIELDS** Former beaches where polished, rounded rocks have been flooded by the sea, removing all soil and humus. Due to land uplift they are now found far away from the coast, some even on mountainsides.

**LABYRINTHS** Rock labyrinths are common throughout the Bothnian archipelago. They are often found on shingle slopes and thus well preserved. You can't get lost in these labyrinths. There's only one way, winding lap after lap until you reach the centre and then go back out the same way. The people living here used to walk the labyrinths to enhance fishing luck and favourable winds. Sometimes children were assigned the task of walking the labyrinths whilst the men prepared the nets for fishing. There are more than 300 labyrinths in Sweden. A third of these are found in the Bothnian archipelago and they are particularly common in the Haparanda archipelago. Many were built in the 18th and 19th centuries but the oldest are from the 14th century. Labyrinths are considered listed monuments and must not be damaged.



Shingles



Labyrinth in the archipelago.

**LAND UPLIFT** The land keeps rising by about 9 mm per year and there are traces of the last inland ice sheet everywhere. Rock faces on islands and mountain peaks were polished by the ice. The ground is often covered in moraine, left behind by the ice. Sometimes, the moraine is shaped in elongated hills following the direction of the receding ice, so called dumlines. Sometimes these were shaped on the edge of the ice and those are called terminal moraines. Ridges, deltas and clay soils were also created by the ice.

**FOUNDATION REMAINS** Foundation stones in the ground, remains of a simple, ancient dwelling, probably a temporary one.

# NATURE GUIDE • THE UNIQUE CONDITIONS IN NORRBOTTEN



Thomas Öberg - author, photographer and expert on the natural environment of Swedish Lapland.

The brackish water, climate, land uplift and rock composition of the Gulf of Bothnia, creates conditions for a unique, varied plant life. Thomas Öberg writes, photographs and lectures on nature and often highlights connections both major and minor between the environment, the plants, the animals and us humans. He wants to show things that are not obvious, yet still are the key to the life we can see around us. Read on for a couple of Thomas' tips on birds and plants to look for during your hikes.

**THE ARCHIPELAGO** The rare Red-throated Diver breeds on the small lakes of the archipelago. They have food nearby - herring in the sea. The divers call eerily at night. Sea-buckthorn grows along the weathered beaches, risen from the sea due to land uplift. The berries are picked in late autumn, after freezing. They are packed with vitamin C.

**HERTSÖLANDET** If you are lucky, you can hear the thin whistle of the Hazel Grouse. The speckled bird is skilled at hiding amongst old spruce trees. On the mire you will find rows of cranberries. The tasty berries can be picked one by one with cold fingers after the first frost. Cranberry jam is delicious.

**GAMMELSTADSVIKEN** The Great Crested Grebe builds a floating nest on the lake. They call loudly and show their proud collars. The grebes dive skillfully after little fish. On old overgrown farmland, the pink flowers of the Arctic Raspberry turn into red berries. The Arctic Raspberry is one of our most aromatic berries, full of rich, sweet flavours. However, cleaning them takes patience.



Hazel Grouse.



Cranberries.



Arctic Raspberries.



## CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT

**GOOD SHOES** are important, they must be sturdy and waterproof. All our trails may contain wet sections. Other than that, dress according to the weather. Bring additional clothing to wear during breaks. A map and binoculars improve the experience but are not necessary.

**DRINKING WATER** is a must.

**FOOD** tastes even better outside and is a welcome addition to any hike. Pack something ready to eat or use the campfire sites to cook. There is often firewood on location but not always. Most petrol stations sell firewood.



Suovas (lightly smoked reindeer meat) and vegetables for lunch.



Time for fika in the sun.



Sawing firewood sparks your appetite.

## A BITE TO EAT ALONG THE WAY

**KAFÉ FÄGNAN, GAMMELSTADS KYRKSTAD:** At the Open-air museum Hägnan, a log farmhouse from the 18th century, you will find homemade pastries, tasty salads and sweet or savoury waffles.

**BÄLINGE:** The Bälänge farm is an organic farm with a café and their own farm shop, specialising in local, environmentally friendly items. You can meet the animals on the farm and old country breeds such as Lapland Goats, Linderöd Pigs, Nordland Horses, Hälsinge Sheep and Bjurholm Chickens.

**RÅNEÅ:** The summer café at the Råneå Boating Association's cottage, Kängsö Harbour. In town, you will find a grocery store, a petrol station and restaurants.

**PORSÖN:** Luleå's award winning science centre, Teknikens Hus, also has a restaurant and a café. On campus you will also find Unik Café, serving lunches, smoothies, sunday brunches and more.

**ERSNÄS:** In the heart of the village lies Ralph Lundstengården, a manor dating back to the 16th century, currently housing a restaurant as well as banquet and conferencing facilities.



Outside the popular Kafé Fägnan on a summer's day.

## RENT A COTTAGE

**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. There are also two saunas here. During summer season, there are hosts and a café.

**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 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)



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).



## GUIDED TOURS AND 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

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

### RÅNEÅ LIBRARY/INFOPOINT

Västerlångvägen 2, Råneå  
0920-45 30 00

**INFO POINTS** 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).

READ MORE ABOUT LULEÅ:

[visitlulea.se](http://visitlulea.se) | [lulea.se](http://lulea.se) | [swedishlapland.com](http://swedishlapland.com)

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