

ALONG THE GÖTA CANAL

Cruise on the Göta Canal from Gothenburg to Stockholm
6 nights / 7 days



Enjoy a four day cruise on the most spectacular waterway in Sweden and one of the foremost civil engineering achievements in the world – The Göta Canal. The construction of the canal started in 1810 and was finished in 1832. During the cruise you will pass no fewer than 66 locks and cruise on the two biggest lakes in Sweden, Lake Vänern and Lake Vättern. This journey is one of the most beautiful and unforgettable ways of travelling from Gothenburg on the west coast to Stockholm on the east coast.

Day 01: Arrival in Gothenburg

Arrival in Gothenburg according to own itinerary. Gothenburg is Sweden's second largest city and is characterised by international style, local creativity and a natural, relaxed charm. It has the pulse of a big city, cultural experiences, beautiful countryside and shopping, all within comfortable walking distance. We recommend a sightseeing tour by bus or the Paddan open top sightseeing boats.

Accommodation at Clarion Collection Hotel Odin

Day 02:**Cruise**

Breakfast at the hotel. Today you will start your adventure on the Göta Canal. Your journey starts in the morning from the Packhus area. Step onboard the almost 100 year old ship M/S Juno built in Motala 1874. The standard of the ship is of course a bit old fashion but still nostalgically luxurios. The cabins are all tastefully fitted with brass details and attractive textiles. They are small and cosy, giving an impression of how people once travelled. The size is comparable to a smaller sleeping compartment on a train, but unlike the train, most guests are only in the cabin while sleeping. All cabins are on the outside and above the waterline, giving a view of the world passing by. Today's itinerary:

13.15-13.30 Lilla Edet

The lock at Lilla Edet, built in 1916, is the first lock on our journey. The original lock was opened in 1607 and was the first lock in Sweden.

14.45-15.30 Trollhättan locks

The impressive lock staircase at Trollhättan consists of four locks, and has a total drop of 32 metres. Of the three parallel lock systems here, only the biggest one (from 1916) is still in use.

15.30-17.00 Trollhättan

The Trollhättan Canal Museum is located in a storehouse from 1893. Learn more about the fascinating history of the Trollhätte Canal through the interesting exhibition and film shown here. You can also take a walk through the beautiful old lock area.

18.00 Vänersborg

This is the last town before we head out into Lake Vänern. The "Brinkebergskulle" lock is just before Vänersborg.

18.30-03.00 Lake Vänern

44 metres above sea level. Sweden's largest lake and the third largest lake in Europe, after the Ladoga and Onega lakes in Russia.

22.45 Läckö Castle

The Castle was built in 1298 as a bishop's residence. Its golden age was during the reign of Magnus Gabriel de la Gardie, who transformed it into a baroque castle in 1652.

Overnight onboard in Category B cabin**Day 03:****Cruise**

Breakfast onboard. Today's itinerary:

03.00-04.30 Sjötorp

Here we enter the first of the 58 narrow locks on the Göta Canal. At Sjötorp we have a set of eight locks and also the remains of some old shipyards.

06.10-08.00 Godhögen-Hajstorp övre

We pass a lock system consisting of four locks in beautiful surroundings. In 1822 the western section of the Göta Canal was inaugurated at Hajstorp. For "early birds" walking is possible from Godhögen to Hajstorp, app. 1.5 km.

09.00 Töreboda

The railway line between Stockholm and Gothenburg crosses the canal here. Töreboda also proudly presents Sweden's smallest ferry, "Lina", which travels back and forth across the Göta Canal.

11.20 The Berg Canal/the Obelisk

An obelisk marks the highest point (91.5 metres above sea level) of the canal. This part of the canal is called the Berg Canal and originally had a sharp bend which was straightened in 1930-33.

11.50 Tåtorp

One of the canal's two hand-operated locks is found at Tåtorp.

11.50-14.00 Lake Viken

The beautiful Lake Viken (91.8 metres above sea level) serves as a water reservoir for the western section of the Göta Canal.

13.00-14.00 The Spetsnäs Canal/Billströmmen

We steer through two narrow, wood-lined passages and small lakes full of water lilies.

13.50-14.00 Forsvik

Forsvik has a very interesting industrial history. The lock, built in 1813, is the oldest one in the canal. The impressive iron bridge dates from the same year. In the lock we are sometimes greeted with songs and flowers by the Kindbom family, a religious group. From here on we will be going downwards!

14.50-17.00 Karlsborg Fortress

We visit Karlsborg Fortress, initiated by Baltzar von Platen and built 1819-1909. The guided tour is a journey through time and space, full of surprises and special effects.

17.00-19.00 Lake Vättern

89 metres above sea level. Sweden's second largest lake.

19.00 Arr. Motala

It was Baltzar von Platen who drew up the plans for Motala, and today it is called "the Capital of the Göta Canal". In 1822 an engineering works, Motala Werkstad, was established here to serve the Göta Canal and is today considered to be the cradle of Swedish industry. Here you also find the head office of the Göta Canal Company, responsible for operation and maintenance. We visit the Motor Museum, with its large exhibition of antique cars and motorcycles in authentic surroundings, collection of radios, toys, household appliances and more. You can also walk to see Baltzar von Platen's grave, about 1 km along the left side of the canal. Overnight stop

Overnight onboard in Category B cabin

Day 04:**Cruise**

Breakfast onboard. Today's itinerary:

04.30 Dep. Motala**05.30-06.00 Borensnult**

Lock staircase of five locks where you might hear the nightingale sing.

06.00-07.00 Lake Boren

73 metres above sea level.

07.00-07.10 Borensberg

Borensberg has another of the canal's hand-operated locks, after which we see the well-known Göta Hotel from 1908. Just past the hotel there is a small gazebo leaning out over a sharp bend in the canal, known as the "Helmsman's Horror".

07.30 Kungs Norrby, aqueduct

The aqueduct at Kungs Norrby was built in 1993 and leads over the national route 36.

10.10 Ljungsbro, aqueduct

We pass the second aqueduct on our journey. This one was built in 1970.

10.30 Berg (Heda)

We start our descent in the lock system of Berg (15 locks) towards Lake Roxen.

The convent of Vreta dates from about 1100 and was the first nunnery in Sweden. Its importance was later superseded by the convent founded by Saint Bridget (St. Birgitta) at Vadstena. The old convent church at Vreta is one of Sweden's most interesting, offering many medieval treasures. Today, it is used as a parish church and is therefore not always open to visitors. The tour guide will take us on a walk (app. 3 km, partly uneven) to see the church and the remains of the convent. As an alternative you can walk along the canal or take a swim in Lake Roxen.

12.00-13.00 Berg (Carl-Johan)

The Carl-Johan lock staircase is the longest in the canal with seven connected locks. Here we board the ship again before steering out on the lake.

13.00-15.00 Lake Roxen

33 metres above sea level.

15.00 Norsholm lock

Here the canal crosses the main railway line between Stockholm and Malmö.

16.45-17.15 Lake Asplången

27 metres above sea level.

18.40-19.45 Carlsborg–Mariehov–Duvkullen

At the lock Carlsborg Övre we have the first of the eight locks taking us down to Söderköping.

20.00-21.00 Söderköping

The idyllic town Söderköping was founded in the early 1200s and was very important during the Hanseatic period. The town also has a long and interesting history as a spa. Söderköping is yours to explore on your own. Don't forget to try the famous ice cream!

22.20 Mem

Passing through the last narrow lock before Slätbaken, an inlet of the Baltic, we leave the Göta Canal. On 26th September 1832, the Göta Canal was inaugurated at Mem amid great pomp and circumstance in the presence of King Karl XIV Johan and his family.

22.20-07.15 The Baltic Sea

We cross open water for a short bit and then weave through the archipelago in the early morning light.

Overnight onboard in Category B cabin

Day 05**Cruise - Arrival in Stockholm**

Breakfast onboard. Today's itinerary:

07.15-07.25 Södertälje

Södertälje lock, 135 metres long, is the largest lock in Scandinavia.

07.25-13.50 Lake Mälaren

0.3 metres above sea level. Sweden's third largest lake.

09.00-11.00 The Viking community of Birka

The Viking community of Birka on the island of Björkö is often regarded as Sweden's first town. The town was then an important harbour for international shipping and trade. It was in use for about 250 years and was abandoned before the year 1000. Birka features on UNESCO'S World Heritage list. The archaeologists on the island show us around (app. 3 km, uneven terrain). We also visit the museum.

12.45 Drottningholm Castle

Drottningholm Castle, home of the Royal family since 1981, is also found on the World Heritage list. We pass the castle if time admits.

14.00 Hammarby lock

The final lock on our journey delivers us from Lake Mälaren into Saltsjön.

14.30 Arr. Stockholm, Skeppsbrokajen

Our cruise ends at Skeppsbrokajen 103, in the Old Town of Stockholm.

Afternoon of leisure to explore Stockholm. The city is built on 14 islands and you are never far from the water. Well-preserved medieval buildings stand alongside modern architecture, and just outside the city, the archipelago of 24 000 islands are waiting to be explored.

Accommodation at Clarion hotel Stockholm**Day 06****Stockholm**

Breakfast at the hotel. Full day of leisure in Stockholm. Sights of interest are the Vasa Museum, Skansen Open Air Museum, City Hall, the Old Town (Gamla Stan) and much more. We also recommend a sightseeing tour by bus or boat.

Accommodation at Clarion hotel Stockholm**Day 07****Departure**

Breakfast at the hotel. Departure according to own itinerary.

- End of Services -

Services included:

- 3 nights hotel accommodation in good tourist class hotels
- 3 nights accommodation in Category B cabin
- Full board onboard cruise ship, 3 x breakfast, 4 x 2-course lunch, 3 x 3-course dinner

Departures:

01.06.2012, 11.06.2012, 20.06.2012, 07.08.2012, 16.08.2012, 25.08.2012

Departures:

28.06.2012, 07.07.2012, 14.07.2012, 22.07.2012, 30.07.2012