



# **WOLVES, MOOSE & BEAVERS IN THE FORESTS OF CENTRAL SWEDEN**

*This is a draft for Pre-Summit adventure at ATWS 2019*



**Join this 4-day / 3 nights trip with full focus on Sweden's nature and wildlife. Watch for moose, beavers and spend a night out in a wolf territory with the chance to hear wolves howl at night.**

Our excursions involve various walking, driving and boating excursions which means you will get to spend a lot of time out in nature. The evenings offer the best chances to watch for wildlife. That's when most animals become active and our chances to see them is at its best. During daytime we go for interesting hikes. But there will also be time to just relax, go for a swim or a hike on your own.

On two of the nights our guides will bring you to see wild animals like moose and beavers. Remember that these are wild animals, so encounters are never guaranteed, although we see them on most tours, which means you will have almost guaranteed sightings of these animals.

Each day there will be some time off so that you can relax at the hotel, use the wifi, hang out in the garden or at the spa. There are also good opportunities for walking and wild swimming.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Watch for moose, beavers and track wolves
- Go by boat to watch for beavers
- Forage for mushrooms and learn some basic bushcraft techniques
- Stay two nights at Färna herrgård, and one night in rustic forest huts
- Local guides and small groups (max 7 persons) for a more genuine experience

## WHERE IS THIS?

If you're into nature and wildlife adventures or photography, then Västmanland county in Central Sweden is a great place to visit. In fact, the forests surrounding Skinnskatteberg has proven to be one of the best areas in Sweden to watch and experience moose, beavers and wolves among other wildlife animals like roe deer, mountain hare wolf and even lynx. And this is just two hours from Stockholm.

## ACCOMMODATION

**You will spend two nights at Färna Manor & Spa**, a hotel located between two beautiful lakes and surrounded by the vast Bergslagen forests. Here you will sleep comfortably between the excursions and enjoy gourmet meals made from locally produced and organic ingredients. The restaurant is

certified by Swedish organic label KRAV, slow food inspired and listed as one of Sweden's foremost restaurants by the White Guide.

This Manor house was built in 1757. The main building includes a restaurant, bar, lounges and is surrounded by a lovely garden. They offer 60 rooms, doubles and singles, in total 100 beds distributed over our six wings. 8 single rooms are situated in the main building. Family rooms may also be available.

**You will spend one night at Kolarbyn Ecolodge**, also called *Sweden's most primitive hotel*. There will be no electricity, no showers, nothing fancy at all, just natural mysteriousness. And that is precisely why you are going to love this place.

As you arrive at Kolarbyn, you will see lots of trees, more trees and even more trees. You are in the forest and everything is green. But if you look closer you will soon find that in between all trees are twelve well camouflaged little cabins. All covered in mud and grass. Bilberries and mushrooms grow wild on their roofs. As natural as it can be. An ecolodge in its true sense. Some guests have even called them mud-holes or hobbit houses. We simply call them forest huts.

Each forest hut has two beds and a fire place. Wooden beds. No mattress. But with layers of insulated air-mats and a topping of cosy sheep skin rugs. It gets pretty comfortable, or even soft. Roll out your sleeping bag. Lay down on your back. Close your eyes. Sleep like a baby!

There are also two nice little toilet sheds. Flush the toilets with soil. Wash your hands with water from the stream and some environmental friendly soap.

# ITINERARY

## Day 1 Boat trip in search for beavers

Meet our guide at Stockholm Arlanda airport for the two hour transfer to Skinnskatteberg. We arrive at our hotel in Färna where we are welcomed by our host Sofie. We sit down for a welcome coffee and snacks in the restaurant. Take some time to truly arrive, enjoy the fresh air or go for a walk in the surrounding garden and forest.

Early dinner at Färna herrgård.

On this first evening we will head out to search for beavers. We travel together to a lake which has proven to be ideal for watching beavers in their natural habitat. We use small boats with silent electric motors to increase our chances to see beavers up close. Other wildlife seen around this lake are bats, Moose, Roe deer, Red fox, Badger, Wild boar, Mink, Common crane, Kingfisher, Grey heron, Black throated diver and Tawny owl.

We return to Färna herrgård late at night.

## Day 2 Forage for mushrooms & wolves

After a late breakfast we head out into the nearby forest on foot to forage for edible mushrooms and berries. Autumn chantarelles, Penny buns, Bilberries and Lingonberries. During August and September the forest floor is literally covered in berries and mushrooms of all kinds.

Our mushroom expert Hellen will show us how to find mushrooms, which ones are edible and which ones are the tastiest. When we are happy with our catch we find a suitable place to light a camp fire. We fry the mushrooms in butter and eat them with bread and coffee. If you wanna try, we can also squeeze a raw juice of the berries and mix it with honey into a healthy drink.

*"One of the most wonderful parts of this trip was walking off-trail in the forest. I can't stop thinking about that thick carpet of moss, lichens, plants, berries, fungi and all the different shapes and colours. It was one of the most beautiful revelations I have ever had."*

In the afternoon we will head out to a nearby forest where a family of wolves keep their territory. Led by a wolf tracker we will search for paw prints, droppings, killed prey and other tracks that can prove that wolves are around.

These forests are also exceptionally good for Moose watching and we are proud to say that we have seen Moose on almost all tours since 2003. Our guides share their skills of tracking moose as we search for hoof prints, fresh droppings and bite marks. We will be out for a combination of

hiking and driving, although most moose are seen while driving. We stop for an outdoor evening meal served by a camp fire overlooking a small forest lake.

We light a camp fire and enjoy an outdoor evening meal. As night falls we go closer to the wolves to increase our chances of hearing them howl. We always stay at a respectful distance as we don't want to disturb the wolves. It is of course in our interest that the wolves do not move to another area. Our guides are experienced and know how to handle any situation that may occur.

During the evening you must be prepared to walk up to an hour in rough terrain, often in the dark, in silence. Our aim is to reach some strategic location where we can settle down and listen. This can be both a meditative and thrilling experience. Imagine sitting on a hill in a dark forest, surrounded by trees and watch the night sky above knowing that a family of wolves is nearby. We wait, listen and hope to hear them howl. Although we cannot guarantee that we will hear wolves howl, we do actually hear wolves howl on most of our tours.

After midnight we return to our hotel for a good night's sleep.

### **Day 3 Bushcraft and a night in the wild**

After a late breakfast we will leave the hotel behind to spend one night in the forest. We drive for 15 minutes to arrive at Kolarbyn Ecolodge, often referred to as *Sweden's most primitive hotel*.

*"The whole idea with Kolarbyn Ecolodge is back-to-nature and do-it-yourself."*

On arrival our host will let you know how everything works. Then place your bags inside your forest hut, unroll your sleeping bag and light some candles so that we are all prepared for a night in the forest.

Bushcraft time! We will meet up with Jonas, a good friend of ours who is an expert in bushcraft and survival techniques. He will show us how to use knives and axes, how to light fires without matches and more. When we get hungry we light a camp fire and prepare a lunch together. It will be traditional charcoal pancakes with lingonberries picked in the forest.

In the afternoon there will be time to just relax or perhaps you want to go canoeing. Our guide will be happy to take you down to the lake where canoes are ready for us to use. Our canadian style canoes are stable and safe. Canoeing is the ideal way to explore the lake and the surrounding forest. Skärsjön is a relatively small lake but it is good enough for an hour or two of paddling. If you are not into canoeing you can go for a hike, take a wild swim in the lake, go for a sauna or just rest by the campfire.

In the evening we prepare a dinner together by the camp fire.

As night falls you can return to your very own forest hut, close the door and hop into your sleeping bag.

#### **Day 4 Wake up in the forest, then departure to Gothenburg**

Wake up in the forest and prepare your own breakfast over open fire using the ingredients from the shed. We then take you back to Färna herrgård where you are welcome to have a shower and get ready to return to civilisation.

We then take you to Köping for a train to Gothenburg.

## **CONTACT DETAILS**

Marcus Eldh

Owner WildSweden and responsible for this tour

[marcus@wildsweden.com](mailto:marcus@wildsweden.com)

Phone: +46-706 10 61 50

Sofie Andersson

Marketing manager Färna Manor & Spa

[sofie.andersson@farnaherrgard.se](mailto:sofie.andersson@farnaherrgard.se)

Phone: +46-706 80 92 66

Malin Bruce

Owner Kolarbyn Ecolodge

[malin@kolarbyn.se](mailto:malin@kolarbyn.se)

+46-704 00 70 53

Hellen Wistrand

Mushroom expert in this tour

Owner Ulvsbomuren

[info@ulvsbomuren.se](mailto:info@ulvsbomuren.se)

Phone: +46-73 86 48 11