

“ *Allemansrätten – literally ‘all men’s rights’ – confers the right to wild camp overnight in most places* ”

In my experience of riding Kattegattleden in the spring and summer, the weather has been perfect for cycling then. Maybe I was just lucky choosing the time to do the route.

There are plenty of bike shops in the main towns and cities along the way so you are never too far away from mechanical help. There is a mainline rail connection between Helsingborg and Gothenburg, with lots of station stops along the way if you need to break your journey or choose to do just part of the route. Bikes are easily accommodated on most Swedish trains and usually travel for free.

### A RIGHT TO CAMP OVERNIGHT

Sweden, like Norway and Finland, has a law called *Allemansrätten* – literally ‘all men’s rights’. In Sweden this law has existed for hundreds of years and confers the right to stay overnight wild camping in most places. There are a few exceptions, such as commercial and government facilities, people’s gardens, nature reserves, or in the midst of a farmer’s crops. It requires a little bit of discretion about choosing where you put up your tent or bivouac. It also requires some care not to leave any evidence of your stay overnight, respecting the environment and its flora and fauna, and removing any sign of your presence there.

*Allemansrätten* is a great benefit for long-distance cycle tourers, especially those on a tight budget. It also gives you a great opportunity to stay close to nature and enjoy blissfully secluded locations to watch the onset of dusk and the arrival of the dawn in the wild. In a recent stopover for me, I camped in an idyllic spot just off a footpath overlooking the Kungsbacka fjord, near Tjolöholm Castle south of Gothenburg. The lapping of the water on the rocks, and the sound of swans and geese flying close to shore, lulled me off to sleep after a full day’s riding. The setting sun shone directly into the doorway of my tent.

Even if you thrive on wild camping, occasionally all of us riding long distance need a place to get cleaned up and refreshed. There are plenty of campsites along most of Kattegattleden; most are mainly open in the summer months from June to September. There are also B&Bs (or B&Ks as they are also called in Sweden) and pensions, as well as hotels – although the latter are mainly in towns and cities.



The Gothenburg archipelago



Most of the route is on cycle tracks

### WELCOME TO SWEDEN

Swedes are keen cyclists and love the outdoors. You see people of all ages on bikes, not just in urban areas but in the countryside as well. No doubt the widespread provision of cycle tracks has encouraged this. So, too, has the love of the outdoors and an eagerness for health and exercise amongst many – and an awareness of how cycling is a good way to address both.

I was cycling on my way north to Gothenburg when I was joined by another cyclist, Thomas, who rode alongside and asked me in English where I was heading. I wondered how he knew I was English. He said that most of the people on Kattegattleden who travelled on heavily-laden bikes were tourists from outside Sweden.

We ended up riding together and enjoying lively conversation for over 45 minutes, until we reached the turn-off to his home in Veddige. This meeting was not atypical. The same day, a couple of hours later, a spry 80-odd year old approached me as I was gazing out across the sea to the island of Vendelsö in Kattegatt, munching on my sandwich. He just wanted to talk – and to practise his English when he found out where I came from. In the space of a couple of days this happened to me several times.

Of course, this happens cycle touring in many countries but it seems that people in Sweden take a great interest in visitors to their county. ●

### Getting there

The most direct way to get there from the UK is to fly to Copenhagen. There is a good rail link directly from Copenhagen airport (Kastrup) to both Helsingborg (about 1.5 hours by train) and Gothenburg (about four hours by train). Bikes are carried on the Öresundståg trains to Sweden.

Getting to southern Sweden by rail from the UK is possible but it’s a long journey through several countries to reach Denmark then Sweden. See [seat61.com/sweden](https://www.seat61.com/sweden). You can shorten the rail journey by starting with a ferry to the Netherlands (Rotterdam, Hook of Holland, or Amsterdam), a strategy that makes it easier to take your own bike.