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# Cruise Baltic Mariehamn



# Mariehamn – The Åland Islands

The Åland Islands are situated in the very heart of the Baltic Sea between Helsinki and Stockholm. Åland is an autonomous region of Finland, with its own flag, stamps and license plates. On the 6,500 islands that make up the Åland Islands, you'll find an exciting mix of Swedish, Finnish and Russian culture and history.

## Welcome to the Islands of Peace

For visitors, Mariehamn is the perfect antidote to a hectic, big city lifestyle. It's the capital for Åland's 6,500 islands and at the same time, with its 11,000 inhabitants, a picturesque and friendly town. The inhabitants are spoilt for beauty, with spectacular nature in abundance and in summertime they enjoy the light Nordic evenings, when the sun barely sets and the islands attract visitors from far and wide. The Islands of Peace, as the Åland Islands are often called, is demilitarized territory, and consequently no military forces or fortifications are allowed in the Islands.

## Kings & Tsars

As a consequence of Åland's strategic location in the Baltic, it has in the past been an attractive area for kings and tsars. Although serenely peaceful today, the islands have had a turbulent and fascinating history. The Bomarsund Fortress ruins are an interesting excursion destination. Built in 1832 by the Russian army, during the Crimean War in 1854 the fortress was surrounded by 12,000 French soldiers and some 40 British warships. The outcome was given. Today, the ruins of the fortress remain one of the Åland Islands' most interesting attractions. As a consequence of the Crimean War, the Åland Islands were demilitarized and remain so to this day. Take a guided bus tour to the castle of Kastelholm. Built in the 1300s, throughout history the castle has been the target of sieges and piracy. The Swedish King Gustav Vasa and his sons Johan III and Erik XIV have all spent time at the castle. Today the castle is a well-visited sight with fascinating guided tours conducted in all major languages.

## Modern Architecture & Design

Mariehamn was founded in 1861 by the Russian Emperor Alexander II, who named it after his wife Maria Alexandrovna. As a pleasant complement to the Baltic capitals, Åland has more of a non-modern architecture. A stroll along the town's many tree-lined avenues takes you past a series of elegant wooden turn-of-the-century

villas. The first female Master Builder of Finland, Hilda Hongell (1867-1952), designed 98 buildings for Mariehamn, of which 44 are still preserved in their original design. Åland designer Minna Rundberg is internationally renowned. Under her own brand name - the EGO Collection - she sells textiles, wrought iron and fancy goods. Her designs are strict and minimalist, originating in the ellipse and inspired by the Åland Islands' natural beauty as well as Japanese and Asian feng shui aesthetics. Collections of her work can be found in the Skarpans art gallery and the Sittkoff shopping mall in downtown Mariehamn. The textile designers Korpi & Gordon are also based in Åland. Their products include contemporary textile products for the home and are sold throughout Europe as well as in the US and Japan.



Mariehamn's strategic location in the Baltic Sea has resulted in strong seafaring traditions.

## City Life & Outdoor Events

The Åland Islands offer excellent conditions for outdoor activities and enjoyable excursions thanks to the natural beauty and history of the



Mariehamn is well known for its picturesque wooden houses.

islands. The Åland Golf Club's two golf courses in Kastelholm make for one of the most popular golf experiences in the Nordic countries, where a round of golf is complemented by sea views and a view of the castle of Kastelholm. Whether seeking to break the record for pike, trout or salmon fishing, or exploring for natural experiences, the Åland Islands offer some of the most interesting and rewarding fishing in the Baltic Sea. There are also skilled local sport fishing guides who hire out supply boats and all equipment. Kayaking gives you the opportunity to get off the beaten track among the islands and skerries, whose beautiful sea bays enable you to get really close to nature. Order a complete kayak package with a tour guide or rent a sailing ship with knowledgeable skippers who will give you an insight into how the Åland islanders used to travel in days of old. It's a special feeling to experience the power and weight of a sailing ship at sea. And if you wish, you may help sail the ship: set sails, sheet home and navigate.

## Great Shopping & Fine Food

Because of Mariehamn's small size, it's possible to walk from the western harbor to the eastern harbor in less than 20 minutes. On the way to downtown you pass restaurants, cafés, small cozy shops and lush parks. Traditional handicrafts are



The Museum Ship Pommern is the only four masted bark in original condition.

alive and well in Åland and give you the opportunity to bring home a piece of the Åland Islands. The local craftsmen combine traditional handicrafts with contemporary creativity. In the craft shops you'll find creations made of natural materials such as wood, textile, wool, leather, metal and clay. SALT is a vibrant handicraft center featuring the works of six leading craftswomen. Krukmejeriet is owned by potter Judy Kuitunen, who hand makes and decorates ceramics. Her patterns are usually very colorful and upbeat. Jussis Keramik designs and produces ceramics and glassware, and is located in the oldest stone building in Mariehamn. Åland's food culture offers a diversity of culinary delights. And when it comes to strong drinks, Åland enjoys a reputation for gourmet tradition dating far back. Visit Tjudö Vineyard and not only enjoy the locally produced wine, but also study the process of making a local variant of calvados – the highly regarded Älvados. Don't miss the famous Åland pancake served with prune jam and whipped cream in one of the outdoor cafés, or the robust black bread with a taste of malt and syrup together with a thick slice of tasty Kastelholm cheese. Everything is located within a convenient distance, making Mariehamn an ideal shopping town. You may also rent a bicycle or simply catch the free bus within Mariehamn's town limits.

## Ancient & Modern

The shipping tradition of today is just as strong as it was when, in the beginning of the 1900s, the Åland Islands under shipowner Gustaf Eriksson boasted the largest fleet of sailing ships in the world. The Åland Maritime Museum and the museum ship Pommern, the world's only four-masted bark still in its original condition, are located just next to the quay in the western harbor. They give an insight into seagoing life in the early 1900s. Take a walk to the Maritime Quarter in the eastern harbor, a great place to explore the museum with exhibits of boatbuilding traditions in Åland, and experience the work of skilled boat builders up close. Join a guided tour to the beautiful Jan Karlsgården open-air



The Åland Islands boast a rich tradition of handicraft and fine art, often inspired by the islands' spectacular nature.

museum, a typical Åland farmstead from the 1800s, located just a stone's throw from the castle of Kastelholm. The Vita Björn prison museum is also nearby. Don't miss the twelve medieval churches that were built on the islands in the 1200s and 1300s, following the abandonment of heathen worship. The churches are possibly the Åland Islands' most remarkable surviving relics from medieval times, particularly considering that their original function still remains today.



The archipelago is a real paradise if one is looking for culinary experiences. Mouth-watering dishes made of local ingredients await the visitor.

## Mariehamn Top 10 – don't miss

- Museum Ship Pommern
- Åland Maritime Museum
- Åland Museum & Art Museum
- Maritime Quarter
- Castle of Kastelholm
- Jan Karlsgården Open Air Museum
- Bomarsund Fortress Ruins
- Tjudö Vineyard
- Åland Hunting & Fishing Museum
- Sport fishing and a round of golf



## Useful links

**Cruise information:** [www.visitaland.com/cruise](http://www.visitaland.com/cruise)

**Port information:** [www.portofmariehamn.com](http://www.portofmariehamn.com)

**Tourist information:** [www.visitaland.com](http://www.visitaland.com)

## Public information

**Tourist information:** Downtown, 500 m from pier

**Taxi:** Available in port

**Shopping:** Downtown, 500 m from pier

**Local currency:** Euro (€)

**Downtown:** Walking distance from the port, 500 m

**Airport:** Mariehamn Airport, 4 km (5 minutes by taxi)

## Port information

**Port:** Port of Mariehamn

**Address:** P.O. Box 5

AX-22100 Mariehamn, Åland Islands, Finland

**Phone.:** +358 18 531 470

**E-mail:** [jan.sundstrom@mariehamn.aland.fi](mailto:jan.sundstrom@mariehamn.aland.fi)

**Fax:** +358 18 531 479

**Web:** [www.portofmariehamn.com](http://www.portofmariehamn.com)

**Time zone:** GMT +2 (European summer time GMT +3)

**VTS - channel:** VHF ch. 12

**ISPS 24h contact:** +358 457 313 5481 or VHF ch. 12

**Maximum ship dimensions:**

Length: 240 m. Draft: 7.6 m. Beam: No limits/

Length: 150 m. Draft: 8.2 m. Beam: No limits

**Pilot:** Compulsory for vessels exceeding

Length: 60 m. (Draft: 4.5 m Beam: 10 m)

**Waste handling:** Compulsory.

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