



# Hanseatic Town of Visby



• Hanseatic Town of Visby  
inscribed on the World  
Heritage List in 1995



## Visby Town Wall

The wall is the oldest preserved town wall in Northern Europe and the only one remaining intact in the Nordic region. The wall was built around 1250 as a defense and customs wall. It was initially five to six metres high and about 3,4 kilometres long. After the civil war in 1288 the wall was heightened to about nine meters. The towers were built in the early 14th century.

The defense system includes the moats and ramparts outside the wall. They are an important part of the World Heritage site. Today, these open green spaces form a green walkway with footpaths and beautiful views. It is a popular recreation area for people of all ages. Along the marked route you will find information signs telling about towers and sections of the wall.



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- |                         |                        |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 Slottsterassen        | 18 Helge And's ruin    |
| 2 Hamnplan              | 19 Norderport          |
| 3 Donners plats         | 20 Rackarbacken        |
| Turistbyrå /            | 21 Dalmansporten       |
| Tourist Information     | 22 Kyrkberget          |
| 4 Burmeisterska huset   | 23 S:ta Maria Domkyrka |
| 5 Bibliotek / Library   | 24 Stora Torget        |
| 6 Museum                | 25 S:ta Katarina ruin  |
| 7 Lilla Strandporten    | 26 S:t Lars och        |
| 8 Gamla Apoteket        | Drottens ruiner        |
| 9 Almedalen             | 27 S:t Hans och        |
| 10 Kruttornet           | S:t Pers ruiner        |
| och Fiskarporten        | 28 Österport           |
| 11 Botaniska trädgården | 29 Skolporten          |
| 12 S:t Olofs ruin       | 30 Kajsarport          |
| 13 S:t Clemens ruin     | 31 Söderport           |
| 14 Snäckgårdsporten     | 32 Skansport           |
| och Väktargången        |                        |
| 15 Göransporten         |                        |
| 16 S:t Nicolai ruin     |                        |
| 17 S:ta Gertruds ruin   |                        |



**World Heritage site boundaries**

- Walk around the town wall
- World Heritage walk

0 200meter

# A World Heritage walk through Visby

Perhaps begin your walk in the southwestern corner of Visby where Visborg Castle was built in the 1400s. It was blown up in 1679. A model of the castle is found at **Slottsterassen (1)**.

Stroll along Strandgatan and make a stop at **Donners plats (3)** where **Burmeister House** is located **(4)**. The southern entrance to the medieval harbour used to be here. In the basement of the Tourist Information there are remains of a medieval defense tower.

Strandgatan dates to the Viking Age. It was also medieval Visby's main street. Merchants' warehouses stood side by side along the street with **the Old Pharmacy (8)** being a well-preserved example.

Outside the sea wall, at today's **Almedalen (9)**, the harbour was situated. **Krutornet (10)**, a watch tower from 1152, marks the medieval northern entrance to the harbour.

If you continue along Strandgatan, inside the wall, you will reach **the Botanic Garden (11)** with **St. Olof's ruin (12)**. Take a short walk upwards to Tranhusgatan and **St. Clemens' ruin (13)**.

Walk further north to **Snäckgårdsporten** and the **rampart walk (14)** where you can climb the tower and get a nice view. Follow the wall uphill and notice the arches that supported the first rampart walks before the wall was heightened in the 14th century. **Göransporten (15)** leads to St. Göran's church ruin. The church was for the lepers and thus placed outside the town walls.

If you turn left to Svartbrödragatan you will reach **St. Nicolai's ruin (16)**, the remains of the Dominican convent. On the other side of the street is St. Gertrud's chapel from the 15th century. Further down the road the ruin of **Helge And rises**, an octagonal church building **(18)**.

If you instead choose to continue along the town wall, you will reach **Norderport (19)**, one of the town's medieval gates.

Walk up **Rackarbacken (20)** and enjoy the view from the spot where the hangman's assistant, rackaren, resided. Continue to Nygatan and experience a time travel at Klinten, meaning the cliff, on which small cottages were built for the poorer population in the late 1700s. Today the area is well preserved and under heritage protection.

**Kyrkberget (22)** offers magnificent views. Below is **St. Mary's Cathedral (23)**. To the south, Södra Kyrkogatan leads to **Stora torget**, the main square **(24)** where **St. Katarina (25)**, the church ruin of the former Franciscan convent, offers a spectacular setting.

Now you can take St. Hansgatan either to the north to see the ruins of **St. Lars** and **Drotten (26)** or walk southwards to find the church ruins of **St. Hans** and **St. Per (27)**.

During your walk you will also discover a town with contemporary life and offers. Sit down and relax, have a snack or a drink, go to the museums, shop and talk to people who live and work in town. They will be your best guides in exploring Visby as a historic yet modern town combining the past with the present.



# Hanseatic Town of Visby

World Heritage sites are places of cultural and/or natural significance providing a unique testimony to the history of earth and humanity and as such their outstanding universal value is to be safeguarded for humanity as a whole.

The Hanseatic Town of Visby was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1995. It includes the walled town with adjoining green open spaces. UNESCO's justification is:

Visby is an outstanding example of a north European medieval walled trading town which preserves with remarkable completeness a townscape and assemblage of high-quality ancient buildings that illustrate graphically the form and function of this type of significant human settlement.

## Striking features

- A town plan with a medieval street network, partly dating back to the Viking Age, surviving both above and below ground.
- Medieval warehouses, serving as sales premises and storerooms for the town merchants.
- The town wall, with surrounding dry moats and built of limestone in the 13th and 14th centuries, is 3,4 kilometres long. 27 ground towers and nine saddle towers have been preserved.
- Church ruins, 12 in total, are the remains of Romanesque and Gothic churches erected in the 13th and 14th centuries. With Reformation and decline in the 16th century these were largely abandoned. Only St. Mary's Cathedral is still in ecclesiastical use.
- Well-preserved wooden buildings in the eastern part of the town, where the streets are dominated by houses and gardens from the 18th and 19th centuries.
- The townscape, a topography with dramatic height differences has shaped the urban form. The medieval town has been retained with new layers and functions added over time until the present day.