



Gråsten Footpath

– a hiker's route

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Market Square

The market square is open, friendly and invites you to stay awhile. The pool has been preserved from earlier times, but a new guise has given the square a more welcoming atmosphere. The square by Slotsøen (the Palace Lake) is yet another delightful spot to visit. Here you can observe mute swans, coots and tufted ducks. If you are lucky, maybe you can see an osprey hunting for food above the lake.

The Little Match Girl

If you come in the evening, you can look forward to the lowered street lights surrounding “the little match girl”. The statue is placed here because Hans Christian Andersen wrote the story about her at Gråsten Palace.

The Palace Gardens

The first palace park was landscaped as a baroque garden with straight pathways and square flower beds. The garden's style was later changed to its current appearance with curved paths and untrimmed trees. Queen Ingrid was a garden enthusiast. With her enjoyment of flowers, colours and varieties of growth, she influenced the development of the gardens. If they are open, why not end your walk with a tour around the palace gardens?

Enjoy your walk!

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Hiking in Gråsten

Gråsten is a charming and attractive town, characterised by the royal palace and woodlands. The town is surrounded by woods and water, in fact, there is so much nature that it is almost a part of the town itself. This hiking trail is also a glorious blend of town and woodland, and there are plenty of good natural, cultural and urban experiences along the way. The route described is 9 km long and begins in the car park which is opposite the palace. The path has signposts in both directions, so you can easily make your own detours, start somewhere else or make a shortcut using the map.

The palace

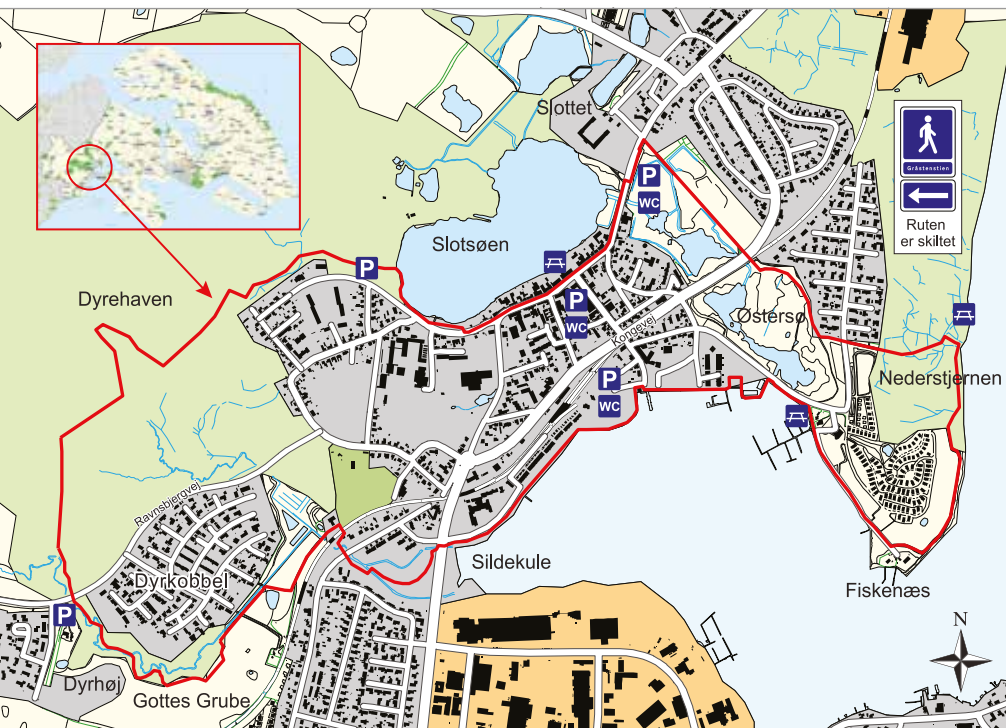
Gråsten is probably best known for the palace, which is attractively located beside the wood and the palace lake, surrounded by a splendid garden. The palace was built just before 1700, but in 1757 a fire destroyed everything apart from the palace chapel and some pavilions. Most of the palace was rebuilt in 1759. Following the Schleswig Plebiscites in 1920 when Southern Jutland was reunited with Denmark the palace was taken over by the Danish state and in 1935 it was assigned to the Crown Prince and his wife, who were later to be King Frederik IX and Queen Ingrid. The palace chapel is the only part of the palace that is open to the public, but anyone can visit the palace gardens when the royal family is in residence.

Sildekule

The route continues along the bay which is called Sildekule, and in the harbour there is the arthritis hospital, for which the town is also known. In Sildekule park, which is from the start of the 2000s, you can find a bench and take a well-deserved rest. This is the site of Ingvar Cronhammar's sculpture "Per-gola".

Gotte's Pit and Hundsberg Brook

An intense natural experience awaits you in Gotte's Pit. This narrow, deep fissure covered with thickets has a babbling brook that meanders through the untamed woods. Bridges and stairways have been provided so that you can experience nature at close quarters, but good footwear is advisable on the narrow woodland paths.



Østersø (the Eastern Lake), Nederstjernen and Fiskenäes

The route starts at the end of the car park on Slotsbakken (Palace Hill) with a walk down a straight path which, via a fine avenue ends in a tunnel under Kongevej. You can usually see a Grey heron standing quite still in the shallows of Østersø and waiting for a fish that it can snap up as fast as lightning. However, it's often difficult to get a clear view over the lake which is surrounded by reeds. On coming out of Nederstjernen woods there is a view of the bird sanctuary Nybøl Nor, which has been selected for the preservation of the migrating tufted duck, greater scaup, goldeneye and red-breasted merganser. On Fiskenäes between 2003 and 2006 holiday homes and a wellness centre were built. There is also a play area.

Fallen trees and carved figures

Even though Dyrehaven woods on the other side of Ravensbjergvej do not grow as wild as in Gotte's Pit, it is allowed to grow naturally. The beech trees here stand so close to the brook that the soil around the roots has been washed away, and it looks as though some of the trees are 'standing on stilts'. Some of the trees have fallen over and are allowed to rot – to the benefit of woodpeckers and tits. In several places in the woods, intriguing figures have been carved into the wood. Near the entrance there is an eagle-owl, and further along you can find a frog, a hippo and other animals.

