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5 The cloth mill – from yarn to cloth

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4 Troense – a maritime and gardening village

Impossible love took them to their deaths

Elvira Madigan was a Danish-Norwegian circus princess, who in 1887, when performing in Kristiansstad, met the somewhat older and married officer Count Sixten Sparre. It marked the beginning of a dramatic but doomed love affair. In May 1889 they eloped to Denmark together and settled in a summer guesthouse in South Funen. One day in July 1889 they go to Nørreskov for an outing. He then shoots her and subsequently shoots himself for reasons of impossible, tempestuous love and a shortage of money. She was 21, he was 35. They lie buried under the large oak at Landet churchyard a few kilometres from the forest of Nørreskov. Their complete story and tragedy can be studied at Taasinge Museum in Bregninge (www.taasinge-museum.dk).



The King's grandiose manor house

Valdemar's Castle is one of the largest manors in South Funen. It is first mentioned in the 14th century under the name of Kærstrup, but in 1639 a new main wing, a real castle, was built for the son of King Christian IV and Kirsten Munk: Count Valdemar Christian, heir to the throne. Hence the name Valdemar's Castle. Ambitious family members were the reason that Valdemar Christian never managed to settle at the castle. Nor did he make it to succeed to the throne after his father's death. The court and the government preferred his half-brother, Frederik III, who went on to become Denmark's first absolute monarch. Following an unsuccessful attempt at marrying him off to a Russian princess, Valdemar Christian was made to perform active service abroad. He died during a military campaign in Poland. The castle remained Crown property until 1678, when the Danish naval hero Admiral Niels Juel was granted the whole of Tåsinge as a reward for having won the battle in the Bay of Køge. He immediately bought the castle, which since then has been the entailed estate of the Juel family, who through the generations have improved and modernised farming and fruit growing methods in Tåsinge. Very old fruit trees survived in the back gardens of Troense into the 1960s.

Colophon

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On northernmost Tåsinge you can experience the unique landscape of Skansen. The grass-covered tongue of land is an uncultivated but grazed common with many special herbs and bushes. Behind Skansen lies the cove of Vindeby Nor, encircled by low and wet tidal meadows which, like Skansen itself, are breeding grounds for many birds, e.g. lapwings and oystercatchers. Skansen commands a panoramic view of the port of Svendborg and one is very close to the shipping traffic through the Sound of Svendborg. The vintage M/S Helge calls at Vindebyøvre just east of there. Onboard the M/S Helge you can cruise through Svendborg Sound.

3 Skansen

Until the inauguration of the Svendborg Sound Bridge, Vindeby was Tåsinge's ancient ferry landing to Svendborg. The first Danish-built steam ferry, the Fritz Juel paddle steamer, was put into service here in 1872. The two-cylinder engine and the steam whistle are exhibited at Svendborg Museum. Today, the ferry landing at Vindeby has been converted into a marina. The broad centre pier and pier head date back to the old ferry landing.

2 Vindeby – the ancient ferry landing on Tåsinge

Vindeby harbour



The impressive bridge across Svendborg Sound was inaugurated in 1966 by the then heiress to the throne, Princess Margrethe. The bridge ended a long epoch of busy little ferryboats shuttling between Svendborg and Tåsinge. The bridge stands 33 m tall and is 1.2 km long. It offers magnificent views along Svendborg Sound stretching to both sides and to large parts of South Funen and Tåsinge. To the west lies the small uninhabited island of Itholm, where a Viking silver treasure was found in 1853. The treasure is now exhibited in Svendborg Museum. Beyond Itholm you can see Skarø and on a clear day, beyond this, the northern tip of Fero.

1 The bridge spanning the strait

Walking and making stops on the trail

The Archipelago Trail is for walkers and is signposted all the way. We ask you to show consideration when out walking and to respect the following:



- The trail is open to walkers from 6 a.m. until sunset.
- Dogs must be kept on a leash.
- The route crosses private land. Please show consideration to the owners, be thoughtful, and do not leave litter.
- Camping is only permitted at designated campsites, or other areas with the owner's permission.
- During hunts the trail may be closed, but information about alternative routes will be displayed.

Coffee sites

Along the Archipelago Trail there are 10 coffee sites where hikers can enjoy their meals or coffee. The coffee sites are beautifully situated and offer information about the surrounding area and activity inspiration for children. The coffee sites are marked on the map, but there are also several other rest sites along the trail.

Archipelago Trail Guidebook

The guidebook provides you with detailed descriptions of the routes, a presentation of the nature- and cultural values of the South Funen Archipelago, and more information about accommodation and shopping. The guidebook is in Danish, German and English and is available at the local tourist offices.

Transport

You can get around Sydlyn and Tåsinge by Fynbus. See timetables at www.fynbus.dk or obtain further information from Fynbus on tel. +45 6311 2233.

Accommodation

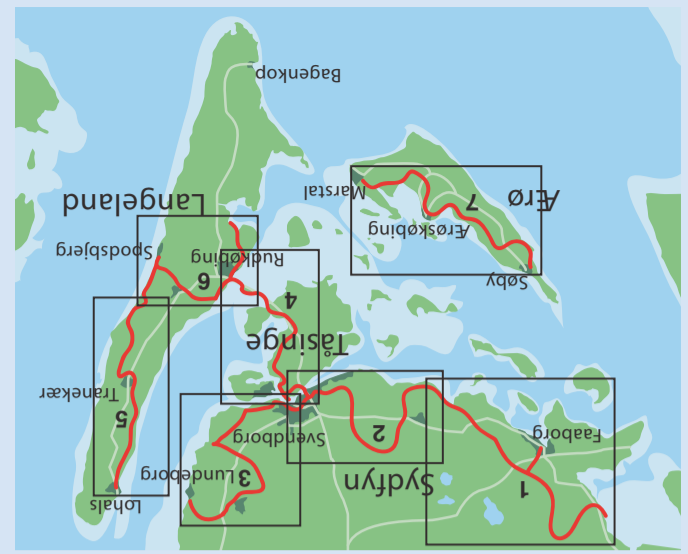
For information on accommodation options please contact Sydlyns Tourist Office on tel. +45 6221 0980. You can also visit our website at www.visitsydfyn.dk or www.detsydfynskeohav.dk.

Would you like more information?

Sydfyn Turistbureau, www.visitsydfyn.dk, tel. +45 6223 5700 – for information about accommodation near the trail.

Svendborg Museum, www.svendborgmuseum, tel. +45 6221 0261 – for information about the history of Svendborg and surroundings.

Further information about The South of Funen Archipelago can be found at www.detsydfynskeohav.dk



The archipelago trail will extend a total of 200 km and so will be one of Denmark's longest hiking trails. To be opened in sections during 2006, the trail will encircle the South Funen archipelago, offering interesting experiences of local scenery and cultural history. Contact the local tourist information offices for more information.

A hiking experience

This section of the trail reaches from the Svendborg Sound bridge in the north, across Tåsinge and Sjø, to Rudkøbing in the south. The trail takes you through the picturesque old shipmasters' village of Troense, which is unique in Denmark. Troense provides magnificent views across the narrow strait to Thuro. The trail meanders through the coastal forests, past beautiful Valdemar's Castle and along the scenic coastline of Lunkebugten, offering several historical and scenic sights on the way. At Rudkøbing you can choose the route southwards to the cove at Henninge Nor or northwards to Lohals. Enjoy!



Troense

The Archipelago Trail

Svendborg - Sjø - Rudkøbing

20 km

Map 4

– Days clothed in blue and green



The enigmatic 'Ormerende'

6 Valdemar's Castle – an interesting cultural experience

At the point of Slotshage lies the spectacular Valdemar's Castle, which has been the property of the Juel family ever since 1677. One can choose to enjoy the wonderful manor house from outside, go for a stroll in the lovely park, go for a swim from the fine sandy beach or visit some of the museums located in the buildings: the Big Game Trophy Museum; the Castle and Manor-House museum with 25 fully furnished rooms and the Yachting Museum.

The vintage ship, the M/S Helge, calls here and can take you to Grasten on Thurø, Christiansminde east of Svendborg, Vindeby-øre on Tåsinge, and to Svendborg.

7 The enigmatic 'Ormerende' – the sea-serpent canal

The trail proceeds into the Dyrehaven deer park and Nørreskoven, in the southern part of which – close to the beach – it converges with the Ormerenden – the sea serpent canal. Ormerenden stretches 1 km into the country, is 6-12 m wide and used to be 3-4 m deep. It points towards the ancient 13th century castle of Kærstrup, to which, unfortunately, there is no public access. It is uncertain what the canal was used for but many theories have been proposed over the years. One of them says that the canal permitted transportation to Kærstrup with barges. A legend from 1823 claims that a giant sea monster once worked its way inland from Lunkebugten thus shaping the long canal. Future archaeological excavations may shed more light on the history of the canal

8 Nørreskov – history's and tragedy's witness

In the wonderful Nørreskov forest, just south of Valdemar's Castle, the trail follows the coastline. A perfect idyll. A complete contrast to the drama that took place under the trees, where a memorial stone has been erected on the exact spot where two gun shots broke the deep silence of the tranquil woods. The love drama between Elvira Madigan and Sixten Sparre ended so tragically on that summer's day in 1889.

Nørreskov is a very luxuriant and varied wood with large and beautiful beech and oak stands. One of Denmark's oldest and largest oaks, the Ambrosius Oak, guards the north entrance to the wood. 7.5 m round and 400 years old it is the same age as Valdemar's Castle. Ambrosius Stub, the poet, was a young clerk and household poet at Valdemar's Castle 1748-50 and was fond of reading under the oak – hence the name.



9 Tidal bay

The trail continues along the scenic bay of Lunkebugten. Migratory birds stop here to rest and feed. The bay is very shallow, and at times strong winds and the tide coincide to drain large parts of the bay empty of water. It then becomes an abundant hunting ground for many anglers and wading birds pursuing lug worms. Between Troense and Valdemar's Castle, close to Lunkebugten, a local drama unfolded in 1955. An 18m long North-Atlantic sei whale was beached in shallow water. Two fishermen from Thurø tried to tug it out into deeper waters, but their attempts failed. Today, the impressive skeleton is exhibited at the Naturama museum in Svendborg.



Lunkebugten

10 Tvede skov and Vemmenæs

Just to the north of the Siø embankment the trail turns into Tvede skov, a dense coastal wood with many tall and impressive trees, particularly beech. The Vemmenæs peninsula stretches east, into Lunkebugten. Previously, this was where the ferry crossed over to Rudkøbing. Back then the Vemmenæs Ferry Inn provided accommodation for travellers. The opening of the bridge to Langeland in 1962 and the dam to Siø in 1964 was the final end of the ferry service. From Vemmenæs, on a clear day, one can see both the tall pylons of the Great Belt Bridge - and of course Siø and large parts of Langeland.

11 One island, one farm, and one school

Siø is a flat little island of only 125 hectares. It used to be several islands: Skovø, Sidø, and Great and Little Fugleholm. The undiked islands were used for summer grazing for cattle from Langeland. In 1861 the islands were diked to create arable land and this marked the beginning of Siø, one large island. Today seven km of dikes and several pumps combine to keep Siø dry, and seed growing and pig breeding are the primary livelihoods on the island. Since 1922 one family have been the owners of the whole of Siø; their family farm stands in the middle of the island. The other houses on the island were built for farm hands and behind the family farm you can see the school building where, until approx. 1950, one teacher used to teach the 7-8 local children.



M/S Helge

