

The view from Skoldnæs Lighthouse

7 Søby

On the north-western point of Ærø lies Søby, the island's third largest town. The heart of activity in Søby is naturally found in the harbour, which welcomes guests that arrive to the island by sea. Søby is also home to Ærø's fishing fleet as well as Ærø's largest workplace, Søby Shipyard, which dominates the everyday life of this small town. Within easy reach of Søby's fine sandy beach lies a well-run modern marina. The steep hill that climbs towards the island interior is lined with Søby's distinctive houses and is crowned by the impressive Søby Church. In town can be found accommodation, a bakery, a supermarket and a bar as well as a beautiful well-maintained windmill.

8 Skjoldnæs Peninsula & Lighthouse

Skjoldnæs Peninsula is a popular excursion. Here lies one of Northern Europe's most attractive seaside golf courses, which boasts sea views from all of its eighteen holes. The imposing Skjoldnæs Lighthouse is open to all and offers wonderful views of the island, and beyond to Germany.

9 Vitsø Nor & Søby Måe

Orinally, Vitsø Nor was a fjord. In 1781, it was drained in order to reclaim land and thus became a meadow that was grazed by cattle. It wasn't until 1964 that the level of salinity in the soil fell sufficiently for the land to be used for agriculture. In 2009, the freshwater lake and the marshes (a total of 112 hectares) were re-established, thereby creating the nature reserves of Vitsø and the wetlands of Søby Måe. They have subsequently become important breeding centres for many species of migratory birds, which nest on the many small islands in the lake. A trail has been established all around Vitsø, from which birdlife and nature can be experienced at close hand. A leaflet on Vitsø and Søbygaard is available.



The Pied Avocet breeds on Vitsø's bird islands



Søbygaard

10 Søby Ramparts and Søbygaard:

Søby Ramparts and the Renaissance period manor of Søbygaard date back to 1580. Originally, in the early 12th century, a large fortification was built here as a defence against the violent hordes that constantly attacked from the sea. After the Valdemars had finally defeated this threat, the castle lost its significance and fell into decline. Søbygaard was subsequently built on this site by Duke Hans, the younger, who hailed from Southern Jutland. The oldest remaining structures are the cellar vaults from 1584. However, the white manor house was not built until the late 18th century. Søbygaard has been under continuous renovation since 1993 and is now a delightful and welcoming place to visit.



Søby Ramparts

Once again, the moat is filled with water and the drawbridge has been painstakingly reconstructed, true to its original design. Søbygaard has become a major feature on the island's cultural landscape. It plays host to art exhibitions, "Kys Frøen" (Kiss the frog) activities, Ærø Festsplil (open-air theatre), weddings and classical concerts in the authentically crafted concert hall, that is beautifully decorated with stained glass windows by artist Sven Havsteen-Mikkelsen.



Kiss the frog



Welcome to Ærø

Ærø is a beautiful and diverse island covering an area of 88 km². It lies at the southern end of the South Funen Archipelago, which stretches from the Little Belt to the Baltic Sea. Geologically, the island was formed 18-19,000 years ago by movement of ice from the southeast, which resulted in the creation of a long ridge that today rises above the sea. On the northern side facing the archipelago, the coastline is flat and meandering. The southern coast rimmed by the Baltic Sea is characterised by tall, protruding cliffs. Ærø is an independent municipality with a thriving island community. Here you will find a range of good accommodation and eateries, a varied and flourishing commercial life as well as a broad spectrum of great cultural and nature experiences.

Have a great time.



Ferries: The ferry service covers four routes to and from Ærø - from Faaborg, Svendborg, Fynshav and Rudkøbing respectively. For information, check www.aeroe-ferry.dk or call +45 6252 400. ÆrøXpressen is running ferries on the Marstal - Rudkøbing route. Go to www.aerexpressen.dk for information.

Free Buses: On Ærø, public buses are free - for everyone, all year round. Also for your bike, if there is room. You can find the current bus timetable at www.aeroe-ferry.dk

Accommodation and Experiences: Find information on accommodation, activities and experiences on Ærø at www.visitaeroe.com or download the VISIT AEROE app on AppStore or Google Play

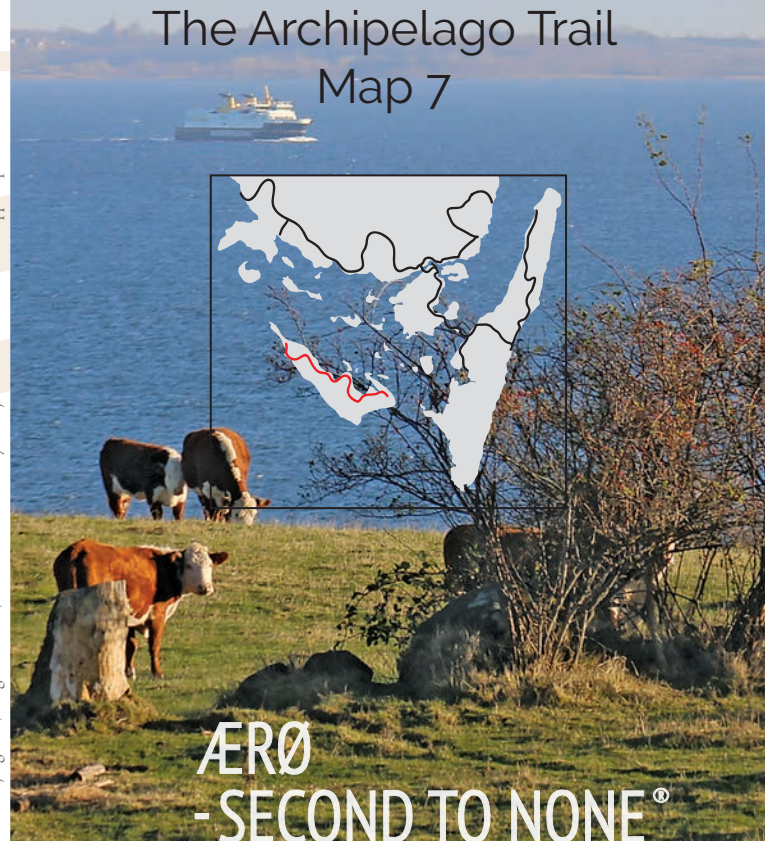


DET SYDFYNISKE ØHAV

Hiking & Cycling Map

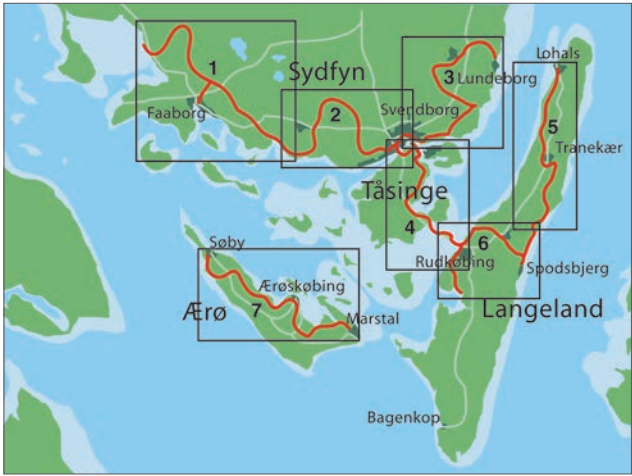
ÆRØ

The Archipelago Trail Map 7



ÆRØ - SECOND TO NONE®

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Overview of the Archipelago Trail and its seven published regional map leaflets

For the Hiker - The Archipelago Trail:

On Ærø you will find several established hiking routes of varying length. The longest one is the Archipelago Trail (Øhavsstien), which is part of a 225 km long path that snakes through the South Funen Archipelago. The section on Ærø covers a distance of approx. 36 km, extending west from Marstal Harbour along the northern coast into the open country, across the dam at Gråsten Nor and further on to Ærøskøbing. From here, the coastal path continues to Borgnæs and onward to the historic settlement of Søbygaard and beyond to the wetlands of Vitsø Nor before the trail ends at Søby.

Guide Book on the Archipelago Trail

A guide book is available that covers the entire Archipelago Trail. It offers detailed route descriptions as well as practical information on accommodation and shopping opportunities along the way. The guide book is published in Danish, German and English & can be purchased at any of the tourist offices serving this area.

When you follow the Archipelago Trail:
Please note that this hiking route often passes through private property so please be considerate of the owners and ensure that you take your rubbish with you. Dogs must be kept on a leash. Camping is only permitted in designated campsites or on private land with the permission of the owner. Please note that parts of the trail may be temporarily barred to hikers for reasons of safety if there happens to be hunting activity in the vicinity; in this case, hikers will be notified of alternative routes.

Want to do some more extensive hiking?

Then circumnavigate the island - its 66 km.



Marstal Harbour

1 Skipper Town Marstal

Marstal is Ærø's largest town, and its long maritime history is in evidence everywhere. Marstal's characteristic houses originate mainly from the 19th century, a golden era where up to 200 schooners would be moored in the winter harbour, sheltered by the kilometre-long stone pier. In the winters of 1824-1842, this impressive breakwater was constructed by local volunteers as an act of civil disobedience, which nevertheless ended with royal recognition. Visit the Marstal Maritime Museum and get the whole story.

2 Birkholm

Birkholm is one of Denmark's smallest inhabited islands. Located in the middle of the South Funen Archipelago, Birkholm is only 96 hectares in size, relatively flat and only 1.8 meters above sea level at its highest point. Birkholm belongs to the municipality of Ærø and is served twice a day by a small modern postal boat, which can also carry a modest number of passengers. See more at www.birkholm-beboerforening.dk.



Shelters at Birkholm. For bookings, go to www.bookens-helter.dk

3 Electric ferry Ellen

E/F Ellen is Ærø's new electric ferry! She has a battery capacity equivalent to 28,000 lawnmower batteries and is capable of covering a greater distance between each battery charge than any other all-electric ferry. Ellen is the result of a five-year innovation project and is among Realdania's 100 best Danish climate solutions. Her main route is Søby-Fynshav.



Ellen in Søby harbour



Ærøskøbing

4 Fairy-tale Town Ærøskøbing

In the centre of Ærø's northern coast lies Ærøskøbing, Denmark's best-preserved medieval city. In 1522, Ærøskøbing was granted market town privileges. In 2002, the town was awarded a Europe Nostra Award for the Conservation of European Heritage, and in 2013, it was awarded the Brown Johannes Cross for touristic sites of national significance. The well-maintained merchant houses in the narrow paved streets together with the old street lamps and blooming roses impart a truly fairy-tale ambience.



5 Gråsten Nor

From the man-made dam on the northern coast that made it possible to reclaim this rich land from the sea, there is a good view of this flat largely undeveloped area which extends all the way to the southern Baltic coast and the natural connection of Ærø's eastern and western regions. In winter, there is an abundance of waterfowl in the sea, which is replaced in spring by sandpipers, curlews and other wading varieties of birds. Gråsten Nor also boasts probably Denmark's largest concentration of the protected flower, the May Orchid, with more than 75,000 flowering specimens. A leaflet on Gråsten Nor is available.



May Orchid

6 Vorbjerg Place of Execution

Between the villages of Lille Rise and Stokkeby lies Vorbjerg Galgebakke (Gallows Hill) - A former site of execution, which is steeped in legend and mystery. On the hillside, there are no fewer than seven ancient burial mounds, which today are however hard to spot as they were pillaged for boulders used in the construction of the long pier (breakwater) in Marstal Harbour.



For the Cyclist:

Ærø is simply a wonderful island to bike around. Cycle Routes 91 & 92 and National Cycle Route N8 wind through beautiful and varied countryside, and there are ample opportunities for worthwhile deviations. If you combine all three routes, you will cover most of the island. Local cycling club CC Flying Heroes has mapped out three routes (all on asphalt) for the annual "Ærø Rundt" cycling event of 20, 50 and 100 km. All three are clearly signposted and are designed to challenge even the most experienced cyclist. Excellent cycling guide books with detailed route descriptions and suggested itineraries are available at the helpful local tourist office.

For the Motorist:

Naturally the popular Marguerite Route passes through Ærø - Look out for the Flower symbol. Nevertheless, even if you use the main road, touring the island by car is a beautiful way to experience the best that Ærø has to offer. Please pay particular attention to cyclists and hikers as you drive along the small roads.

For the Angler:

For the hobby fisherman, Ærø's shores are a true Eldorado. The shape and size of the island make it easy to move from one fishing place to the next - and with 80 km of coastline there are plenty of places from which to cast the line out. Ærø is a member of the Havørred Fyn co-operation, which continually strives to improve the environmental conditions for sea trout, both by the release of young trout and by returning the small, natural streams. The book "117 Fine Fishing Spots" provides good tips for sea trout fishing and is available from the tourist office.

Picnic Spots:

There are plenty of designated pit stops at picturesque locations on the island. You can pull over at these to take a break, have a picnic & enjoy the beautiful surroundings. These places are usually provided with tables & benches, and rubbish bins and mostly toilet facilities as well.





Voderup Klint

11 Voderup Klint:

No trip to Ærø is complete without a visit to the cliffs at Voderup Klint, also known as *Denmark's longest staircase*. Marked by the Brown Johannes Cross, these unique moraine cliffs are a tourist site of national importance - a unique landscape, where one natural terrace gives way to another, like huge steps descending down to the rocky beach below. The 33-metre high uppermost plateau affords fabulous views of the Baltic Sea coastline and beyond to the shores of northern Germany.

The village environs & cliffs of Voderup have been designated a Natura2000 area for its rich fauna - here one can find the rare fire-bellied frog, the oil beetle and the golden ground beetle to name but a few. A leaflet on Voderup Klint is available from the local tourist office.

12 St Albert's Church:

At Vejsnæs Nakke can be found the remains of St. Albert's Church. Originally built as fortifications that are believed to date back to the Viking Age around the year 1000AD, it was in the fourteenth century that St. Albert's Church established there. Archaeological evidence found at the site indicates that the church was in use until the Reformation in 1536. Today the foundations of the church are clearly marked by the linear earth mounds.



Pilgrim figure from St. Albert's Church



Beach huts at Vesterstrand.

13 The Beach Huts:

The charming and picturesque beach huts of Ærø are found at Eriks Hale in Marstal and at Vesterstrand in Ærøskøbing. Both places the beach huts are beautiful, characteristic and well maintained to the smallest detail. The grounds are rented forever. It is not allowed to make changes. Everything must remain as it were. Only small improvements are allowed. The oldest houses are more than 100 years old.

Map legend

- Archipelago Trail
- Coastal Path
- Other Hiking Paths
- Wet Footpaths
(May be very wet during winter months)
- Østersørutens - National Cycle Route
- Funen Cycle Routes 91 & 92
- Local Cycle Route
(Also suitable as footpath)
- Main Highway without Cycle Path
- Marguerite Route
- Ferry Route
- Attractions
- Bus Stop
- Parking
- Tourist Information
- Shopping Opportunities
- Drinking Water
- Toilet
- Picnic Spot
- Viewpoint
- Viewing Platform
- Fishing Spot, Trout
- National Attraction
- Bathing Beach
- Slipway
- Camping Site
- Primitive Camping Site
- Shelter

Cycle Route N8: Ærøskøbing-Søby 17.5 km

Cycle Route 91: Søby-Marstal 30.5 km

Cycle Route 92: Ærøskøbing-Marstal 10.5 km

Archipelago Trail: Søby-Ærøskøbing 20 km

Archipelago Trail: Ærøskøbing-Marstal 16 km

Coastal Path: Vitsø-Marstal along the south coast 30 km

Island Circle 66 km

1 km 5 km

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