

FINNVÄGEN 21 KM



Difficulty: average
Markings: orange
Recommended shoes: boots

Terrain: views, mostly coniferous forest, cultural history, waterways, some short stages on gravel roads
Version: 2024-01-30

Summary

A hiking trail of 21 km between Fredros and Bogen in northern Gunnarsskog. Finnvägen is a varied, beautiful wilderness trail following the old pathways used for centuries. Before 1850 there was only a walking and riding path, until a carriage way was made after the establishment of the Mitandersfors ironworks. In many places the trail is 1-2 m wide, the rest forest paths. There are some short stages on gravel road. You will see remains of old crofts occasionally.

The trail is a great alternative if you seek stillness and wilderness spirit. It is also interesting from a sociological perspective, to get a feel for a rural area, where there at times were large workplaces, small scale farming and forestry and neighbours helping each other to get through the day.

The path is marked with orange on trees or posts. A map is available for download as a separate PDF.

Phone coverage can vary throughout the trail.

Suggested starting point

Treens camping in Fredros, WGS84, latitude 59.931352, longitude 12.654725. Parking and information board at Treens camp ground and beach area. You follow orange marks along a walk way of one kilometer to the starting point of the trail, just west of the Fredros junction.

Another option is to park at the old soccer field, **Gamla fotbollsplanen** (59.943603, 12.685858) just north of the Fredros junction on road 885. This suits those who wish to combine sections of Finnvägen and Bruksleden to make a circular route of 8 km. See maps.

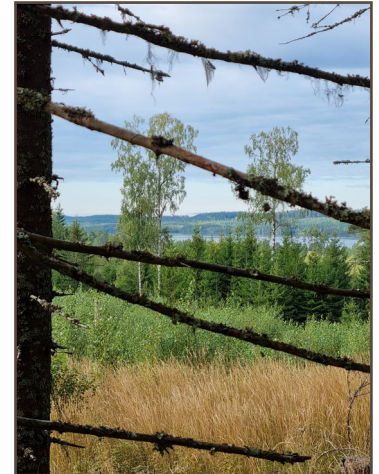
The bus connection 112 Arvika-Mitandersfors passes the old store, "Gamla affären, Fredros" around 30 min after leaving the Arvika bus station. The distance is 38 km. For schedules see Värmlandstrafik (varmlandstrafik.se).

Description from south to north

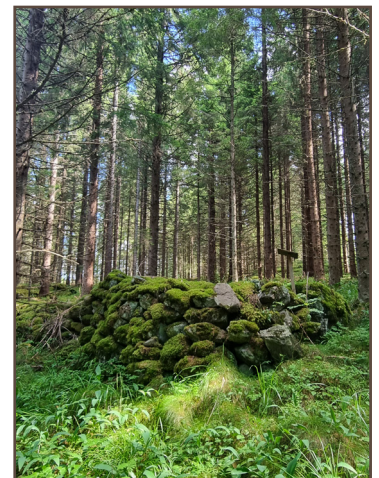
Fredros – Lövhöjden, 2,7 km

From the junction at road 871, follow the orange marked posts to the west, along the gravel road towards Mitandersfors, for 300 m. At the first curve there is a sign showing the start of Finnvägen, where the trail heads off into the forest.

The carriage trail goes through mixed forest, followed by a cutting area which allows you to see lake Treen in the south. After a stage of spruce forest, the trail again meets the gravel road to Mitandersfors, and you cross it.



Lake Treen, Fredros.



Cairn at Lövhöjden.



Working horse on Finnvägen again, but this time for laying out duck boards.

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A path continues west of the gravel road. Shortly you reach a cutting area at Södra Karlstorp, where the trail follows the edge of it and passes north of the house and leads into dense spruce forest.

Halfway to Danielstorp, about 100 m after crossing a creek, there was once a croft called Övre Mesbråten, 50 m west of the trail but now the remains are well hidden by forest. They had a "speakeasy"¹, an illicit establishment that sold alcoholic beverages. Reaching Danielstorp, you walk along the side of a meadow and see the remains of an impressive barn built from natural stone. It was built at the end of the 1800s and was inhabited till the 1940s. Perhaps time for a break at the bench table?

A carriage way leads through spruce forest up to Lövhöjden. It is an old settlement from the 17-18th century, possibly inhabited by immigrating Finns as there has been smoke cabins. The house still remaining is from the end of the 18th century. Next to the trail there has supposedly been a staging area for coffins². The Finns living in Axland and Bogen stopped here for lodging on their way to the Gunnarskog church to bury their deceased.

Lövhöjden - Västra Abborrsjön, 3,5 km (the farm V:a Abborrsjön 4,0 km)

Instead of continuing on the forest road connecting Lövhöjden with the next village, Abborrsjön, the trail takes off to the north west towards Västra Abborrsjön. You go through mixed terrain of spruce forest, cutting areas and small creeks.

Close to the sign Finnle (pronounced Finn-lé), there is a big rock, where the cousins Kerstin and Karin once had to climb up to save themselves from a bear. The girls were herding the cows and horses of their farm when a bear attacked. They called for help with their horn, but before rescue came, one horse was so badly damaged it had to be put down². "Lé" means an opening of pushing the fence poles sideways instead of opening a gate.

The trail continues along a ridge with predominantly heather and pines on mountainous ground. On the ridge there is a place called Manslagarna. The story goes that a man was "manslagen"/slain here, possibly at a hunt for horse thieves at the end of the 1600s, mentioned in the judgement book of Fryksände³. After about 3 km you look out over the lake Västra Abborrsjön and further on a few farms. 300 m east of Västra Abborrsjön was the croft Rävängen, from which the smoke cabin was moved to the Gunnarskog Local Heritage Center where you can still see it today.

Västra Abborrsjön - Axland, 3,8 km

After crossing the gravel road (vehicles may occur) the trail continues along a tractor road past an old soap stone quarry, which provided material for many stoves in the area. A bit north you pass the croft Myrtorpet. One km farther you cross another gravel road and soon pass by the mire Rönningsmyren.



Danielstorp



Spruce, moss and creeks.



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Axland - Prästgårdshöjden, 4,3 km

500 m east of Axland you head straight west and join the snowmobile trail for a bit. After crossing two gravel roads, you walk on a small gravel road to the north west for one kilometer. It makes a bend south of Nystugan to avoid the house property. After another kilometer you pick up a path again and head west.

After a slightly wet area with duck boards you reach the Finn croft remains of Pundashöjden. The name most likely comes from one Eskil Puntainen, mentioned in the tax registration lists of Axland from 1664-1673⁴. The trail continues slightly north west along the base of the hill, and then straight north up the hill Pipoberget. This is one of the steepest climbs.

After crossing a timber road, there is heather and pines and you reach a path junction. If you need to think about choices, there is a bench table to sit down for coffee. The path east will lead you steeply down to the red wooden church of Bogen after roughly one kilometer. If you want to continue to Mitandersfors you take the western path.

Prästgårdshöjden - Källershöjden, 4,5 km

Heather and pine are gradually replaced by spruce as you go downhill the 1,3 km towards the Rataho church and its giant rocks.

The carriage road is replaced by a timber road taking you past Boströmsåsen. One kilometer after the Rataho church you go right at the junction with the gravel road. Stay on it for 200 m (vehicles may occur) and then follow the path to your left. It takes you uphill to Nybackshöjden. After 500 m the tarn Samackolamp is visible in the west.

Another uphill, takes you to Jorslaberget. After descending you reach a timber road. Going downhill you reach Mitandersfors directly. Going uphill you connect with Finnskogleden up on Källershöjden. On the top of the hill, go straight (west) at the t-junction and you meet Finnskogleden 200 m thereafter.

This is where Finnvägen ends and you can either continue south (on Finnskogleden towards Håvilrsrud, 16,5 km) or north (on Finnskogleden towards Mitandersfors 1,5 km) through the woods.



Rönningberget



Pine forest near Rönningmyren.



Bench table at the path junction of Prästgårdshöjden.

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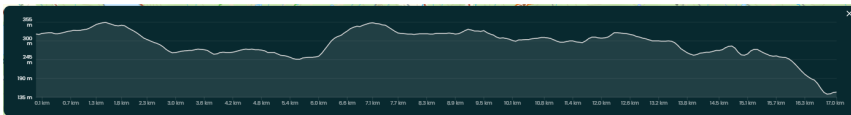


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Elevation profile for Finnvägen

The profile shows the southern part to the right and the northern to the left. For an interactive map, where you can see the altitude for different locations, look up the trail at www.naturkartan.se. Enlarge the map view by clicking the green framed symbol shown to the right. Then click the circled symbol. Move the cursor across the elevation profile to see the corresponding position on the map.

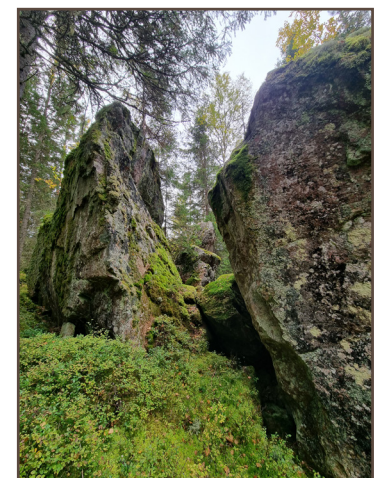


Heather and mixed forest at Prästgårdshöjden.

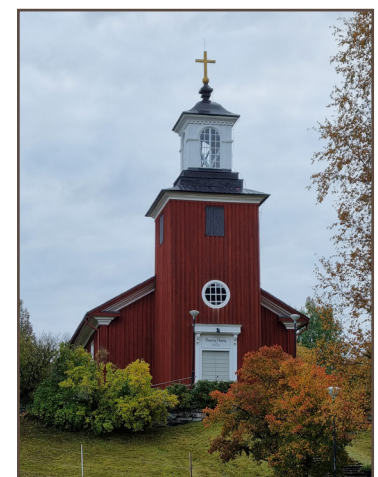
Reference sources:

¹Bättre sent än aldrig, (Better late than never) Lars Persson, s100, ^{2 3} s 101.

⁴Torsby Finnish Settlement Centre, Berit Andersson



Giant rocks of the Rataho church.



The Bogen church, built in 1849-51.