

Västerbotten

Unexpected Contrasts



Länsstyrelsen
Västerbotten



Tärnaby

Sorsele

Malå

Storuman

Norsjö

Skellefteå

Vilhelmina

Lycksele

Robertsfors

Dorotea

Åsele

Vindeln

Bjurholm

Vännäs

Umeå

Nordmaling

Stockholm







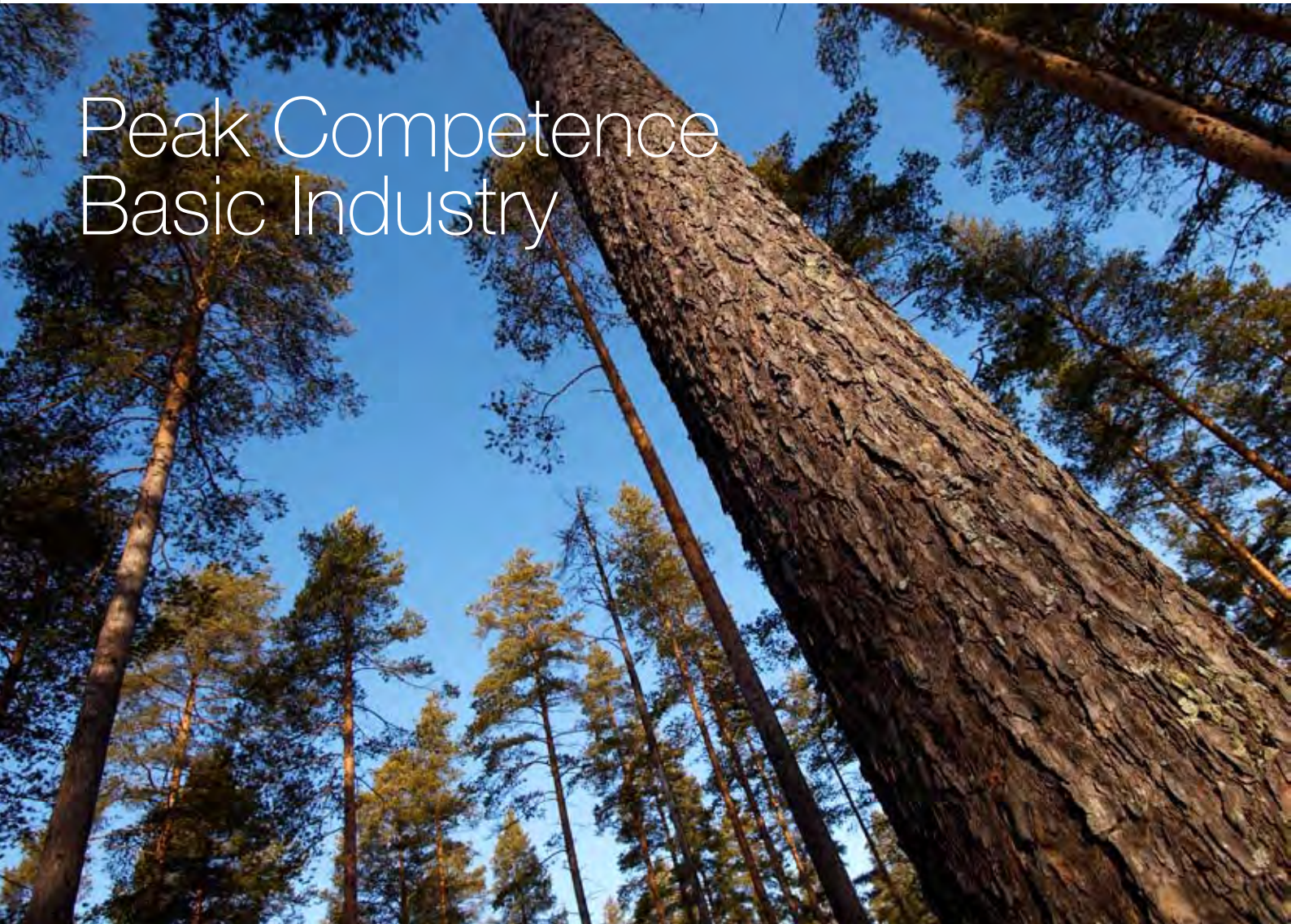
Timber houses of the future built today.



Reindeer husbandry involves seven Same villages, and about 53,000 reindeer.



Peak Competence Basic Industry



Metal ores, the forest and hydroelectric power are the basis of modern Västerbotten.

Copper, lead, zinc, silver and gold are mined in seven mines in the Skellefteå field, which is one of the richest in Europe. And we have green gold. With 14 percent of Sweden's forests, we achieve a net export value of almost 100 billion Swedish kronor. Hydroelectric power from three large rivers is a major source of energy for the rest of Sweden.

But, the most of important asset is a dynamic business sector, which uses the resources of nature efficiently and carefully. It continually attracts the most competent people, applies the latest technology, and is always looking for new, unexpected areas of development.

Its success is demonstrated by the fact that several engineering companies have managed to become world leaders within their sectors.



World leading manufacture of forestry machinery.



The security suitcase, a unique Västerbotten innovation.



Small enterprise and art merge.



New, creatively oriented occupations



Pioneering Entrepreneurship

Historically, the limited livelihood offered by farming created a Västerbotten culture of solving problems: of not giving up, of continually finding ways around obstacles, of persevering when others give up. Several of our most successful companies grew from such individual determination.

This entrepreneurship DNA has taken the county to leading positions in new areas of activity, including the experience industry, industrial design, life science and innovative digital design.

Advanced university research combined with business competence and the Västerbotten entrepreneurial spirit have also given us unique advantages in creating winning concepts for the future.



Dancing
Winter Light

Summer days
without nights



When the winter is at its darkest, the Västerbotten heavens are lit up by the shimmering Northern Lights. Continually changing, the colourful curtain flickers over a landscape heavy with snow.

When winter and extreme cold loosen their grip in March, the fifth season of the Same year begins, winter spring, which for many inhabitants of Västerbotten is the best time of the year. The sparkling white carpet of snow gives access to the silent expanses of the wilderness.

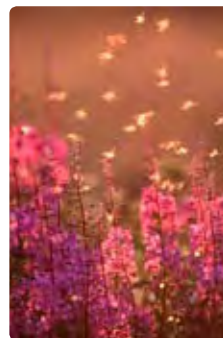
It is possible to get around on skis or snow scooter. Distant mountain lakes become accessible for those who wish to fish through the ice, and those who wish to sunbathe. From the mountain tops one can see the majestic white mountain chain rising against the horizon, while newly brewed coffee tastes best in a shelter hollowed out from the snow.

An extensive system of roads gives us unique accessibility, both inland and to our Swedish mountain world. Further north, nature sets its clear borders, and further south the mountains are no longer such a wilderness. But here, in Västerbotten, it is possible to drive far above the tree line and get out of the car in Europe's last wilderness. With its varied nature, the nature reserve of Vindelfjällen is the largest in Europe.

King Charles' sceptre, the flower which symbolises our province, grows mainly along the edges of some of the marshes in the forests, together with cloudberry and wild rosemary. Together, they give a fairylike experience of colour, taste, smell and beauty.

In the east, the barren seashore, with the blue sea, which almost entirely lacks an archipelago, contrasts with the open spaces of the mountain landscape.

The right of common access applies everywhere and for everyone.



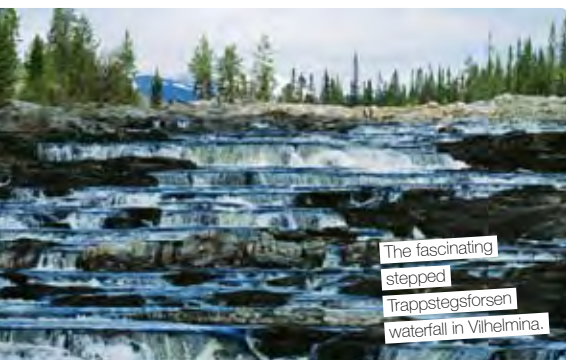
King Charles' sceptre



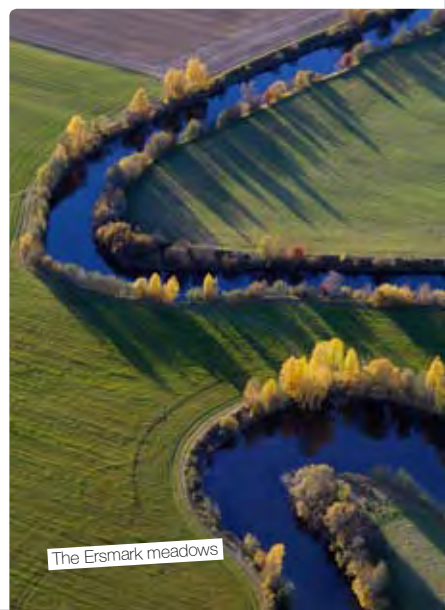
The Ransarån river in the Vilhelmina mountains.



The Tärnafjällen mountains – a magnet for tourism, winter and summer.



The fascinating stepped Trappstegsforsen waterfall in Vilhelmina.



The Ersmark meadows

Essential Interactions



The great distances in the county have historically meant a need to meet at markets and on church holidays in order to socialise, do business and perhaps find a comrade for life. The cottage churches in Skellefteå, Lövånger, Vilhelmina, Byske and Fatmoma remain as reminders of that time. They are still used today, but now the tradition is primarily reflected in a varied offering of popular festivities and festivals. And markets, like the one in Bonnstan in Skellefteå.

The two major summer festivals in Skellefteå attract young people interested in music from all over the country. The Åsele market attracts 150,000 visitors to the interior of the county each year. In Umeå, the world's largest rounders tournament is held, with almost 10,000 participants. Stora Nolia, Sweden's largest fair, is a popular festival for the whole of Norrland, with 125,000 visitors.

Umeå is often called Northern Sweden's cultural centre. Not without reason. The Norrland Opera is a "musical place for new expression", one of the most northern opera buildings in the world, and a leading location for artistic creation. The Umeå symphony orchestra often has visiting conductors and soloists of world class.

Some of Sweden's most widely read and popular authors have their roots in the small-scale farming and life of the Västerbotten village. The Västerbotten Theatre in Skellefteå has had a long series of successes, not least in its unique verbal storytelling tradition, which has been expressed in various dramatisations.

Within Same culture, there are many prominent crafts people, singers skilled in the Same chants called jojks, and artists who continually find inspiration for new artistic expression, through keeping in contact with a living reindeer herding culture. Many other experiences are offered in the Forest Museum in Lycksele and in the County Museum in Gammlia in Umeå, including the history of the original inhabitants of the county.



Same sorcery drum.



The Nordic Scenographic School widens the boundaries of imagination.



Sahara Hotnights, on the stage and on CD counters throughout the world.



Sture Meijer colourful, successful expressionist.



Strindberg's "the People of Hemsö" interpreted by the Västerbotten theatre.



Charlotte Gyllenhammar's work "Outside", Umedalen Sculpture.



Craftwork signed by Surolle, Jögge Sundqvist..



Umeå's pleasant campus.



Essential care and research side by side.

Crossing the Frontiers of Knowledge

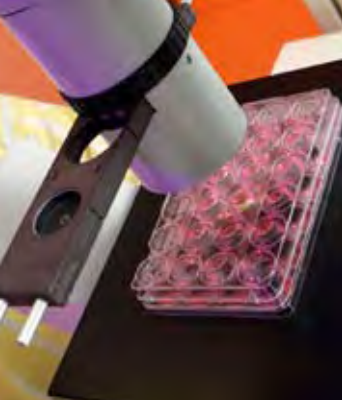


Most research in Västerbotten is basic research motivated by curiosity. About 2,000 researchers at Umeå University conduct internationally outstanding work in such areas as neuroscience, plant and forestry bio-technology, infection research and global health. Luleå Technical University, which is active in Skellefteå, and Sweden's Agricultural University with two faculties in Umeå, also make important contributions to research.

While making astute prioritisations and focusing clearly on strong environments and individuals, Umeå University is now also aiming to become a leader in industrial IT, green energy and bio-refinery.

What will the antibiotics of the future be? How shall we cure type 2 diabetes? How shall we be able to find more raw forestry products? What is the genome of spruce? What happens in our brains when we get older?

Basic research in Västerbotten does not lack exciting challenges.



The Umeå Institute of Design clears the way for new design.



Sought after computer games originators are being trained in Skellefteå.



Five star gastronomy education in Umeå.



Innovations for the Future

The county's business sector is working quickly to find concrete applications for the results of basic research.

The goal is more innovations, more companies and more jobs. Therefore, infection researchers welcome small, entrepreneur-driven companies who wish to use their knowledge and advanced analysis equipment. The investment in creating Europe's foremost IT innovation environment is a result of close cooperation between university, the business sector and the municipality. Luleå Technical University in Skellefteå is a world leader in technical measuring and control of timber. The design college is ranked as one of the world's foremost, where research which is close to industry is an obvious cornerstone. Within the life science sector, the emphasis is on converting world-leading research into new companies with winning business ideas.

The forestry industry, which is so important for the county, gets over two-thirds of its income from sawn timber for building and residential purposes. But there are great hopes in close cooperation with the universities. The goal is to be able to utilise more residual products and increase the added value of forestry with the help of researchers, by developing new products such as bio-fuel, pharmaceuticals, textiles, foods, colours and dyes and solvents.

The forest is the green gold of the future.



Our brains and bodies have developed over hundreds of thousands of years to survive in the wild during hunting, fishing, collecting berries and fruit and finding over-night shelter.

So we usually experience life close to nature as natural. We like a campfire crackling in the twilight, we like being in a tent or a cosy cottage, on a sandy beach warmed by the sun and shaping a piece of wood with a knife.

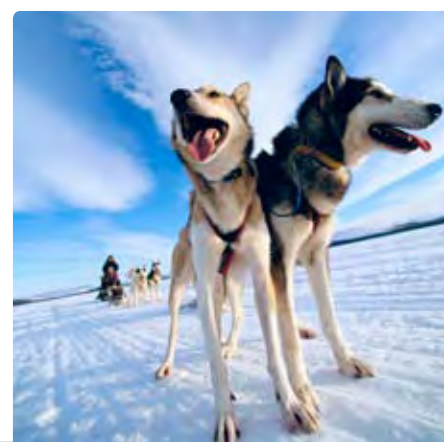
Our country has most of Europe's last wilderness. And nowhere else is it as accessible as in Västerbotten.



For anyone interested in experiencing nature over and above the ordinary, or interested in extreme sports or unusual events, there are many things to choose from: a seal safari to one of Sweden's largest seal colonies, exclusive fly fishing in the Viejeströmmen river, panoramic tours on Iceland ponies in the Ammarnäs mountains, hunting capercallie with a gun-dog, floating in silence and meditation along the world's longest ski lift above bogs and streams, fishing for temperamental char in the Autjejaure lake or extreme skiing from one of our high class winter resorts.

The right to wander where you will gives everybody common access to our fantastic natural environment. Here there are many entrepreneurs in the visiting industry with experienced guides who are prepared to take you around in safety.

Welcome to our natural life.





Living with Nature



Challenging
Experiences

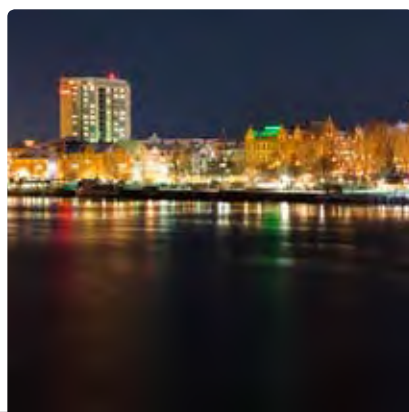
Just as people have personalities and character, so do cities. Umeå is the city of the young white-collar worker and researcher; Skellefteå is the city of the entrepreneur and industrial worker. Lycksele is the commercial centre of the inland region, and of the culture which means so much for our county identity.

Umeå is also an ambitious Norrland metropolitan area, which, with its academic researcher profile, is a hub of innovation and renewal. With continual growth and young, multicultural population, the city is alive with entertainment and culture.

With roots primarily in the mining industry, Skellefteå is an engineering industry centre. It has grown within the entrepreneurial culture which today produces new companies in areas such as IT and the Web-based experience industry.

Some of our inland villages are being repopulated today, often by people from other European countries who are looking for a quiet, natural life in balance with nature. Reindeer husbandry is integrated with the Same culture and is increasingly being developed into a modern industry in balance with tourism and other sectors.

In Västerbotten, everyone can find a social environment with a life that suits them.



Some people talk about distance in time, others in kilometres. In Västerbotten, distances are not talked about very much at all. Because the road network, public transport and broadband are well developed, it is easy to travel and communicate. And then everything feels close at hand.

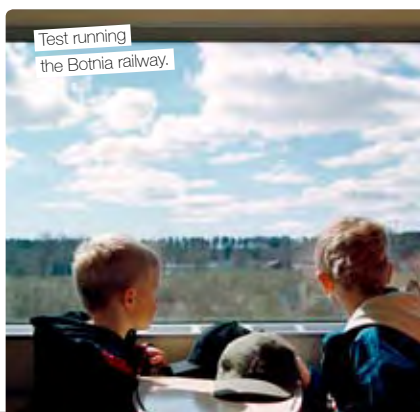
It takes about an hour to fly here from Arlanda in Stockholm. Apart from the coastal cities, there are also daily air connections to Storuman, Vilhelmina, Lycksele and Hemavan. Travelling time from Stockholm to one of Sweden's best slalom ski slopes is 90 minutes.

A train trip on the Botnia railway gives a stress-free, environmental friendly trip between Stockholm and Umeå of about five hours.

The car is still the most important means of travel in our county, however. The uniquely well-developed road network winds deep into the wilderness of the forest and mountains, and makes them accessible for exciting trips to unknown areas with new opportunities for experiencing nature, hunting, fishing and berry picking.

Västerbotten, the county of accessible nature.

Easy and Close at Hand



Everyone in Sweden remembers Ingemar Stenmark. The champion skier's vernacular skiing expressions had a deep influence on shaping the image of Västerbotten. When he skied, all of Sweden stood still. But the most remarkable thing is that from the seventy that Ingemar achieved, a straight line goes to the two thousand that Anja Persson achieved. The driving force is in the genes.

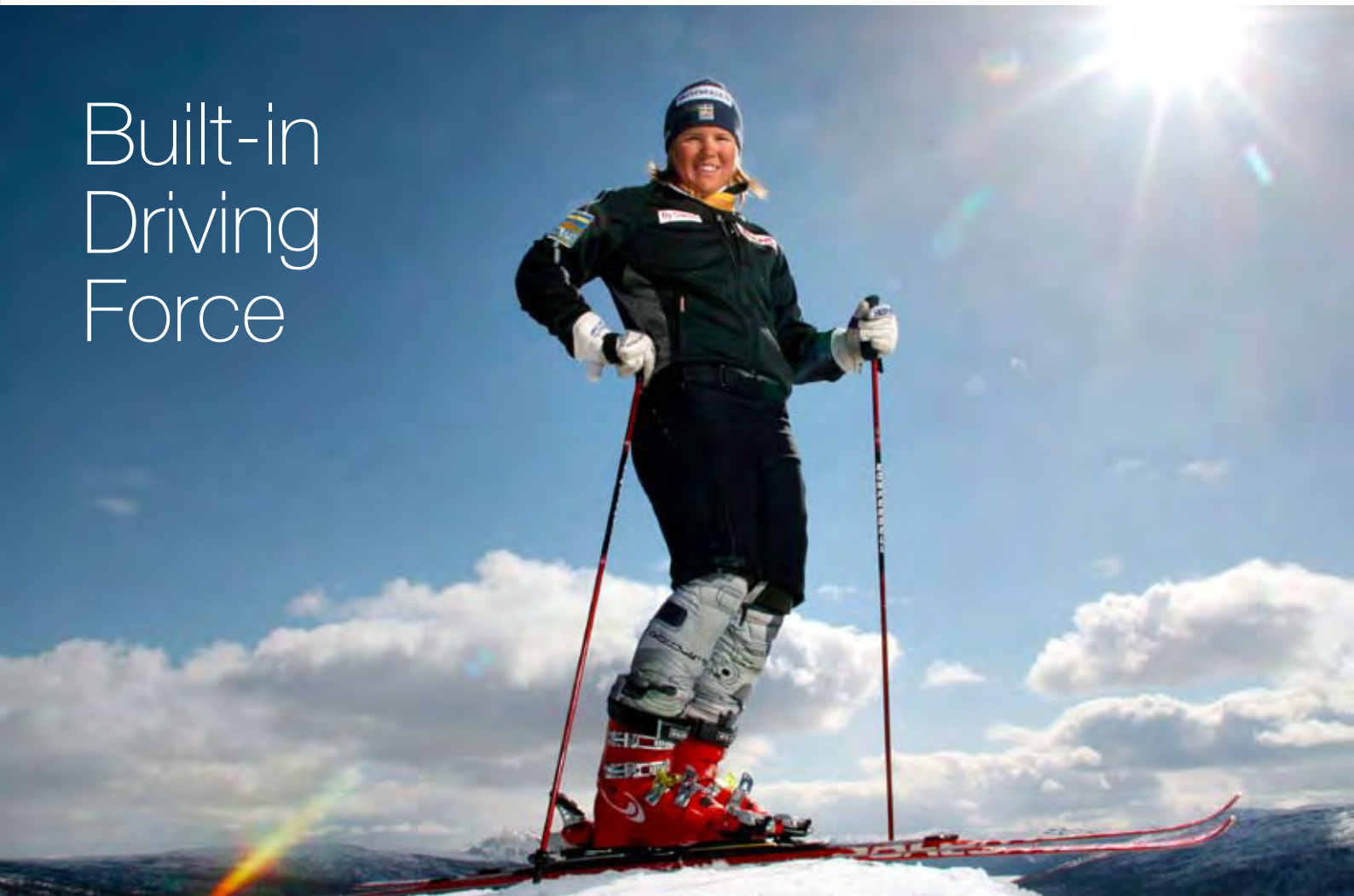
In Tärnaby, there is Monica Edmondson, who with her glass artistry and colour arrangements from Same costumes, reflects the icy beauty of the landscape. In the same village, her artistic predecessor, Sune Enoksson, made the country's most beautiful horn knives for decades.

Not far from Jörn, an inland entrepreneur, had the wild idea of building a forty-five metre-high elk in plywood on the top of a mountain. The idea is to show the forest and its wild animals from one of the county's most prominent viewing points.

With a well-developed municipal musical school as a basis, many bands and solo artists have gained inspiration and drive, which has taken them to really big arenas.

In Västerbotten, borders are seen as something to be surmounted.

Built-in Driving Force



The music school
as plant school.

Many of the new residents of the county, immigrants and people from the south, wonder about the myth of the few words and reticence of the Norrland people, and why it does not fit reality. On the contrary, there is a rich literary life here, a verbal stream of the pleasure of communicating, with easy conversation and quick repast. All flavoured with the direct use of the language, which harks back to the time when life was lived more on the terms of nature, and also forward in time with the new platforms and interactive interfaces of the social media.

A story is basically always a meeting, both for the listener and for the storyteller. Together, a bridge is created between generations and cultures, between city and country, Same and Swede, old and young. The basic issues of life are without borders. When people become aware of the fact that everybody lives under the same roof and shares the same values, then a real interaction occurs.

In Västerbotten, literature, art and storytelling are alive.

Meetings Over Borders





Apart from cloudberries, there are, for example, arctic raspberries and cranberries.



An Exotic Larder



Västerbotten's climate is hard, with great contrast between long, cold, dark winters and short, intensive summers of brilliant light. The contrast makes things difficult for everything which grows and lives. At the same time, noble, exotic tastes can be refined from the hardest conditions of life

With all its shimmering lakes, fairylike, ancient forests and open mountain landscapes, the nature of Västerbotten offers a larder of unique ingredients.

Here are salmon trout and mountain char, golden-yellow cloudberries and ruby-red arctic raspberries, chanterelle and flap mushrooms, almond potatoes, angelica and butterwort. Reindeer meat is available, fresh, frozen or dried. Often it is also possible to get hold of really exotic ingredients: elk, capercallie, black grouse and ptarmigan. The Västerbotten cheese has a rather strong taste, it has made culinary inroads throughout the world.

The table is laid for anyone who wants to experience exotic tastes.



Hazelnut coated
Västerbotten cheese
with cloudberries.



Gastronomic Innovations

Food is existential. The dishes on the table reflect culture, the soul of the people. They say something basic about those who live there, about their history.

Västerbotten home cooking is famous for such ingredients as wheat flour, preserved pork and bread baked with blood and rye flour. Other items often on the menu are dried pike, beestings pudding, pancakes with ham, and fermented milk. And probably only a Västerbotten author can write an epic novel with hash as name and theme.

Today, Västerbotten has a new gastronomy which offers first class food based on our unique local ingredients.

Entrepreneurship flourishes here as well.

Umeå University runs diploma courses in gastronomy, and 12 Västerbotten restaurants are members of Gastro Botnia, a culinary Kvarken-wide cooperation. Several of the county's qualified chefs have become well-known in TV and other media.

With such ingredients and such culinary creators, that is not surprising.



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