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FANTASTIC FACTS ABOUT
VÄRNAMO

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WELCOME TO VÄRNAMO!

Värnamo is a place brimming with history, success stories and community. This guide contains 100 fantastic facts showing why our municipality is so unique. You'll read about exciting places, prime movers, successful companies, fun-filled events and much more. Whether you've lived here your whole life or are curious to learn more, we hope you'll feel a sense of pride and discover something new!

Happy reading!

►01 NO TRAFFIC LIGHTS HERE

Värnamo Municipality has said goodbye to traffic lights, investing in 16 roundabouts to create better flow and shorten traffic queues. But the roundabouts do more than streamline traffic – they also beautify the town with incredible works of art, including Corpus, Kopparkatedralen (the Copper Cathedral) and Riktning (Direction), all of which add an extra dimension to the town's environment.

►02 FROM TYRES ON THE GROUND TO STARS ON THE STAGE

Gummifabriken started out as Sweden's largest manufacturer of rubber products and has since developed into a hub of business, education and culture with a common agenda for growth. It offers conferences, trade fairs, lectures, training courses, food, cinema and, not least, events with everything from local talent to world-class artists.

►03 TOP HONOUR FOR HORSE TRAINER

The local riding association, Värnamobygdens Ryttarförening, is 75 years old – but that's not all they have to celebrate! This year, equestrian jumping trainer Björne Carlsson became the second person in Sweden to receive the prestigious title of Master Trainer in Jumping. Björne's great commitment as a trainer, rider and course builder has contributed to many individual successes and to VBR's position in the elite series.



►04 THE GOLDEN PALM SQUARE

Have you seen Ruben Östlund's film 'The Square', which won the Palme d'Or at the 2017 Cannes Film Festival? The film was inspired by an exhibition at Vandalorum and the Square in the Flanaden marketplace – a nine square metre art installation created in 2015 by Kalle Boman and Ruben Östlund. The box symbolises a free zone in the centre of the city where shared rights and responsibilities prevail.

► 05 SWEDEN'S TOUGHEST SWIMMING RACE

Vidösternsimmet is a real folk festival that takes place in and alongside Lake Vidöstern in August every year. The swimming competition attracts many nationalities and offers distances for all levels. The shortest is 500 m and the longest is a whopping 84 km, making it one of the longest swimming competitions in the world! Which challenge suits you best? Follow the race as a spectator from your own boat or at the pit stops along the lake and enjoy the festivities at the finish line.



►06 HAMBURGER HILL

Värnamo's Hamburger Hill is where the big burger giants Max, Burger King, McDonald's and Jureskogs meet. A classic stop for hungry travellers along the E4 and Road 27, where 24,000 vehicles pass through daily.

►07 AN ISLAND A DAY

Lake Bolmen has as many islands as there are days in a year. The largest one, Bolmsö, is the biggest island in Småland and is connected to the mainland by a bridge and a regular ferry. The Bolmen area is a beautiful place surrounded by deep, quiet forests, perfect for cycling, fishing, swimming and canoeing.

►08 20,000 FRESH-MADE WAFFLES

In the idyllic church village of Dannäs north of Lake Bolmen lies Dannäs Våffelcafé and B&B. An impressive 20,000 crispy waffles are made here annually for guests from near and far. Browse in the farm shop and keep an eye out for unique events.

►09 UNIQUE GRAND PIANO AT GUMMIFABRIKEN

Designed by Mats Theselius, the grand piano in Gummifabriken is a unique creation. It has a leather finish and brass legs. The lid and frame are painted to resemble wood. More than 40 companies and individuals have sponsored keys, making the grand piano a symbol of Värnamo's entrepreneurship.





►10 SWEDEN'S ONLY FILM HISTORY FESTIVAL

Värnamo Filmhistoriska Festival is Sweden's only festival that celebrates Swedish film history. Held on the last weekend in April each year, it features films that are at least 25 years old and have had a major impact on Swedish cinema audiences. The festival has been opened by popular actors such as Lasse Åberg, Christina Schollin, Fredrik Strage and Inger Nilsson. This year's festival will be opened by Claes Eriksson – director, screenwriter, revue performer, comedian, actor, and composer.

►11 JONAS OF SWEDEN – THE KING OF POTATO PEELERS

The Jonas Original is a true kitchen classic with over 70 years of history. Since its introduction in 1953, around 100 million have been sold in 40 countries. Talk about a superstar potato peeler! The manufacturing methods have been modernised, but the design remains unchanged. Proof that good design never goes out of style. Production takes place at the DaloLindén factory in Värnamo.



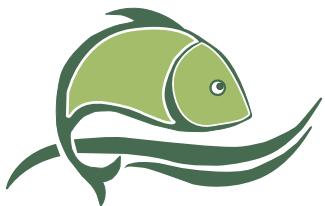
►12 A CRACKING SUMMER

180,000 sets of caps are sold at the High Chaparral Wild West theme park each summer – which means 1.8 million cracks echoing through the historic town! Live out your cowboy dreams with loaded guns, excitement, drama and loud bangs.



►13 DREVER THE TOP BREED IN VÄRNAMO

Dog ownership is on the rise and by the end of 2024 there were 4,256 dogs registered in the municipality. Drever – once called the ‘Swedish beagle’ – is the most popular breed, followed by Labrador Retrievers and Alsatisans.



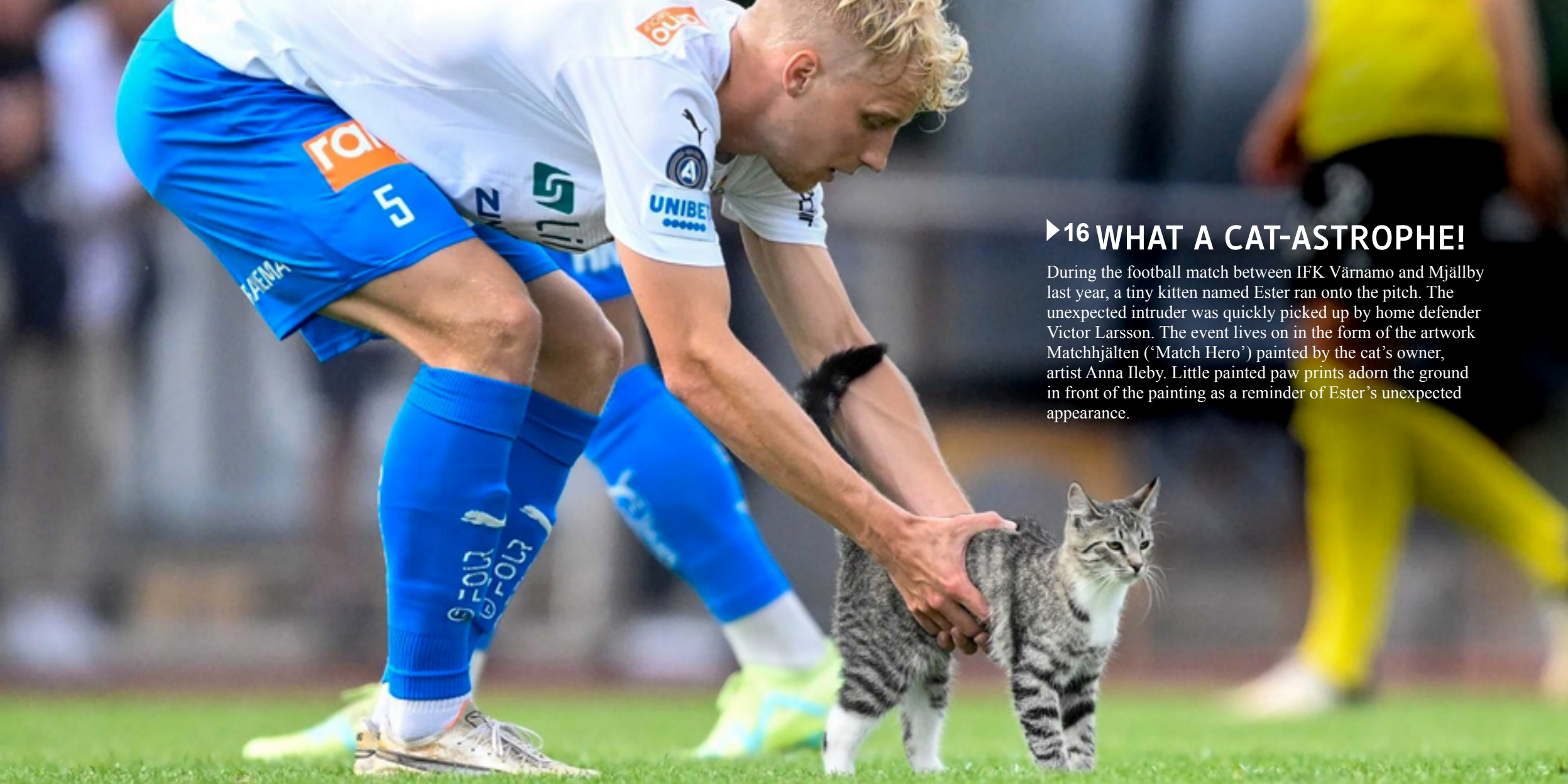
►14 HUNGRY AS A BEAR? TRY FISHING IN BOLMEN

Bolmen is Sweden’s tenth largest lake and home to no fewer than 25 different species of fish. Pike lurk in the reeds of the lake, and it is said that the biggest fish ever caught here was a pike weighing over 19 kilos.



►15 EUROPE’S OLDEST DISC GOLF CLUB

Värnamo Frisbee disc Club put the municipality on the disc golf map early on. The club organises several events and maintains Värnamo’s state-of-the-art disc golf course in Borgen Outdoor for quality play.



►16 WHAT A CAT-ASTROPHE!

During the football match between IFK Värnamo and Mjällby last year, a tiny kitten named Ester ran onto the pitch. The unexpected intruder was quickly picked up by home defender Victor Larsson. The event lives on in the form of the artwork Matchhjälten ('Match Hero') painted by the cat's owner, artist Anna Ileby. Little painted paw prints adorn the ground in front of the painting as a reminder of Ester's unexpected appearance.



► 17 AN ICON OF SWEDISH FURNITURE DESIGN

Bruno Mathsson is one of the region's famous sons and one of Sweden's most renowned furniture designers. He is internationally recognised as one of the pioneers of modernism, alongside Alvar Aalto and Marcel Breuer. The Bruno Mathsson Centre consists of Bruno's parents' home and his first glass house. See historical furniture in its original setting and try out timeless classics with a beauty that appeals to everyone.

► 18 VÄRNAMO BEST IN OUTDOOR RECREATION

The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency named Värnamo 'Outdoor Municipality of the Year' in 2023, and in 2024 we came in at a strong second place. We work with our citizens to develop outdoor activities and to link together the design and furniture city of Värnamo with its natural assets. Among other things, we've created around 20 grill areas, open-air recreation areas with walking paths, clear waters, imaginative wind shelters and extraordinary picnic areas.

► 19 THE BUS TOUR THAT WILL MAKE YOU LOVE VÄRNAMO

Twice a year, Värnamo Municipality offers new residents, new workers and newfound fans of the community a bus tour of the municipality. Sit back in the bus seat and listen to the guides describing Värnamo's past, present and future. The local business organisation – Värnamo Näringsliv – and Värnamo Municipality will show you the best the community has to offer.



►20 FROM NEW YORK TO VANDALORUM

Piet Oudolf, the world-famous garden designer behind the High Line in New York, has created a masterpiece at Vandalorum Museum of Art & Design. The 3,500-square-metre perennial meadow boasts more than 26,000 plants and offers a unique experience through all seasons. In spring 2025, Oudolf will create a new, inviting garden in the Vandalorum courtyard with a perennial meadow, artworks, paths, benches and an outdoor café.

►21 EUROPE'S BEST PIZZA

The Tomic family put Värnamo on the pizza map in 1979 when they opened the town's first pizza restaurant, Pizzeria Chaplin. It offers genuine artistry on all fronts – from the cosy garden and interior design to the lovingly crafted pizzas. The Santa Lucia pizza won the European Pizza Championship in 2004 and it still measures up now, 21 years later.



►22 TWO LOOPS AROUND THE EARTH WITH CARDBOARD

DS Smith Sweden, headquartered in Värnamo, is Sweden's largest producer of corrugated cardboard. One in three Swedish-made corrugated cardboard packages is produced in the company's factories in Mariestad and Värnamo. The material is loaded onto 2,300 pallets per day and would cover as many as 40,000 football pitches per year. With 95 per cent of its board manufactured from recycled materials, the production is climate-friendly.

►23 HIGH PRECISION IN A TINY FORMAT

Mikroponent in Värnamo manufactures thin metal components by etching and laser cutting with outstanding precision. As pioneers of these techniques in the Nordic region, the company has created solutions for the electronics, aerospace and automotive industries. Perhaps you've seen Skultuna Brassworks' lanterns, with the famous design by Lara Bohinc? They're made here, at Mikroponent in Värnamo.

►24 TOP CYCLISTS MEET IN VÄRNAMO AGAIN

Sweden's national grand championship in cycling will be held in Värnamo on 14–20 July. The Gravel event will be in Åsenhöga, while Trial and XC will be held in the Borgen Outdoor recreation area in Värnamo. The facility is open year round. Try out the courses or enjoy the excellent grill areas, walking trails and disc golf courses.

►25 AN IDYLIC STAY IN SMÅLAND

Wake up to the silence in the middle of the wilderness. In the two youth hostels in Store Mosse National Park, you can live as people did 100 years ago. Put away your phone, discover the walking trails, pump water from your own well and warm yourself in front of a roaring fire. In other words – the hostels have everything you need for an unforgettable stay. Book a guided tour with the naturum visitor centre or the company

Vandra med André – with or without snowshoes – year round.

►26 BEERS BREWED WITH LOVE

Wårdshuset Bredaryd is a world-class drinking destination, with over 1,400 varieties of beer and an impressive whisky list. Beers brewed on-site with love, as well as exclusive beers from the whole world – a taste sensation like no other!

►27 QUALITY, INNOVATION AND TIMELESSNESS AT KÄLLEMO

Källemo is one of Scandinavia's leading design companies, with a passion for pressing the boundaries of what furniture is and adding something new. Production is local, in partnership with more than 30 companies within 50 km. The headquarters and showroom are in Värnamo.



►28 THERE'S NOTHING 'LAKE' THIS CONCERT!

Picture a concert on a floating stage, where little waves wash over the dance floor and the audience enjoys the music and the summer evening in a gently rocking boat. The 26th of July is Lake Bolmen Day, where one of the many activities you can experience is Sjökul, a unique concert in the middle of Bolmen. Other activities include crafts markets, boat rides and fishing in the lake.

►29 THE BIBLE BELT

Värnamo lies in the south-western part of what is called Sweden's Bible Belt. A wide array of denominations are active here, including the Pentecostal Church, the Swedish Alliance Mission, the Mission Covenant Church of Sweden and the Uniting Church in Sweden. Historically, religious denominations spread along the railway, and in addition to Värnamo the Bible Belt includes Gislaved, Gnosjö, Vaggeryd and Jönköping.

►30 IFK VÄRNAMO CHALLENGES THE BIG FOOTBALL CLUBS IN ALLSVENSKAN

Värnamo is one of the least-populous municipalities ever to have a football club in Sweden's top-tier league, Allsvenskan. We're very proud of that! Its success is due to incredible dedication and interest in the sport.



►31 GNOSJÖ SPIRIT – A UNIQUE BUSINESS CULTURE

Värnamo Municipality has 5,540 companies that embody the Gnosjö Spirit, embracing entrepreneurship, collaboration and helpfulness. The companies support one another as customers, suppliers or by sharing resources. Entrepreneurial spirit is a way of life. The strong sense of community has shaped the region for hundreds of years, and has shaped Värnamo into the heart of small industry, with low unemployment and high business acumen.



►32 UNIQUE WIND SHELTERS

A wind shelter can be dull and boring ... or the stuff of dreams! Make your nature experience something special – discover our unique wind shelters throughout the municipality. Most of them have special grill areas that you're welcome to use. Find your way out into nature using the Naturkartan digital guide, available as an app and website.

►33 VÄRNAMO COMPANY LAUNCHES WORLD SENSATION

In 2024, 3M Peltor in Värnamo launched the world's first self-charging, noise-attenuating communication headset. With new solar cell technology from Powerfoyle™, the headset is charged by both outdoor and indoor light. In 2008, the American 3M Company acquired Peltor, a company that manufactures hundreds of thousands of products annually in Värnamo, where most of its research, product development and production still take place.

►34 ONE OF SWEDEN'S BIGGEST SILVER SCREENS

Svenska Bio in Värnamo invites you to a cinematic experience that's out of the ordinary – on its 17-metre-wide film screen, one of the biggest in Sweden. And the seats in all three cinemas feel extra luxurious with plenty of leg room.

►35 WALK FROM SPAIN TO NORWAY

Three pilgrim trails meet in Nydala: the Västra Sigfridsleden, Munkaleden and Nydalaleden Trails. If you choose Munkaleden or Nydalaleden, you'll be walking part of the 4,000-kilometre Pilgrimage Network between Santiago de Compostela and Trondheim.

►36 EUROPE'S MOST MODERN HOTEL

Immerse yourself in design in Värnamo by booking a room at the Hotel Scandic Värnamo. In 1955, the showy city hotel was described as Europe's most modern. The Danish architect Bent Jørgen Jørgensen wanted to create the hotel of the future, and now 70 years later, we can confirm he succeeded.

►37 BEST SMÅLAND CHEESECAKE

The Småland cheesecake national championship is being held for the 20th year in a row. Last year, the competition was held at Hörle Herrgård, whose grand premises make a perfect venue for major events and festivities. Drop by one of the fika buffets arranged throughout the year. Perhaps you'll find your favourite cheesecake on the buffet table?

►38 UNIQUE EXPO IN VÄRNAMO

Come to Sweden's machine-builders' and sellers' Mecca! On 14–15 May, technology and engineering companies in Värnamo invite you to an open house – Värnamo Industriexpo. You can meet the companies and see the power and expertise the region has to offer.



►39 FULL SPEED AHEAD

In 2020, racing driver Felix Rosenqvist from Värnamo became the first Swede in 18 years to win an IndyCar race, the foremost open-wheel car racing series in the United States. He also holds the titles of European Champion in Formula 3, two-time winner of the Macau Grand Prix and Masters of F3, and three-time Formula Renault champion. Felix has also won races in Formula E and international GT racing and competed in the Deutsche Tourenwagen Masters.



►40 MEDIEVAL DRAMA

‘Det rika Nova Vallis’ – a chronicle play about the first Cistercian monks in Nydala (Nova Vallis in Latin) – is performed in front of the impressive 12th-century ruins. Over 80 amateur actors, roosters and musicians have recreated this dramatic tale every year since 1993. On the weekend of 15–16 August, the medieval history of Nydala Abbey comes back to life with drama, intrigue and mystery. Book tickets and experience something extraordinary.

►41 A TALL CELEBRITY

It’s been more than 50 years since Formenta started manufacturing flagpoles in Värnamo. Since then, the company has delivered flagpoles for the Olympic Games, the Commonwealth Games, the Asian Games, the White House in Washington, the UN offices in Vienna, the Friends Arena, the Tele2 Arena and several other famous buildings and sports arenas around the world.

►42 THE SWORD IN TÄNNÖ

In 2018, 8-year-old Saga’s discovery in Lake Vidöstern at Tännö made headlines worldwide. She was helping her father with their boat when she stepped on something, which turned out to be an 86 cm long Viking sword manufactured some time around the year 700. The sword was probably placed in the lake as part of a sacrificial rite, and today it is on display in Jönköping County Museum.

►43 ELEPHANTS ON THE RUN

In 2013, two circus elephants escaped in Värnamo and went for a stroll in a residential neighbourhood. One elephant scratched itself against a tree trunk, while the other nearly crashed into the wall of a house. The elephants returned to the circus with no fuss and the show could go on.



►44 THE CRADLE OF THE SWEDISH FURNITURE INDUSTRY

The Swedish furniture industry was born in the Värnamo region. With poor soils and rich forests, farmers soon began supplementing their income by manufacturing spindle-back chairs. In the 19th century, the community was full of joiner's shops and the wooden chair became a characteristic part of homes in Småland. From these humble beginnings, a broad furniture tradition was born, and the region still has several leading furniture makers today.



►45 A MILLION FLUFFY PILLOWS A YEAR

Have you ever spent the night in a hotel? Then you've probably slept on a pillow from Värnamo Sängkläder. The company is the only producer of blankets and pillows in Sweden and has one of the world's most modern factories. You can find their products in shops all around the country. For a great deal, visit the factory shop in Värnamo.

►46 SOCIAL MEDIA CHAMPION

Who is Jönköping County's most influential social media figure? The winner this year in the interior design category is Sofia Björk from Drömminge! She tops the Maktbarometern survey's list for most engagement and greatest reach across Instagram, Facebook, TikTok and YouTube. Congratulations, Sofia!



A photograph of a narrow, paved road that curves gently through a dense forest of tall, slender trees. The foliage is thick and green, creating a 'tunnel' effect with sunlight filtering through the leaves. A metal guardrail runs along the left side of the road. The road surface is dark and shows some wear. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and scenic.

► 47 WORTH A DETOUR

Discover Getaryggarna, an enchanting stretch of road where a green tunnel of beech woodland winds between Bor and Rydaholm. Visit the nature reserves and the swimming sites, and enjoy quiet evenings in the two motorhome stopovers.



►48 THE SWEDISH HUMOUR PRIZE GOES TO ...

Hampus Nessvold from Lanna in Värnamo Municipality is an actor and screenwriter who became famous for characters like 'Pastor Björn' and 'Terese' on the SVT series 'Trevlig Helg!'. He has performed at Stockholm City Theatre, Cirkus and Riksteatern, done arena shows, participated in the televised Community Sing-Along at Skansen and the radio show Sommar on P1, and has won the Swedish Humour Prize multiple times.

►49 SWEDISH CHAMPION ON TOAST

For some it's just a sweetener on a sandwich, but for Kia Axelsson at Enets Marmeladeri och Bageri, jam is so much more. Her passion has now led to a third Swedish Championship medal in culinary arts. Visit her farm shop and café to experience the fika, the food and the award-winning creations for yourself.

►50 VÄRNAMO, CITY OF BENCHES

In the Bänkarnas Stad – City of Benches – project, art meets nature in artistically designed benches positioned along the Lagan River. The beautiful benches all have an incredible story to tell. Each year in May, a new bench is unveiled, all linked to Värnamo as a centre of design, art and furniture. So far five benches have been created and donated to Värnamo Municipality by a business, association or private citizen.

►51 A CENTURY PROMOTING HEALTH

Värnamo Frisksportklubb was founded 90 years ago and is one of the oldest associations in the municipality. With its focus on healthy living, the club organises lots of fun activities, such as a circus school, trampoline jumping, whitewater rafting and climbing.

►52 SMÅLAND PRODUCTS AT SUPER PRICES

For two years in a row, the Fabriksrundan factory tour has been a big hit. Some 50 factories open their doors for shopping and tours of the production. Come and find bargains among all the well-known brands manufactured in Gislaved, Gnosjö, Vaggeryd and Värnamo Municipalities. Open 10–11 October 2025!



►53 CULTURE MUNICIPALITY OF 2024!

Värnamo Municipality was named ‘Sweden’s Culture Municipality of 2024’ for our wide range of cultural activities for all ages, with a special focus on children and young people. Culture is a part of daily life in our municipality, enriching our world. This is the first time ever that a municipality in Jönköping County has received this honour.

►54 FROM TEACHERS TO BREWERS

Fredrik and Jennie Carlsén, the founders of Wernamo Craft Brewery AB, traded the classroom for the brewery. With nearly 50 years’ experience of teaching between them, they are now creating something brand-new together, with a simple goal – helping everyone find their favourite beer. Their brewery and brewpub at the Best Western hotel in Värnamo centre offer demonstrations, beer tastings and more activities.

►55 SMÅLAND’S SECRET DESERT

Slättö Sand is one of the biggest shifting sand fields in Sweden’s inland, created after the ice sheet withdrew 15,000 years ago. Experience the nature reserve with mysterious sand mounds, rare insects, an unusually warm climate and a cosy wind shelter with a grill area.

►56 CAMPUS VÄRNAMO – SWEDEN'S MOST MODERN LEARNING CENTRE

Gislow Hall at Campus Värnamo offers a learning environment with unique hybrid technology. Smart features such as automatic view switching, 70-inch screens and powerful audio guarantee a first-class training course, both on-site and digitally.

►57 FROM WORKPLACE TO MEETING PLACE

In Småland's best-preserved bog ore smeltery, you'll travel back in time to the heyday of Åminne Bruk. In the works museum you can observe the manufacturing process in which a worker daily retrieved two tonnes of ore from the lakebed, which was then refined into iron products. These days the works is an important gathering place, especially during all the motor meets that attract thousands of enthusiastic visitors.

►58 CLIMATE ADAPTATION LEADER

Värnamo is number one in Jönköping County and 17 in all of Sweden according to Länsförsäkringar's index of the best municipalities to live in when the climate changes. One example of climate adaptation is all the ponds, which have primarily been expanded to regulate water flows in periods of intensive rain, but which are also useful for recreation.





►59 FAMILIAR FACE IN HIT SERIES

Actor and singer Anna Sise grew up in Värnamo, where she started dancing in 'Dance and Drama' before continuing her studies. Anna appears in TV series such as 'Thin Blue Line', '8 Months', 'Solsidan', 'LasseMajas detektivbyrå' and 'Hamilton'.

►60 AN EXCLUSIVE DINING EXPERIENCE ... FOR THE EAGLES!

During the winter months, Store Mosse National Park feeds some 40 golden and white-tailed eagles, which you can follow on your smartphone or from the eagle hide 100 m from the parking area. Bring binoculars or borrow a pair at the naturum visitor centre, where you can also visit the intriguing exhibition about the bog.

►61 900 KM OF NATURE EXPERIENCES

This year, the new Smålandsleden Trail will open – a 900-kilometre walking trail through all 13 municipalities in Jönköping County. In Värnamo Municipality, it connects Store Mosse National Park, Kärda, the Värnaro recreation area and the Lagadalsleden Trail.

►62 SWEDEN'S BIGGEST ARTISTS' GRANT

46 000 euro are awarded each year to a promising Swedish artist. This is the biggest artists' grant in the country, thanks to Värnamo resident Åke Andrén, and it is expected to be awarded annually for 50 years.

►63 MAKE TIME FOR THE MIDDLE AGES

Nydala Abbey and Alvastra Abbey were the first two Cistercian monasteries in Sweden. Nydala Abbey was founded in 1143 by French Cistercian monks, and it took more than 100 years to complete. Visit the fascinating abbey environment with its gardens and go on a guided tour for even more details.

►64 SWEDEN'S FIRST DRIVE-THROUGH BAKERY

At Ringvägen 40, you can stop by DittCafé, Stigs bageri – Sweden's first drive-through bakery. The bakers here go through 120 tonnes of flour and 25,000 litres of cream each year, and for Fat Tuesday, they make more than 22,000 Swedish Lenten buns, semlas. Place your order quickly and easily at the window on Ringvägen.

►65 THE RUBBER BAND

The rubber industry in Värnamo has played a key role in Sweden's industrial development, and it's still important today. Road 27 was once referred to as 'the Rubber Band', because almost all the towns along it – Gislaved, Forsheda, Värnamo, Bor, Horda and Rydaholm – had rubber factories. They produced everything from tyres and galoshes to technological rubber products for the automotive industry, agriculture and other industries.

►66 A TRIP TO ASIA – WITHOUT A TICKET

Kevin Ha and his family started the Rosegarden restaurant's journey with a simple Asian eatery in Värnamo. Today, they offer both casual and grand restaurants at 17 locations around Sweden, from Umeå in the north to Ystad in the south. Two of them are in Värnamo – in the town centre and in the Bredasten district.



►67 ARE YOU COOL ENOUGH TO TAKE A SWIM?

The Värnamo Vinterbadare are a group of friends who defy the cold to take a dip in our ice-covered lakes. The reward afterwards is a pop-up sauna and a warming fire. Are you brave enough to join them?



►68 AN OASIS OF ART AND DESIGN

Welcome to Vandalorum, where art, design and nature meet in perfect harmony. Explore unique exhibitions featuring both Swedish and international artists, all in an inspiring environment. Vandalorum's modern buildings create an oasis for creativity, where you can go on guided tours and let your own creative juices flow. It's an experience like no other – come and discover the magic!

►69 THIS COMPANY HOLDS THE FUTURE

More than 30 million babies have been held in the embrace of a BabyBjörn baby carrier. Founded in Lanna in 1961, the company has always focused on family. Their first product, a baby bouncer, was a hit and was soon followed up with baby carriers and other products for the bedroom, kitchen and bath. These days, BabyBjörn has annual sales of over 92 million euro and operates in 55 countries.

►70 HALF OF ALL BIKE TYRES WERE FROM VÄRNAMO

In the 1930s, Gummifabriken was Värnamo's biggest company, with 275 employees. As Sweden's leading supplier of rubber tyres, the factory dominated the market and produced an impressive one million bike tyres per year. That figure was half of the country's total production. Visit Gummifabriken's historical exhibition, which has preserved loads of the rubber products of the era.



►71 THE TREASURED PARK

Every summer, thousands of people of all ages set out on a treasure hunt in the open-air museum Apladalen. This verdant setting with traditional wooden fences and historic buildings hides clues to the treasure hunt. Can you break the code to the treasure chest? The adventure begins at Agdas café.

►72 VÄRNAMO WOMAN STARTED SWEDEN'S SALVATION ARMY

Hanna Ouchterlony, born in Värnamo, founded the Salvation Army in Sweden after hearing the British theologist Bramwell Booth preach at Värnamo railway station in 1878. She started the first Salvation Army meetings and became a pioneer who transformed the country and helped thousands of needy people. Värnamo has a street named after her, Ouchterlonygatan, and a bronze bust of her in Åbroparken, created by Sten Ericson in 1958.

►73 THEY'VE GOT A HANDLE ON IT

Smedbergs in Rydaholm has been making axe handles since 1910. The company produces about 1,500 hickory handles a day, which are sold online or delivered to tool manufacturers like Hultafors, Gränsfors and Wetterlings.

►74 ÅMINNE HELPED SHAPE STOCKHOLM'S SKYLINE

The 30-metre high spire on Riddarholmen Church in Stockholm was replaced in 1968, and the new one was manufactured at Åminne Bruk. The ironworks offered excellent iron quality and top-notch craftsmanship. The spire was cast in several pieces that looked like the original, and you can still see some of the original parts at Åminne Bruk.

►75 BELOVED PROGRAMME HOST

Nina Hjelmkvist, who grew up in Värnamo, is one of Sweden's most popular children's television hosts. After working as a show artist, she studied Balettakademien's musical theatre course, which was followed by many years hosting SVT's fantastic children's programme 'Bolibompa'. Her warmth and energy have entertained and spread joy to hundreds of thousands of families.

►76 TOP EMERGENCY CARE

In recent years, Värnamo Hospital has had Sweden's most efficient patient flow in Accidents and Emergencies. The average stay was 155 minutes, compared with the national average of 244 minutes. Thanks to clear processes and good collaboration, the hospital continues to deliver fast, safe health care.

►77 THE CORE OF A UNIFIED SWEDISH MEASURING SYSTEM


On the order of King Karl IX in 1604, the 'Rydaholm ell'* became the official standard of measure for length in Sweden. Visit the elegant Rydaholm church and see the copy of the measure that remained the standard until 1879.

*An ell is the distance from your fingertips to your elbow. Hence the word el-bow!



►78 NO LOLLYGAGGING HERE!

Charming little Lerdala is home to Knäckkokeriet, a sweets manufacturer that makes 150,000 toffee lollies a year! With all Swedish ingredients, this old-fashioned sweet is sold in traditional cones, also made in the region. Most of the lollies are sold at the Gränna peppermint stick factories, but it's a real treat to buy them right in the factory – an idyllic rural place where you can choose your favourite flavour and get a peek at the manufacturing process.



►79 BOOK A STAY IN A CROWN

What do you say to a night sleeping eight metres up in the crown of a tree in the Tallkotten treehouse, a unique accommodation created by Tobias Englund and his family? It was a childhood dream that came true in the woods outside Fryele. Tallkotten (‘the pinecone’) sleeps four and has a cosy atmosphere with a heating stove and a panoramic view of the countryside. Visitors come here from all around the world to enjoy peace and quiet in the arms of Mother Nature. Come and try it for yourself!

►80 BY RAIL THROUGH THE NATIONAL PARK

Get to Värnamo in a convenient, climate-smart way – by direct train from several parts of the country. If you’re coming from Gothenburg, you’ll pass through Store Mosse National Park, one of only two national parks in Sweden you can ride a train through (the other is Abisko). Enjoy one of Sweden’s most beautiful train routes, just before you arrive in Värnamo.

►81 THE CAR THAT’S BEEN ROLLING FOR 124 YEARS

You’ll find all kinds of motor vehicles, toys and musical instruments from the 19th century on at Smålands bil-, musik- och leksaksmuseum in Rydaholm. Marvel at the collection of 1,000 toy cars, discover the limousine that drove the royal couple, or feast your eyes on one of the oldest cars ever imported to Sweden.

►82 FIND AN APP-EALING CAMPSITE

Eremit is one of the most important apps for finding and booking unique places to stay in Sweden. The app was founded by Larz Teke from Värnamo and is used by thousands of curious motorhome owners every year to find the perfect place to stop for the night.

►83 WRESTLING FOR THE CHAMPIONSHIP

It is widely known that Värnamo Brottarklubb turns out loads of new wrestling contenders, and their success in national competitions speaks for itself. How about 39 gold medals in the Junior Championships, 38 gold medals in the Youth Championships, 37 gold medals in the Senior Championships, three team gold medals in the Freestyle Championships and one team gold medal in the Freestyle Championship for youths? Every autumn the club arranges the popular Finnvedscupen, which attracts wrestlers from much of Sweden.

►84 NORDIC POLICE DOG CHAMPIONSHIPS

On 20–23 May, the best police dogs in the Nordic region gather in Värnamo for a spectacular competition in several events. There will be a parade through town, a drug search at Scandic Hotel Värnamo and impressive contests at Värnamo Brukshundsklubb. The National Police Commissioner will open the event and police horses will demonstrate their strength and elegance. We look forward to seeing you there!



►85 CAMP FOR YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS

UngDrive Masters is Sweden's biggest camp for young entrepreneurs and will be held this year on 26–28 September. An astounding 3,000 young people between 15 and 18 years of age run summer businesses in Sweden each year. The 96 best summer entrepreneurs are invited to Swedish Championship competitions at companies in the Gnosjö region. In 2024, Värnamo hosted the event; now the baton has been passed to Vaggeryd. An unforgettable weekend with contests, inspiration and lots of networking!

►86 BY CHOPPER TO THE LAKE

Gavlö Strand on Lake Bolmen combines relaxation with security. Not only can you swim and play beach volleyball and boules, there's also a boat ramp with a helipad.



►87 BREAKING THE GLASS CEILING

Lisa Lidén is Sweden's first and only female club manager in the upper echelons of men's football. She has led IFK Värnamo during their years in Sweden's top-tier league, Allsvenskan. Her work is characterised by gender and social equality and equal access to leading positions and sports.



►88 BONJOUR VÄRNAMO!

They say that French schoolchildren learned that Stockholm's and Värnamo's markets were the most significant places in Sweden in the early 20th century. Author Harry Sjöman heard this as a child and wrote about it in his book Wernamo marknad – marknadsplats med gamla anor (Wernamo Marknad – a marketplace with a long history). Still today, many open-air markets are arranged in the municipality each year.



►89 WOODLAND CAMPING RIGHT IN TOWN

You can't camp in the countryside and in town at once, can you? Yes, you can! Värnamo Camping is located next to Lake Prostsjön, the Lagan River and the deep forest. Take a late-night swim, play adventure golf, walk in the woods or go paddling – right next-door to the restaurants, bars and shops of the town.

►90 PASSION FOR CHOCOLATE

Does anyone ever stop liking chocolate? Not if you ask the 90-year-old artisan Irene Ek, who became a passionate chocolatier at age 80. Visit Gläntans Choklad in Hjalshammar, one of the excellent farm shops in Värnamo Municipality. We guarantee you won't be disappointed.

►91 ONE OF SWEDEN'S 30 NATIONAL PARKS

Let Store Mosse National Park take your breath away. It's home to Sweden's biggest, nearly untouched raised bog south of Norrbotten. Find your favourite view along 50 km of boardwalks and trails, or book a guided snowshoeing tour out into the landscape. Whatever you do, don't forget to look down so you don't miss the rare carnivorous plants!

►92 QUALITY CRAFTSMANSHIP

Slöjdarna i Värnamo kommun (The artisans of Värnamo Municipality) have kept their crafting traditions alive for nearly 40 years. Right now, the big thing is skarvsöm, a historic, decorative patchwork technique that has its roots in the Värnamo region. You can meet the artisans in Marknadsstugan, the market cabin, in Apladalen.



►93 RECORD-EARLY SKI PREMIERE IN VÄRNAMO

Alandsrydsbacken in Värnamo was one of the first ski slopes in Sweden to open for the winter season. Thanks to the non-profit organisation Finnvedens Slalomklubb and great local engagement, skiing could begin earlier than in many other places. Try the ski school, rent equipment, enjoy a bun or grill a hot dog at one of the grill areas. See you on the slope!



►94 RIDE IN STYLE ON SWEDEN'S STEEPEST RAILWAY

All aboard! Take a ride on the historical trains on the Ohsabanan track through the woods of Småland between Ohs and Bor. In addition to the regular routes, you can attend the Ohsabanan Days and see the Santa Train, Sweden's only ice cream train and new this year, the Music Train.

►95 ONE OF SMÅLAND'S SMALL LANDS

Värnamo is located in a region once called Finnveden, one of the twelve Viking-Era 'small lands' that became the province of Småland. The name Finnveden still lives on in the names of several businesses, associations and our Allsvenskan football arena.

►96 WORLD LEADER IN PLASTIC RECYCLING

Rapid Granulator AB, headquartered in Bredaryd, is one of the world's foremost manufacturers of equipment for plastic recycling. The company has delivered more than 100,000 granulators worldwide. The machines efficiently process waste from plastic production, which allows reuse and contributes to a sustainable plastics industry.

►97 MUSIC FEST IN VÄRNAMO

At 6 pm on 12 July, the popular travelling music festival Diggiloo will open in Värnamo. The outdoor arena on Tinas Ö will play host to artists such as Medina, Ola Salo, Sanna Nielsen, Jessica Andersson, Bruno Mitsogiannis, Per Andersson, Uno Svenningsson and Mapei. With an audience of about 6,000, this will truly be a celebration – come and join in!

►98 ANOTHER STONE IN THE WALL

West of Lake Rusken, the road is lined by standing stones and one of Sweden's longest stone walls – the legendary Bohulta Stone Wall, which is 950 metres long, 1.5 metres wide and over one metre high. The wall was a way for the owners of Ohs Bruk ironworks to showcase their wealth and status.

►99 THE MUSIC PRODUCER FROM FORSHEDA

Peter Nord from Forsheda is a songwriter and music producer who works with J-pop and K-pop artists in Asia. One of Peter's compositions is GLITCH on Snow Man's album RAYS, which was the world's most-sold album for a week in 2024. Peter has had over 20 number-one hits in Japan and more than 50 gold and platinum records.

►100 100 FANTASTIC FACTS

Wow, you've learned 99 fantastic facts about Värnamo. Do you want to know the last one? You'll find it here in Värnamo Municipality when you experience it all in person. Thank you for being a part of creating 100 fantastic facts about Värnamo!

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PRODUCTION: Destinationsenheten, Värnamo kommun, 2025
PRINTING: iVisby Tryckeri AB
TRANSLATOR: Jennifer Evans for Stefanie Busam Golay | Stilren
COVER PHOTO: 'The Square', PHOTO: Patrik Svedberg

PHOTO: Alin Popescu, Alexander Hall, Marica Rosengård, Jonas Johansson, Mikael Fritzon TT, Patrik Svedberg, UngDrive, Mattias Persson Motorsport Publication, Källemo, Rosegarden, Sofia Björk, Deltavormgroep/Vandalorum, Malena Thor, Leonard Stenberg/Kulturhuset Stadsteatern Stockholm, Emil Carlin och Värnamo kommun

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