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## Gotland preparing for increased cruise tourism

*Visby is a classic cruise destination, with a new terminal set to increase flows of tourists in 2018. The tourism industry on the island is now getting ready to receive cruise passengers in the optimum way.*

One of the organisations that is engaged in the preparations is Gotland Cruise Network, where different actors have grouped together in order to develop Gotland into an even more attractive cruise destination.

”This is nothing new for Gotland. We have been hosting cruises for more than

30 years. The difference now is that we are going to be receiving larger ships, which will increase the number of tourists,” says Monika Frisk, Operating Manager of Gotland Tourism Business Association.

It is the numbers of day tourists from abroad that are increasing and placing requirements on everything from transport and infrastructure to guides with good language skills, wifi services, tax-free service and shops which can handle foreign currencies efficiently.

”Many of them will probably stay in Visby to shop and look around the city, but we will also be offering programmes of excursions for those who want to see more of Gotland,” Monika Frisk reports.

Digital solutions are playing a greater role in the tourism industry. There is already a website for cruise tourists where they can acquaint themselves with Visby as a world heritage site. Monika Frisk also perceives opportunities with apps which visitors can download, as well as other solutions.

”Experience tells us that quite a lot of cruise tourists choose to return to a destination as ”ordinary” tourists,” she says. ”It is therefore of interest to try to build relationships with the visitors, why not via a Visby-community on Instagram?”

***Gotland is affected***It is also a busy time at the cruise quays. Tove Turesson is PR Officer for the project and maintains communication with both Gotlanders and those responsible for the construction project.

”We have a page on Region Gotland’s website for the general public. It presents the work on the cruise quay, reception of visitors and development of the infrastructure,” she says. ”The aim is to provide up-to-date information and influence attitudes towards an initiative that is good for Gotland as a whole, for example, in that cruise tourism extends the season for the tourism industry.”

”And then we will naturally be planning for the inauguration which takes place on April 29.”

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