

# BALTACAR

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## Baltic History Beneath Surface:

Underwater Heritage Trails  
*In Situ* and Online

# BALTACAR

BALTACAR is an Estonian-Finnish-Swedish cooperation project that aims to harness the tourist potential of the underwater cultural heritage of the Baltic Sea by creating new opportunities for visiting unique underwater sites at their original location. During the project, a tourist attraction including wrecks in Estonian, Finnish and Swedish waters will be established in the Baltic Sea.

Additionally, joint efforts will be made to market and promote underwater heritage tourism in order to raise awareness of the unique underwater heritage of the Baltic Sea, its excellent preservation conditions and the potential of underwater heritage for developing local tourism. To support marketing and outreach activities, an interactive website will be set up that provides up-to-date information on the newly created tourist attraction and on the possibilities of visiting it.

In Estonia, we will be focusing on wrecks in waters off the islands of Hiiumaa and Saaremaa. These locations host a number of wrecks suitable for recreational divers – the maximum depth of dive sites with interesting historical backgrounds is no more than 30 metres. In addition we will pick six wrecks for which 3D images will be created after the wrecks have been fully documented. Additionally, four sites will be marked with mooring buoys and two will include underwater information boards.



Photo: Juha Filmkaman / SubZone Oy

In the framework of this project, new underwater parks will be opened in Hanko and Kemiönsaari, and the wreck park opened in Helsinki in 2000 will be further developed.

Information will be brought from the bottom to the surface and from archives to pop-up exhibitions in the form of 3D models and prints, NFC tags, guidebooks and brochures, and a virtual diving experience created with 360-degree videos. The main objects of the project are various shipwrecks from different eras located off the coast of the Gulf of Finland. Among other things, the project includes the oldest wreck park in Finland, Kronprins Gustav Adolf near Helsinki, where one can visit the wreck of a ship of the Swedish line that was destroyed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century during King Gustav III's war with Russia. In Hanko, divers may examine the history of a 17<sup>th</sup> century Dutch cargo ship that was carrying grain when it sank, and in Kemiönsaari, they can visit the wrecks of 19<sup>th</sup> century sailing ships that represent the old seafaring tradition.

In addition to gathering and disseminating information, an essential part of the project is developing the infrastructure of the parks: preparation of underwater and surface signage, and installation of buoys and guide ropes.



Photo: Pekka Tuuri

In 2014, Sweden's first maritime cultural preserve – the Dalarö Dive Park – was opened to the public, providing access to shipwrecks for divers as well as for non-divers. The waters off Dalarö contain a great number of well-preserved shipwrecks from the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, making it a hot spot for recreational divers. It was previously not possible to visit some of the shipwrecks, but by including them into the cultural preserve, access can be granted to divers when accompanied by a licensed guide.

BALTACAR enables to improve and expand the existing dive park. This will be done by adding at least one shipwreck to the existing three at the cultural preserve, creating new stories and narratives, better visual documentation (3D images, 360° videos), organizing regular trainings for dive guides and for ROV-pilots, and other activities.

We also want to make the project BALTACAR an inspiration for NGOs, tourist companies, local and regional authorities and other parties who would like to highlight their local underwater cultural heritage, making it a new and exciting tourist attraction.



Photo: Jens Lindström, SMM CC by 3.0